

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1973

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WORD FROM ELDER SLAUSON

Halcottville, N.Y. 12438

Very Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Just a few lines to let you know to send my *Signs* to Halcottville, New York, as I sold my house in Kingston last May, and am living with my son in Halcottville. As you know I am in my 90th year, so I couldn't manage my rooming house very well. I had cataracts on both eyes, and have had it removed from one, but am blind in the other. But I am well, with a good appetite, and sleep well, and can take long walks, and can attend some of my appointments; thanks to God. I feel so thankful to God, to be as well as I am at my age; and able to "fight the good fight of faith."

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How true and wonderful! Words fail me to tell how wonderfully good the Lord has been to this poor, sinful worm of the dust. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Psalm 116:12)

With much love,
Brother Amasa J. Slauson

SISTER KILBY TO
ELDER AND SISTER POOLE

Stone Mountain, Ga.

Dear Peggy and Jim,
(Elder and Sister James Poole)

Tonight I have been reading Pink's "Attributes of God" and also several chapters of Scripture cited in Pink's book. His writings seem to be in full accord with the Scriptures. He (Pink) portrays God as a majestic, all powerful, supreme Being — one to be revered, to be feared, and to be ever exalted. Not merely in lip service, as is done by multitudes, for as Pink says, many will readily agree that God is "great in wisdom, wonderous in power, yet full of mercy..." — *these attributes of God are assumed "common knowledge" — but, oh how far from a true knowledge of God are these words unless they have been applied to our very souls.*

God cannot be understood by our intellect. He is beyond finite comprehension. He is discerned spiritually and can be known only to those He makes Himself known.

When we contemplate God and His Word, we are filled with amazement, with awe. We know He is eternal — from everlasting unto everlasting — the woes of this life will soon pass away, but God is forever!! Why then should we find ourselves so tightly up in the cares of this world? What is really important in life? What should our thoughts be?

Pink, in his foreword, says, "A spiritual and saving knowledge of God is the greatest need of every human creature." We are admonished, "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job 22:21)

If we were enabled to read, to study, to reflect all the days of our lives upon the excellency of our almighty God, we could never begin to really approach an

understanding of His magnificence — nor to adore Him as we ought. Yet, in all, I believe we should earnestly strive, as he blesses us to do so, “to acquaint” ourselves with Him, to keep our faith uppermost in our minds — and most of all to know that all else matters little — except the saving power, the perfections and the grace of our God.

This world is reserved for destruction, for fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men. Let us not then be ignorant of this one thing. Let us look for and haste unto the coming of God and the promise of new heavens and a new earth. Let us acquaint ourselves with Him and be at peace. Let us look upon the daily worries, the world’s confusion and distraught state as the fulfilling of His Divine purpose — with all things in His Hand. For we know he reigneth supreme over all events, all creatures and all things. Let us be at peace. Let us acquaint ourselves with Him. Let us be still and know He is God.

These thoughts have pressed upon my mind this weekend. We took Russ yesterday to Georgia South Western to begin his college studies. I felt forlorn at leaving him, knowing he now steps into a new phase of life. He leaves us, and his life at home under our counsel is virtually ended. As I looked back over his 17½ years with us, questions flowed into my mind; will my son hold fast to the values of right and wrong? Will he adhere to the teachings I have tried to instill in him? Does he know the tenets of our faith and will he ever cling to them? Did I, his mother, train him in the way I would have him go? Will he walk with humility? Will he succumb to temptations and evil doings? Did I take the time to know him and love him?

I do not know the answers to my questions. I only know all the days of his life are in God’s Hands. I pray God will touch his heart, reveal Himself unto him and keep him always in the straight and narrow way.

I love you both so dearly. Remember us here and love us always. Truly we are lonely pilgrims here on earth. We reach out to our brethren — for only they

understand. And that is why I reach out to you.

May God keep you and shed His grace upon you.

Katie Kilby

Rt. 5, Box 104
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder Wood:

...I have had many of the readers ask me where does the Spirit of God in man go at the time of death. Some are greatly confused about this matter.

I have selected from the Scriptures different men of God on the subject ...“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” If we are given faith to study the Word of God, and if the Holy Ghost takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, then these things can be understood...

Yours in sweet fellowship,
J. R. Hollandsworth

Where does the inner man go at the time of the death of the body? According to 1 Corinthians, 15th chapter, the body is the only thing that goes to the grave, and only thing that will be changed in the resurrection. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Ecc. 9:10) “Then shall the dust return unto God who gave it.” (Ecc. 12:7)

We will call on Peter as a witness on the subject: “Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus hath showed me.” (2 Peter 1:13,14) This was the new man Peter talking: he that believed Jesus is the Christ; this is the man that shall never die. This is the Spirit that Paul tells about in Romans 8:11, “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in

you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This is the Spirit that goes back to God that gave it.

Let us use Stephen as a witness. "And they stoned Stephen, calling on God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59) We will call on Jesus also to testify on the subject, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost." (Luke 23:46)

Nothing is buried but the body; nothing is changed but the body, The spirit is partaker of flesh and blood, not just the flesh but also the blood. "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight." (Psalms 72:14)

We will call on Paul and find out what he says about this. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. (Phil. 1:23,24) This is none other than the new man Paul talking about resting from his labors until the resurrection of the body, then God will with the same Spirit quicken his mortal body. Our bodies will not be raised and changed, but changed and then be raised like unto His glorious body. I know that God fills heaven and earth. We do not bury any part of God; if we did then God would be dying by degrees: then who would raise the dead.

God has dominion over all things, and in all things, and in every place, but God is not in all things. God is not in a reprobate, God is not in an unregenerated person.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? and white robes were given everyone of them; and it was said unto them that

they should rest for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:8-10)

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29)

I understand that the dead in Christ shall rise first, this is the resurrection of the generation of Jesus Christ, which is the church; then there will be a resurrection of the generation of vipers, and the joy of the generation of Jesus Christ will be everlasting, and the punishment of the generation of vipers will also be everlasting.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

SOLDIER CREEK ASSOCIATION

Rt. 1

Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

The Soldier Creek Association of Old School Baptists held its 128th session in October, 1972. The visiting ministers were Elder H. Prince of the Memphis Church; Elder E. Prince of the Cane Creek Church in Tenn.; Elder R. Campbell of the Memphis Church, and Elder W. D. Griffin of the Hopewell Association in Alabama; in addition to our Moderator, Elder P. Poyner and Assistant Moderator, Elder Wayman Chappel.

All of these elders preached an all-wise, merciful God who controls the heavens and the earth; who gave his Beloved Son to the cross for the sake of the elect. By the infinite mercy of our God, peace and fellowship abounded among the congregation. We are few in number, but as long as our God enables us, we will stand and be counted for His truth and doctrine. We are not able to do this if left to our own ways and thoughts.

Enclosed you will find a resolution of Respect for Elder R. L. Biggs, which you

may publish; and a donation to the *Signs* which you may use as you wish. Elder Biggs was a true and faithful friend to the Soldier Creek Association.

In love and fellowship:

Roy L. Locke
Soldier Creek Association

ENMITY

Enmity and the curse pronounced upon the devil are the first threads in the garment of God's promises wherein Christ is revealed (from faith to faith) in the writings of Moses.

These words, "And I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed," are spoken to and promised to satan, who is a creature separate from grace and the election of grace by a vast gulf.

Now our fathers "embraced" this promise, but did not receive this promise, for it was pronounced as a promise to satan and his seed. Our fathers by faith did see the promise afar off, across the vast gulf wherein it was revealed to faith (but promised to satan) that Christ would stomp the head of satan so hard that it would bruise His heel. Hence, it pleased the Lord on behalf of the church chosen to everlasting life, to "bruise Him."

The saints of God hate sin and satan only because our Lord said, "I will put enmity," and has done so unaided. Only Jesus can break up this friendship we have for sin by our depraved nature. This comes to pass in the experience of every new born child of God when the Lord God, who is the Author and Fountain of every blessing, fulfills the promise made to satan and his seed, and therefore not received by the fathers, who left us a pure communion, together with a godly heritage; but the promise made to satan is embraced by faith in the breast of the household of faith, who in time past all walked according to the course of this world in friendship with the world, the flesh and the devil. "I will put enmity."

This God given enmity comes by the way of the sanctifying influence of the indwelling Spirit of God. Therefore the

good behavior so necessary to gospel order and decency, is never the result of conditions met by mortals; but is only the result and fruit of the work of God who only has power to save.

Therefore in the promise pronounced on the creature satan, faith in the saints who did not receive that promise but "embraced it afar off, and were persuaded of them. . .," all died in faith, which seeing that the "seed of a woman" would bruise the serpent's head, therefore called Eve the "mother of all living," seeing that she would only be the mother of all dying, except for the fact that Jesus was "born of a woman."

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P. O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

CIRCULAR LETTER OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1972

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

We greet you thru this Circular Letter in the name of the Lamb of God.

We, the attendants of the meetings of God's people in the churches of the Salisbury Association, feel to be greatly blessed. We have no dissention, nor is there any who would attempt to carry off disciples with strange doctrines. We feel to have a purpose in our coming together from time to time. We feast on the fellowship and love of the brethren. When God further blesses us with the Gospel, it is truly a time of rejoicing.

As it seems to be a general practice to submit some scriptural thought in circular letters, I shall submit a few borrowed thoughts for a servant from days gone by, He wrote on the *perseverance of God's saints*. The following lines are taken in part from the Circular Letter of the Philadelphia Association, written in 1791, by Elder William VanHorn:

"We exclude, in the consideration of this subject, all false professors of religion of every description, whatever may be their attainments, as in the grace of knowledge, talents or tongues, and

power of working miracles, who, nevertheless, are and continue destitute of the working grace of God. Hence, those who have made a fair show in religion for a time, as the foolish virgins, Matthew 25. The branches who were in the true vine, either by profession only, or in relation to Abraham, John 15. Those who in a sense may have tasted of the good word of God, as the stony-ground hearers, Matthew 13; or, as Herod, who heard John gladly, Matthew 6:20. Those who may have embraced the doctrine of the gospel, frequently styled "The Faith" in the New Testament, Acts 24:24, 1 Timothy 1:21, 2 Timothy 3:8, as Hymeneous and Alexander, who in time made shipwreck thereof, 1 Timothy 1:20. Those who have been enlightened, and had the gift of prophecy, as Balaam, 1 Cor. 13:2; or who had the gift of tongues — power to work miracles, and as such tasted of the powers of the world to come, or of the gospel dispensation, as Judas, Hebrews 6:5 — all such we exclude: of all such there is not sufficient evidence that any of them were renewed by the grace of God, but of many of them, the fullest testimony that they were not. We therefore cannot plead their perseverance of grace, which they never had; nor can any such instances of defection, with any propriety, be produced as objections of the doctrines of the final perseverance on the saints. We assert that those only will persevere in the way of eternal life, and attain unto it, in whom the regenerating grace of God has or will take place." This fact is proved by the everlasting grace of God to His people; by the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure; redemption by Christ Jesus; the charge He has taken of his people; the promises of the gospel; the perfections of God, His immutability, justice, power, wisdom, faithfulness and truth, all engage to bring the heirs of grace, through perseverance therein, to glory. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints in grace, is not the doctrine of perseverance in wickedness — is not a li-

centious doctrine. "How shall they who are dead in sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1, 2)

It is evident from these lines our churches in days gone by, held firmly to the doctrine of perseverance. While the subject of perseverance is often contended for today, we must never lose sight of the vital companion truth that the preserved will persevere in the righteousness of Christ. None but those who finally endure to the end, will be able to stand blameless before God. How will we endure? By being born again, kept by the power of God, and by God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

It is our sincere desire that the family of God continue to hold fast to sound doctrine, that they may never be ashamed of the faith once delivered to the saints, and that true association will prevail.

Submitted for the consideration of God's people.

Elder James F. Poole

ACCOUNT OF THE CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

603 W. Wilson Street
Farmville, N. C. 27828

Dear Sister Emma Brake,

The association is over, we had a beautiful meeting but there was an air of sadness hovering over us because of the absence of you and other precious saints of God, who were providentially hindered from being with us. I know we can only hint, but Loraine and I both missed you so tremendously that we will endeavor, as best we can to describe the meeting to you.

First may we say that there was a peaceful mood that existed among the brethren the entire time of the meeting and our people seemed to be more of one accord than I have seen them in a long time. On Friday morning we met in the church, "Bethel" at Grantsboro, the attendance was unusually large for

Friday, and the small building could not hold the people. They had a stand built, but it began to rain and it certainly caused me to be concerned. Then the Lord had the people from the Free Will Baptist Church next door, offer us the privilege of using their building. It is much larger and still we filled it and used chairs in the isles in all available spaces. We were grateful to the F.W.B. people for the use of their building. It was comfortable, dry, and we could stay together. There were twenty-one ministers present Friday, nine visitors and twelve from the Contentnea. All active Contentnea ministers were present except Elder Stokes and he told me he had to work on Friday.

The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder J. T. Prescott, who called on Elder O. V. Allen, the alternate, to open the meeting with hymn and prayer. I felt that he was blessed to pray, after which Elder Prescott was blessed to preach a beautiful sermon, which set forth those things most surely believed among us. He was followed by Elder O. V. Allen who spoke briefly, and we were dismissed for lunch, by Elder Sam Jones, pastor of Bethel Church. Elder J. J. Rhue returned thanks at the table, and we enjoyed an excellent and plentiful lunch.

After lunch, the association met again in the F.W. Baptist Church building and the meeting was called to order by Elder W. W. Stallings, Jr., the clerk of the association. As you know, the clerk is the only officer of the association that carries over from year to year. Then I was chosen Moderator for the 19th consecutive year. I know that I have no special ability to serve in this capacity, and I am sure that my brethren are aware of this, but they are kind and the Lord is able to perform that which pleases Him. Then Elder Stallings was re-chosen clerk and he called to assist him again Brother Carroll Williams. These brethren are blessed to do such a beautiful job. They work so well together and are most concerned about and very good to their afflicted mode-

rator. The usual committees were chosen, and the conference proceeded with the regular business in an orderly manner.

Elder David Spangler opened the conference with hymn and prayer and he was blessed to speak in prayer the sincere desires of the hearts of our people. Cypress Creek and Stump Sound Churches presented petitionary letters to join the association. The letters were read and both churches unanimously received by the voting messengers. The moderator extended the right hand of fellowship to their messengers and welcomed them in the association. Upon request of some of the brethren, Elder W. D. Godwin of Seven Mile Association and Elder J. R. Hollandsworth of Pigg River were sent to the church to preach for those who did not wish to stay in the conference meeting. The next session of the Contentnea Association, God willing, will meet with North East Church, who chose Elder Bob Lyliston to preach the introductory sermon, and Elder J. J. Rhue as alternate. The minutes were then read, approved, and ordered printed and the conference closed in order by the Moderator until Saturday morning at 10:30.

Saturday morning, meeting was opened by Elder Henry Jones. His prayer was very sincere and touching. He was followed by Elder Rufus Brown of Pigg River, Elder David Spangler of Upper Country Line. Elder David preached from the "Last words of David" about a day without clouds, and his sermon presented such a beautiful unclouded "Day" that I could nearly long to see that day now. Brother Willard Cox spoke next, he is a liberated gift from Union Church in the Virginia Mountains. Then Elder S. R. Boykin of the Black Creek. This concluded the morning session and we dismissed for the noon hour.

What a beautiful table we had. The brethren really rallied around "Bethel" and it was a wondrous meal, no scarcity of anything. Dear sister, it is a beautiful sight to see the people of God eating

together and expressing without words the wonderful fellowship that God has given them for each other.

Some of the young brethren gathered back in the auditorium early to sing, and it was beautiful. I told the people that we could expect to hear no sweeter music on this side of Heaven. We had no new visiting Elders and Saturday P. M. we used our preachers, each spoke briefly, and were blessed to adhere strictly to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a beautiful sound, "the Gospel," the love of God abounding among His people. They were called on and responded in the following order: Elders W. W. Stallings, Bob Lylison, Sam Jones J. J. Rhue and W. T. Brown. We had such a wonderful meeting today, it was good to hear from our own people. Dismissed until Sunday A. M.

Sunday, the auditorium was filled. This is such a beautiful sight, it is truly "indescribable and full of Glory" to observe them as they waited for the preaching services to begin. I attempted in my weak way, and yet in the best way I knew to open the meeting. Then Elder Hale Terry of Smith River and Elder W. W. Taylor of Sulphur Fork spoke. Both were blessed to exalt the name of God in a wonderful way. Then the noon hour, and again a lot of food, fed the large crowd and plenty left, nothing lacking, and the people seemed to enjoy themselves tremendously. Again they gathered early in the house for singing.

Elder Bill Everett from the Kehukee was first to speak after lunch, followed by Elders W. B. Barnes of the Black Creek; Kenneth Key, Upper Country Line; and Elder I. S. Connor, Kehukee Association. I then called on the assistant clerk, Brother Carroll Williams, who stated that he had so much enjoyed the three days and thanked the brethren for allowing him to be a part of the wonderful meeting. Then Elder W. W. Stallings, our precious clerk, who made some beautiful remarks about the meeting. I then closed in our usual man-

ner, trying to thank God, the brethren at Bethel, the ministers, the congregation, the Clerk and assistant Clerk, the committees, the scoutmaster and his wonderful scouts, the people at the FWB Church and the good friends of the Church, and all who contributed to this memorable meeting. We then dismissed, hoping to meet them and you at North East Church next year.

Sister Brake, this is how we saw our association this year. We hope this description does not bore you, as we know we fall so far short of really telling of the beauty that was there. We missed you, we love you, and we pray that God will restore your health so that you can visit us soon.

Love,
Ap and Loraine
(Elder A. P. Mewborn)

HAD GOOD ASSOCIATION

1901 19th Avenue East
Tusacaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Editors:

...since we are so elated and rejoicing still from the good meeting we attended, we try to tell you about that.

The Five Mile Creek Association of Alabama has just gone through her one hundred and fifth session in peace, love and harmony one with another. The Lord was gracious, and His ministers came laden with the gospel and were given to declare it with power, — giving God all the honor and glory.

Elder W. D. Griffin of the Hopewell Association, Elder E. E. McCool of the Buttahatche Association, and Elder Lloyd Wall of the Sulphur Fork Association of East Texas were with us: along with other visitors, whom we appreciated very much. Also Elder H. C. Moon and Elder C. E. Hand of our body were with us.

How are each of you and your companions? Hope the Lord had been gracious to you and blessed you with natural things sufficient for you need, as well as spiritual things.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift keep you in the shadow of His wing, and visit you with his mercies and grace.

When you are given to petition the throne of grace, remember me.

An unworthy sister, if one at all,
Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

ENJOYS ELDER J. R. HARDY'S
WRITINGS

Rt. 3, Box 206
Seymour, Mo. 65746

Dear Editors:

My subscription expires next month, so please renew for one year and use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoyed reading the republishing of Elder Joel Hardy's writing at the request of Elder Winfrey of Kingman, Kansas. Elder Hardy was pastor of Pleasant Valley Church many years, and was the most humble pastor I ever listened to. He baptized me in 1919. I have letters which he wrote me which are real sermons, and I treasure them anew every time I read them. I have not been there to church since I last heard from him in 1937; but I do have the *Signs of the Times*.

I am enclosing one letter of his which, if you would like to publish it, I am sure the brethren would enjoy it as much as I have over the years.

Yours in hope,

Mrs. Christene McFeeters

(See *Voices of the Past* December, 1972)

HOW SOON WE FORGET!

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

Dear Editors:

As I sit here this hot and dry day, I can look around me and see so many things for which I should be thankful, but I still find myself trying to ask for more. It has been several weeks since we had a rain, and our crops look like they are failing. I hope I believe God works all things after the counsel of His own will, but we poor creatures can't help but beg. When our prayers are answered, O how soon we forget! As long as everything is going like we think we want, we fail to

remember where our help comes from.

I would like to say a few words about our meeting at Rocky Swamp the second Sunday in August, 1972. We were blessed to have a beautiful day, and the precious truth preached by our pastor, Elder M. E. Garner. He was wonderfully blessed that day. We had a nice crowd; and I would like to say how thankful I was to have all our children and their families there once more. They all belong to other denominations, but I know they all respect my feelings. My precious companion and I visited their church one night when they had a revival. I don't mean any disrespect, but O, how thankful I hope I am that I don't have to listen to that kind of expression all the time.

We visited Williams Church the third Sunday in August, 1972, and heard the precious truth proclaimed by their pastor, Elder Jones. They also had a visiting Elder Goad from near Danville, Va. My husband and I enjoyed being there so much; and were glad to meet new friends from Virginia. I hope we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. I feel they all are, but it is myself I doubt.

I will finish these few lines I started some days ago. Since then we have been wonderfully blessed with a good rain. I don't know how to be thankful, but God knows my heart. Everything looks so fresh and green. I did not mean to let my subscription run out, but like many other things, I was neglectful.

Do with this as you see fit. I close with love to all.

Sincerely, a little sister,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

CONTENTION UNION

The next session of the *Contention Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Otter's Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in December, 1972.

The church is located between Crisp, N. C., and Fountain, N. C., just off Highway 258.

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

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195
Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia January, 1973

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All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. (Psalms 145:10-11)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To November 1, 1972)

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EDITORIAL

Another year has swiftly passed since we greeted our brethren last January. And now another year and another volume of the *Signs of the Times* is beginning to unfold. What the continuation of God's purposes will bring, we do not know; but we are assured that His will shall continue to be done in all things, and that His grace will be sufficient for each one of us.

How good it is to be enabled to look back over the past year — and a goodly number of years with many of us, and to feel as David wrote in the 143rd Psalm: "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land."

No doubt many problems have confronted us: things which have concerned us deeply. Yet, in looking back, we have found that His grace was sufficient for all our needs; and that we have been kept continually in prayer that we might be reconciled to whatever the Lord's will was. He promised not to leave us but to be with us unto the end of the world. So, finding that His grace was sufficient for us, we were often enabled to stand still and see His salvation.

Our concerns are of many varieties, but chiefly of the weakness of our flesh in our inability to do the things we would do, and in finding that we do the things we would not. But these things are good for us, for without them we exhibit no signs of our weaknesses and needs, either to ourselves or to the brethren; but in them the Lord knows how, and does bring us to remember the days of old, and to meditate upon the wonderful way in which the Lord has led us in bringing us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

While we muse on these things, do we not often experience with David, in the 30th Psalm, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. 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."

Only with these experiences are we brought to, "Stretch forth our hands unto God, and to thirst after Him, as a thirsty land." which nothing but grace can satisfy; so, nothing satisfies us but the renewing of the evidences of the Lord's mercies.

During the past year many of our brethren and friends have passed from this world, for the Lord has taken them. This year of 1973 will find many more quitting the walks of this life. These things remind us how frail we are; and that, by God's grace, we too, "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Last year in our Greeting, we wrote in part as follows: (and we know of no better way to express our feelings, so quote it again.)

"It has taken the financial support and the contributions of writings by many brethren and friends, to support the paper. These have been provided for in the will of the Lord, so that the gospel has been maintained and the doctrine of

God our Saviour fully proclaimed as revealed in the Scriptures and hearts of the Lord's people. Paul wrote the Corinthians, "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." This, we can plainly say, is what makes the difference between those who believe the Scriptures fully as the written word of God, and those who acknowledge them, yet for the most part deny them in practice.

"Nobody believes the truth except those who have been quickened from death in trespasses and sins, and brought to the New Birth to see the kingdom of God, — and the solemn and glorious beauties therein. These are the only people that we know who make mention of an experience of grace, and give their exercises in these things as the reason they now see and believe differently than they once did, and know that salvation is only by the grace of God unto his people; and not in any way by the works of any man to satisfy the judgment pronounced against all men.

"This knowledge manifests the difference between the Lord's people and all other people; it is this that causes the one to hold the Bible to be the sole exponent of God's manifest will as revealed in the written word, and specifically those to whom the Spirit takes the things of God and shows unto them. Both the scriptures (the written word) and the things revealed unto individuals are of the same spirit, for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, as Peter wrote. But on the other hand, all others either deny the Scriptures or believe them half-heartedly, since they substitute much in their doctrines and practices which the Spirit has not revealed. And this, we hold, is contrary to the admonition of Jude when he wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the

saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

"So if any should inquire why Old School Baptists are different in doctrine and order from other people, this is the reason. It is not just merely by opinions but deep rooted conviction when the Spirit overshadows all carnality and brings light where there was darkness, peace and joy where there was trouble, hope where there was despair, a firm foundation where there was a sinking, and a song of praise where there was no hope. To these things they testify as they give the reason of their hope, telling how great things the Lord has done for them. These things testify of the spiritual birth. Without similar experiences there is no love and fellowship one for the other; and no reason why one should be received into the church.

"We had not thought to write in this wise, but rather to greet our readers with a note of thanksgiving to our God for all his past blessings, which we acknowledge have all been by his grace and because of his great love. As we reminisce we see God's hand in all things both in nature and in grace; and as we think of the future, we are glad we are in the same almighty hands. We have nothing, we are nothing, and never will be or have anything except through His loving kindness to us. Therefore we desire in all things to give Him all the praise, honor and glory.

"But for the faith given us we would face the future with considerable fear and alarm in these troublesome times. Yet that faith causes us to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord: — it just speaks with an inward voice, saying, God is yet ruling, and all is well.

"May God's ministers be blessed to preach the sovereignty of God over all worlds, times and events, contending for the faith He once delivered to the saints, to the praise, honor and glory of God whose people we are."

Your Editors express their appreciation for the support the brethren and friends have given the *Signs*; and pray that the Lord will continue to give you the desire, and enable all to continue to enjoy reading its columns, and to support its publication.

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

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Hudson, N. Y.
 July 3, 1860

Esteemed Eld. Beebe:

The following letter, which you see is from Brother Greenwood of Ohio, was sent by him in the German language to the brethren in Albany, N. Y. Brother Wicks and Mr. Thorn and Sister Thorn were at my house when we received it from the brethren at Albany, and they, as well as myself and wife, thought we had better translate it and request you to publish it in the *Signs*.

Dear Elder, we are well at present, and feel to rejoice in the doctrine which you preach, and hold forth in the *Signs*; but we regret that we cannot be present to hear the proclamation of the glorious news of the gospel. We are thankful, also, that our temporal wants are supplied by our gracious Lord, &c.

We both hope to hear from you and from our brethren and sisters at Middletown and vicinity, soon; and we send to you and them our christian love and fellowship, and remain yours, in the best of bonds,

J. George Bender.

Copy of Brother B. Greenwood's Letter to the German Brethren in Albany, N. Y.

Cincinnati, April 22, 1860.

Dearly Beloved Brother Schachtel:

—Grace, love and peace be with you and all the brethren, Amen. I have just read in the *Signs of the Times*, that the German brethren and sisters at Albany

have been arrested by the Lord, and have found the pearl of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. My joy was beyond a pen's description. Glory to God in the highest, was the language of my heart. Yes, praise, thanks and honor be unto our God forever and ever, that he had plucked us, poor sinners, as brands from the burning, and showed us the ocean of his love towards us—that he hath called us to life in Christ, when we were dead; that we who were blind, he hath made to see; we were deaf, and he made us hear. He who only is holy, hath pitied us poor sinners; we in whom there was nothing good by nature, praise to Jehovah, he hath made known to us the way of life, and revealed to us him whom our soul loveth, as our one (and no other) Bridegroom of his church. The High and Lofty One, the glorified One who was rich, and for our sakes became poor, that we, by his poverty, may be made rich. Jesus Christ the Lord, is his name He is the Lord of all Lords, and the King of all kings. He hath loved us with an everlasting love, and he hath carried us, and still carries us, in his love and in his pity. He is the Lamb of God which was slain from the foundation of the world. He took on him our sins. O, how the rich one took our poverty to make us rich! He hath borne our sins in his own body on the tree; has destroyed sin for his own people, and delivered them from the power of darkness; he obtained the victory and triumphed when he died on the cross, and cried, "It is finished!" He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again from the dead for our justification. His name is **The Lord our Righteousness. He will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images.**

Brethren and sisters, we are nothing: Jesus Christ is all in all. He is our Lord and our God. In him are we members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. He loved his own even unto the end-unto death. He gave himself for them—that he wanted to get?; No. He gave himself for them because they were his. So says the Lord. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the

world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word." Thus has the Lord rescued his sheep, as their Good Shepherd. He has redeemed them and bought them with his own precious blood. O, what everlasting love! Sink in the dust, O sinners, and worship only him. Here is light and glory; how it shines in the redemption of his church. Here the poor sinner stammers, exults, rejoices, trembling and worshipping, saying Grace! Grace! Grace! Where sin hath reigned, grace has much more reigned. The Lord hath wrought a mighty work in us rebels. "O, the depth of his wisdom."—Rom. ix.

And now, beloved, know ye that I also am a poor pilgrim. I emigrated to this country in 1854. As such an one, I was baptized on profession of my faith in 1853, at Weener, Ostfriesland, and joined the little band which were, a short time before, excluded from Onken's* church, for the faith's sake. This little band was cast out and persecuted by almost all men, because they confessed that they were not redeemed by works, but by grace. O, beloved, I know very well your present situation, and I pray that God may give you strength, in the inward man, that you may be able to resist the enemy of truth, whether he assails you in the garb of a friend or as a false christian, known as Anti-Christ. For thus saith the Lord, "Fear not, little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The Lord knoweth them that are his. Look to him alone. He is true, and all his work is perfect, and by him we are saved with an everlasting salvation; and to him be glory, Amen.

In Germany I became very poor; many a time did not we, my wife and child have the necessary bread; but the Lord did help us again, and ordered it so that we could come to America. He did not use brethren or friends to the truth, to do this, but enemies to the truth, even atheists, were used by him for the purpose. This taught me that men and devils are subject to his decrees, and have to obey him who holds all power in heaven and in earth. And although we

had to leave our only child there for some time, and suffered many afflictions, yet the Lord did make everything glorious. When I came to this country I sought for the children of God, but found none until after three years; then I found some who were born of God. Unspeakably great was my joy, although I could not understand more than half the brethren said, as they were all English; but the Spirit gave the witness to our spirits that we are the children of God. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; this was plainly seen. Yea, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in you all. These are called *Primitive or Old School Baptist*. I found in them the church of the living God, and with Ruth could I say to them, Thy God shall be my God, and thy people my people. I told the church what the Lord had done for my soul, and was received and have a place among them unworthy as I am; and I went in and out among them, to the house of worship. Consider, brethren, the wonders of the Lord; it pleased him to give me, ignorant me, mouth and wisdom to stammer the name of Jesus Christ and him crucified in the English tongue, and since 1858 I have attempted to preach the wonderful works of God; not with words of man's wisdom; for such I have none; and furthermore, God has not called such, for he had made their wisdom foolishness. Formerly I was at Clover, in Clermont county, Ohio; afterwards at Lynchburgh, Highland Co., Ohio, where my family now are. I intend now to move to Cincinnati. I came here this week and found employment as tailor. I thought of getting a place as cutter; but for the present have to make up work for the store. This morning I thought I would visit my German brethren here, but failed in doing so. With but few of them I am acquainted; but the dear brethren are bound up in the system of righteousness by works, as missions, Bible societies, Sunday schools, &c. I do not doubt that when the trumpet shall be blown, of the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, that the hirelings will fall. The sheep will hear the voice of

the good Shepherd and will follow him.

Now beloved brethren, pray for me; I have tried until the present to preach, although it has been very broken English; but the brethren like to hear me; so I have rejoiced with them in the consolations of the gospel. And all at once I hear that in the German tongue the words of grace sound forth. Yes, verily when the Lord makes his voice to be heard, the north must give up, and the south cannot keep back; his children shall come from the east and west, and from a far country, and with one accord cry, not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory. So let us now, beloved, walk worthy of our calling. We are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, 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. "Who hath saved us, and called us, 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 began. This same God is around about his people, as the mountains were round about Jerusalem. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory give you the spirit of grace, and of wisdom and of revelation, in the knowledge of him, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling.—Eph. i. 17,23. "Till we all come into that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.—1 Peter i.

I am your brother in Christ,

Bernard Greenwood

*This Onken is a modern missionary.

We found the above letter by Elder Greenwood very interesting and feel to pass it on to the brethren, since it shows the travels of one of the Lord's servants.

There is an excellent account of Elder Greenwood in the "Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers." And Elder Greenwood's book entitled, "The Dealings of God with a Laborer, or the Experiences of Bernard Greenwood," is most interesting, if one can find a copy to read.

Elder Greenwood was born in Germany in 1827, and died in Wilson, N. C. in 1893, where he had moved in 1880.

J. D. W

ORDINATION OF BROTHER
JAMES STEWART McCOLL

THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED
BAPTIST CHURCH IN CANADA Meeting
at Ekfrid, Ontario, June 24 and 25, 1972.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

This is to certify that JAMES STEWART McCOLL, a member of this Church, was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry on June 25, 1972. The proceedings of the council ordaining him were as per the copy of the minutes below.

THE PARTICULAR COVENANTED
BAPTIST CHURCH IN CANADA Deacon
Eldon Gilbert, Church Clerk—Elder George
Ruston, Pastor

The minutes of the council called by the Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, for the purpose of examining Licentiate James Stewart McColl with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

(At the Quarterly Meeting of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada at Dunwich, Ontario on Saturday, May 13, 1972, at a business meeting presided over by Elder George Ruston, Pastor, a motion was passed unanimously calling for the assembly of a council to examine Licentiate James Stewart McColl as a candidate to be ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry at the Quarterly Meeting at Ekfrid on Sunday, June 25, 1972.)

The council was formed at a business meeting of the Church at Ekfrid on Saturday, June 24 at 4:30 p.m.

In the absence of Elder Ruston, Elder D. A. McColl was chosen Moderator and Deacon Eldon Gilbert was chosen Clerk.

The Moderator invited all Elders and members of sister churches of our Faith and Order to act with the council and they responded as follows:—

Elder W. E. Turner, Scott's Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;

Elder J. T. Prescott, Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;

Deacon Tom Williams, Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, North Carolina, U.S.A.;

Deacon Victor Borst, Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, U.S.A.;

Sister Gertrude Secor, Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, New York City, U.S.A.;

Sister Ruth Dubois, Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Shokan, New York, U.S.A.

An opportunity was given to examine the candidate, and it was moved and seconded and passed unanimously that the council proceed with the ordination on Sunday, June 25, 1972 at 10:00 a.m.

The Church came together at 10:00 a.m.

on Sunday, June 25, 1972, and the Order of the Ordination Service was as follows:—

—Prayer by Elder D. A. McColl,

—Singing — Psalm 121,

—Review of the proceedings of the council to date by the Moderator, Elder D. A. McColl,

—Ordination Sermon by Elder J. T. Prescott — Proverbs XVI.1, 1. Timothy V,24,25 and Revelation XX.12,

—Relation of his experience as a subject of Grace and his exercises respecting the work of the Ministry by Licentiate J. Stewart McColl,

—The candidate then knelt and Ordination was imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder W. E. Turner giving the Ordination Prayer,

—A solemn and impressive charge was then delivered by Elder Turner,

—As the candidate arose, the Moderator, on behalf of the churches, gave the right hand of fellowship to Brother J. Stewart McColl.

—The 100th Psalm was then announced and sung and the service closed with the benediction by Elder J. Stewart McColl.

Moderator—Elder D. Alex McColl

Council Clerk—Deacon Eldon Gilbert

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA DORRIS RAY

The world of unrighteousness remembers the exploits of its citizenry, but the righteous nation remembers the mighty works of its Maker. Come tarry with me for a while as I speak of the wonders of His love in blessing the militant kingdom with such a lovely sister in Christ.

Our loved one was born June 3, 1890, the daughter of Elder William and Bettie Dorris. She died January 12, 1972. She was married to Mr. Robert Bruce Ray on October 9, 1910. To this union were born twelve children. All of them survive her except an infant daughter, and Bruce, her youngest. Those that survive her are five sons, to wit, Winston, De Witt, Jesse, Fred, and Frank; five daughters, to wit, Mrs. Louella Green, Mrs. Celeste Dowdle, Mrs. Bettie Pennington, Mrs. Bobbie Grace, Aldridge, and Ida Mae Belk; one sister, Mrs. Ruth Blalock. Mr. Ray was killed in a tornado many years ago. I think that I am safe in saying that all ten of her remaining children are subscribers to the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, as well as her sister. She left twenty seven grandchildren, and several great-grand children.

She became a member of Zion church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in June, 1921,

and was baptized by the late Elder E. Z. McCool. She later became a charter member in Bethel church, near Steens, Mississippi.

How glad I am that she would have stopped me from any eulogy of her life, but how glad that I am that through the grace of God I can say that her life was an open book, testifying to the grace and love and mercy of our God. Her life was a life of suffering and sorrow, often suffering in body, and often going with a bowed head in godly resignation to the will of her God in carrying her through deep and trying waters. I do not write of her own works, but language limitations forbid me to withhold praises to whom all praise is due. Her life was a life of humble and faithful service to her God, her church, and her friends. More than once she was called upon to turn her back on her own flesh that she might win the approval of her Lord and Master. Surely she was blessed to count all as loss that she might win Christ.

Bethel Church has lost a lovely member, her children have lost a devoted mother, but she has gained the shoreless land of eternal bliss in her spirit there to await the glorious resurrection of these bodies, a doctrine that she counted as the zenith of her hope. Let us, dear brethren, and you the lovely and devoted children, not sorrow as those that do not have hope, but rather to go forward sowing and reaping in an introspective examination as to whether we are in the faith, and resting in the finished work of Christ.

She was buried by the side of her husband near her home church. Her funeral services were conducted by her former pastors, Elder H. C. Moon and W. D. Griffin, her present pastor being unable to attend because of a prior funeral.

W.D.G.

ROBERT BRUCE RAY

The youngest son of the above was born December 4, 1931, and died March 8, 1972. Bruce was afflicted nearly all of his life, but he had a keen perception of things pertaining to God and the church. He was never the same after the death of his mother, as her death necessitated his living among his brothers and sisters. He could not adjust to so great a change. While his death was tragic, it did not darken our belief in his hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and how delightful it would be to my often shattered hope could I feel about my eternal welfare as I feel about his. He loved the brethren and love is of God.

His funeral was conducted by the same two elders that conducted his mother's, that being the desire of the remaining brothers and sis-

ters. May our Heavenly Father reconcile us to His holy will.

W.D.G.

ELLA ROGERSON PEELE

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my beloved sister, a mother in Israel, who departed this life on February 18, 1972.

Ella Rogerson Peele was born December 21, 1891, in Martin County, Bear Grass Township, the daughter of the late Eason and Bell Harrison Rogerson. She was married to William Stanley Peele in 1917. He died in 1943.

Sister Peele was baptized into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, third Sunday in September, 1941, by Elder B. S. Cowin. She had been a loyal and faithful member these many years. Our dear sister's love and devotion to her family, her friends and her brethren and sisters was truly manifest in her meek and humble life of services to them.

Surviving are two sons, William Stanley Peele, Jr. and John Eason Peele; one stepson, Elmer B. Peele and one stepdaughter, Mrs. Charlie Rawls.

Funeral services were held by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison. Burial was in Jones Family cemetery near her home.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in March, 1972.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

GLINDORE MOBLEY WHITEHURST

Almighty God in his infinite wisdom and tender mercies was pleased to call another of our dear sisters from this life March 15, 1972: Sister Glindore Mobley Whitehurst who was born in Martin County Sept. 29, 1881. She was the daughter of the late Dave and Jean Clark Mobley and was married to Deacon R. L. Whitehurst in 1911.

She lived in Bear Grass and Cross Roads Communities most of her life, moving to Williamston in 1960, after the death of her husband.

She was baptized into the fellowship of the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church the third Sunday in July, 1912.

Sister Whitehurst was very humble and meek in spirit, always concerned for the welfare of others rather than self, having lost two of her sons, and being afflicted. For many years she bore her grief, and afflictions with patience and strong faith in a Saviour's love. Always ready to give thanks, praise, and honor

to a glorified Savior.

Surviving are two sons, James Station Whitehurst, Williamston, N. C., and C. B. Whitehurst, Goldsboro, N. C., and two daughters, Mrs. Milford Holliday, Williamston, N. C., and Mrs. Calvin Warren, Williamston, N. C., 21 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Biggs Funeral Chapel by Elder E. C. Harrison and Mr. David Pope. Burial was in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston, N. C.

Order a copy to the family, one for the Church record, and one for publication.

Done by the Church in conference Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1972.

E. G. Harrison, Committee

SISTER LUCY S. HOUSE

Whereas it has pleased the Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by his gracious will and infinite wisdom, a dearly beloved sister and mother, we write with a saddened heart.

Sister Lucy S. House was born November 30, 1891, and died February 18, 1972. She was married to David R. House who preceded her in death several years. To this union were born two sons: David R. House, Jr. of Greenville, N. C., and William A. House, of Stokes, N. C.; also one daughter, Mrs. Elsie House Wynne of Stokes, N. C. Left to mourn also are three sisters: Miss Elizabeth Simmons and Mrs. Pearl Crandell, of Greenville, N. C. and Mrs. Hellen Norris, of Goldsboro, N. C.; two brothers: Ruffus Simmons of Bethel, N. C. and Hubert Simmons, of Stokes, N. C., and several grandchildren and other relatives.

Sister House united with the church at Briery Swamp, Stokes County, N. C. Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1922, and was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowan the following Sunday. She was always a faithful member, attending the church regularly as long as health permitted. She was blessed always by the presence of God in her heart, to demonstrate the love she had for her church, her brethren and the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Her funeral was held at the Wilkerson Funeral Chapel, Greenville, N. C., by Elder W. C. Harrison of Williamston, N.C. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the resurrection of the saints of God on that final day.

Done by order of the conference the second Saturday in March, 1972.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, a copy for publication, and a copy entered in our church records.

Elder S. R. Boykin, Mod.

Sister Ada M. Leggett

Bro. Joseph A. Leggett, Committee

WILLIAM MANNING MOORE

On September 12, 1971, Brother William Manning Moore was called home, as we who loved him believe. He was attending the Communion meeting at Rutledge Primitive Baptist Church and was as well as usual. He helped in their business meeting before lunch, ate lunch, and was taken at noon. He died a few minutes later, en route to the hospital.

He joined the Ivy Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in July, 1952 and was baptized by Elder E. D. Gafford the next day. The Church ordained him as a Deacon the first Sunday in March, 1954.

He was born in Crenshaw County, Alabama, September 27, 1894, to William James and Florence Robertson Moore.

He was married to Miss Georgia Lake Morgan September 26, 1920, who together with seven children survive him, James H. of Laporte, Texas; M. Lamar of Andalusia, Alabama; Dr. W. Glenn of Carrollton, Georgia; Lister H. of Montgomery, Alabama; Mrs. Helton L. (Nell) Fowler of Troy, Alabama; Mrs. J. David (Betty) Peterman of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Dr. Morgan J. of Andalusia, Alabama; one brother, E. H. Moore of Luverne, Alabama; 16 grandchildren, one great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held at Turner's Funeral Chapel, Luverne, Alabama with Elders Sam Dean, J. P. Morgan, and James W. Johnson officiating. Interment was in Emmaus Cemetery, Luverne, Alabama.

He will be sorely missed by his family and friends and by the few remaining members of the Ivy Creek Church. May the Lord bless and comfort all those who miss him.

Sister Jennie Stringer,

Clerk of Ivy Creek Church

BELVA O. GUILLIAM

With sad hearts Elder Cecil Turner and the writer, and a large congregation of sorrowing brethren and friends, met at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church Saturday, September 16, 1972, for the funeral of Sister Guilliams, age 82.

I hope this brief but true account of a mother in Israel may serve to remind us all of what lovely friends we have had to journey with us. Friends we could look up to, and not down on: "Little children" who know that Jesus has not failed in anything He set out to do.

The word preached does not succeed until it is believed. Sister Belva Guilliams believed

the report. She believed because the same God who brought Paul down to feel he was the chief of sinners, also taught her. "Sinners can say, and only they, how precious is the Saviour." The Lord moreover caused her to feel most at home with the saints in light where the "fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

Sister Gilliams leaves nine children and above fifty grandchildren and great grandchildren to mourn her passing. They all loved her dearly, and she certainly did love them: a well known fact. Yes, and she loved Jesus who was to her the end of every prophecy, the beauty of every promise, the song of her lips, the uppermost desire of her heart, and the haven of her tempest tossed soul.

Our sorrow is all because we loved her as we do feel the Jesus was, and is, the Fountain from whence she received (by grace through faith) strength to live as she did — a Christian Lady.

Written in sadness by one of the many who loved her dearly.

Elder J. L. Bocoock

SISTER LENA WHITE

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has called from this world of toil and trouble Sister Lena Butcher White; whom we dearly loved.

Sister White was born April 20, 1893, and departed this life August 3, 1972. She was the daughter of the late John and Martha Evans Butcher. In 1935 she married Charles Thomas White, who passed away in 1948.

Sister White was faithful to attend her church, and blessed to attend her meetings almost to the end, although she had to depend upon someone for transportation. She had many bodily afflictions, and her pastor, in speaking of her, said, "She never had a lot of the material things that most of us take for granted." Yet her faith failed not. She told me once when I visited her in the hospital, that she was not afraid to die; and asked us to pray that the Lord would take her. We tried to petition God that He might reconcile her to His will, whatever it might be.

In all of life's trials she never lost her witty way. Our children loved her visits in our home, because they knew she would entertain them.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Annie B. Barker, and a number of nieces and nephews. Her marriage union was not blessed with children, but I have not known anyone more tenderly cared for by relatives. Every one of her nieces and nephews attended her funeral, except one who was in the mid-west at that time. We feel that this was a great tribute

of respect of her.

Her funeral was held at Malmason Primitive Baptist Church where she had been a member for many years. Conducting the service were her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Charlie Shelton. Interment was in the Butcher Family Cemetery. We trust by God's grace she has laid an armour by to dwell with Christ at home.

Written by one who loved her, I hope, for Christ's sake.

Peggy Wells

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The Soldier Creek Association feels a great void has been placed in our midst by the passing of Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Church, formerly of the West Tennessee Association. In the words of one of our brethren, "He meant so much to so many people." Elder Biggs traveled among the churches of Soldier Creek Association for many years, preaching Salvation by Grace and Christ crucified. Surely, he was a soldier of the cross and a most able minister of God. Elder Biggs will be sorely missed by the Soldier Creek people. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Elder Biggs.

Therefore, Be it resolved, That we bow in humble submission to the Divine Will of our Heavenly Father who gives us spiritual life and in the fulness of time, gathers His saints unto Himself.

Resolved, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy placed in the Association record and a copy sent to his family.

Done by the order of the Soldier Creek Association in session on the second Saturday in October, 1972.

Committee:

Elder W. D. Griffin

Elder Wayman Chappel, Asst. Moderator

Bro. Roy L. Locke, Asst. Clerk

SISTER LELIA BELLE EDWARDS

Inasmuch as it has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from us our dearly beloved sister, Lelia Belle Edwards, we bow in humble submission to His will. Our dear sister in Christ was born February 8, 1893, and departed this life May 23, 1972. She was a daughter of the late Crede M. and Sarah Bird. Her decline had been gradual since the passing of her husband, Brother Alfred O. Edwards.

Surviving are four sons, Woodrow, Clay and

Ray, of Hurricane, W. Va., and Kermit of St. Albans, W. Va.; five daughters, Mrs. Rosetta Thornton, Nitro, W. Va.; Mrs. Audrey Purdy, Poca, W. Va.; Mrs. Reba Bird, Rock Cave, W. Va.; Mrs. Beulah Bird, Hurricane; and Mrs. Doris Kelly, Shady Springs, W. Va. Also twenty-eight grand children and thirty-six great grandchildren.

In early life Sister Edwards was brought under conviction for sin. So deep was her conviction and travail of soul, and so mercifully was hope given her when peace was spoken, that she thought she was alone in the world, and that no one else believed as she did; though she was reared by Primitive Baptist parents. She united with Providence Church June 26, 1920. She was faithful in all things to the church, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered. She confessed to be a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth, "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a city whose builder and maker is God; wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. To know her was to love her.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that a copy of this be placed on our church records, and a copy be sent to the family and to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of the Providence Church in conference June 24, 1972.

Elder W. P. O'Neal, Mod.
W. L. Burnside, Clerk
Willard Bird, Asst. Clerk

SISTER ADA M. THOMPSON

The Church at Thompsons Grove, Roanoke County, Virginia, in conference Saturday November 4, 1972:

Our beloved sister passed away after living a long and useful life of eighty years. We often heard her talk of the greatness of God, his loving kindness and sweet mercy. She was firm in the doctrine of the power and wisdom of Almighty God, and the total depravity of man.

We, the Church at Thompsons Grove, looked on her as a good sister, and a mother in Israel. She was faithful to her church, filling her seat as long as she was able to go, and always ready to help in any way she could financially.

She bore her afflictions with much patience, never complaining or murmuring. She had the best of care, her family being very devoted to her. All was done for that loving hands could do, until we believe the Lord said "Come".

RESOLVED, That we humbly bow to the will of our gracious Heavenly Father, and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family; and that a

copy of this Resolution be spread in the church book, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

Elder J. L. Bocock, Mod.
Nelson Reed, Clerk

BROTHER SAM H. WORLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Brother Sam H. Worley, at the age of 93. He died after a long illness in Medical Care Center in Lynchburg, Virginia, on August 4, 1972.

Brother Worley was born in Pittsylvania County on March 6, 1879, a son of the late James Worley and Phaba Owen Worley. He is survived by his wife, Sister Sarah Hammock Worley; nine sons, Wilford, Dave, James, Sam, Douglas, and Oscar Lee Worley, all of Gretna, Robert Price Worley of Montvale Clay Worley of Lynchburg and Charlie Worley of Alexandria; four daughters, Mrs. Frances Dove and Mrs. Gladys Light of Roanoke, Mrs. Roberta Brumfield and Mrs. Annie Dalton of Gretna; also 88 grandchildren and a large number of great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Worley also is survived by two brothers, Edgar Worley of Olan, West Virginia and Brother Mack Worley of Danville, Va.

He united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950 and was baptized on the same day.

His funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and was laid to rest in the family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Written by Marvin Brumfield as requested by Weatherford Primitive Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

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

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

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

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each

first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
HOUSTON PITTS, Clerk
Steens, Miss.

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

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

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

C. C. HAND, Pastor

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

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

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

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

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of

Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND
R. W. RHODES, Pastors

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

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

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

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

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR. Pastor

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

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

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

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

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 14 miles south of Fayette, Ala., meets each first Sunday at 2 P. M.

W. L. NORRIS, Pastor
1414 8th St., Tuscaloosa, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

MT. CARMEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located southeast of Millport, Ala., meets second Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Moores Bridge, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday at 2 P. M.

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.
W. L. NORRIS, Co-Pastor
1414 8th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

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

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

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

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30 P. M. The annual Homecoming is still held the first Sunday in July and Saturday before, with services beginning at 10:30.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

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

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

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

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

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

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

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., ¼ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

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

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

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

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

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

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

and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

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

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

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

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

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth

Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

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

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

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

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

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

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

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

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

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

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry

Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

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

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

JOHN WILDER, Moderator
N. E. LAY, Clerk

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

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
JERRY EVERS, Asst. Clerk

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

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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

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

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

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

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor

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

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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

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

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

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

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

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

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

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

EIDorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
EIDorado, Arkansas

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

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

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

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

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

Everyone welcomed.

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

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

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

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

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

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington

meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

WILLIAM L. EVERETT, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

vited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

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

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

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

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

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

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

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

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

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

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1973

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE WONDER OF HIS LOVE

The wonder of my Father's love
Is flowing in my soul:
He's ever ruling from above
As endless ages roll.

He ever works his holy will,
Whatever it may be,
His every purpose to fulfill,
For greater than all is He.

Through Christ my Lord his mercy flows
Unto those who believe.
His every child my Father knows:
His blessings they receive.

Not one of His can ever stray
Beyond his searching hand,
For He is watching night and day:
He's ever in command.

Ethel Glass Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

ARE YOU FALLEN FROM GRACE?

Beloved, it is felt of necessity to consider and discuss the opposition some hold against the truth saying that the grace of God is conditional on the obedience of man, and that it is possible for a man to "fall from grace;" by the phrase "fall from grace" the opposers imply the theory if a man does not exercise diligently his abilities to choose and do good services toward God, then God will remove his grace and spiritual blessings from such a man.

First, in defying this hideous opposition, note the word "grace," which is unmerited favor, free mercy, undeserved love and compassion. The very word "grace" cancels the supposition that works are prerequisite or antecedent to salvation. Grace is defined as being unmerited because "we are saved by grace and not of works" or merit "lest any man should boast;" grace is defined as free because we are "justified freely by his grace;" grace is defined as undeserved because "God commended his love (or grace) toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." As God saith, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," and not on just anyone who will obey Him of their own will for "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." For one to work means one is under a conditional covenant, whereas "grace" sets forth an immutable and stedfast covenant. My Beloved, "we are not under the law, but under grace," if so be we are redeemed from the curse and condemnation of the law. If obedience is prerequisite and antecedent to grace and salvation, then why was Saul of Tarsus, a most traditionally zealous, disobedient, rebelling Pharisee, included in God's calling by grace? Contrariwise to all human conception, grace is antecedent to faith, hope, and charity, and most of all obedience; as Paul says, "we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations," while otherwise they would have still been foolish and disobedient. (Titus 3:3-5)

In considering the remainder of this opposition against the Gospel it must be plainly understood what people generally mean when they say a person

has "fallen from grace." They generally imply such a one loses possession of spiritual blessings and access to the salvation of himself, all because of negligence and failure to the service of God on his part, and such a one may be restored to grace again by repentance and by proving himself serviceable to God again. If God will, we shall shortly see what Paul meant when he said, "ye are fallen from grace" and his application of the phrase will be compared and contrasted with the former application, to prove the common application to be inconsistent with the Scriptures.

If men could "fall from grace" in the aspect of the common application, they could fall to a state no lower than his corrupt sinful, unrestrained nature, where grace first found him! To say men can "fall from grace" (assuming the common application throughout this portion of the discussion) is to say that men may commit worse crimes while under the influence of grace than they can while in a state of nature—crimes so great God is obligated to de-promote one of his subjects back to the low estate of his unregenerate nature, where grace first found him! Can sin super-rule and reign over grace, or is it really true that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:21) If one can commit such crimes while influenced by divine grace, then after all, God's subjects are not "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time;" and after all, God is not "able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." If God is liable to de-promote us when he finds fault with us, then how can we "be confident that he which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" Christ did not tell the six churches in Asia, which he had somewhat against, he would de-promote them and remove his grace from them; but rather, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." Could we say God will desire to

correct those who, if possible, had "fallen from grace" or had been evicted from the love of God? And being that grace is love, then how can Apostle Paul of a truth say that neither things present nor the things to come, or literally nothing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, if men can "fall from grace?"

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." And justification is free by grace, through the redemption in Christ, as has been previously stated. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." etc. Can anything condemn us as the redeemed of the Lord? "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Could it be said "we are more than conquerors" through Christ if sin rose up so great in our lives that it simply conquered us and caused us to "fall from grace?" Furthermore, if the conditions of men could change the mind of God and his purposed decrees of mercy and wrath, then God is made a liar, for he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." But it is not so, and we cannot "fall from grace" or lose possession of the promise, because "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 a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Moreover, one cannot "fall from grace," neither can the covenant confirmed before of God in Christ be nullified, for God says "your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand." All of Adam's family have made a covenant with death in hell, "for all have sinned," and "the wages of sin is death." The covenant with death shall not stand, but the covenant God made in Christ when he chose his people in him, shall stand forever and all the elect shall be saved!

Now, if God be pleased, we shall see what Paul meant when he wrote to the

Galatians, "ye are fallen from grace." Most of all it is necessary to understand Paul's application of the phrase, and to know he did not use it as men use the phrase today.

In discussing this, remember how Paul does constantly rebuke and reprove the Galatians for having been bewitched and removed to another's teachings, which was not the Gospel, but false teachers had perverted the Gospel, teaching that men had to keep the law in order to be saved, which law neither our fathers nor we are able to bear. These seducers were really no different to the freewillers of today, who also teach works to be prerequisite to salvation. Somehow these seducers had bewitched the Galatians into looking to their own works for the answer to their justification, rather than looking to Christ for the answer. Therefore Paul exhorts them emphatically, saying, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Paul is here explaining how the works of the law are not of faith, and how Christ can mean simply nothing to anyone who looks to his works, such as circumcision, for justification. "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law;" which is to say that the law demands perfect obedience, and one cannot receive justification on the basis of the law because of this perfect demand. Therefore one who teaches another to be circumcised must not stop there if he is teaching the Law of Moses, "for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

This statement of Paul's makes us to reason that the false teachers put more stress on being circumcised without putting equal emphasis on the other commandments, which teaching would have been illegal even if it was taught before Christ nullified the Mosaic Law. Heretofore in our study, Beloved, can it

be gathered that Paul has been exhorting and rebuking the Galatians for having begun in the Spirit, but getting side-tracked by the flesh; and so Paul reaches a climactical point in his rebuking and reproof by writing, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." The sentence "ye are fallen from grace" is applicable only to the "whosoever of you are justified by the law." WHAT! You mean to tell me this statement of Paul's sets up the fact that men can be justified by the law? No: that's the point, for Paul had already previously said, "no man is justified by the law in the sight of God." But Paul was not in Gal. 5:4 directly speaking of the matter of justification from God's viewpoint, but from the viewpoint of those Galatians who judged themselves to be justified by the law. They had not been literally justified by the law, but only in their own minds, just as the Israelites did not literally limit God, but in their own minds. Likewise neither had they literally fallen from grace as men generally use the phrase, but had done so in their minds by so forgetting that grace and no longer looking to the source of that grace, Christ, for their justification.

Paul did not mean the Galatians' election, calling, justification, redemption, sanctification, etc. had been nullified when he said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you," because these blessings were given them in Christ before the foundation of the world (Gal. 3:17; !! Tim. 1:9). Instead the blessings of Christ had been made of no effect in their minds. To paraphrase it, Paul was saying in this verse four, "Christ no longer means anything to you Galatians who perceive you are justified by the works of the law. Christ is no longer precious in your eyes as being your judge and justifier, for you are blinded by the passions of your flesh in seeking to establish your own righteousness and means of justification that you may have the glory of your salvation, robbing Christ of the glory that is due him. You have forsaken the salvation that comes

free and have desired to earn it, which is impossible, and therefore have you fallen or condescended in your comprehension of salvation from the highest quality rank of salvation, grace salvation, to the lowest rank of salvation, works salvation.

Had these Galatians literally "fallen from grace," or had God left them destitute and forsaken because of their backsliding, then Paul would have never written, nor would he have again attempted to visit those Galatians, for Paul both knew and wrote, "it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift (Spirit) etc., if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance." This verse of scripture annihilates the theory of freewill which sets forth the idea that those who fall away can be renewed to repentance and restored. Holy Writ proclaims it *impossible* to renew fallen ones to repentance. Therefore we hold that it is impossible for one to fall away (literally) because God's will is that Christ "should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." Paul also knew if they did fall away they would "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, which would in turn prove that God was not "able to keep them from falling." Then Christ would be made an open shame for having not "perfected forever them that are sanctified" the first time, which would, if true, prove him to be less than God. If some did fall away it is either because Christ was slack in doing his job or else he was unable to do it. Freewill people can choose between the two, but I will confirm that in all this we must say there is no falling away of the saints. Praise God; it is his work from start to finish!

I will conclude by saying if you began as the Galatians did — in the Spirit — and believed at the start that our justification is freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, but later someone bewitched you and you again became persuaded that there was something you had to do to be justified, then I've got news for you: "Ye are fallen from grace" in the way

Paul applied it. Only from your viewpoint are you fallen, not from God's, because it is from your viewpoint that you are justified by the law, not God's. I've got more news for you, for if you indeed began in the Spirit, then God will not let you continue in this state, for "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Amen to the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Gregory Dean Duren
Rt. 1, Box 30A
Buhl, Ala. 35446

(Brother Duren also wrote as follows: "I am now a high school graduate and eighteen years old. I have volunteered for six years service in the U. S. Air Force. My active duty will begin December 20, 1972, and I will be stationed in Biloxi, Miss. Shortly after basic training is completed, about the first of March, I will have a thirty-five weeks course in electronics at Keesler Tech. School."

We pray the Lord will continue to be with Brother Duren and give him grace for whatever the Lord has in purpose for him. We enjoy his writings, feeling he is taught of the Lord, and hope he will write again soon. — J. D. W.)

WORD FROM SISTER BAKER

Rt. 1, Box 10,
Naches, Washington 98937

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

In Malachi 3:16 we find, "And they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. . ." which we delight to do, but, being human, we often neglect. This season of the year, Christmas, serves a good purpose in reminding us to greet one another. Though Primitive Baptists are widely separated by distance, our love is the same for each one no matter how far away they are. This is a love that goes far beyond anything in this world, because it is the eternal gift of God.

I am glad that Elder Spangler and sister Huntting wrote such good articles about our meetings here this summer. And I am so thankful I was privileged to attend the meetings.

I hope your health is good, and you will have a pleasant Christmas with your family.

I never cease to be amazed that I am so blessed as to know the truth as it is in Christ, I hope. God bless you both.

Humbly, in love,
Daisy Baker

(We were glad to hear from Sister Baker and to know she is well and able to be around, and to do most of her housework at the age of 91. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Rt. 2, Box 646,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Dear brethren in our blessed Lord, I hope I am one even if the least of all in the Covenant of Grace. I enjoy reading the dear *Signs of the Times* so much. The Editorials and all who write, and the Voices of the Past, are food for my hungry soul. When it pleases the Lord to give me an understanding heart, they are like crumbs of His love and mercy. The Psalms of David are so sweet to read. David was greatly blessed to pray, and Psalms 124 and 130 are wonderful to me.

Elder Lambert's and Elder Wood's editorials, and Elder Beebe's writings are heavenly food to me. Elder Wood's editorial at the "Beginning of Another Volume," and Elder Lambert's editorial, "Wings of Salvation," in January, 1969, were greatly enjoyed, and I have read and re-read them.

Dear Editors, I am sending a money-order for \$40.00 to help with the *Signs of the Times*, in memory of our dear Mother, Mrs. J. M. Brammer, who passed away February 19, 1965. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over sixty years, and loved to read the *Signs*. She said shortly before passing away, "Farewell vain world, I am going home." She always filled her seat unless she had real sickness in her home.

I am sending a copy of my experience, which was given me, I hope, in the mercy of the Lord. I would like for you

to print in the *Signs* if you feel it is worthy of the space.

May the blessed Lord give you dear brethren and sisters a heart and mind to pray for me a poor worm of the dust, in hope of God's mercy.

Your least sister,
Callie Clark

EXPERIENCE

It has been on my mind for some time to write a part of the things I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor, needy sinner. I feel my weakness to make the attempt, but something seems to press me to write, for blessed are the things He has done for me.

When I was a child about nine years old, I began to be in trouble. After I went to bed, I would lie on my face trying to pray to God to take care of me. I feared that something would happen to me before morning. I felt to be the worst child in our family. I shed many tears over this, but I did not want anyone to see me crying. When I was about fifteen years old, in the year of 1919, I wondered what would happen to me. I had a fear that made me tremble. I saw myself a vile sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. I seemed to be looking right through me, and beholding nothing but sin and corruption. I read my Bible, but it only condemned me. I tried to pray, Lord, save, or I perish. Something seemed to say, There was a time you might have been forgiven, but now it is too late. Oh the awful misery in my breast. My sins rolled up before me like mountains. Everything I did or said was sin. It seemed that God was frowning on me. I feared He would crush me through the earth; I feared to try to pray, and it seemed I must die in my sins. Oh how I begged Him for mercy, but it seemed there was no mercy for such a one as I. I plainly saw that I was lost, ruined, and undone, not fit to die, and not fit to live, without God, and without hope in the world. The heavy burden for sin was condemning me. I was

weighted down so that my very breathings were, O Lord, if it can be thy will, be merciful to me, and forgive my many sins. I felt He was too good to pity or to hear my cry. I thought I would go and ask my dear mother to pray for me; maybe the Lord would hear her in my behalf. Then something would seem to say, You don't want your mother to know what a sinner you are. In the Bible I read of the sweet promises of the Lord to His children, but they were not for one like me.

After some time I went to visit Mama, and before I knew it, I was telling her my troubles. I looked and she was crying. I thought, I wish I had not told her, for I had made her unhappy. But she said, "I have tried to pray for you." I felt better for a while, but the burden returned. I felt I could not live longer, and if I died with this heavy burden for sin, hell would be my doom. *I learned* that "Vain is the help of man." None could reach my case, but the Lord, and I felt He was angry with me.

Dear children of God, if you have had these troubles in your breast, you can witness with this poor sinner. I went to church, and the dear saints looked so good and happy, and I felt so sinful, not fit to be in their company. At one time I stood by the communion ring looking at the dear saints, and they looked as pure as angels in heaven. It was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen. The tears ran down my face. I thought, Oh, if I could but be with them! It seemed I could hear the Lord gathering His dear children home, and I was left alone, and in sorrow. In my sorrow I went again to my Bible. I opened it and my eyes fell on the words, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in Me; in My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there may ye be also." Oh how sweet those

words were to me! It seemed the Lord had spoken them directly to me. My troubles were gone. I was rejoicing in my Lord's tender love. I longed to praise His holy name. I had a great desire to live a life which was well-pleasing in His sight. But the more I tried to live right, the more I seemed to sin. One day I was meditating over these things, when it was made so plain to me that all our righteousness is as filthy rags, for it is by grace we are saved. I rejoiced in that blessed truth. I was burdened then to know in some way, if He had forgiven my sin. The word came into my mind, "Father glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee." Then it seemed that I viewed Jesus between heaven and earth bleeding and dying for His children. In some way I hope I was among them. I was singing,

"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."

A calm feeling came over me, and I was rejoicing in Jesus my Savior. These words came to me: "It is finished." I felt that the Lord spoke those words to me. I cannot tell of the blessed comfort I then enjoyed. I wanted to praise Him the remnant of my days. Everything seemed to be praising Him. I longed to go to the church and tell it to them. I had a great desire to follow Him in baptism, but it was not long before doubts and fears came. I feared I had just imagined these things; yet I hope He did say, "It is finished." Oh how I tried to pour out my troubles to the Lord! When I met the dear saints, I wanted to be with them, but I was so unworthy.

One morning at a baptism, old Brother S. D. Koger kneeled down to pray, and oh how I did want him to pray for me. He asked me if I wanted to talk. I said, "I love you folks, and long to be baptised, but I am unworthy." He said, "It is those who feel to be unworthy

that we want". I went to the church many times with the longing to be with them whom I had been made to love so dearly, yet thought it would be wrong for one so vile to ask a home with them. I dreamed of Elder Koger baptising me, and as I came out of the water, I was singing, "Oh sing to me of heaven, when I am called to die," but when I awoke it was only a dream, but it was sweet to me somehow. The scripture came to me: "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." I tried in my weak way to beg the Lord to lead me in the right way, and if it should be His will to give me grace to suffer for His sake.

I dreamed of going to church with my sister, and saw Jesus standing dressed in a white robe down to His feet. A gold band was on His head, upon which was written, "The holy Child, Jesus." He looked at me with a loving smile, and said, "I died for you upon the cross." Oh those words were sweet to me! How unworthy I felt that one so vile should be beloved so. I went before the church, still feeling unworthy, and told a part of what I have written, and to my surprise they received me, and I was baptised the third Sunday morning in July, 1922.

I then felt satisfied, for I felt I had gone home to the ones I loved so dearly. I thought I would go on in peace, but I was mistaken, for it was not long before doubts and fears arose, and I thought I had deceived the church. Oh I am a little child, I know not how to go out or come in. Wilt thou give me understanding, and lead me for thy name's sake, and be pleased to keep me at the feet of the little children in humility. The older I get, the more unworthy I feel of the sweet fellowship of the saints. Oh wretched sinner that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I know that without redeeming grace I am forever lost. I know by experience that there is nothing good

that I can do. When I would do good, evil is present. I feel unworthy of the notice of the Lord, but I have nowhere else to go. Thou only hast the words of eternal life. In Him only is my hope. I am often begging that He reveal His love once more, and recently these words gave me much comfort:

"Fear not I am with thee, oh be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by thy righteous, omnipotent hand."

I sang those words, and those following, different than ever before. I hope I was made to rejoice in that great love of God, in so much, that I felt if He should see fit to call me to die then, all would be well. I said, O Lord, it is enough. I cannot praise Him enough. He is my Hope, my Strength, my All. I know that He is love to stoop so low to save one so vile, and put a new song in my mouth, and ever to comfort a poor worm of the dust. I just cannot find the words to tell of it.

About two years ago, I was in so much trouble, and felt that He had forsaken me. I tried to beg for mercy. I cried, O Lord, if I am lost, why am I suffering so? A still small voice said, "For Jesus' sake, you are suffering." I cried, "O Lord, never let my sufferings be less." I fell asleep rejoicing in His tender love and free goodness. He is ever watching over His children. He loves them with an everlasting love. He does not forsake them. My only fear at times, is that I am not among that number.

Brother and Sister Turner, for some cause my mind is to hand this I have written to you. I feel that I should not take up the precious time of God's children, yet they are the ones I long to be with, and hear them talk of Jesus. I tried to lay it aside and not write, but my burden was so heavy, I was made to cry for His spirit of prayer, that He might guide me, and make me submissive to Him.

O Lord, make us look to thee, from whence all our help comes, and let us

love one another for thy name's sake.

Please pray for me, one of the least,

Callie Clark,
Bassett, Va.

SIGNS RECOMMENDED
TO THOSE INTERESTED

P. O. Box 308
Swansboro, N.C. 28584

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am enclosing my check for one renewal and two new subscriptions, and \$1.00 for the Indigent Fund by one of the subscribers, as shown.

We appreciated your presence at our association. We had expected Elder Wood, but he could not make it. Hope you will be given a mind to visit again in our area.

It is my intention to recommend the *Signs* to Old Baptists and others who manifest an interest in the doctrine it contends for. It is the periodical published by our people, and stands firm as it has for more than one hundred and forty years, for the truth as I have been made to believe it. It is certainly needful for the cause: had it not been the Lord would not have sustained it through so many years. It deserves the support of every Old Baptist throughout the country who loves the doctrine of the predestination of God in all things.

May the good Lord be pleased to bless others to continue publishing the good news in the years to come, when the present writers are called to their eternal home.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

(Elder) J. J. Rhue

ELDER BIGGS WAS HER PASTOR

St. Charles. Ky. 42463

Dear Brother Wood:

I want to write a little concerning our late dear pastor. We miss him so much. Elder Biggs has been our councilor — one we could go to for advice, and we seem so lost without him.

We will meet, hoping that the Lord

will send us another pastor; for He is the only one we have to look to.

Hope you and sister Wood are well. I am ninety years old, and am able to be up, for which I praise the Lord.

Much love and fellowship,

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

Elder R. L. Biggs, our beloved pastor, passed away at the age of eighty-one. He had a long, rugged road to travel. He was called to the ministry in early life, but thought he could not go and ran away from it; but the good Lord brought him back and showed him that the way of man was not in himself to direct. He traveled many hundreds of miles with many disappointments in life, but the Lord held him up; and he gave the Lord all the praise.

A dear sister told me she heard him preach at a little church down in the country when he was a young man. And while he was preaching a wonderful sermon, a light shined around his head like a rainbow dimly; and the people looked one to the other. The Sister was Cynthia Brown, long passed away.

He was called to our church, Old Lick Creek, July 3, 1949; and he was faithful to the calling. He had to travel nearly a hundred miles, but he was faithful through all kinds of weather.

We are such a little church, and left without a pastor; but the good Lord had always kept us. And I want to praise the Lord, not man.

Mrs. W. B. McGregor

(See obituary December issue)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 3, Box 295
Eden, N. C.

Dear Elder Lyliston:

I cannot tell you what a joy it was to me when Elder Spangler gave me your letter. I had thought of you many times during the week before I was baptized, and afterwards. I had a desire to write to you but I felt so little that I could not bring myself to do so. Elder Spangler gave me your letter last night at our regular fourth Saturday night meeting. It

was a sweet meeting for me in many ways. Brother and Sister Spangler were back from a long trip. I had not seen them since the Sunday I was baptized. Your letter and being blessed to see them again, made me feel that the Lord was yet being merciful to this poor sinner.

I would have been overjoyed to have seen you at my baptizing, but the Lord had not purposed it to be that way. Even so, it gives me pleasure to know that you would have come had you known about it.

You wrote of your many doubts and fears, and I am glad that you did. I must confess that I spend much of my time in doubts and fears. Long before I was made to ask for a home in the church, I was fearful that I was deceived, and in joining the church, would deceive the people that I so dearly love. It seemed to me that I must remain on the outside of the church, and just look in. But, at the same time, I felt that even that was more than I deserved.

On the second Sunday at Reidsville Church my beloved pastor spoke about the leper who said to Jesus that if he would, he could make him clean. Brother Spangler quoted the scripture, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Never have I felt such a desire to be clean as I felt that day, and never have I felt so sinful. At the close of the meeting, I felt that I would join, but I could not move when an open door of the church was announced. My grandmother expected me to go that day. She said I was trembling like a leaf. That experience was repeated several times, and each time I could not go.

On the Sunday evening that I joined, I heard my pastor ask Brother Wallis Smith if he thought it would be alright to open the doors of the churches. It is difficult to tell you how I felt. I didn't want them to do it, because I knew that I had to go if he did. As we stood to sing, the thought came to me that it would be just like the other times, and I wouldn't go. But it was different: I could not wait. I had to go. During the week

before I was baptized, I read the experience in an old issue of the *Signs of the Times*, in which a dear brother, who has undoubtedly been laid to rest before now, said when he wanted to go, he couldn't, and when he didn't want to, he had to. I rejoiced so much in that article.

In your letter you wrote that you didn't even know my name, and that probably I did not remember you. Well I have found that you don't have to know a person's name to feel a spiritual love for him. As for remembering you, my dear brother, I knew you the minute you walked up to the stand. One third Sunday at Pleasant Grove Church I was blessed to hear you preach. If my memory is correct, you spoke from the 9th chapter of Mark on the words of the father of the boy who had a dumb spirit: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." If not deceived these words cut me to the heart. That sermon has stayed with me ever since. You related much of my experience, and I remember thinking how beautiful it was.

When I found that you were to preach on Saturday night of the association, I felt a great desire to be there. After the afternoon services, my grandfather was tired and wanted to go home. He has been in poor health since October. So I went home; but I just had to come back. I can't tell you how much your sermon meant to me. As you preached, I believe I felt the very power of God in my heart. That night before going to bed, I fell down on my knees and tried to beg God to lead me home to the church if I was truly one of His. I believe my prayer was answered, and the Lord sent you to me at lunch time on Sunday to give me the assurance that I longed for.

Ever since I was baptized I have wanted to write to you and relieve my mind of these things, but I could not. I feel certain that the Lord had a purpose in that, as He does in all things.

Thank you for writing to me, Brother Lyliston. Your letter came to me when my spirits were very low and I had to again look to the Lord for grace and mercy. As you wrote, I hope our paths will cross again. If you are ever planning

to visit one of the churches in our association, please let me know ahead of time, if you can. I hope to visit among the people of your association some day, if the Lord would bless me to.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His loving care, and when you have a mind to pray, you might remember me, if the Lord would bless you to.

Your sinful sister,
Mary M. Lee

LOVE THE SIGNS

Carbon Hill, Ala. 35549

Dear Editors:

We are a little late in renewing for the *Signs of the Times*. We love the paper so much, and are so thankful for all you Editors. We feel it is a blessing to the Lord's people to have the opportunity of reading such sound doctrine the *Signs* stands for; and all the experiences of the Lord's dear people while here in this life. Not while the world stands will He cease leading and feeding all His children; and much of it comes through the *Signs*. This is why we enjoy and love reading it each month.

May the blessed Lord spare you and give you health to continue publishing this dear paper.

Humbly submitted in love,
J. C. and Lillian Scott

ATTENDS THE ASSOCIATIONS

Tarboro N.C.

To the Signs:

Enclosed check is for renewal of the *Signs* for two years, and \$3.00 for the Indigent Fund.

I get much pleasure in reading the *Signs*. May our good Lord bless you dear Editors and others that write to our comfort. The Lord has blessed me this year, as he has in the several years gone by, to go to many associations. I miss so many who have been true soldiers of the cross: they are gone but not forgotten.

I was glad to see Elder and Sister Wood at the Pigg River Association.

What a blessing it is just to get a glimpse of the ones you love for Christ's sake. I have been to the Seven Mile Association the last week-end, and they had a very good meeting. I hope to go to four more, if it is His will.

May God bless us to meet again. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
Lee Gooch

REALIZES HIS NEED EVERY DAY

Rt. 4, Box 313
Eldorado, Ark.

Dear Editors:

I enjoy the *Signs of the Times*. Have been reading this wonderful, God-given paper many years. My mother was taking it when I was a little boy — Martha Ballard Murphy: and I have been subscribing for many years. Please renew my subscription two years; use the other as you see fit.

It seems God in Heaven makes the *Signs of the Times* better and sweeter to me as the months and years go by. How thankful to Almighty God for leading and enlightening me this way. This wonderful experience and feeling can not come from man or self. I am a poor, unworthy sinner traveling in this low ground of sin and sorrow, begging God every day to direct my steps and control my tongue.

I have had the privilege of having Elder Spangler and wife in my home, and hope it will be God's will to have them again. Elder E. J. Lambert is our pastor at Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at Eldorado, Arkansas. We are few in number, but where two or three are gathered together in God's name, He is there also.

May God in heaven just and holy, all wise and all powerful, who made everything what was made, lead, guide and direct the Editors to continue this wonderful paper on until Jesus Christ the saviour of all the elect of God, comes again. He is soon coming: what a wonderful day that will be to all He died

for. Children of the Heavenly King, what my weak prayer to God is, Am I one? I am sinful, weak, and one that needs God's guidance every minute of my life.

I love every one that believes this doctrine. Do as you see fit with this.

Unworthy,
Fred Ballard Murphy

THE LORD WORKS IN
A MYSTERIOUS WAY

Box 74,
Red Lodge, Montana 59068

Dear Ones of Like Precious Faith:

It is renewal time for me for the *Signs of the Times*, so am enclosing check for renewal for two years, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

It was the year 1905 that I first became acquainted with the *Signs*. I lived in the state of Missouri then, and we moved to another farm that year. Some one who had lived in that house left quite a large number of issues of the *Signs*. I was thirteen years of age, the youngest of seven children. My father had passed away when I was about one year old. He was known as a most faithful minister of the Primitive Baptist Faith in those parts. I am speaking of Elder John B. Copeland of Slater-Saline County, Missouri.

In July of 1908 I came to Red Lodge, Montana to live with Mrs. Nannie V. Copeland McMahan, a sister of my father. She was subscriber of the *Signs of the Times* as well as the *Messenger of Peace*; edited then by Elder Walter Cash of St. Joseph, Missouri; but is now out of print. I have lots of issues of it so often read them. To my knowledge there is not even one Primitive Baptist Church in the State of Montana.

I hope I have not annoyed you with some of my experiences. I am thoroughly convinced that there are lots of good people in Montana.

I am also sure the Lord works in a mysterious way His wonders to per-

form. May the good Lord bless and keep you.

Yours in Christian love,
Martha L. Logan

DOES NOT HEAR
BAPTIST PREACHING

2050 Greenway Blvd.
Wichita, Kansas 67213

Dear Editors:

I would like to subscribe for the *Signs of the Times*. I am seventy-six years old and do not hear Baptist preaching anymore. I am not a member of the Old School Baptists.

I surely believe there will be a resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, but only the righteous who are born of God shall be raised to life everlasting, and the ungodly to the resurrection of damnation. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in the 15th chapter, said that if you do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen, and our preaching is in vain and our faith is vain. Paul says a lot more about the resurrection, but I will not go into it further.

All I know is that I am a sinner, and my works are as filthy rags. I feel as a lost sheep in the forest — all mixed up. I still believe we are saved by grace and not by works. Would appreciate it if one of the editors or others would write me sometime, and maybe I could sleep better. I have heard Elder Lambert preach and enjoyed him. In believing predestination, you have to believe in the resurrection of the dead; or am I wrong.

From a sinner in trouble,
Fred C. Winfrey

ENJOYED A LOVELY DAY

1721 S. Seales Street
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

I have had sweet meditations of the lovely day we were blessed to enjoy last Sunday, and my soul has soared high

above the vain and transitory things of earth.

It seemed that our hearts were warmed and attuned to God's Holy Spirit as we listened to the glorious gospel you were given to preach to us of Jesus. "The Captain of our salvation." You vividly brought to view how it became God to send His own Son to take our place in the judgment, that we might be free from condemnation; and ultimately be carried to the climes of glory to forever sing His blessed praise. What wonderous love that he would condescend to dwell in the hearts of sinners by nature, but whose hearts have been made clean by His precious blood, and made partakers of His glory.

Much more could be said of the lovely message you brought us, but I have not words to express it. The blessed Spirit of God continued in our midst, if not deceived, as the little band of His saints gathered in our little humble home. As I told you, I did not feel worthy for them to come, but rejoiced that they felt to come. Words fail me as I try to tell of the lovely day, but how can mere words fully define the things of the Spirit world? I felt that we were all so safely ensconced in the arms of our Saviour, that all the power of earth could never harm nor pluck us from Him. My dear Brother and Sister, is this not a most blessed place to be!

I only meant to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, but could not refrain from trying to express how much I enjoyed the whole day. May God continue to give us the season of rejoicing as we travel this meandering pathway toward our longed for Home above.

With sweet fellowship and love,
Mamie P. Aldridge

CORRECTION

Please note that in the article by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth in the January issue the quotation of Ecclesiastes 12:7, should read "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—J.D.W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

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CELEBRATING FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

In honor of the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Elder and Mrs. W. D. Griffin, their children extend an invitation to the brethren and friends to meet with them in commemorating the occasion between the hours of two and four o'clock Sunday, March the fourth, 1973, at their home on Highway 18 about half-way between Fayette and Vernon, Alabama. (Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555)

Danville, Virginia February, 1973

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

2 Kings 6:1-7

“And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, Master; for it was borrowed; And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place, And he cut down a stick and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up

to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.” (2 Kings 6:1-7)

Back through the years I have heard this subject tossed around among the Old School Baptists. I have joined in the discussions, and have, as I too often have done, accepted the general version of the matter, to wit, that these sons of the prophets were false brethren among the children of Israel; that they had gone along with Israel in a nominal way until the travel became strait for them; that they could do rather well until the strict rigid doctrine became repulsive to them, and that they desired a way of their own. Usually, John was quoted to bolster this thought when he said, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (I John 2:19) Some would go so far as to bring in the seven women that took hold of 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.” (Isa. 4:1) Others would bring up the case of those that went back, and walked no more with the Saviour because of His sound doctrine (John 6:65,66). It is derogatory to the honor and glory of our heavenly Master for us to be copy cats, or to be parrot like; to let others do our reading, to nod our approval without thinking and searching and studying for ourselves. My policy, in writing and speaking, had been to not say or write anything that could be refuted by gainsayers. I have not been able to live up to this policy, but I still think that it is a good rule when the dear aged mother in Israel (in Texas) requested that I write on this subject the first thing that come into my mind was this: What more can I say than has been said throughout the years? How could I ever bring up anything new about the subject. As I have said many times I came up under an old timey minister of the gospel. He has told me many things of struggles in the ministry. One time he

told me that when he was requested to write or preach on a subject that it alarmed him because that he did not know as he felt that he should not be able to comply with the request. But he said that usually, after the request, that he was given a desire to comply with the request, and this led him into an examination of the text. This has been my lot in a great measure. It was that way with this request. I desired to be correct in what I presented about it. I have spent sometime in meditation, and I trust in prayer, and in searching.

To begin with, the application that I had always heard and accepted did not ring true with what I found in the scriptures of truth. Then I did have *something* to wrestle with; I did have much casting about in my mind as to how that I might make an excuse for not complying with the request. That did not work, and thus I am before you once more in my weakness to comply with the request of our dear sister as best I can. I told her, when she handed me the requests (for there were others, which I will, as God blesses me, get to) that I was not able to write on the deep matters of God's kingdom, and she said, "I know that, but I also know that God can bless you to do so." As long as my brethren know that, and as long as the Lord teaches me that, you will bear with me if I do not follow the usual line of thinking about the text.

First, let me say that there is not a word of condemnation in the history of Israel about the son of the prophets. If this could be construed as condemnatory of them, it is the only time that it has been shown by inspiration. Furthermore, there is not an objection nor a rebuke to them for their request, but rather, an agreement of Elisha that it was the thing to do, and he went and helped them in the work of building this new place of dwelling.

But it is said unto me, They found the place of dwelling with Israel too strait, and this shows dissatisfaction with the ways that the Lord was leading Israel, and with the things that the prophets prophesied of and about. How do you

know that his was their mind? Have you associated the same thought with those that have desired to build a new house of worship? Have you thought the same thing with all of the people of God that have enlarged their house or added something to their present house that they might be more comfortable?

If this was the primary thought that the sons of the prophets had, to wit, that the way of Elisha and his house were too rigid, too hard, too much discipline, too much doctrine, it would seem to me that they would have used the word straight. Sixty nine times this word is used in the Bible to set forth right, uprightness, haste, suddenly, straightway to go straight, and other meanings that would be repulsive to one that *any* way would do as well as the one that we are doing. But the place (not way) wherein they were dwelling was too strait. The place wherein they were dwelling was too strait for comfort, and the intention and object of the sons of the prophets was for the establishment of a better place, definitely, not way.

It was Elisha that they went to for his consent in building this new dwelling place. The mantle of Elijah was given to Elisha. Elijah cast his mantle upon Elisha, and he, in turn, took up the mantle of Elijah. Let us remember that the name Elijah means in the Hebrew language *my God is Jah (Jehovah), or God Himself*. Elisha pled with Elijah that a double portion of his spirit be upon him. His reply was that if he saw him when he was removed from his presence that it would be so, but if not, it would not be so. As they were traveling and talking there appeared a chariot of fire and parted them asunder and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. As he went up his mantle fell from him and Elisha took it up. (2 Kings 2). I do hope that none of my readers would call Elisha indiscreet or unsound as a prophet. I do hope that we are all able to see the beauty in the prophetic gift of Elijah falling on Elisha, for the whole object in this episode in the history of Israel, and the life of both Elijah and Elisha, is the glory of God. It is not that

we are in Elijah or in Paul, but it is that we are in Christ Jesus; that this being in Him is not the performance, or lack of, in Elijah or Paul, but that it is to the praise of His grace. This portion of scripture is in what Paul had in mind when he said, the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now this writing about the sons of the prophets coming to Elisha is given to us that we might have this hope. Is it in the sons of the prophets or in Elisha? It is true that this is a part of the whole and it takes each part to make up the whole, but the glory is in the iron swimming, not in them being found in a strait.

Elisha means in the Hebrew language *God is Saviour*. This is beautiful to me; this brings my dear Saviour closer; Elijah (God) had to pass away, and his passing away gave room for the coming of Elisha (God as Saviour), for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let look back and view all of the miracles that Elijah performed, and let us look back at all of the wonderful things that Elisha performed. In the time of Christ many believed when miracles were performed, and this miracle was given for the same purpose to confirm and settle and ground our brethren who would not have been made perfect without our day. (Heb. II:40)

Again let us remember that Elisha means *God is Saviour*. The sons of prophets went to him in type as the children of the kingdom came to the Saviour in anti-type. The children of the kingdom were in a bind, in a bad strait. They asked Him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? They were certainly in a strait place (not way, not in a sect too strait, not having a doctrine preached to them that was too strait); the perservation of their natural lives looked difficult for the wind and the waves were rising high, threatening to engulf them in destruction. (Mat. 8; Mark 4; Luke 8) Now look back at the text. The sons of the prophets came to Elisha. They did not come as arrogant self-willers; they

did not come as Pharisees making sport, but they came as humble as were the disciples in the raging storm. To one the storm was holding them in a strait or difficult predicament; to the other the place wherein they dwelt was too strait or difficult. As to what caused this strait, we are not told. The Jewish historian tells us that it was because of an overflow of population in the Jewish nation or economy. This we do not know. It would be folly, since we do not know, to say that it was this or that or the other, and especially is this true, when we see that the text is not given to bring the sons of the prophets into the limelight, but that the whole is given for the exaltation of Elisha (Christ). Persons are never to be eulogized or lauded; the sons of the prophets are not being rebuked nor praised here; this doctrine or that doctrine is not being criticised nor praised. The primary aim was to perform a miracle. Elijah had performed many as the prophet in Israel, and now his mantle or gift has fallen on Elisha and he, too, is to perform a miracle. In each case, when our Saviour performed miracles there was a setting arranged for it. It was true in this case.

Elisha gave a command for them to go build a place in which to dwell (not to found a new doctrine or a new denomination or do away with the oracles which the Lord had delivered to Israel, or to change any of the order that God had instituted for the benefit of his people Israel). The mind that the sons of the prophets had was given the approval of the prophet. Then they asked him to go with them. He agreed to go, and he did go. **TO THINK THAT I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THESE SONS OF THE PROPHETS WERE FALSE BRETHREN!** Really that thought made Elisha just as weak in doctrine as were the sons. He not only encouraged them, but he went with them. He went with them and they (signifying that Elisha helped to build the place, not helped to change the doctrine, or to make a new way) begin to cut down wood. While Elisha prefigures Christ, yet he did not know all things, or, as the type of Christ,

he did know, but asked questions as though he did not know in order to teach them a lesson. Be that as it may, while they were working to build a place in which to dwell, one of them had an axe to fly off from the handle. He cried out in dismay. The Bible does not say, but it strongly implies that this cry was in anguish. Who am I to say what prompted the cry? Have I got any authority to say that he was in anguish because that he could not help any further in changing the *way* of doctrine? Please refer me to chapter and verse that I have any such right. And if you have any such right to make the case up against these sons of the prophets, please give me chapter and verse for your authority. This anxiety was caused by concern at being unable to continue to build the *place*, and because that he had borrowed the axe. This is where I used to think that it surely was condemning the sons. This one had borrowed an axe, and anything borrowed is a sign of weak doctrine. If so, then Elisha had already proven himself the weakest one in Israel because he had authorized a poor indebted woman to borrow vessels so that she could sell oil and get out of debt. If we are going to condemn the sons of the prophets we must find something besides a borrowed axe to do it with.

His cry was unto Elisha. It was a three fold cry of anguish. Why do I say that? Because this is a number of brethren under the law, and yet all doing common work for the mutual good of Israel. Their object was a good one—at least it had the approval of the man who meant God the Saviour. This son could not work any further in the work. The axe was a borrowed axe. They were all poor and no doubt he did not feel able to pay for it or replace it. He cried out to Elisha, as I humble trust I have cried out many times for help or relief from One greater than Elisha. I hope that I am thankful that He had come to my rescue many, many times, giving me relief and comforting me in my gloom and anguish. And I am so glad that I have been blessed to find this One that is greater

than Elisha in the text. This is the time of love, when I find my blessed Redeemer, and am able to sing,

Sometimes I read my Bible,
And 'tis a sealed book;
Sometimes I find a blessing
Wher'er therein I look,

and so it has been in my efforts to comply with our sister's request. I feel that my Lord has come and I am glad.

Where it fell? Ah, yes pilgrim, the God of our salvation always has your welfare in mind. From day to day He is perfecting that which concerns you. He cut a stick. I do not know what the stick represents, nor neither do you. Cutting a stick was a simple thing—simple, like spitting in clay and poulticing an eye; simple like having a man go wash seven times in the pool of Siloam; simple like using water to make wine; simple like stretching out a rod over the sea. The simple stick was thrown into the water at the place where the axe fell, and the iron did swim. The son did not scamper out to get it. It does not say, but if you remember all of the miracles of God our Saviour were followed by much joy and thanksgiving, and I am sure that he that had been in anguish was now filled with awe and admiration and adoration. Elisha said to him, "Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it."

I feel sure that when we have been disconsolate, our minds have gone to this event of the iron swimming, and renewed courage was given us that nothing is too hard for the Lord. This event was cast into the lap, and our God disposed of it to His name's honor and glory. The glory and the lesson was not in the sons of the prophets desiring to build a new place to dwell in, but the Elisha, who as a type of our blessed Saviour, made the iron swim,

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ATONEMENT AND REDEMPTION

The simple word *atonement*, or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation,

agreement, or restoration to favor, and when applied in a gospel sense, has reference to the mediatorial sacrifice of the Son of God, by which his people are reconciled unto God. That mediatorial work or sacrifice involved his suffering for them the penalty of the law which they had transgressed, bearing the curse which was due to their transgressions, putting away their sins by sacrifice of himself; being delivered up for their offences and raised again from the dead for their justification.

Redemption, signifies the buying back of that which has become legally involved and is held by another in captivity. For instance, a flock of sheep which has gone astray from the premises of their owner, and committed trespass on another, may be legally held by him who has sustained the injury, until the owner of the sheep shall come forward, prove property, pay the legal charges and take them away. This is called redemption, or buying back the flock or property which belonged to him who redeems, before the trespass was committed. In this the payment of the damages is the atonement or reconciliation, for it satisfies the party who held the legal claim upon the flock, and the price paid for the satisfaction, or reconciliation, redeems or buys them back. So that the atonement and the redemption of the sheep are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated. None but the owner of the sheep has the right to redeem them in the case. If he fails to redeem them, and they are sold to some other person for the damages they have done, they are not redeemed at all, because they are not bought back, or restored to the former owner, but pass into the possession of a new owner. The redemption of the people of God is thus described, see Isa. liii, 6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." That is, the whole demand of the law and justice of God, was demanded of that Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and who says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good

Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. John x, 11, 12. If Christ had not been the owner of the flock before they strayed, or went into captivity, justice could not have demanded satisfaction at his hands—the Lord would not have laid their iniquity upon him, nor commanded, saying "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." Zech. xiii, 7. Nor could Christ have claimed the right to redeem them on any other ground. He was the Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and he plead and sustained his prior claim to, and right of property in them, saying, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them" And this glory he says he had with the Father before the world was. See John xviii, 5, 7, and 10. Therefore he could in coming into the world to redeem them, confidently refer to the records of eternity: "Lo! I come, in the volume of thy book." (The book in which all his members are written, Psa. cxxxix, 16.) "It is written of me; to do thy will, O God." Heb. x, 7, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John vi, 39. These scriptures define very clearly the extent of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the principle of relationship and proprietorship on which that redemption is based. In this redemption, he asked not or prayed not for the world, but for them which his Father had given him out of the world. And this was the full extent of the will of the Father, according to which God worketh all things, that Jesus should redeem and save his people from their sins, and raise up again at the last day all that the Father gave him before the world was; and therefore it was that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of *us* all. That is all of *us* who like sheep have gone astray.

And he has accordingly, "surely borne *our* griefs, and carried our sorrows: "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement *our* peace" (or atonement) "was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. iii, 4,5. And because "It pleased the Lord to bruise" and to "put him to grief." He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" "By his knowledge" shall he "justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa. iii, 10, 11. And we know precisely what will satisfy him; for he has graciously told us. "I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou hast given me out of the world." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," &c. John xvii, 9,24. This is his will, and the Father has pledged his veracity that he shall be satisfied. Nor is this any less the will of the Father than it is the will of the son; for, "This is the Father's will which has sent me that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Thus we are instructed in regard to the nature and extent of the atonement and redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That it extends to all that the Father gave him, and to no others. That it embraces all that seed which Jesus should see when his soul was made an offering for sin, and which seed shall serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation, according to Psa. xxii, 30. But it extends to no other seed or people but that "Chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people which shall show forth his praises." 1 Peter ii,9.

The atonement or reconciliation is just as extensive as the redemption, and the eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, is just as extensive in its application and its saving benefits as the atonement and redemption, and it can extend no further. All the murmuring, fault-finding and blasphemies of the children of men cannot extend it any further, nor remove

one of Zion's stakes, nor break one of her cords.

After all the opposition manifested by the world to the definite extent of the atonement, there is not an individual on earth, that really desires to be embraced in it but those who are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power. All others prefer to rely on their own fancied free will, free agency and use of means, and to rely upon a *chance* system, which would give a chance to everybody, but in reality save nobody. God's redeemed people themselves were all of them opposed to his method of salvation until they were brought to an experimental knowledge of their guilty, lost and helpless condition, then they found it to be exactly suited to their case. And then being taught of God, they could not be satisfied with any uncertain, indefintie or chance system. Knowing their own total helplessness, they bless and adore God for that covenant which is well ordered and sure; for it is all their hope, and all their salvation.

Such a system of redemption as the arminians contend for, if they could have it, would do them no good; for it would save nobody, and they are therefore just as well off in their present delusion on the subject, as they would be with a *chance* redemption, offered grace, and conditional salvation, while they are totally depraved, and dead in trespasses and sins. They are at war with God's plan of salvation, and it is impossible for them to be saved in any other. There we must leave them to perish forever in their delusion, unless they, by a divine power, over which they nor we have any control, shall bring them to know their need of a whole Savior, a sure redemption, and to rejoice in a perfect atonement and reconciliation to God and to his way of saving poor lost and helpless sinners.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 1, 1858)

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:—I am sending you a copy of a letter I wrote to

brother Winfrey while he was sick in the hospital at Salina, Kansas. He was a member of a church which I am serving at Kingman, Kansas. The family desired that it be published in the issue of the *SIGNS* in which his obituary appears. It is submitted to your judgment and disposal. You will note it was written to Brother Winfrey personally, without any thought of it being submitted for publication.

Dallas, Texas, Feb. 22, 1938.

DEAR BROTHER WINFREY:—I am writing you today, as I am shut in, waiting for a nice snow to melt off, which the bright sunshine is changing to water very rapidly. Thus it is with all time things, regardless of how beautiful or otherwise desirable, they belong to the order of things which are ever changing; nothing within the reach or power of man to possess here below of which he can say, Now I have a permanent possession; this is my very own. Before he is hardly aware, it waxes old and is ready to decay and must pass out from before him. Our fondest ties of friendship and the most cherished objects of our affections last, as it were, but for a day, until we come to the parting of the ways; and if we possessed it all, with no more power than we have to establish its permanency, we would still be poor indeed, and with the wise man could say, All is vanity and vexation of spirit. But when we find within us a longing for something that is permanent, something that is fixed and can never be moved; something that will never disappoint our hopes nor make shipwreck of our faith, we must look not at the things that are seen, "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

In this experience we find ourselves in company with that great cloud of witnesses of whom the apostle said, They looked for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and

that they desired a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. How delightful it is to be in the company of such people, and to have the mind absorbed in the contemplation of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. The passing and changing events of time can effect no change in this glorious inheritance; and to know that it is not provided nor secured to us by the patience of our toil, nor by the skill of our labor; neither is it bestowed on the grounds of service, nor as a reward for merit, but by an immutable will Jehovah bequeathed it and reserved it in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. If we hope for this enduring inheritance, though we do not see it, yet do we with patience wait for it, knowing that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Brother Winfrey, I find myself sometimes actually longing for that house and that inheritance. We are given a foretaste of our inheritance, called "the earnest of our inheritance," which is intended to in some measure satisfy our desires until the redemption of the purchased possession; that is, until He takes his purchased possession home to glory. With some of us it will not be long now to wait, but our consolation and assurance is that God changes not: whether in youth or in old age the same unchanging God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." The shadows of death have many times fallen across our pathway, as we came this far on our journey toward the country we seek; in fact, our path was routed through a land of death and decay. The great wonder often is how we have reached the place on our journey that we have without being utterly destroyed;

but after all of our wondering we must come to the solution which David gave for his safety; "Thou art with me." If he is with us, then we, too, can brave every danger without fear, and can say with the poet,

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

This is our hope and consolation, that our God changes not, and irrespective of our diversity of thoughts and unstableness of purpose, he is the same unchanging God and his years fail not. How glad we should be, and I hope are, that our safety here and hereafter does not depend in any measure upon our faithfulness. But hear the assuring promise: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Our waywardness does not in the least affect his faithfulness for he has sworn unto our Spiritual David, saying, "Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." How wonderful to have these precious truths brought understandingly to our hearts, so we can grasp the significance of the meaning of these precious assurances, for it is written, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." It is only in His light that we see light, and when the light of life is revealed in us, when God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; by that divine light the veil of the law is taken away from our face and our heart is turned to the Lord and we, by faith, see the new covenant glories, which is the glory of the Lord, and the

apostle says, "Are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

How wonderful is all of this mysterious yet overwhelmingly fascinating working of Israel's God. It binds our every thought in such admiration that, like Mary, we desire only to sit at the feet of our Lord and hear his gracious words. And how our ears catch and our souls absorb every word of promise that describes the case of a poor trembling sinner, the poor insolvent who has a load of debts but nothing with which he can pay; only can come as a beggar at mercy's door, and if he should be turned away from here, like the disciples of Christ, he must stand in blank ignorance as to his next move, and ask, To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. But thanks to our gracious High Priest, for none who came inquiring have ever been sent empty away; for it is he who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all they diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.

The mighty works of God in saving and leading his children out of the dungeon of sin and crowning them who are only worthy of death with immortal glory, swell our hearts with wonder and admiration to look upon them, and to get a glimpse here and there of his transcendent beauty and glory as revealed in them. But with what subduing humility, and astonishment indescribable are we filled when we are given to hope that we are a part of this wonderful plan. If it is so, all things, whether life or death, whether visible or invisible, are engaged to work for our good; even the moments of time are hastening us on to the possession of our eternal home, where in the full blaze of the glory of our God and Savior we shall swim in the ocean of his love, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. I know, dear brother Winfrey, your affections are there, because your treasure is there. And I

pray that God may sustain you with an unflinching trust in his unchanging faithfulness, and support you by his all-sufficient grace until he chooses to call you hence, and that he may make you as faithful in your devotions to him in death as you have been in your life. This I feel he will do, for his promise is, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Again, Blessed are they that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope that Lord is. And whom the Lord has blessed they shall be blessed.

I shall hope soon to hear that you are very much improved. Sister Winfrey, if you can find time, let us hear often, if no more than a card just to say how he is getting along, for we are anxious to know of his progress.

With fervent christian love and fellowship in the gospel of Christ, in which Mrs. Hardy joins me, I am, I hope, your humble servant for Jesus' sake,

J. R. HARDY

(What a comforting letter Elder Hardy wrote to Brother Winfrey! In these things we are sustained day by day, for God gives us grace sufficient for all our needs every day.

Brother Winfrey passed away shortly after receiving this letter. We re-publish this because all these things are common with each subject of grace. — J. D. W.)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

It has pleased our gracious and all wise God to remove from our midst a beloved Sister, Evelyn Davis, of the Snow Hill Church, well known and beloved by all. No doubt in our minds she was a child of God. Our loss is her eternal gain.

Let us of the Salisbury Association bow in humble submission to the will of God, and say, "Thy will be done, O God."

Written by Brother Frank Holland.

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

MEMORIAL

ELDER C. N. BUNN

Almighty God let your tongue be the pen as an attempt is made to write in memory of our pastor Elder C. N. Bunn who was so dearly loved by the members and friends of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Bunn accepted the pastoral care of our church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March 1961 by saying, "That he could not come to us as a leader, but the Lord willing he would come as a follower and do the best he could to serve us." We believe the Lord God sent him to us and by God's grace he was blessed to faithfully serve us until he was called to paradise, the place of the glorified saints on May 24, 1972.

Brother Bunn believed and preached that there is living omnipotant, "I AM THAT I AM," who did predestinate his children to be conformed to the image of his precious son, Jesus Christ, and that there is laid up for them a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto all them that love his appearing.

Elder Bunn's experiences or reasons for his hope were rich indeed and those blessed to hear him relate them would know that all was well, because their minds were taken from the vain and perishable things of this earth and centered on the heavenly and divine things of God.

His funeral service was conducted by those that were dear to him, Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Henry Jones. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N. C. to await the morning of the resurrection when his Lord will say to him, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May God in his kind and tender mercy reconcile us to our loss and may his richest blessings rest with Nellie his beloved wife, whom we dearly love, and all who mourn his passing is our prayer.

Written by one who loved him,
Ruby Coward

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLIAM L. NORRIS

I have been elected by the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association, while in session at Harmony Church on Sunday, October 15, 1972, to write the obituary of Elder William L. Norris. So I will try in my weak way to do the best I can.

I feel we, the Hopewell Association, have lost a Dear and affection friend, Pastor and

Moderator. I feel our loss is heaven's gain. He believed in Salvation by Grace and by Grace alone. He had no confidence in the flesh.

He was born in 1888, which made his stay on earth 84 years. He was married to the former Ruth Kirk for 48 years. She preceded him in death nine months and six days. His earthly journey ended on August 28, 1972.

His body was laid to rest in Memorial Chapel Gardens, following the funeral services at the Chapel in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Officiating at the services were Elder Claud Hand and Elder E. E. McCool.

Elder Norris was ordained to preach the unsearchable riches of God in 1956. He Pastored churches throughout the Hopewell Association. He was Moderator until failing health wouldn't permit.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his two daughters, Mrs. James Wallace of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Mrs. William Smith of Rogersville, Alabama. Survivors also include two grandchildren.

I say to the bereaved family; Weep not as those who have no hope. I feel that Elder Norris is resting in the Paradise of God, awaiting the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Elder and Sister Norris spent the last three declining years of their lives in the Glen Haven Rest Home in Northport, Alabama.

Submitted in Love,
Bruce H. Sullivan

BROTHER RUSSELL BOAZ

Brother Russell Boaz was born August 3, 1895, and passed from this life August 9, 1972, at the age of seventy-seven. He was the son of the late George W. and Lucy M. Boaz. His wife was Mary E. Boaz, who passed away September 20, 1963. He spent his entire life in the Dry Fork Community in Virginia.

He joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1963, and was a faithful member and always there to fill his seat. We all at the church will miss him. But the Lord knows best.

He leaves one daughter, Mrs. Barbara Bryant, of Gretna, Va. and one sister, Mrs. George Payne of Danville, Va.; also two grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel by his former pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, and he was laid to rest in the Boaz Cemetery, to await the resurrection day.

The church desires a copy of this obituary to be sent to the family, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one for the church records.

Done by order of the church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mo.d.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

A MEMORIAL TO A PRECIOUS DEACON

As the natural leaves quietly fall to the ground leaving only the memories of their past behind, which speaks of the beauty and service of their lives; so to was with Deacon Barney Taylor Green who faithfully served out his life and quietly fell asleep Oct. 15, 1971, having been born Jan. 16, 1888.

Like the tender buds of the tree leaves he grew into maturity of manhood and was united in marriage with Miss Desser Henson in Dec. 1907.

Brother Green soon established himself as a good citizen of Wood County, Texas, farming for a living. He and his good wife reared two fine sons, one of which preceeded him in death.

After having received a hope in Christ he united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in 1915. In 1927 Brother Green was ordained a deacon and faithfully served his church as deacon until his death, being a member fifty-six years and a deacon forty-two years.

Bro. Green became ill while dressing to attend his home association and after two weeks in the hospital he quietly passed away, leaving to mourn his passign his wife, Sister Desser Green, one son, two sisters, and two grandchildren and three great grandchildren, together with the membership of Hopewell Church and many friends. His funeral was held in the funeral chapel in Winnsboro, Texas, by his pastor assisted by Elder Loyd Wall, after which his body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in the Hopewell cemetery.

May God bless Sister Green and family, together with all the bereaved. Amen.

Written by his pastor,
W. W. Taylor.

MRS. HERBERT MILLER

Elizabeth Hudson Miller was born November 20, 1901, and lived her entire life in Union Parish, La. She was united in marriage with Herbert Miller on December 23, 1920. She and Bro. Miller soon established themselves as good citizens of their community, being good neighbors and friends to all who knew them. Their home soon became known as a place of welcome to all the Old School Baptists who came to visit them.

In the Fall of 1932 Sister Miller came before Liberty Hill Church, relating an experience of grace and asking a home with the Old Baptist. She was received and was baptized by the pastor, Elder R. W. Rhodes.

Sister "Dibb", as she was known by all her friends, loved her church, the doctrine of salvation by grace, and all the brethren. She left

marks along her pathway that give evidence of one who had passed from death unto life. Her faithfulness to her church never failed right down to her death, which occurred January 30, 1972, after a brief illness.

We feel most surely that she was called to a better home, leaving to mourn her passing: her dear husband, Bro. Herbert Miller, one son, Hudson Lee Miller, one daughter, Mrs. Jackie McBryde, also 3 brothers and 3 sisters, a number of nieces and nephews, one of which is one of our beloved ministers, Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr. Likewise she is greatly missed by the membership of Liberty Hill Church and our brethren in general.

One of her greatest joys was entertaining the brethren, always ready to be of service to them in any way she could. The writer's personal feelings is: I have lost a wonderful friend as well as a dear sister in the church.

Her funeral was conducted in the Liberty Hill meeting house by the writer, assisted by Elder D. E. Turner, after which her body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the resurrection morning, at which time we feel that she will come forth in the likeness of the Lord's character, and in his glory to forever be with the Lord. Amen.

May God bless Brother Miller and all who mourn her passing, giving us the spirit of reconciliation unto our God, and enabling us to look unto Him for all things now and forever more. Amen.

Written by one who held her in high esteem and respect,

Elder W. W. Taylor

JULIA AYERS JOHNSON

Sister Julia Ayers Johnson, age 91, died at her home at Hurt, Virginia, November 27, 1972. She was born in Franklin County, Va., March 1, 1881, the daughter of the late Samuel Ayers and Mary Dillon Ayers.

She was married to the late John W. Johnson, and is survived by three sons: Clarence and Frank of Hurt, and Curtis of Beckley, W. Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Mabel McKinney, Roanoke, Mrs. Bernard Trent, of Hurt; Mrs. G. K. Worsham, Richmond, and Mrs. Jack Phares, of Kansas City, Mo. Also by three sisters: Mrs. Rosa Harrison, Logan, W. Va.; Mrs. Gennie Thurman, Redwood, Va., and Mrs. Annie Chitwood of Glade Hill; twenty-one grandchildren and thirty-three great grandchildren.

Sister Johnson was faithful to attend her church, Springfield at Gretna, Va. She was received by letter October 13, 1951. She had been unable to attend for several years due

to bad health.

Funeral services were held from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Ronald Davidson. Burial was in the Gretna Burial Park.

May the Lord reconcile all who mourn, and say, Thy will be done.

Written by,
Annie Tosh

ANNIE FRANCES MEADOWS

Sister Annie Frances Meadows, age sixty five, was called from us to her eternal home on December 14, 1972. She passed away at the hospital in New Bern, N.C. Sister Meadows illness began about three months before her departure. All was done for her that doctors, family and friends could do. We cannot question the will of God who loved her so much that He called her, we feel, to be with Him in paradise. We believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Meadows professed a hope in the Lord and was baptized many years ago by Elder T. H. Edwards. She presented her Church and was received into our fellowship Church and was received into our fellowship about two years before she was called from this world of sin and sorrow. The sorrow that has come to us is deeply felt and only the Lord can fill the void and reconcile us to heaven's will. Through her afflictions she was given faith to look beyond this vale of tears to a better place, a city beyond the grave whose builder and maker is God. The weekend she spent at her home before her last visit to the hospital, she requested that her brethren come after the services at our church, and sing, pray and speak in her Saviour's name. In her weakening condition her first request was that, we sing, "Jesus though art the sinners friend", She endeavored to help us for the last time to sing her favorite hymn. The writer was blessed to visit her shortly before she passed away and her expression was that the Lord would take care of the situation and it would be alright. We cannot wish our dear sister back to suffer her afflictions that she bore with so much patience. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed by the name of the Lord."

Sister Meadows funeral was conducted by Elders J. T. Prescott, J. J. Rhue and Mr. King.

May the Lord comfort and reconcile each of us, including her family and friends, to His holy will, is our prayer.

Surviving are: one daughter, Mrs. Phyllis Dunn of Newport News, Va.: one son, J. D. Meadows, Swansboro, N.C.: four sisters, Mrs. Cora Kittrell of Stella, Mrs. Lorenzo Meadows of Swansboro, Mrs. Lillian Henderson, Mrs.

Lillie Bordeaux, both of Jacksonville: four brothers, Ransom and Navi Morton of Jacksonville, Kadi Morton of Stella, and Noah Morton of Richmond, Va.: 8 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Ordered in conference December 14, 1972, by Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church that this memorial be prepared and one copy be placed on our Church Record, a copy sent to the family and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder J. J. Rhue, Moderator
Sister Vilma G. Rhue, Clerk

SISTER ADA METZ THOMPSON

Sister Ada Metz Thompson passed away October 24, 1972, after much affliction. She was born May 16, 1892, making her stay on earth eighty years. She was the daughter of the late John M. Metz and Laura A. Mills Metz.

Sister Thompson was blessed to unite with the Primitive Baptist faith at Pine Forest Church, Floyd County, Va., and was baptized the third Sunday in October, 1921. I was told that while she was burdened join the church, she laid her head on the table and cried, and begged the Lord not to let her go to the church if it was not His will. On August 16, 1952, Sister Thompson was granted a letter of dismission from Pine Forest in the Smith River Association, and she was received by the letter at Thompson Grove Church on September 6, 1952, in the Pigg River Association, where she was faithful until death.

She leaves to mourn her passing, one brother, Reggie E. Metz, of Bent Mountain, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Ottie M. Barr, Baltimore, Md. and Mrs. Ola M. Smith, Roanoke, Va. Also several nieces and nephews, and a host of friends.

Her funeral was held at Okey's Chapel, Roanoke, by Elder William Holland, Elder B. O. Thompson, and the writer. She was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery, Roanoke, beneath a lovely mound of flowers, to await the second coming of the Lord. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the resurrection of the body. God's children will be satisfied when they awake in His likeness and see Him as He is. Written by request.

Leonard J. Brammer

SISTER MINNIE CREECH SPENCER

Sister Minnie Creech Spencer was born in 1900, and passed away May 18, 1972, in Petersburg General Hospital following an extended illness. She was the widow of the late James

Rufus Spencer; and a native of Johnston County, N. C., but had been a resident of Virginia since 1922.

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of Gould Funeral Home, Hopewell, Va. by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in Blandford Cemetery, Petersburg, Va.

Surviving are four daughters: Mrs. Marie Neace, Mrs. Irene Wynn, Mrs. Charlotte Cheely, and Mrs. Margie Beasley, all of Colonial Heights, Va.; and eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister Spencer united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, Kenly, N. C. in October, 1967, and was faithful to attend services as often as she could. We are sad when we think of missing her presence and the loss of another dear member, but feel our loss to be her eternal gain.

May God bless the church and her bereaved family with a spirit of reconciliation, faith and courage to remember that, The Lord gives and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Done by order of conference June 24, 1972 by Sisters Nellie Hocutt and Mavis P. Pope.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Mod.
Jeffrey O. Creech, Clerk

BROTHER WALTER HOWELL

By order of the conference of Pittman's Grove Primitive Baptist Church, it becomes my duty to write the obituary of our precious Brother Walter Howell. He was born December 11, 1898, and passed from this vale of tears May 25, 1972. He is survived by his wife, Sister Evelyn Evans Howell; one daughter, Mrs. Mary Ann Millard; three granddaughters and one great grandson.

Brother Howell was a firm believer in the doctrine of Electing grace and the predestination of all things. I do not know of one more faithful to the dear church at Pittman's Grove, always filling his seat with true humbleness of a child of grace. Brother Howell did not talk much, and he did not have to, for just to behold the mark of love on his countenance, was inspiring to all. We loved him; but we bow in humble submission to the will of Israel's God who does all things well — who has never made a mistake; and we feel that Brother Howell is in the Land of Rest.

His funeral was preached at Pittman's Grove Church May 27, 1972, by Elder Curtis Rains and Elder Wayne Mitchell to an overflowing congregation of friends and brethren.

In conference July 8, 1972. Written by one of the least of all.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Mod.
Brother Lee Pope, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1973

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NO DISCHARGE

Great God, before thy throne
Thy waiting people bow;
O make their cause thine own
Grant their petitions now.

Consider their sad plight,
With trials overborne;
Bid them no longer fight,
All battle-scarred and worn.

They weary are, and faint,
They long for rest and peace;
Note each afflicted saint,
And grant him quick release.

A voice from heaven sounds:
"Refuse not him who speaks;"
The Word with strength abounds
To him who for it seeks.

Have we forgotten quite
The chastening of the Lord,
And will ye do despite
To his reproving word?

Consider Jesus, who
Such contradiction bore;
Let that your faith renew,
And strength to you restore.

Your striving against sin,
And your resistance made,
To blood have not yet been;
Why then so soon dismayed?

Consider those of old,
Who untold sufferings bore
And count, as you are told,
"Them happy which endure."

Clarice E. Durand

(This paraphrase was submitted by her daughter, Sister Mildred Gordy. Sister Durand was the widow of Elder Silas H. Durand.—J.D.W.)

SAD AT THE PASSING OF ELDER RUSTON

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood;

Since the time is near to renew the subscription to the *Signs of the Times* I felt I should write a note.

We are few in number up here in the northeast, but I feel they that are left, still stand firm in the faith once delivered to the Saints of God. Our pastor, Elder Slauson, though well along in years, still has a keen mind on scriptural matters. God, thru his infinite mercy, has strengthened him to speak ably at our meetings.

We felt sad at the passing of Elder Ruston for he served the churches in this area for many years. We looked forward to his returning from Canada to our associations. We felt the loss of Sister Elnora Sickler very much for she was deeply rooted in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

The Lord blessed me to attend two associations this year. The Upper Country Line and the Salisbury associations. As I met with the brethren from all parts of the country I thought of Isaiah 43rd chapter 6th verse. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;" The brethren came from all over, but they all spoke in accord.

God has, thru his determinate counsel

and foreknowledge, a people in every kindred tribe and tongue. Isaiah was endowed with the gift of prophecy and was instructed of God to prophesy of God's wrath against Israel. And also of the glorious salvation of the elect of God, who were to be cleansed and redeemed of their sins by the shed blood of the Lamb Christ Jesus. He is referred to in Isaiah 42nd chapter 1st verse as "My Servant." We read "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth? I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." God speaks through the prophet Isaiah of all the wonderful things in store for the elect. How king's loins will be loosed to make this possible. (Isaiah 45 — 1) Isaiah tells of the folly of trusting in idols and the failing of all these false doctrines. Then after the elect of God have found they can put no trust in false doctrine, Isaiah 51st chapter 1st verse reads. "Harken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Thus God is showing the elect what they are spiritually and what they are by nature. The elect of God bear two personalities. One that is of the man Adam and the other of the spiritual. In the 52nd chapter 1st verse read. "Awake, awake put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." The elect can no longer enjoy the things of this world that he once did.

Here in the 53rd chapter we see the climax of God's way of salvation. The first verse reads. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" It is only the Lord's people who are given eyes and ears to hear and understand these things. To the world of the nonelect the Lord's death on the cross was just an unusual incident.

We feel that the Lord's people, no matter where they come from, will know each other. For when they start to speak

their conversation will bear that true and certain sound.

These are some thoughts that came to mind. I hope you will pardon any error for I feel to be the least of all, and it is only by the grace of God that I am what I am.

Enclosed \$5.00 to renew my subscription for a year and \$1.00 for the Indigent Fund.

With hope and trust in God,
Woodrow W. Bellinger

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11)

These words of the Apostle Paul have been in my mind of late and I feel exercised to the point of writing something on them, knowing well that if this desire is of myself and the Lord has no part in it, nothing worthwhile will come of it.

Upon searching out the origin of this word armour and how it fits into the teachings and admonition of the Apostle, we must keep in mind that it's sole purpose was to protect the Lord's people against the wiles of the Devil. In it's spiritual application, it is that protective power of God, given to His elect, without which they would be unable to stand against the Devil's wiles. The Apostle had undoubtedly observed the Roman soldiers and men of valor wearing the armour made by man, to protect them against their enemy in battle, and he envisioned that the Lord's people likewise were constantly engaged against Satan, an enemy; thus He provided armour for them, which the Apostle admonished them to put on and wear, not just a part of it, but THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD. Those who are to engage an enemy in battle in this world, in the past and in these days, were known as Soldiers and it was timely that this title was given in olden times to the Lord's people who were destined to be engaged constantly against the Devil. Thus the title of Soldiers was used by those of olden times, and others down

thru the annals of time; and by the Hymnists inspired to write sacred songs.

We find the word armour does not apply only to God's protective power, but it also applies to Satan's dominion over man, it being the strong and powerful lusts of sin, ignorance, etc., which are the armour he used to keep his power and dominion in the hearts of men. St. Luke 11:22 brings this out, showing when the Lord takes over, "He taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils." We find that the word armour was widely used by the Apostle, it's salient use being against the Devil's wiles, and it being such graces, and spiritual weapons as are for the defense of the soul, and whereby we may be enabled to combat with our spiritual enemies. In Romans 13:12 he wrote, "...Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light." Again in 2 Cor. 6-7 he referred to it as "The Armour of Righteousness."

The Apostle brought out further who the real enemy was that the Lord's people are always to be engaged against. In Ephesians 6:12, we find, "For we wrestle not against flesh, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of his world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." This armour must, therefore, be used to combat Satan's power or standing as a principality, a ruler of darkness of this world, etc. Principalities are, we find, a royal state or those having dominion over many people, so the word applies both to Satan and to earthly powers. The Apostle, in Titus 3:1, told him to admonish and exhort the Church, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates," etc. This was timely counsel to the Lord's people in those days and for all time yet to come to pass. How many do we see today who claim to be Christians and some with big titles in Churches, in the front ranks of demonstrators, or linked up with groups who violently oppose the Laws of our various branches of Government? Are not they, and all others so engaged,

under the direct power and dominion of Satan? The Apostle then continued in verses 13-18, naming the various parts of which the **WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD** consists, "having your loins girt about with truth and having the breastplate of righteousness," etc. What a wonderful armour this is in it's complete assemblage, and it is freely given to those Soldiers, —the Lord's chosen people, all cut and fitted to their spiritual being, and which will never cease to be effective against the wiles of the Devil.

Now to enumerate or list all the wiles of Satan, would take much space. Much has been written about them in the Scriptures and by many in writings and in songs thru out the ages past, thus the Lord's people can readily place most all them. I find in the bound volume of letters written some 200 years ago by John Newton, born in London in 1725 who became a "Soldier of the Cross," leaving many inspiring letters and poems and preached sermons behind him when he departed this world, a very wonderful letter treating on the wiles of Satan's devices, which he termed "Satan's principal devices," saying, "Satan is a hard taskmaster, when he interferes in the performance of our spiritual duties." Some several lines were written on each of the salient devices, which is set forth only in title, viz; 1. To hide from the Lord's people, the Lord's designs in permitting him thus to rage. 2. To make them utter impatient speeches, which do but aggravate their distress. 3. To persuade them that all they feel and tremble at, arises immediately from their own hearts. 4. To drive them from the throne of grace. 5. (adding something from another letter) Satan's violent temptations when he is permitted to come in as a flood, and to overpower the apparent exercise of every grace by a torrent of blasphemies and evil imaginations.

It is seen that the Apostle admonished the Lord's people to not only put on this **WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD**, but to wear it constantly, all the time, for Satan never ceases in his tireless efforts to weaken and conquer, if possible, all the

Lord's people. Now when something is worn constantly, particularly bright shiny armour, it will become dull in appearance. Thus this armour we have in mind needs shining, and thru the medium of prayer, we find this is done. The words written long ago are fitting:—

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright."

It is worthy of note to read I Samuel 38—40, and find that Saul armed David with his armour (made by man), which David cast off before facing the Philistine giant with his sling and five stones. This shows, I believe, that the armour of God was David's sufficiency and likewise the sufficiency of all the Lord's people in combatting enemies both naturally and spiritually.

Concluding, will refer to Ephesians 6:12, —that part "Against spiritual wickedness in high places." Mankind dwells here on earth, so the "high places" mentioned are here on earth. I believe they are the places of great renown, the glory of the multitudes ruled or swayed by false doctrines which is in truth and effect, spiritual wickedness. To mention but few of the known number of them, we have in Rome, the Vatican from which comes unbelievable claims of their divine right to be God's Church on earth; the Pope's taking the place of Jesus Christ on earth, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one: God himself on earth. Such claim was made by a high-up official of theirs in Chicago in recent years and has never been renounced. Also we have Mecca, the so-called Holy city of the Moslem-Mohammedism—Islamic million's faith. Mohammed was born there, and by his own appointment, was their divine prophet, second only to their God Allah. He brought about their Bible, the Koran. In Salt Lake City, Utah we have the stronghold-high place of the Latter Day Saints' millions. Their President in 1962, as carried in the news media, said their church is the kingdom of the Lord set up to endure forever and never to be dethroned or given to

another, etc. One could go on and on naming many others of millions upon millions of followers after false leaders abroad and in this country, and having untold millions of dollars at their command and great holdings of church properties, which would properly come within the category the Apostle had in mind. Undoubtedly there are many of the Lord's elect amongst them, to be brought out of such darkness at the Lord's own appointed time.

One who hopes and prays that he has put on the WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD, continually wear it on through his journey through this vile, wicked and sinful world, warding off Satan's fiery darts, and standing against his vile devised to the very end, when Satan will be banished forever to his eternal abode of darkness; and the Lord will gather his Jewels unto Him in that blissful eternal home.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
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REJOICE WITH JOY UNSPEAKABLE

A225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

Dear brother in the Lord and our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. Christian greetings to you and all others of like precious faith, who sometimes were afar off but now are made nigh by the shed blood and righteousness of our blessed Lord and Redeemer. We who not only were in darkness but darkness itself, alienated and separated from God by a rebellious nature, and the enmity of our heart and mind.

We then who by sad experience are made to know the depravity of a deceitful heart and darkened mind, then through a God given faith are made to rejoice both in the person and the finished work of the second person in the Holy Trinity, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. And as these and all other divine principles of spiritual truth are revealed to us, it makes us

rejoice with joy unspeakable as we, in a measure, are filled with His glory. Yes this same Jesus who manifestly was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, shall continue to shine brilliantly in the gospel heaven until this present world shall be no more. It is by the Spirit of our God and the constraining love of Christ that enables his called and qualified servants to preach the glad tidings of the blessed gospel, to feed His sheep and His lambs, and declare the whole counsel of God: that salvation from regeneration to glorification is of the Lord — to whom belongs the power, the honor and the glory both now and evermore.

May God continue to bless you, Brother Spangler, with the other editors, to continue to send forth our good paper, the *Signs of the Times*, for many years to come. May God continue to lead, guide and direct and protect His people to their journey's end in this present evil world. Brethren, pray for me.

In humble hope,
Elder Lavis Stewart

44 Durrett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is an article I have written for publication in the *Signs of the Times*, providing you deem it worthy, and you think it will be of any comfort and edification to the dear people of Christ's kingdom. I know that I have suffered great trials and afflictions day by day in this life. My age and absence of a clear mind is very sensitive to me; and my spelling is also bad.

At times I feel like that I just can't make it any further; but there is this article and one or two more that I desire to write before my health declines to where I can't do so.

I have for years felt like I would like to write, that which I truly hope has been the Lord's dealing with me. And to, I would like, the Lord willing, to write my understanding directly on the nature

of the new birth. But that, as all the scripture, especially the fundamental doctrine of our Lord, to me is a mystery which is hard to be understood; and more so, to explain.

I am enclosing personal check for \$10.00 which you may use as you see fit, or as you please.

Our Brother Gregory Duren is joining the Air Force, and I will surely miss him.

With all love and best wishes to you and Elder Wood. Grace, mercy and peace be with you both, in your publication, and in all your labor of love in the Lord.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

THE RESURRECTION

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51,52)

It is my desire to write some of my understanding of the scriptural teaching of the resurrection of Christ and His people. It is my understanding from the scriptures, and I hope by divine revelation to me, that Christ Jesus was the first to rise from the dead, the first-fruit unto God of the resurrection, the first-fruit of them that slept, the first begotten from the dead: that this same Jesus was crucified and put to death in the flesh, was buried and lay in the grave three days and nights, and then arose from the grave abolishing death, and destroyed him who had the power of death, which is the Devil, and arose victorious and triumphant over death and hell. And after being seen forty days by many witnesses, ascended into heaven at the right hand of the Majesty on high: there to, and does, appear in person glorified for all his people who are redeemed by his precious blood, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people under heaven.

It is worthy to note that the Apostle

used the word "shall" five times in the two verses of scripture quoted above. And we are sure that no other portion of scripture is to be found that teaches otherwise than that heading this writing. And we note that the Apostle himself was in hope of the resurrection and change himself, and all the elect of God for whom Christ died for their sins, and arose for their justification, and was graciously endued with the Holy Ghost to declare faithfully and truthfully the resurrection of the dead. The Apostle had already been quickened and given spiritual life, and lived by the faith of the Son of God, being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's love, mercy, grace and truth, but still was in hope of the resurrection of all the saints of God in Christ Jesus.

This is proved by his saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." And, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Also, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink (take your fill of fleshly desires) for tomorrow we die," and there would be no more of us. But it is taught in the above scriptures that we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

It seems clear to me that the trumpet will sound at the second personal appearing of Christ; for it is written, "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 (including Paul and I hope me) which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (spirit), and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Ever be with the Lord seems long enough, doesn't it? This is declared to take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye — as quick as the lightning shineth from one part of heaven unto the other. This is a mystery just as the Apostle said it was; but surely the

Sovereign God, who made the lightning as well as the twinkling of the eye, can by his almighty power act in the resurrection of the dead, and change in the living, as quickly as these.

Furthermore, there is no time in death: those that have been dead or asleep in Christ (counting time with the living) a thousand years, it is but a moment or twinkling of an eye with them. Christ lay in Joseph's new tomb three days, as he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." And that he did! "Come," said the angel, "see the place where the Lord lay. He is not here, He is risen."

Christ Jesus is both God and man? He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit and raised from death. It is written, "A body hast thou prepared me, O God." Not a body for me, but a body hast thou prepared me; and God raised Him from the dead, glorified in the very presence of God the Father.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as he is." If we did not appear in His likeness at His appearing, then we could not see him as he is in his glory. But we shall be raised in glory, in His glorious likeness. None shall see Christ in the beauty of His glorious person except those in His perfection of Beauty.

I feel I have the right to say concerning His people, that they will not only be raised and taken to glory, but will be raised in glory. They will be in His glorious likeness immediately, as quick as lightning at Christ's appearing. "So also is the resurrection of the dead (the saints that are asleep in Christ,) it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural

body (so was Jesus); it is raised a spiritual body. The twinkling of an eye is so quick it doesn't obscure in the least an object the eye is seeing; but the second and personal appearing of Christ Jesus, and the appearing of his people in his likeness, will not only be that quick, but will be the most glorious double appearing that has ever been seen or heard of.

"For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philp. 3:20,21) This is said to be our vile body changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. Our vile body, doesn't seem to be speaking of the church, for the church is called the body of Christ, and his people members of his body in particular; and God has set each member in the body, church or kingdom as it pleased him. Of course, each member or person will be changed, which is called our vile body, or each individual's vile body, for they personally will awake with Christ Jesus' likeness. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: when I awake in thy likeness, I shall be satisfied." The resurrection is a personal thing with all the saints of God, just as their salvation is personal with them. Paul said, "From henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me in that day; and not to me only but to all them that love his appearing." Why? Because he loves me (individually) and gave himself for me.

It is awful how greatly Jesus suffered for sinners. I have often said that if we wished to see how greatly Jesus hated sin, look at Jesus on the cross — and to see how greatly Jesus loved his people, look at Jesus on the cross, bearing the curse and wrath of God for wretched sinners. He died for their sins in their stead, and rose again for their justification. And being justified freely by his grace, we have peace with God

through our Lord Jesus Christ. These God predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; and it behooved Christ, by whom are all things and for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. They are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ; and if children then heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Of this they have an earnest in this life. We not only adopt a body of a child, but the child which has a body: and God's people are adopted children by Jesus Christ.

Some claim some part of the Adam sinner is born over again by the new birth, and some part is adopted. That is not God's doing but man's imagination. The new birth is from above of the divine nature of the spirit of God, of an incorruptible seed by the living Word of God. Christ is our life and resurrection. We live here by the faith of the Son of God. All are the children of God by faith, and that faith is of and in Jesus Christ. Christ is said to be in us the hope of glory. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory: see him as he is and be like him; and ever be with him.

It is the poor, afflicted child of grace, who has received two births of diverse natures, who has warfare between the two natures. Neither of these natures is the child, but the child has them both. It is this child that is admonished to put off the old man and put on the new man. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. . ." as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. It is this poor and unworthy child, now in warfare, trials and tribulations, that will in person finally and eternally be perfectly and completely delivered from such bondage of corruption, and be changed into the likeness and image and liberty of Jesus and his glory.

"For this corruptible must put on (be changed to) incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So

when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? (Jesus tasted it). O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, (Jesus atoned for it) and the strength of sin is the law. (Jesus fulfilled it). But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Be it so, O Lord Jesus. I know that I am very imperfect in wisdom, knowledge and understanding. If some of the brethren see where I have erred from the truth, I will appreciate their kind and tender correction.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

CALLED WITH AN HOLY CALLING"

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel!" (2 Tim. 1:9-10)

As the Lord blesses us, may we meditate upon the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. What did Paul mean by saying "Who hath saved us?" When did this take place? Notice that God did the saving, and man did not have any part in the matter. God did the saving in the person of Jesus Christ. (See Col. 1:15) The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and intercession of Jesus Christ are what is necessary for the salvation of sinners. This was made manifest when Jesus came upon this earth in the flesh, and at the appointed time when he died in the room and stead for his people.

We believe that the salvation of God's people has always been secure in the mind and purpose of God. God saw all

of his people even before the foundation of the world. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." (Rom. 8:29) God knew his people before this world was in existence. In this sense, "who hath saved us," means that the salvation of God's people has always been secure in Jesus Christ. Someone might say we are speculating, but let us consider this Scripture: "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past." (Ecc. 3:15) Notice this expression: "That which is to be hath already been." When this world was created, it was yet to come when mankind would die by the fall, and this death would pass upon all men in Adam, and then later on in the years to come Jesus would come upon this earth, keep the law and fulfill it, and then die for his people to satisfy the just demands of the law. All this has already been in the mind and purpose of almighty God. There is no new thing under the sun, so God has already seen all of this from the beginning. (see Ecc. 1:9)

"Called us with an holy calling." God has called his people from the beginning to be his own. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:" (2 Thess. 2:13) This is an holy calling. Jesus has made you holy by washing away your sins in his blood. No man shall see the Lord without holiness. (see Heb. 12:14) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an *holy nation*, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:" (1 Peter 2:9) the righteousness of Jesus has made his people holy. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride

adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10)

"Not according to our works." This salvation is not according to the works of man. If it were, then man would have that much to brag about and boast and pat himself on the back, and in turn man would be praising himself for his own good works. The Scripture says that God will not give his glory to another. Therefore all honor and praise and glory belong to God.

The purpose of God was that salvation would not be by the works of man, but that it would be by Grace. As we think of grace, we think of a free gift. If we earn something, then someone is indebted to pay us what we earn. If salvation were conditional, God would be indebted to give this to those that kept the conditions. Following this reasoning, salvation would not be by grace, but it would be by debt. (see Rom. 4:4) If that reasoning be true, then creature praise would be heard in heaven, and men would not within their hearts appreciate the works, suffering, etc. of Jesus. We are glad that this is not true. Jesus came to those that were sick, lame, and felt the need of a redeemer. Jesus is the saviour of sinners. From time to time, do you not praise God from your heart for his wonderful works to you? We read in the Scriptures that the heavenly host shall render praises unto God for this mercy that endureth for ever. "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. 7:10) Notice the praises of the angels: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beast and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:11-12)

This salvation was given to the sheep before the world began. "Which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This salvation is by Jesus. "For I

determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts. 4:12) This shows that all the works were done by Jesus. "...I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4) The works were finished by Jesus. As Jesus hung upon the cross and before he gave up the ghost, he said, "It is finished." the poet said: "It is finished, it is finished, Christ has borne the heavy load." "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness..." (Rom. 9:28) God finishes a work that he began. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6)

God determined the salvation of his people before the world began. "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. 1:11)

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." This salvation was made manifest to you at the appointed time, was it not? This salvation is made manifest in due time to all of the elect of God. This is made possible by the work of the Holy Ghost. "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" (John 14:26) "He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:15)

You cannot sing the sweet songs of the redeemed until you know something about your lost and ruined condition. You cannot sing "Amazing Grace" from your heart until you know how miserable it is to be lost.

"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"

Since this salvation is made manifest by the appearing of Jesus within one, it

gives us more evidence that it is a heart felt matter. Salvation is a good sound to a poor broken hearted sinner. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Psalm 89:15) It is joyful within the heart, and it causes one to praise the Lord for his mercy that endureth for ever. "From the rising of the sun, until the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3) "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19) Heart felt religion is wonderful! Your eyes are turned upward to the Lord, and your heart leaps within you, as you praise the Lord from your heart. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." (Psalm 42:1) There is an earnest seeking after the Lord. Sometimes we cannot find him, as Job experienced; "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" (Job 23:3) It causes us sorrow when we cannot meditate upon Spiritual things any time we desire to. This causes us to pray unto the Lord to bless us to meditate upon Spiritual things. Since we know something about the weakness of the flesh, we yearn for a closer walk with God. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalms 61:2)

"Who hath abolished death." Jesus has abolished this death for his elect only. This eternal death or eternal separation between God and man faced all of mankind. But, Jesus redeemed his people from the curse of the law. Therefore, he has abolished death for his people, and they shall receive the gift of God, which is eternal life. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: For you are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14) "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14) "Who delivered us

from so great a death, and doeth deliver: and in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." (2 Cor. 1:10) This has reference to Jesus who delivered his people from the curse or this death which the world will suffer for ever.

The gospel is the power of God to give salvation to his people. (Rom. 1:16) God gives Spiritual life to his elect. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring." (Acts 17:28) "...The gift of God is eternal life..." (Rom. 6:23) It is only thru the mercy of Jesus that we shall live for ever.

These deep mysteries concerning the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that God gives salvation to all of his people, and that God is able to keep them by his mighty power, etc., are revealed to the saints in due time. "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (Eph. 3:3-5) We realize this last Scripture leads to a deep, beautiful subject, but we quoted it to bring out the point that at the appointed time God reveals the deep mysteries to his saints which it pleased him to withhold to himself for a period of time. Remember, the secret things belong to the Lord, but the revealed things belong to his people. (see Duet. 29:29)

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

HE DOESN'T NEED HELP

243 Baker Street
Warren, Ark. 71671

Dear Editors of the Signs:

My subscription is out and I don't want to miss a single copy, so am enclosing \$10.00 for which please renew my subscription for another two years.

It is indeed a blessing that God gives us such spiritual minded men to write to

His people of the wonderful works of His grace to His chosen, poor and afflicted people. Paul said, "By grace are ye saved, ...not of works lest any man should boast." And that we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. When? It was decreed in the Covenant of Grace before the world was. So we poor worms of the dust were not there to help in any way, as far as eternal salvation is concerned. And when man was formed of the dust, He didn't have him there to help, as he didn't need his help; and doesn't yet require man's help in any way.

The preaching of the gospel is foolishness to those that perish, but to the elect it is the power of God. May we be blessed to give God the glory for the witness within our poor souls, which He has given us by his quickening Spirit, and the applying of the blood of His Son, our Elder Brother and Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord. All that Jesus shed his blood for to redeem, are prepared for heaven and immortal glory.

I have felt at times that He would be just should I have to suffer all the tribulations that Job did. Yet I quake to think that I should have to suffer as he did. It is impossible that one of the redeemed saints should be cast into hell. The hymn, "Show pity Lord" by Watts, page 155 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, is the confession of one whose eyes have been opened and brought under conviction of sin. One must have such feelings or there would be no conviction at all. It is expressed in remembrance of that feeling of just condemnation; but never can it have an application to one who has experienced the pardon of sin, and has a hope of eternal life. "Wherein they greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." It is in this sense the expression may properly be used. If otherwise it would belie our hope; which cannot be, since, "For by

one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified."

In gospel bonds.

A sister I hope,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

Rt. 7

Carthage, Miss. 39051

Dear Editors:

I send greeting to the *Signs of the Times* and want to renew my subscription.

I am seventy-eight years old, and hope to be able to read this good paper as long as I live. I thank God for preserving a remnant that stands firm on the Rock that the gates of hell shall not prevail against.

I hope that it may be pleasing to the Almighty God to have mercy on this unworthy and poor sinner.

I beg your prayers.

Doxie Edwards

LOVES THE PRECIOUS PAPER

3116 Maurice Avenue
Richmond, Va. 23224

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose \$15.00 to pay for the *Signs of the Times* for two shut in sisters. They are two lovely sisters and they would like to have the paper. I would like to share my paper with them but we live quite a distance apart, and it is quite hard to get it to them. Use the remainder as you see fit.

I love the precious paper and look forward to it coming every month — it has so much food for my hungry soul.

I am now nearing my 82nd birthday. I know I have not much longer to stay here. I used to dread death, but now I do not dread it. I feel the Lord has spared me so many years here. My heart and mind are on heavenly things. I love the Lord and pray He loves me. My mind is on a heavenly home, if I be blessed of God to be one of his little ones. When you go to the throne of grace, remember me.

Your sister in hope of eternal life.

Sincerely,
Nannie E. Varnier

Danville, Virginia March, 1973

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BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Scott's Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE

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(To January 1, 1973)

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OBSERVING FIFTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The children of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lambeth wish to extend an invitation to the brethren and friends, to meet with them in the observance of their parent's fiftieth wedding anniversary, on Sunday, March 18, 1973, between the hours of two and five o'clock, at the Monticello Club House on Hycone Road, about one mile east of Monticello Church. No gifts please.

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 31

How forgetful that poor sinners are. This forgetfulness has followed them all the historical scenes of their life. Yet, as handicapped as they have been by this besetting sin, they refuse to acknowledge it all of the way. Instead, they are always reminding the Lord of their good intentions and dependable qualities.

If the Lord wills, let us pray. O Lord our heavenly Father, we beg thee to teach us how frail that we are; to understand that there is not any stability within us as far as our flesh is concerned; to understand that even though thy mercies and thy deliverances were but yesterday, that soon, soon, we have forgotten them; to know that we must be shown again and again the miracles that have been displayed in our lives, and O Lord, even though it is by fire, by the heating of the furnace, save us; but in mercy consume our evil works. Amen.

The deliverance of our fathers out of Egypt was most spectacular; that deliverance was altogether by the power of God. God sent Joseph into the land of Egypt. This land was darkness. There is not any indication that there was any light or knowledge there concerning God. Joseph was not sent by men. They, as far as their part in his abduction and being sold into Egypt, did not have any intention of it coming out as it did. They did not, in their feelings, have any sin to be saved from. Their intention was *his* destruction, not *their* salvation. They did not volunteer to go down later. Until each of my readers have experienced (in nature) starvation, I do not want even an echo or reverberation of an echo, that they could have helped going down into Egypt. *I do not want to hear of that.* After getting down there, and after Pharaoh had grown indifferent toward Israel to the extent of enslaving them in bondage, I do not think that any reference to the ability of Israel to get of themselves would be wholesome doctrine; I do not think, yea, I know, that it would not be becoming to sound doctrine. I freely acknowledge that I know but little, and I am sometimes afraid about that little, but I want to know, yea, sometimes, I do know, the doctrine of God's saving grace, even to the extent that I am not afraid of *it*, nor to contend *for* it, nor for gainsayers to deny it; therefore, if I have a reader that feels unable to take a step, or to say a word, or to do a thing because of an indwelling of sin, then I write for your comfort and edification. If on the other hand, I have a reader that *is* able to save himself in any aspect of the Christian walk, I call on you to gird yourself and speak right out to us, always with this reservation, that you find us a character in Holy Writ that leaves us evidence of being able to do that.

The time came when the oppression of Pharaoh became unbearable. This was then a time of prayer, a time of crying out to the Lord for mercy, a time of begging Him to undertake for them and to deliver them out of bondage. This petition did not set in when the

designs of Joseph's brethren was being executed; it did not come up before God when the fatness of Egypt was being enjoyed in plentitude. Perhaps there is as much talk today about prayer as ever there was in the world, but those that are talking about the need of it are not doing any of it. The pleasures of Egypt are being indulged in without a qualm of conscience; the fill of sin is being taken by everyone on every side; the consequences of sin and the goodness of God are two things that are not being sought by these. There is today, as there was in that terrible day, prayer ascending up to God. They were not talking about the need for prayer; *they were praying.* They were not saying that people needed to pray more; they were praying constantly. O dear saints, what pleasure it gives me to declare to you that God heard the prayer of these praying characters, and that He likewise hears every prayer of His praying people today.

When the people of God have needed a leader, he raised up that leader. When His people needed the afflictions of the rod; when they have needed, according to His judgment, the chastening which corrects and teaches; when the Moabitish washpot (Psa. 60:8) is to be used for the cleansing of the walk, for the separation of the precious from the vile, for the purging of him or her that have become wise above what is written, it is given to them. Such a leader was Moses, and methinks that I will not have one disputant about this being the exclusive work of God. The raising up of Pharaoh was God's work, and it was for this reason alone, to wit, That God shows His power, and that His name be declared throughout all the earth. God has been apologized for by those whose breath came from the same source that the raising up of Pharaoh did, but I am sure that His work and name was not besmirched by His work, nor His name's honor and glory enhanced by the apology. Pharaoh was wicked, and the wicked are the sword of the Lord, and Israel's God has a perfect right to lift up His own sword, has He not? If not, why

not? Men may keep keepsakes and heirlooms, but when that which God made a thing for has been accomplished then God is through with it, and He destroys it. That has been declared down the ages and will continue to be declared; if not, then that which God raised Pharaoh up for will not be accomplished. The rod of God's anger will be raised up whether it is Pharaoh or the Assyrian or the Chaldeans or Herod or Pilate or the present day persecutors, and when they have been used as His sword they will be destroyed.

Behold, who will, the wisdom and the love of God as made manifest in the travel of Israel into Egypt. How my heart is made to leap for joy when such is laid down before us for our rest and relaxation in the green pastures and beside the deep and smooth streams of everlasting love. Moses, the needed leader, is raised up and nurtured by Egypt (but not of Egypt) for the salvation of Israel and the destruction of this cruel nation. Sometimes I hear people speak of God's injustice in doing things. I have heard it said that it would be unjust for God to predestinate all things and then punish those that did evil; I have heard it said that it would be unjust for God to hate one and love the other, seeing that all were guilty; I have heard God arraigned on every hand by those that would not have Him reign over them, but each time I hear it, by whomever it is, I am reminded that God is going to say to that self-sovereign, Who art thou that repliest against God (Dan 4:35; Rom. 9:20). The Lord raised up Moses and placed Him in the court of Pharaoh to educate him and prepare him for the work before him. How wonderful that both were raised up to fill their sphere and state of action; one to the approval of God, the other to be destroyed in the sea.

I do hope that my readers are cognizant of the illustrious matters before us; that we are beholding the work of God in our salvation; that we are traveling together in the unfolding of the text. If there is a finger in all Christendom that can point out one

thing that a man or set of men has done to bring this wonderful work about, I would like for it to be raised now. I am getting too far in the evening; the shadows are lengthening too far for me to trifle with such sacred and divine and eternal things in a flippant manner. If men have played or can play any part in being brought out of Egypt (darkness) I need and want to know it. Especially, since we are coming to the climax of this deliverance, I would like to see the man that would even mention a name other than that of God that had anything to do with the salvation or deliverance of the children of Israel at the Red Sea. Furthermore, I would press upon the children of God not to look to idols for salvation; that they not only remember that every last one of the children of Israel were delivered *across* this sea, and that every last one of the Egyptians were destroyed *in* it.

Now to notice that text a little more particularly. All that I have written has been unfolding of the text without saying a thing about the letter of it. Here is the nation of Israel. Here is the monument to His saving grace. Here is the one way that God delivers Israel. This way is not only the one way; it is the only way. All of this salvation is of God. Notwithstanding this wonderful deliverance, as soon as the Assyrian army encamps round about them, they flee to Egypt for help. Ah, how we assail one another for an imagined weakness. Look at our brethren back there. O the times that the Lord refreshed the memory of Israel about His high and outstretched arm that delivered them at the Sea; and yet they forgot it. How we poor sinners do forget His many mercies and blessings and benefits to us. Notwithstanding all his rehearsing His deliverance of them out of the snare in Egypt, they forgot it again and again. This time is not an exception. Having forgotten the Arm that delivered them, they turned back to Egypt for help. What a spectacle. What a monument to the weakness of poor sinners. So many I have heard tell a wonderful experience in being delivered in their first experience, only to soon

forget it; how often have I heard those dear children of God sing

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see,

and yet, instead of saying grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home, they now are saying that it is by my works that I acceptance gain with Him. There is not any difference in the plight of the Israelites in this situation and those of today that feel some portion of salvation is in their hands.

All of the Egyptians were men, even as weak as those that were destroyed at the Sea. They depended on horses, and this is always disastrous to those that depend on them (Psa. 33:17; 147:10; Hos. 1:7); they that ride on horses, and those they would help, must both fall before the fiery indignation that awaits them in Zion, for they will always find the furnace highly heated in Jerusalem for the consumption of any that would depend on Egypt. The Lord hath spoken clearly and with power, that salvation is of the Lord, and when Israel practices vanity by going down to Egypt for help, He will be in their midst as the lion roaring over its prey. As the shepherds of natural sheep will not move the lion in its attack on their flock, just so, in the same manner, in the same degree, will God not spare those shepherds that speak for Israel in the hour when he comes in the fire of His Spirit in their consumption. (Heb. 12:29)

As birds flying, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it. How wonderful is this deliverance to poor sinners. As the eagle builds her nest on the highest crag, and then flies concealed in the ethereal atmosphere above ready to suddenly descend in her fury, just so will the Lord sit highly enthroned round about Jerusalem, to defend Israel and to expose and lay waste by intense burning in the heated furnace in Jerusalem, all her enemies. In the midst of this fiery ordeal for the enemies, God speaks with

a still small voice, and yet in power to Israel, to return unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. This is just before a great conflagration is to be felt in Zion and Jerusalem. The day is at hand when all the lying vanities of Egypt are to be laid aside; when all the idols and arms of flesh are to be cast from Israel. The Lord is coming upon the children of Israel in fiery vengeance upon all that would make golden calves and dance around them; upon all that would go to Egypt and it has such a devastating experience to them that pass over to their stronghold, and their princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and furnace in Jerusalem.

Let us remember that Zion and Jerusalem are the same city. Zion was a higher part of the city in a south-western direction, but they were referred to as the same city. The children of God have not come to Sinai the mountain of fire that destroyed, but they have come to Mount Zion, and unto the fire of salvation. They that reside here have been chosen to this end. Moab, the wash pot of the Lord; Assyria the rod of the anger of the Lord against all idols and isms and theories; the consuming fire of this furnace, all, all is here for the cleansing and purifying of the elect of God. The trial of this fire is destructive, but not the children of God themselves. Their works are all destroyed, but they themselves are saved as by fire.

All of the saints have experienced this trial by fire. The trial was not desirable to the flesh, but Job that was passing through the trial, recognized where it was coming from. The saddest part of it all was that even his wife did not know about what was taking place. The trial was indeed intense so much so that he lost her companionship, but it only consumed that which was to be blamed in him. The sadness of the trial was such that he lost the felt companionship with his God, but, while he lost sight of Him, he received a valuable lesson in it all. He was blessed to trust Him and was going to be gold without any alloy or spot

or blemish or any such thing. What a blessing it is to know that even though the fire is grievous, that it is purifying and separating the precious from the vile.

Our beloved brother wrote us a lovely epistle in which he enjoined on us not to be misled about the fiery trial which is to try us. It is a fiery trial which tries those that dwell in Jerusalem; none are exempt from this trial (I Pet. 4:12); and another of our dear brethren declared that *every* man's work shall be made manifest; that the day (that is, the day of that work) shall declare it, *because* it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try *every* man's work of what sort it is. This fire is in Zion or Jerusalem or in the heaving bosom of *every* child of God. It does not go out by night nor by day; it remains constantly burning and bringing to naught and nonentity every principle and doctrine and thought and deed that would prove derogatory to that salvation which was treasured in Christ before the world began, and was made manifest by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This fire destroys Egyptian bondage and Assyrian cruelty and saves poor sinners by consuming their works and removing the ashes out of the way, and giving them beauty instead. (Isa. 61:3)

Written by request of an aged sister in Texas.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

SOWING IN TEARS.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." —Psalm 126:5

But to whom does this sweet promise apply? Who is it that sows in tears? No one in nature. We would think it very strange to see a man weeping while engaged in sowing grain in a well-cultivated field. His tears and work would contradict each other. His work declares a confidence in the ground and

in the seed, and an assurance that a rich harvest will reward him for his trouble, while his tears express a lack of any such confidence and assurance. The sowing of seed is a cheery, pleasant work, full of bright hopes and joyful anticipations. The husbandman does this work in full confidence as to the result. His ground has been thoroughly prepared, his seed is good, he has chosen the proper season, and he has no reason to doubt that he will in due time reap a satisfactory harvest. In this work, therefore, he has no cause to weep. In nature seed-time is not time for tears.

The natural man, in doing those works by which he expects to gain the favor of God and obtain an entrance into heaven, cannot be said to sow in tears. The field is his own heart, and he regards it as good soil, which he is able to prepare in a suitable manner. In it he plants and sows the best of seed, as he regards it, and expects with the utmost confidence that his labor will be abundantly rewarded. He sees no more cause for weeping than a man who is sowing wheat in a rich, mellow soil, on a clear, beautiful day.

If one who owned a small piece of land, which was all his dependence, would find it failing from year to year to respond to his labors, yielding less and less, until finally it ceased to produce anything; and if again he should go forth with all his remaining seed, which he feared had lost all its virtue, and should scatter it with all his remaining strength upon the soil that had proven worthless before, making this last feeble effort with scarce a shadow of hope, even against hope, because he sees no other possible chance of preserving life; we should expect to find that man sowing in tears.

So when one who has been working the field of his own heart with satisfactory results hitherto, begins to notice a failure in the returns, begins to realize the blighting effects of sin, and finds that he has no remedy for that deadly blight, from that time he begins to sow in tears. The field grows worse in his view, until he finds it entirely barren of all that is

good, but fearfully and increasingly fruitful of all that is evil. It seems a terribly hopeless field to work in, but it is all he has, and he cannot get away from it. He cannot but still try and try, and hope against hope that he may yet succeed in finding some good spot, some little valuable soil, that may yield at least one good thing. If only one good prayer, if even one sigh or groan, that he could know was from a pure desire, could be brought forth, there would be some relief. But sin is in everything, in every cry, in every breath; and even the best of seed seems to become bad when it comes into his hand. If he tries to sow any part of the word of God, the very words seem to lose their pure and holy character as they fall into that field, and to be only the letter which killeth; to mean nothing when there but to manifest the hypocrisy and worthlessness of that deceitful heart and utterly corrupt nature. Here is one that sows in tears.

What an unspeakable blessing it is for one to be taught the corrupt and barren nature of this field, although in learning this solemn and important lesson he is reduced to such a wretched condition, and brought to the borders of death. What a blessed thing it is to be forced to scatter the last handful of seed upon what he now sadly believes to be a thoroughly unfruitful soil. Every effort to do some good thing in the sight of a holy God, every effort to cleanse ourselves from evil, and to make some atonement for sin, every sigh and groan because all such efforts fail, every cry for mercy, is well compared to sowing, but it is sowing in tears. But every poor sinner who thus sows in tears shall reap in joy. Here is the mystery of salvation, the miracle of grace, the wonder of redemption. Here is the soul-surprising experience of a new heart. The old, worthless, barren field is in the background now, and here is the field which the Lord hath blessed. Upon the new heart the Lord has written his law of love. Here is every plant that is desirable, every fruit that is good. All our desires, all our sighs and prayers, like good seed, seem to have fallen upon

good ground here that we knew not of, and to have brought forth abundantly. Nothing is lacking of all that we longed for. We find everything in Jesus. Work has ceased. There is no need for work. Nothing is left to be desired when we have Jesus. Our works only discovered our helplessness and inability; his works have secured everything—eternal deliverance from sin, salvation from all vileness, redemption from death and the grave, and every grace and blessing, with all the purity and joy and glory of heaven. In Jesus we have a soul-satisfying taste of love, and joy, and peace, and meekness, and goodness, and gentleness, and faith, and longsuffering, and all the fragrant and delicious fruit of the Spirit.

It is because Jesus went forth under the law weeping, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, bearing precious seed, and came again in the gospel, bringing his sheaves with him, that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He did the work which enables them to reap a rich and blessed harvest. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, which is infinitely better than would have been what once they hoped for, to have it fulfilled by them. He works in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. In no other way could there ever be anything within a sinful man that would please a holy God. We are therefore made to realize how wonderfully good and glorious are his works, and how precious also are his thoughts concerning us, and how great is the sum of them. This fills our hearts with that sweetest of all feelings, praise to his great and lovely and most excellent name.

We do not make a harvest ours by reaping it. It must be ours, or we would have no right to reap it. Reaping is entering upon the enjoyment of it. When the rich harvest fields of the gospel are opened to our astonished view within our own poor hearts, we learn that this precious harvest of life everlasting, with all its infinite blessings which we now begin to reap in joy, was ours before we knew of it in Jesus Christ; and through the fellowship of his sufferings, who

went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, we enter into the joy of our Lord.

Silas H. Durand

Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 23, 1886

ZECHARIAH 14:6,7

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.”

By request of our esteemed brother, F.K. Cooper, of Washington County, Pennsylvania, we submit such thoughts as we have on this portion of the prophetic testimony of Jesus; and in this, as in every expression of our sentiments on the subject of salvation, we wish ever to be found in harmony with the inspired Scriptures. No views, however ably presented, can be correct unless sustained by that infallible standard; and every sentiment which rests upon the firm foundation of the written word of the Lord must with that word endure forever.

“And it shall come to pass.” This positive assertion of a future event could never have been used by any other authority but that of our God, who declares the end from the beginning. Without the immutable purpose of infinite wisdom and power there would be no certainty of anything in the future: therefore the denial of the absolute and supreme predestination of God, including all the events in time and the fulfillment of his eternal purpose, involves the rejection of all prophetic revelation. Indeed it is only in the positive certainty of the determinate counsel of the will of God that the final salvation of the redeemed saints is assured in Christ Jesus. In every declaration of prophecy, from the sentence of the law given to Adam in the garden of Eden to the close of the inspired record, the infallible assurance of divine truth is recorded, as in this text, in the strongest form of absolute predestination. Nowhere has God spoken

of his purpose as dependent upon contingencies or affected by the will or action of any creature or being outside of himself. The pride of carnal reason has applied to the sovereignty of God the contradictory term of “permissive decrees,” but no authority can be found in the Scriptures for any such limitation of the infinite will of God. His word is spirit and life, and his power is sufficient for the accomplishment of all that he has declared shall come to pass, whether it be the disobedience of Adam, by which sin entered into the world, or the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in which his saints are justified. God is holy, just and good in all his works; not less in the condemnation of the guilty than in the justification of the saints through the righteousness of their perfect Redeemer. In all the counsel of his will nothing is uncertain; therefore he can with truth declare, “It shall come to pass.”

“In that day.” To an attentive reader, even with a natural mind, there must be manifest in the letter of the Scriptures definite certainty in the record, including not only the actual performance of all that God declares, but the very exact moment when each event shall come to pass. The land of Canaan was given to Abraham by the unalterable truth of God four hundred years before his descendants were brought into possession of it. And they were just as certainly appointed to suffer Egyptian bondage as they were assured of that goodly heritage. The reason given to Abram for the delay was that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.—Gen. 15:16. Carnal reason cannot understand how this wickedness was included in the divine purpose; but God has left it on record to confound the wisdom of man and to show his absolute sovereignty over the wickedness of the vilest sinners. Then his people may well rest in the assurance of his word, knowing that no power of iniquity can move beyond the limit set by the hand of their almighty Redeemer, who “hath determined the times before appointed.” It was not possible that the great event declared in this prophecy should come

to pass before that day which was specified, nor yet could it be postponed beyond that day. Such a day never was before that time, nor can it ever again be in the same sense; yet in the experience of the saints that day is still revealed to each of them individually.

"The light shall not be clear nor dark."

"The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached." The preaching of John did not proclaim the gospel kingdom as set up in its visible organization. He declared only that it was at hand. In this he was indeed "a burning and a shining light" as compared with all the prophets by whom God has before spoken unto the fathers. As the messenger whom our Lord sent before his face, John was a highly favored servant, and well might he rejoice in the glorious announcement given him to proclaim; yet he did not enter into the organized church of Christ in gospel light and liberty, since he was slain in the prison by Herod before our Lord was crucified. Until Jesus nailed to his cross the handwriting of ordinances, the law and the night of Judiasm still obscured the light of the testimony of salvation by the blood of the everlasting covenant in Christ. There was no living light in that old legal covenant. It could only show sin as exceeding sinful, and make manifest the perfect justice of the divine sentence under which the whole world was already condemned. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Gal. iii. 19. In the interval between the preaching of John the Baptist and the establishment of the gospel dispensation by the Holy Ghost filling the apostles on the day of Pentecost, there was a period which was neither the clear shining of the light of gospel liberty, nor yet the darkness of the legal night, with its bondage and shadows. There was, indeed, light which was superior to the reflected moonbeams of the Mosaic dispensation; yet even the most favored disciples could not by that light see clearly the eternal power and God-head of the Lord Jesus. This was

shown by the request of Philip.—John 14:8. The faith of the Son of God had led the disciples to forsake all and follow Jesus; yet they could not see him as the only manifestation of God until he was made known to them in his glory by the Spirit of truth, after his resurrection. It was light that made manifest to them the great grace which was in the Lord Jesus; yet they did not understand his triumphant power over sin and death in that day.

The particular time referred to is described in the preceding context as the day when the feet of the Lord shall stand upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and that mount shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley. As that mount stood between the Gentiles and the entrance into the literal city of Jerusalem in the type, so the truth and justice of God forbade any sinner to hope in the salvation of God. No created arm had power to cleave that mountain as described in the text, nor could any other but the power of God so cleave the mount of divine perfection which bars against the sinner the entrance of the true Jerusalem (the possession, habitation, or vision of peace). Here is the strong consolation of the gospel as contained in this portion of prophetic testimony. The feet of our redeeming Lord did stand upon the mount of Olives which was before Jerusalem, and that mount was cleft by his power so that a very great valley was formed, protected on either hand by the perfections of God; and in this way of truth and justice the ransomed of the Lord enter the gates of the holy city where the presence of God is their everlasting light and joy. The very truth and justice which cut off the sinner from all hope of entering into this holy habitation, under the feet of our Redeemer afford assurance and protection to the trembling sinner who hears the voice of Jesus speaking peace through his own most precious blood.

"But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord." The repetition of this positive form of assurance presents

the certainty with which it is settled in the eternal purpose of that God who moved the prophet to record this wonderful truth. The term "one day" does not signify any measure of natural time, since Peter says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."—2 Peter 3:8. The important assertion here presented is that this day is "known to the Lord." This includes the comforting truth that nothing contrary to his eternal purpose of love and grace can be developed in that day. Here the faith of the Son of God finds a sweet and consoling rest for all those whose trust is the name of the Lord. Since even the hour and the power of darkness is included in the knowledge and supreme decree of our God, it is clear that the assertion of Paul included all the saints when he 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. Darkness may overshadow the day as the legal night is shrouded in gloom when the moon of Jewish types is turned into blood; but though the sun of revealed truth be darkened by the clouds which are the pavilion of our God, and the dreadful tempests attending him strike terror to our natural reason, by faith all who are led by the Spirit of God are enabled to rest in the sweet knowledge that "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Nothing can come to pass without the knowledge and purpose of God; therefore they who are kept by his power have nothing to fear. Even this day of indefinable gloom is "known to the Lord." In the revelation of his gracious purpose of love and mercy this day is just as essential as any other incident in the great system of divine providence whereby Christ Jesus is exalted with the right hand or power of God as a "Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." This is a point of truth which the saints cannot afford to forget. Our most bitter trials are given by the same love

which God commends to us in the gift of his Son to die for us. It is this truth which enables the saints of glory in tribulations. How sweet to feel and know that all our times are in his hand, and every day of trial is "known to the Lord."

"Not day nor night." As the legal night terminated with the preaching of John in the wilderness of Judea, the good tidings which he proclaimed were not included in the night of Judaism; and from his time until the resurrection of Jesus there was neither day nor night in the manifestation of the revelation of salvation. This is the only sense in which we can understand this expression. Certainly there can be no time when the knowledge to his people that this prophetic declaration is recorded. Literally this was the case in the time to which we have understood it to apply; and in the experience of the subjects of grace such a day is found. The light of legal requirements is shrouded in the darkness of hopeless condemnation, and the day is not yet revealed in them in "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Dark as is this season, it is appropriately designated as a day; for it manifests what was never seen in any other light; that is, the justice of divine condemnation in cutting off all hope from the conscious sinner, who feels that this darkness is his everlasting portion. Then the glad tidings of salvation by grace is too great and joyful for the poor sinner to claim as coming to him. This is experimentally a day which is "not day nor night."

"But it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." The repetition of the assertion that "It shall come to pass" would appear to natural reason to be unnecessary. So the wise and prudent of the world are made to expose their own folly in criticizing the divine record. But to the tried saints for whose benefit all Scripture is given, this emphatic repetition of the sure and certain fulfillment of this predestinated purpose of God is full of the marrow and fatness of comfort and consolation. When the tempter suggests that this

bewildering gloom which hides the Sun from their sight, is but the beginning of the night of utter despair which is just ready to swallow them up, then they know the need of the strong consolation which God had given in these assuring expressions. In nature, with the evening time comes darkness; so it is very consistent with reason to expect that even the dim light now seen will be withdrawn at evening time; but in the case of this day of which the prophet is speaking, the order of nature is reversed, and the light shall be manifest at evening time. This wonderful display of divine power was fulfilled in the day of the preaching of John. Instead of sinking into the darkness of night, the day was swallowed up in the infinite light of the Sun of righteousness; so that while John was "a burning and a shining light." yet his light could add nothing to the divine radiance of the true Light which illumined the gospel heaven. Hence Jesus says, "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; but I receive not testimony from man." "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."—John 5 :36,37.

As the light of natural day can receive no aid from artificial lamps, so the light which emanates from the throne of God and the Lamb is not increased by any efforts of his creatures. The saints ever find the light of their Savior's countenance when it is with them "at evening time." So long as they are enjoying light and prosperity they do not feel their need of him; but when darkness overshadows them and they cannot see their way, then it is that they need the light. In this evening time of their experience, they sweetly realize the value of this precious provision of grace by which light is given at evening time. When thick clouds darken the way of the bewildered pilgrims, and they feel that they are just losing all the light by which

they have been guided, it is evening time with them. Reason says the night has come upon them and they are lost in the darkness; but they are now just where the glorious Sun of righteousness shall certainly shine upon them, making the darkness itself to glow with heavenly radiance as they see in his light that the darkness was but the shadow of the blessings in reserve for them. All the rich stores of exceeding great and precious promises which God has given them in the Scriptures are confined to the afflicted and poor people; and he hears the prayer of the destitute. Then to every saint it is indeed true that "At evening time it shall be light."

(Editorial by Elder William Beebe December 1, 1886.)

SOME INTERESTING HISTORY

2118 St. Johns Ave.
Jacksonville, Fla. 32204

Elder David V. Spangler and
Elder John D. Wood
Editors

Dear Editors:

I hope you will not think this is an unusual request. Sarah Lord was the only daughter of William Lord, a Primitive Baptist minister who was active in Georgia in the years following 1787. Sarah Lord was named for her mother. He came from Broad Creek Church on the eastern Shore of Maryland, now Sussex County, Delaware, and was a founder of Myrtle Springs Primitive Baptist Church, near Toombsboro, Ga., in 1812. The church is still in existence and in possession of the original records dating from 1812. Sarah Lord was a deaf-mute, a condition that we now know is due, in the majority of cases, to diseases of the inner ear following scarlet fever, measles, or even influenza. After William Lord's death in 1825, according to old court records, there was an occasional dispute among relatives about the handling of her estate, and her role in life must not have been a happy one. These — the afflicted — were those of whom Christ most often spoke, because

he fully understood the nature of their lives. Though Sarah Lord has been dead more than a hundred years, thought of these ancient griefs has often distressed me and this has led to writing these simple memorial lines in her remembrance. I hope that you can see fit to print them.

My great-great-grandfather, James M. Lord, was moderator of the Myrtle Springs church at the time of the Civil War. He moved to Alabama and my grandfather, Yancey Jackson Lord, was a well-known farmer a few miles north of Cottonwood. I believe this part of Alabama has as heavy a concentration of Primitive Baptists as any part of the nation, and I am speaking of Slocomb, where I was born in 1903 and according to your Church Notices has three Primitive Baptist churches, Malvern, just a mile from the farms operated by my mother's people, the Merritts, Ozark, Cottonwood, McKenzie, Andalusia, Coffee Springs, Goshen, and other communities in this section.

I am a retired newspaperman and magazine editor in the business field and now have some time to devote to these matters in which I have always been interested. I think the Primitive Baptists represent, as near as it could be represented in these times, the original church of Christ. They follow the same ritual, such as the laying on of hands, found among the Anabaptists, the Waldenses, the Albigeois, the Bogomils and the Paulicians. This isn't just chance, though renowned scholars claim that no connection can be proved. Facts speak for themselves, however, despite the lack of documents which were burned for just this reason. I am going to France December 11 to visit the Albigensian regions, and have been studying French for the past five or six years in Jacksonville University here with this in mind. You can see that my interest is sincere and of long standing. I had the honor of a small exchange of correspondence some years ago with Elder George Ruston before his death.

I hope you will receive this letter in the spirit in which it is written, and will

accept the attached contribution to the Indigent Fund in memory of Sarah Lord.

Sincerely, with all best wishes,
David. B. Lord

GIVES THEIR SIGNS TO OTHERS

Rt. 1, Box 127A
Riner, Va. 24149

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed is check for \$5.00 for one year renewal, and balance for the Indigent Fund.

We enjoy the *Signs* so much, and give them to others to read. We enjoyed Elder Lambert's writing on "Meek" in the November, 1972, paper. O yes, what wonderous love is this! that His blood was shed for His precious sinners. We feel so unworthy but hope that He died on the cross for us. O Lord, give us more spiritual understanding, and guide us, for without Him we can do nothing. For we are saved by grace through faith not of ourselves lest any man should boast — it is the gift of God.

Unworthy, Brother and Sister
Asa and Beulah Wells

ENJOYS THE WRITINGS OF THE BRETHREN

14778 Springfield Ave, Rt. 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44062

Signs of the Times:

Dearly beloved of the Lord, Editors, writers and the readers of the messages of God's chosen in Christ before the world was, Greetings in the name of the Lord.

I desire to salute you with a holy kiss in the name of my redeemer, Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory. My soul doth praise and magnify my Lord for giving unto us unworthy sinners such able writers as write for the *Signs of the Times*. I miss the writings of the able writer, Elder Ruston, who has passed on to his reward. Elder Griffin, write on.

May God be praised for giving us able ministers to preach and write the truth, who stand upon the solid rock, Christ the sure foundation. We feel like shouting when we read such wonderful messages, and hear them preached, as they have been the past few months. Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Write on Elders Spangler, Lambert, Wood, and all who so vividly defend God's truth. Elder Beebe's messages are so wonderful. I have never met any of your writers, but my brother Roy S. Thomas of Wilmington, Delaware, has often spoken of you.

My dear wife passed on to her reward on August 12, 1972. She was in failing health for five years. Two months before she died she said when too sick to even walk or recognize her children and sister at times, "Lord, I will praise thee until I die." She loved the gospel so much. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1930 in east Tennessee. I joined the same church in 1908 when a mere lad of ten years; and God's grace is sweeter as the years go by.

Yes Brother Griffin there is no other arm, no other voice except the voice of the Lamb of God, who is mighty to save. May God richly bless his people. Pray for me, a sinner saved by grace.

I see my subscription has run out. Here is \$10.00 for one year and the balance for the Indigent Fund.

In Christian love,
H. Claude Thomas

ATTENDED
SEVERAL ASSOCIATIONS

Hartford, Ala.

Dear Elder Wood:

I missed seeing you in 1972 but hope that you and your companion are well: may the Lord bless you and yours in all things.

I think perhaps I was blessed to visit more churches than ever before in one year, and rejoiced to be with the people

of the Lord. I was so glad to attend the Staunton River Association in Virginia, and meet again so many ministers of former years, and several younger preachers; and hear some of them expound the glorious news of Zion. We also attended the Ebenezer, Conecuh, Claybank, and Western Associations, and heard many wonderful sermons at each. May peace, love and fellowship abound everywhere in our ranks. We hope to be blessed to attend the Upper Country Line Association in North Carolina this year, where we first went in 1940.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
J. J. Collins

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. L. NORRIS

Elder W. L. Norris was born April 18, 1888, and died August 28, 1972, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He was married to Sister Ruth Kirk in 1925, and to this union were born two daughters: Mrs. Mary Ruth Smith, Rogersville, Ala., and Mrs. Esther Wallace, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Our dear brother joined Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church in 1953, and was ordained to the ministry in 1957. He served well several churches in the Hopewell Association, as well as many visits to other churches and associations.

He was the son of Elder Sammie Norris and grandson of Elder John Norris, who served Nazareth Church fifty years.

Our dearly beloved brother will be greatly missed in the churches as well as in the family and neighborhood, as he lived a worthy life to all. The weather was never too bad for Brother Norris to attend his church, as God permitted. He was a strong and faithful believer in the sovereign grace of God. His walk and talk proved this. I do not know of a more worthy yoke brother in the ministry to write about.

He also leaves two grandchildren, James L. and Ruth Smith, Rogersville, Alabama.

His funeral was conducted by the writer at his previous request in Mayes Memorial Chapel, Tuscaloosa, and interment was in Memorial Cemetery, Tuscaloosa.

Written by request of the family.

Elder H. C. Moon,
Hancevill, Ala.

SISTER SUSIE EVERETT ROBERSON

It is with sad hearts that we attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister, Susie Everett Roberson. She was born December 22, 1898, to the late Lawrence and Olivia James Everett of Robersonville, N. C., and died November 5, 1972, in a Goldsboro hospital where she had been a patient since July.

On December 24, 1929, she was married to Ira F. Andrews. He died July 9, 1952. On December 24, 1957, she married Lee Roberson, who survives. Sunday, June 4, 1972, she united with the church at Flat Swamp, and was baptized that afternoon by Elder J. T. Prescott and Elder E. C. Harrison. Her husband joined at the water and was baptized with her. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God. We can say that she kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness.

She leaves to mourn her passing besides her husband, a foster son, James Lowell Everett, of Windsor; two brothers, Eli and Reuben Everett, both of Robersonville; one sister, Mrs. Carrie Williams, of Robersonville; and two grandchildren.

The church extends her deepest sympathy and love to her husband and family, and pray that God's richest blessings may rest on them. "The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services were held from the Primitive Baptist Church in Robersonville by her pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott and her nephew, Elder Billy Everett. She was laid to rest in the Robersonville Cemetery in the presence of her many friends and relatives, to await the resurrection morning, when Jesus will call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Done by order of Conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1972.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Hassell Allen, Clerk
Reuben Everett
Louise Everett
Mary Jenkins

Committee

MRS. NELLIE J. REEVES

Sister Reeves, an outstanding member of Pilgrims Rest Church, Dothan, Ala., died after a lingering illness on November 24, 1972. She was a leading citizen of Houston County, active in community and church affairs. She reared a noble family, including Minister B. H. Reeves, and three daughters who are teachers: Mrs. Jesse Palmer, Mrs. Lillian Hughes,

and Mrs. Douglas Carter, all of Dothan, Ala. Surviving also are, one sister, Mrs. Lizzie Warrick; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren, and many other relatives. Her husband died about thirteen years ago. She was most devoted to her children.

Funeral services were conducted at her beloved Pilgrims Rest Church by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister J. Hollan Dykees on November 26, 1972; with interment in the adjoining cemetery.

J. J. Collins

FRANK VAUGHN

The writer attended his funeral on January 14, 1973 at Providence Church, Geneva, Ala., where he was born eighty-seven years ago, and was a class-mate the first day the Geneva County High School was established September 28, 1908, in Hartford, Ala. We were close friends and associates from then on until his death.

A vast concourse of relatives and friends were present at his beloved Church.

also

ALVIE GILLEY

Brother Gilley died in a Dothan Hospital on December 18, 1972, at the age of eighty-four. He leaves a wife and many relatives to mourn his passing.

He was a member of Goodwater Church, where funeral services were conducted by the writer and Minister J. T. Peacock; with interment in the adjoining cemetery, on December 20, 1972. He was a resident of this section his entire life, and lived a quiet and peaceful life.

also

MRS. NANCY RYLES

Mrs. Ryles died August 1, 1972 at the age of eighty-eight, after an illness of several months. She was the widow of Henry Ryles and is survived by two sons, Cody and Ted, and three daughters, Mrs. Nell Fillingrin, Mrs. Bertie Lue Fillingrin, and Mrs. Maggie Langford, all of Hartford, Ala. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren, one of whom, Dr. Tim Ryles, is a leading educator of Georgia.

She loved the cause of Christ and lived a devoted life to her family, community and church. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and Minister Roy Griggs of Montgomery, at Garden Chapel Funeral Home on August 2, 1972; with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, Wicksburg, Alabama.

J. J. Collins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1973

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WOULDEST THOU?

Within the portals of my heart
Dear Lord, I'll welcome thee,
To search its contents at thy will
While evil spirits flee.

I would not hide a single thought
Or wish, dear Lord, from you,
But always leave the door ajar,
That thou may enter through.

Wouldst Thou erase the sin therein
And tarry for awhile;
Or linger near that I may see
The shadow of a smile:

To hear that still small voice within
Speak joy and peace to me,
And calm this troubled heart of mine
Until Thy face I see.

Fannie Padrick
207 South 3rd Street
Wilmington, N. C.

(Sister Padrick is in her eighties, and was baptized about sixty years ago by her Pastor, Elder J. C. Hooks, then Moderator of the Bleck Creek Association.)

SERMON BY
ELDER JAMES F. POOLE
AT SNOW HILL CHURCH
SNOW HILL, MARYLAND
DECEMBER, 1972

16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren this do ye; lade your beasts and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

18 And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them. See that ye fall not out by the way.

25 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father.

26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

28 And Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and

see him before I die.

Genesis 45: 16-28

Jacob had been grieving for many years over the supposed death of his son. Joseph's ten brothers, who sold him, have had lingering in their hearts the knowledge that they were guilty of selling their brother. The youngest brother, Benjamin, was, of course, innocent; nevertheless, he was a brother and a part of the family of Israel. Joseph is now governor of all of the land of Egypt, the mightiest empire in the world at that time.

As I pointed out last Lord's Day, Joseph rose to that position through no apparent effort of his own. Everything Joseph did prospered because the Lord was pleased to care for him and to protect him.

Out of the rest of the verses I have read to you this morning I would like to extract several thoughts to draw a common parallel. The illustrations of the Old Testament portray the lessons of the New Testament. Joseph is a beautiful illustration and type of Jesus Christ our Lord. Many times I might not make my thoughts clear because my words will interchange from Joseph to Christ and back and forth without explanation. If I do so, I hope you will recognize that I am drawing an illustration out of the Old Testament history to portray a New Testament lesson.

If Joseph is a type of Christ, and I believe he is, we could dwell many a day upon the beauty and the glory of the illustration. Our Lord and our Savior portrayed in one like Joseph, whose very life was miraculous. Joseph was the next to the last child born of his mother. He had only one full brother, the rest being half brothers from handmaids and from Leah, the other wife of Jacob.

Joseph was a man who had absolutely no malice in his heart. It is hard to conceive of someone like that today, isn't it? As it has been pointed out many times, you and I are frail characters. It is easy to hold a grudge; it is easy to say, "I'll forgive, but I will never forget." But the Lord has not only forgiven His people, He said He would cast their sins

from them as far as the East is from the West. I don't know how far that is, but it's farther than you or I will ever travel, for you can head East as far as you want to go and West is still behind you. Or you can go West and the same is true. And that is how far our sins are from us. And He said to be remembered no more. God does not remember our sins. I cannot comprehend that. Can you? That a God who knows all things is capable of not remembering my sins!

Joseph put aside the crimes of his brothers. All of them were behind him and he now is concerned about their welfare. I cannot comprehend that either. How that our Lord and Savior can only be concerned with the welfare of His people! Now, I am concerned about the welfare of my family; I am concerned about the welfare of friends, and I am concerned about the welfare of our church and our church friends. And my concern extends out a fair distance. But I am not capable—as some in this world are—of being a welfare agent for every human being. I know my limitations and I know my government's limitations. I am not interested in the welfare of all human beings. I am interested in the welfare of those as far as I can reach. And I think this is a part of Joseph's character here.

While he was governor of all of the land and controlled the food, the wealth, and all things, he really was not concerned except to the point that he was going to do the job assigned him by Pharaoh. But when his brethren came, there was true concern which extended beyond the temporal and beyond the circumstances of that day and reached into the very heart of Joseph, for his concern now was for the entire family and their whole well being that they might truly enjoy happiness, contentment and unity together.

There is one thing above all else that stands out here: Joseph recognized the *need of all of the family remaining together*. Do you know what this means? It is not good for Jacob to stay in Canaan and for some of the brothers to come to Egypt and they be scattered all

over the face of the Mediterranean. The mind of Jeseph is for *all* of the family to be brought together. I think it a profitable situation when all of the family of God are brought together. A unity, a oneness, a companionship then exists that they cannot have when they are scattered across the face of the globe. *And we are one in Christ.*

Now reading in verse 20: One of the first admonitions Joseph gives to his brothers is: "*Regard not your stuff.*" I like that expression "stuff." That account, and all of the other things that go with it. It's just stuff — that's the best you can say for it. Canaan's land was often a type of Heaven, but Canaan's land was never sanctified and Canaan's land was always plagued with Canaanites, idolators and wicked workers. You can just about say that anything you have gathered out of Canaan isn't fit to carry off to a family reunion!

And so Joseph's first admonition to his brothers is that when you come to dwell with me, forget about your stuff. All that you have accumulated you can leave behind. You don't need it. It won't do you a bit of good where you are going.

I would say that about God's people being gathered into the family reunion of the Church here on earth. You can leave your stuff behind. All of your family's religious notions; all of your good works, all of your ideal, all of your good intentions—all these things you can leave behind like Joseph's brethren left behind all that they had accumulated—all of their practices and all of the things of Canaan's land. They are now going to dwell with Joseph. "Leave all behind and come with me because I have something better for you."

Can you imagine the Lord, when he summons His people, saying, bring all that Babylonion stuff with you? No, no! Leave it all behind. Come with me, for I have something better for you, something more marvelous, something grander, something *free*, something you have not accumulated. If we could bring

to the church or to the presence of Christ things we have "dug out" or earned, then everything we have would not be by the grace of our brother Joseph, would it?

When we come before Him all of the stuff is laid behind. I can look back and see that at one time I was not quite willing to leave everything behind. I thought I ought to take just a few things along with me in case the church did not act like I thought it should act, I could introduce some of those fine things I had bought out in Canaan's land and improve the lot of the people. And it has taken me a lot of years to realize, even to the extent that I do now, that all of that paraphernalia and stuff that I had gathered in Canaan's land would not do me a bit of good—and it would do the church nothing but harm.

Leave your stuff behind. When you come to Joseph, you do not need all that "gobbledegook" you have. Every provision will be made for you. All your needs will be met from the least to the greatest.

I recall that the Savior Himself said: "Take no thought for these things for your heavenly Father knoweth you have need of them." As one precious sister who is no longer with us said, "He knows our needs before we need them." That stuck in my mind and I think it will stick with me as long as I live.

He knows my needs before I need them and Joseph knew the needs of the brethren before they needed them. The brethren had no notion what they needed. They did not know the weather conditions in Egypt; they did not know what the cultivating conditions were. Joseph just said, "leave it behind." God has kept His kingdom in good order through Joseph His son all these years, and you won't need any of the *stuff* that you have accumulated.

The second thing I would like to point out is in Verse 21: "*And gave them provision for the way.*"

He put them on a journey. He dispatched instructions to them. He told them to go home and gather up their families, and come back to me. And for

this journey he gave them provision for the way...not provisions for the rest of their lives, but enough for the journey. He doesn't give them any surplus for if they had surplus they would lean to that and *not* to Joseph where it came from.

This is the message that God tells His precious saints here in this world. He provides for the journey, but He doesn't give them any surplus, no abundance. Don't we see a beautiful illustration of that later when the offsprings of this family journey for 40 years in the wilderness? Did He give them any surplus when he fed them? He gave them only provisions for the way. And I think that points to the *one way*.

There is but one way and you know very well what it is: Jesus Christ, our Lord is the way and He provides all that is necessary in order that one might *be* in that way. Nothing else is needed. You don't have to provide for yourself in this journey. If God summons His people out of this world, if He blesses them to say, "Joseph is alive and I am going to him," there will be provisions made.

I think basically the provision is the faith of God's elect. The just shall live by faith. I know there are some here who'll say "Oh, I wish I could live by faith." Brothers and sisters, I will tell you that I wish I could too. But, I am going to tell you something and I am not saying it boastfully. If I live in Christ at all, I do live by faith. It may be little faith; it may be as a grain of mustard seed, as the Lord described it, but if I am in Him, I live by faith. "The just *shall* (not may) live by faith."

You cannot live in Him other than by faith, and *that* is provision for *the way*. It might be a dark way, but you will still have provisions. It might be a dreary way, an uphill way, but he will still provide for you. It might be by the way of thieves and robbers who'll take all your goods; it might be a way of many hindrances, but He will still provide even if it takes unseen angels to protect you from harm, known and unknown alike.

The Scripture says He gave them provision for the way.

Verse 22: "To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment."

I wonder if that's there just to fill up space? You can't wear Canaanite garments in the presence of Joseph. Did you know that? There needs to be a change of raiment. The filthy righteousness of this world won't do in the presence of the Savior, and you can lay aside all of your works and deeds and all of your supposed righteous works and pretended finery, because if you ever go with Him, you'll have a change of raiment.

I want to emphasize one thing. In coming to the Church of the Living God, when you draw the illustration down to our local focal point, we need a change of raiment. We need to put on the new man in baptism and put off the old, the Canaanite, and visibly and vitally become identified with Joseph.

And when the brothers of Joseph got a change of raiment, it was different from any raiment they had ever seen in Canaan's land. And the Canaanites knew it was different. Any old Canaanite barbarian could look at them and say "Those fellows have something that we don't have." It might be better or worse in their estimation, but they could tell it was not a garment that came from their land. There was something different and I cannot conceive that Joseph would give them something inferior to what the Canaanites had. When they put on their raiment, they were identified and they were acknowledged as belonging in a sense to Joseph. They were under subjection to him. They were not under a force or a constraint—but out of *necessity* (they really did not *have* a choice, did they?)

It teaches us that even in the common illustration of the brothers that man's supposed "free will" is blasted under the very normal circumstances of life. I enjoy talking with these defenders of free will. One question I asked a person one time is: "Just how free is your

will?" He said, "It is as free as it can be." I said, "Can you do anything you want to?" He replied, "Yes, I can." "Is your will limited in any way?" I asked. "No," he answered, "not at all." "Then fly like a bird!" I said. He got mad and said, "You are absurd." I said, "Yes, I am, and so are you." And I *was* absurd and so was he.

It is absurd to believe that you are free. We're not free to live any longer than our lives are determined to be. We are not free to travel any farther than God has suffered us to travel. I know a few years ago many people said, "Man will never go to the moon. God did not intend for people to be on the moon." It seems to me that he intended for them to be there. They went, didn't they? There are no limitations to the power of God nor to the purpose of God and His people. He can endow us with all of the wisdom that we have conceived possible and you can be sure of this one thing: the circumstances God puts us in limits our freedom to His will. *You are free to perform the will of God!*

Returning to verse 22: He gave them each a change of raiment, but we see a difference here. Eleven brothers—10 are half brothers. They all had their father alike, but had several different mothers. To Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment. To the others he just gave a change of raiment.

I wonder why he made distinctions here. We really have three categories of people that Joseph is dealing with: Jacob, his father; his ten brothers (which are half brothers); and one full brother, Benjamin—and he deals with each one differently. Yet, the end result is the same. The purpose is to bring them each one, to Him. And I thought in my mind Jacob is the Old Man—not the Old Man of the flesh, but he's the old one from afar back. The ten brothers are his contemporaries, and Benjamin is the younger, the one who came after Joseph. And it almost perfectly blends in with the illustration of the Old Testament saints: the Jews, who were those that despised and sold our Savior; and then

Benjamin, his full brother, which is the Church of the Living God which followed after, and to the church has been given more than the Old Testament saints or the Jews either ever had.

The Old Testament saints lived in shadows. They lived in types. The Jew brethren for the most part were "deny-ers." But to Benjamin, the full brother, more has been given. To him was given 300 pieces of silver—ten times over the price that was paid to betray our Lord and Savior, showing the estimation that the Lord has of His people above that which they had for Him.

Judas sold him out for a cheap price. The Lord gave a great sum to His people on top of that, five changes of raiment. Now in the Scriptures when you come to five, you come to grace.

Every change of raiment he had spoke to him that Joseph had bestowed grace to him. Whenever Benjamin changed clothes, he had to think of Joseph. Whenever he spent a piece of silver he had to think of Joseph. Whatever he had and wherever he went he had to think of Joseph, for he was completely subservient to the grace that Joseph bestowed upon him.

He gave them another admonition in the 24th verse. *"And he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way."*

We sometimes have the tendency to think that the Bible is all doctrine, or that the Bible is all just testimony of grace. The Bible is full of warnings, admonitions and exhortations and these ought to be spoken on as much as the Bible speaks on them. "See that ye fall not out by the way." Those final three words "by the way"—we might add, by which way? I go back then to the 13th Chapter of Matthew where all of the parables are and I think "What a vast storehouse of teaching that is to me!" By the wayside. The seed that fell by the wayside. It never became profitable and it never brought forth fruit unto the one that was the bestower or the caster.

"See that ye fall not out by the way." You must stay *in the way*, not *out of the way*. The Lord's people must continually *be in the way*. Now I will say that you

will never be in the way and stay there but for the grace of God, and yet you are instructed to see that you fall not out by the way. You can't stop off like Demas did because you love this world. You can't linger and turn back like Mark did. You don't have the opportunity to sit down and rest, but you press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus; and you know that you are living and walking a journey that reaches to heaven. You cannot stop by the way anywhere. Don't fall out, he said, keep going until you get to Jacob and then turn around and keep going until you come back to me. There is no stopping.

The brothers came to their dear father. They told him Joseph is yet alive. These must have been sweet words on their lips to say "Our brother is still alive, he whom we thought dead is truly alive and he is governor over all of the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them *not*.

In all of this incident—their second trip, their coming back, and the unanimous statement from the brothers to their father that Joseph is yet alive—what did it do for Jacob? It caused him to faint in heart! Did it make him believe? It said he believed them not. And as much as anywhere in the Bible this teaches me that you and I can go out to the four corners of this world and tell people of the words of Joseph (Jesus) and no matter how close to him they might be, no matter how much they would like to believe, they cannot believe based on our naked testimony. *All* of the words of the brethren did not cause Jacob to believe. No, instead, it caused his heart to faint within him! That in itself would be sufficient to cause me to disavow any missionary system, and I have no criticism of those who favor such a system. But I cannot go, nor could I support such a cause, because I can see here these exuberant and enthused brethren who had just come from the hand of Joseph to their father—and *still* Jacob would not, could not, believe. Joseph was dead as far as he was concerned.

Dear brethren, it takes something more than a testimony of man, even of dear friends and dear kinsmen to change the heart of one who is to approach to Joseph. Do you know what it takes? It takes evidence. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We have to have substance. It might not have to be a tangible or a visible substance, but an evidence or a substance of some sort to cause one to believe. The Lord must reveal His hand in the matter before you and I can believe and in this case it is so beautiful I hardly see how we can escape the conclusion: The brethren told Jacob all the words that Joseph had told unto them and when he saw the *wagons* which Joseph had sent to carry them, the spirit of Jacob, their father, revived.

The words did not change his mind. But when he saw the wagons, his heart revived. What was it about seeing the wagons that revived his heart? I imagine Jacob had seen many ox carts and wagons in his day. But he had never seen wagons like this. This was a host of wagons—enough to carry 70 people or so. Pharaoh would not have given to Joseph anything but the best to carry his father and his family into his presence.

Take the wagons—three times over it is mentioned—here come the wagons rolling into the front yard and they rush in to tell their father about it, and the brothers don't see any belief in his face. But when he steps out onto the porch and sees the wagons his heart revives. It truly must have been a time of joy to him! This has to be the evidence that all the words his sons had told him are the truth. "The wagons of grace have rolled up into my yard to transport me to the one I love, the one I have been longing for, the one I hoped that someday I would see again." And Jacob's heart revived because he saw the wagons!

God sends wagons to us. They might come in one form or another or different shapes, but you can be assured of this. When the time comes for us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we will see the wagons and our hearts will revive and what will we say? We will say as Jacob

said: "It is enough. I need nothing else. I have all I need." The words of the brethren are wonderful words, but these evidences, these wagons mean more to me because I know they are real. I can see them. They are a substance. They are vital and they mean more to me than anything else because one with authority sent them to me. Oh, glory to God that he has given us transportation to bring us into his presence.

The spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said, It is enough. Jacob was his natural name; Israel was his spiritual name. He took his journey.

I want to read verses 3 and 4 of the next chapter to you. In the visions of the night, this is what takes place. "And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

He said, Fear not, you need not worry. Go on down into Egypt and I will go with you. The Lord had promised that. He says, I will be with you even unto the end. To the end and unto all ages He'll be with His people. Fear not to go down into Egypt. "I will provide for you and I will take care of you. Here are the wagons I have given to Joseph to give to you." They are the evidences and I might say to the dear friends in the congregation, you have seen enough evidences in the times you have been among God's people, and in the privacy of your own meditations to know whether or not the Lord had dealt thusly with you.

Jacob sees the opportunity. The Lord has opened it up. Here are the wagons. "It's all I need," says Jacob, "and I am going to get into one of them until the Lord stops me. I am going to go." And God says, fear not to go down into Egypt, for I am going to go with you all the way. I am going to make a great nation out of you and I will surely bring thee up again.

Jacob is going to die there in Egypt. You and I are going to die down here in

Egypt, also. For Egypt is a type of this world. But he says, I'll surely bring you up again and Joseph will put his hands over your eyes. You'll be blessed to know that it is going to be all right. You'll be blessed to know that I am going to be with you and if I am there you need nothing else. You leave Canaan for awhile and follow me and I will transport you to higher things, to greater things than you have ever imagined, for I will make you a great nation.

When He said He would be with me that suits me. You might fall by the wayside. I might fall, too, but for the grace of God. But if He is with me, I will not fall. If I go to Egypt, He will be there. David said if I make my bed in hell He will be there. If I ascend to the heights, wherever I go, He's there. But think of this: "And Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Joseph will bless you to see, and *only* Joseph, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for sinners, and *that* and that alone will ever transport us safely to the presence of our God. May God keep you.

(Prepared for publication by Sister Katie Kilby, Lake Jackson, Georgia.)

THE RICH MAN

Dear Brethren:

Lacking faith, which betakes its owner to trust in grace and mercy alone, all who profess to faith, but have no faith, will be rich and not poor. All with a spiritual light into their own heart and soul, will surely find: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The plea, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is far better than the lie: "All these things I have kept from my youth up, . . ." Such is the language of the deceiver: for, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, for in many things we offend all." (1 John 1:8-10; James 3:2, 3) Yea, the rich man pleads his own righteousness, in contract to the saints who say, "What is men that he should be clean? and he that is born of a

woman that he should be righteous? (Job 15:14-16; and 4:18-19)

Being unlike a saint whose flesh lusteth against the Spirit so that he cannot do the things that he would, the man who is a rich deceiver will feel justified by the righteousness which, upon trial, will prove to be as filthy rags. Each and every notion in a rich man arises from his indwelling sin and darkness of mind, and they all presume to enter into judgement with God.

When the Lord assumed flesh He became poor, being made like unto His brethren *in all points*. He therefore owns no rich children, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit . . ." (see Isaiah 57:15)

Now God's humble poor are all poor by reason of their affliction. God's promise to leave in Zion an afflicted and poor people, forever excludes the rich man; and lends strength and beauty to the truth of Luke 1:53, "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." Therefore I declare that all who are saved are poor mourners in Zion, weary with a sense of sin: their every hope and desire is centered in Jesus, who "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."

Those who have hope in Christ are troubled on every side, and are ever subject to sin by their daily words, daily deeds, and daily thoughts: There is lust in our sight of those things delightful to our flesh, and, through total depravity, there is evil in our anger at our own failures whenever we strive to overcome our wounds and dangers — which is not in our power. We strive

to hide our sin but we can never root it out.

False professors think that by care and diligence they can renew their own strength, and so rely on self to perform salvation; and being vainly puffed up, and not divinely instructed, they claim to resist the devil and abolish sin; and their doctrine is to the praise of human help and industry, — and they all feel rich. Rich because they know not the necessity of grace to put off the wretched government of death and darkness; rich because none need to ask for anything, if everything lays within the grasp of man's free will.

The poor child of God believes on God, and worships God in God's own Spirit, wherein He saves and calls whom He pleases according to His own eternal will, which nothing can resist. Saints do not resemble vessels of riches, or vessels of good works; but vessels of mercy. To God alone it belongs to do all things as He wills; and He wills to have mercy on His children. And while doing His will, God's power meets with no difficulties, for nothing can hinder Him by whom are all things.

To take the trees of Lebanon and form them into a chariot overlaid with love, is a thing which requires Almighty Power; which immutable power breaks in pieces that which is earthly, and transforms it through the grace of regeneration into an habitation of God. To such as are thus new-born, is given eyes to see that grace comes not from the works of its possessor, but by the eternal will of its giver. God abiding and leading us by an unalterable Love to the eternal haven, teaches as never man taught, that we are poor, naked, helpless sinners; and that the power of sustaining the combat with every foe, and obtaining the victory over every

foe, is all in Jesus Christ — Himself being both Shepherd and Lord of His flock.

The love and healings and good deeds done by Jesus for the rich and wicked people during His ministry in the days of His flesh, did not save them. Nothing but the blood of the Lamb can remove guilt; and the blood of Jesus Christ was only shed for the election of grace. When, therefore, Jesus touched the ear of a wicked man and healed it, it did by no means save the wicked man. And when we read that Jesus "beholding" the rich man "loved him" it does not mean the rich man was saved from sin, but it does mean that Jesus is Holy, and a life of hatred is a life of sin. So Jesus fulfilled the law; and the summary of the law is, "Thou shalt love."

Brethren, the divine justice that Jesus satisfied while in the "form of a servant" will see every rich man in hell, and all of the poor in spirit in eternal glory. My dearest friends are the followers of Jesus Christ whose Spirit led Him, and now leads His children, to abound in love toward all men to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God. So while Jesus worked no ill to His neighbor, as "love is the fulfilling of the law", it does not alter the fact: "The rich he hath sent empty away." (Luke 1:53)

In gospel bonds,
J. L. Bocock

EXPERIENCE

Ward Road
Snow Hill, Maryland 21863

Dearly Beloved Brothers
and Sisters in Christ:

How can you put on paper the Greatness of our Almighty God! Dare I really think that the Almighty God, the Ruler of Heaven and Earth, the Maker of all things, would look upon someone as sinful as I? Yet, what would my life be like if I couldn't hope that he has? I have spent many a sleepless night afraid that

my emotions have gotten away from me; and then I will spend sleepless hours of such peace and joy that I know my Lord is the only One that has made it possible.

"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow...." How beautiful and precious these words are to me.

What my Lord has done for me might not seem like anything to a stranger, but a dear brother or sister will surely know.

When I belonged to a Baptist Church during my lifetime, and heard only words preached, how I lived in fear of going to hell. Try as I would to live the kind of life they preached I had to, I just couldn't do it and I was so afraid. I stopped going to church all together, because I would come home so upset and unhappy and afraid. It seemed to me that I was the most sinful person on this earth. My sins seemed to grow more and more and I went down to the very pit of hell. My nerves went to pieces and I was so full of misery. I tried to pray but with the thought in my mind that anyone as powerful as the Almighty God wouldn't even listen to my feeble prayers.

One day while at work in a business we had at the time, I went upstairs where our bedrooms were and entered one and closed the door. I fell on my knees at the side of the bed so full of anguish, and tried to pray. I could only cry out, "God have mercy on me." I stayed there for a while and wept, crying out in distress over and over, "God have mercy on me and show me what to do." After a while a calmness came over me and I went back to work. Like the sinner I am, I didn't give my Lord the credit for this calmness until a long time after.

Shortly after this we closed our business because of my health. We moved away from the place we were living, and I settled down and begin to enjoy life again.

I thought I needed to go back to church, so I did, and for a short while I thought I had found what I had wanted in life. Soon the same unhappy, upset, worried feelings came back. Something was missing and I didn't know what and it really frightened me. I soon stopped going and thought to myself, "I'm going

to hell anyway, and I can do so by myself without them telling me so every Sunday.”

One day in the early spring of the same year we moved, Brother Jim Ward called me and asked if I would like to go pick some strawberries to put in the freezer. It was early in the morning and such a beautiful day — one that I’ll never forget.

While picking berries we began to talk of church and I told Brother Jim how I felt like I was searching for something but couldn’t find it, and how unhappy I was when I went to church. Brother Jim told me about an experience he had with the Lord. Oh, our Lord does work in such wonderous ways! How I thought about what he had told me, and what a peaceful calm feeling I had when thinking about it.

I wanted to see Brother Jim and talk to him or have him talk to me, but I couldn’t bring myself to call him or visit him.

My Lord did all this in His own way and time. Brother Jim and I had many wonderful talks after this while picking fruit of some kind or other. Then I began to wonder, why had God done so much for him and nothing for me? Oh, how little faith we have! I didn’t know my sweet Saviour was working on me then. Praise His Holy Name!!

Then came December and both children had the mumps and we had a very cold winter with lots of snow. Our little girl soon got over the mumps, but the older one had a very hard time. While she was still ill we had a fire. The barn caught fire and sparks were falling on the house (which was covered with snow), so the firemen told us to move out. We did, and of course, the cold and moving about delayed our daughter’s getting well. My step-father was very ill at the time and in January my father-in-law became very ill and died in February. In May my mother-in-law died — so went the spring. It came about that we had to move and when we did, it was in a house of Brother Jim’s on his farm. Now I know to give thanks to my dear sweet, precious Saviour for all this.

I became drawn to Brother Jim and Sister Margie and I didn’t know why. I knew it was more than relationship or friendship. It was something a lot deeper and I couldn’t understand it but didn’t question it.

When visiting them as I so often did, I would see the *Signs* there and would pick it up and look at it but never read it. This book became like a magnet to me. I would pick it up every time I was there. Finally I asked if I might take it home to read. Of course, they both said yes. I read it from cover to cover and I thought how blessed these people are to have God looking after them and helping them. Why, Why, can’t He help me?

Brother Jim and Sister Margie asked me several times to go to church with them, and I would always try to change the subject. One day my daughter and I were visiting them and she asked my daughter to go to church with her, but didn’t ask me. Something stirred inside of me, and I asked where services were to be held. Brother Jim spoke up and told me where, and who would be preaching; and I told them I thought I would like to go.

After returning to the house I asked myself, now why did I do that? Oh, how I wished I hadn’t told them I wanted to go. All night I would wake up and worry why, why, did I want to go and make myself unhappy again? But I went, thanks to my Saviour! Dear Elder Griffin was preaching and what beautiful words came from his mouth. Never had I heard anything like this all the years I had been to church. I could hardly wait until the next service. Shortly after I started going they had the Association. If there was anyone there that enjoyed hearing one beautiful sermon after another any more than I did, then the Lord had blessed them indeed.

To be saved through faith! This verse, Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God”..., has meant so very much to me. Not to have to work to be saved. Oh how sweet!

Praise God for this word of comfort, and Oh, so many, many more.

I began to think of being a part of the Church. I wanted to be with these dear saints so long as I lived. I was afraid to ask, afraid of being shut out because I knew I was unworthy to be in the same room with them. I prayed to God to show me if I could belong to His people.

One Sunday during services my heart was so on fire and open to God's Word, I thought it would jump out of my body. It felt like a huge hand was squeezing my heart and I began to cry and tremble. I couldn't finish the song we were singing. I just sat down. One of the sisters asked me if I had anything to say to the Church, and all I could say was, "I don't know."

During the week I was so full of joy, but still afraid to ask for a home with the Church. The next meeting I went to was at one of the dear sister's homes, I felt so burdened I could only tremble and cry. Elder Griffin had just started to speak and two of the sisters sitting close to me knew what was wrong with me and urged me to go ahead. I found myself up and walking and kneeling at Elder Griffin's side. I remember telling him that God had accepted me and would he ask the dear ones if they would. I trembled with fear that I was so unworthy and that God would stop me from getting in the Church with His Saints. When Brother Harry Ward spoke up to make the motion, I cried out with joy, "Thank you, God!!" How wonderful to be accepted! I thought God was showing me that I was His. Oh, what a good and forgiving Master we have.

The morning Sister Dixie Davis and I were baptized the Lord was surely there with us. When I came up out of the pool and saw the faces of the Brothers and Sisters, they seemed to be a part of Heaven. Surely we are shown small bits of what Heaven must and will be like. Elder Griffin preached one of the most beautiful sermons that morning I have ever heard. He preached about a winding stairway to Heaven. He said, "You dear Sisters have started up that stairway and

He will guide you all the way. How my soul did soar at these words!

My Lord stayed with me so long before he turned away and let me see what the old way without Him was like. At those times my soul cries out to Him, and when He pays me a visit when I'm all alone it is so sweet and precious I can hardly stand it. Praise the Almighty God for loving me and showing me the way up that winding stairway to Heaven.

The Lord saw fit to have Elder Griffin return to Alabama. We missed them so very much, but He takes care of His people in His own way.

Now we are blessed to have Elder Poole and Sister Peggy and their family in our midst, and I hope we are as thankful as we should be. They have been with us a little over a year, and speaking for myself, they are so precious, and if God sees fit to remove them today, I thank Him from the bottom of my heart for letting me know and love them this long. They have become very dear to us and we should thank God every day for sending someone so blessed to speak as our dear Pastor can. Praise God, loved ones, for all the blessings He sends our way. Think of me in your prayers and may God bless and keep us all until we can be with Him forever and ever.

An unworthy but Grateful Sinner,
Sister Lib Cherrix

P. O. Box 9134
Springfield, W. Va. 25309

Dear Brethren:

I see by this issue that my subscription is out, so am sending Money order for one year: use the remainder as you see fit.

I was sorry to hear of Elder Ruston's passing, but the High God knows what is best. May God reconcile Sister Ruston and bless her both naturally and spiritually. I enjoyed his writing very much; and also the editors and other associates.

I will soon be seventy-six years old. May the Lord bless you to keep up the good work, blessing both you and yours.

From one in hope of eternal life by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus.

(Elder) John J. Smith

EXPERIENCE

3347 Tutwiler

Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

My heart and mind this morning is to talk with you about the wonderfulness of our God, and His teachings and care for his children while we travel through the low ground of sorrow which God spoke into existence many years ago.

All is too great for such as I to undertake to write about, yet I hope I have been give eyes to see and ears to hear of the wonderful works of God, with the understanding which He alone gives. We read that these things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes; and except we become as a little child we cannot see the kingdom of God. But having received these things, how can we fail to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. This was the easiest thing to do, and the sweetest experience I ever felt; but it seemed to be forgotten for a while. I was about eleven years old: then for about five years I was light hearted and enjoyed the things of this life. My friends began to join their churches at a protracted meeting, and I went once to the mourner's bench, feeling so weak and undone: and came away feeling worse. They wanted me to come into their church, and it sounded so foolish to me, for my heart seemed as stone; and from then on my world was different. I continued to go among them for awhile, but finally I could go no longer — and had no where to go.

I would go with my parents to the Primitive Baptist Church, but could not understand them. My way seemed to be sinking down without hope and without God in this world. The experience of viewing the creation so beautifully was gone from me; and I found myself thinking I was a dumb brute and would die, and that be all. Then the thought came that would mean I would never see

heaven and immortal glory — then I was faintly hoping for God's mercy. One dark, gloomy morning my mother and brother were ill, and my brother finally died. I was going out to milk two or three cows, and as I shut the door behind me, I felt to turn and pick up my burden to wrestle with it as I went. But, O my soul, it was not there; and the presence of my Saviour was with me, smiling down upon me with healing in His wings. My heart was overflowing with love, and I sweetly remembered the first experience I had about five years earlier. Without a doubt in my mind, all was love, joy and praises to my God; and this sweetness of assurance stayed with me about two weeks.

I have always felt to say I didn't realize I had mentioned it to anyone, but a Primitive Baptist preacher came to the town, and my mother and I went to hear him: and how plain and sweet his sermon was. I was so thrilled, and felt to be clothed and in my right mind. I thought life would be so pleasant and easy to bear now, but little did I know of the trials along life's way, and the weakness of my old flesh. Many trials and tribulations have been passed through. One time I was so cast down and my way hedged in for so long, I felt I would die: for I could not even pray, or have a good thought. One day it seemed I was told to go pray. I thought, Well I will go try, that is all anyone can do, but there was resentment in my heart. But when I got to the place to try and closed the door, something seemed to say: "God could strike you dead." And I could not get out of there quickly enough. I still remained in that condition for days or weeks.

One day while all around me was dark and cloudy in my soul, just like you have seen the sun break through a broken place in the clouds, Jesus seemed to appear, and my heart leaped for joy, and my soul was filled and lifted up above this world of suffering. I felt what it must have been with Jonah when he was cast into the water of the great sea: he cried, "I will pay that which I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord," and he

was vomited out on the shore. I feel surely that is what we all cry when we go down into the deep. Elder Griffin wrote an article several years ago on, "They that go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters." It was a wonderful article and I would love to look it up and read it again. There was another series of articles that filled the whole year's publications which were so wonderful.

Just so today, there is wonderful reading in the *Signs of the Times*. I am glad the print is so clear, as I hope to be able to read it as long as I live. People from afar we have never met, telling the same sweet truths, strengthen our hope that it is of the Lord. I have been blessed for a year or two with a great feeling of peace, hope and love. We can never know what awaits us to bear, but nothing can molest until times appointed; and if such come to us, it will be for our good: for all things work together for our good, if we are God's children and love Him.

You will find enclosed a check for \$10.00 for two years renewal. Use the remainder as you see fit.

Yours in sweet hope,
Mrs. Carrie Campbell

REMEMBERING FORMER DAYS

Haines, Oregon 97833

Elder D. V. Spangler and other
Editors of the Signs:

I see that my subscription has expired with this January issue. Enclosed find a check to cover two years and a little over for good measure. Another year has come and gone, and we are now starting out on 1973. As we change the dates on our letters and other things, I drop back, in memory to other years. Back to the old meetings at Big Springs Church at Elgin, Oregon (which now has only five members). To the Old Church at Touchet, Washington, and the Sister Church at Weiser, Idaho. (Both of these mentioned churches are now closed). I have pictures of the group, from Touchet, who would stop by our home

on their way to Weiser. Often the backyard was full, as well as the hay mow and every place that would bed down a traveler, was full. But what fellowship there was there. With old Elder Mayfield, and Barnes, and others, as well as my father, C. W. Bond.

I read, in the *Signs* of the Association meetings there. They are much larger than we were ever able to have. There just are not that many people here. But in those old days we did the best we could and there were few missing when the roll was called. Now the roll has been called, Up Yonder, and all of these people have answered this call, until I can count on the fingers of one hand, the ones who even remembered those meetings.

Then I move in Memory up to a closer date, another group, another place, and I see the times that you have been with us, In Oregon, and Washington. Our ranks are growing thin, But the same old doctrine is still preached as with the first group. Our Elder Ben Preston, of Pleasant Grove Church, at Naches, Washington, has taken the place of our Elder Attebery, who is too infirm, physically, to carry the burden, any longer. Ben brings him to the various meetings and he enjoys meeting with his old friends.

Our memberships are still stable. We gained four among the Naches and Mossy Rock Churches, during the last year, and I believe that we have lost only one, Brother Casey, of Naches, a few weeks ago. But I wonder what this next year will do to them. When I look around and see the 90 and 85s and down to my age of 70, as one of the youngest, I wonder how many will be with us, in January 1974.

You see more Old Baptist faces, every time that you meet with them, than exist in the three states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. And it is interesting to read of there being 21, or more, ministers at the Association. We feel fortunate to have that many listeners, and are fortunate to have one minister.

I hear from Brother and Sister Carter,

once in awhile. They keep me filled in on the rest of you. My trip back there in 1969, is well remembered. But I am glad to be back out here where I "love my fellow man the best, when he is scattered, some."

May the God, who rules all things, keep and care for you, for many more years, is my wish.

Your brother in hope
Charles W. Bond

EXPERIENCE OF RONNIE
HOWARD WRITTEN FOR HIM
BY HIS GRANDFATHER

Pink Hill, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope you can find room to print the following experiences.

The experience of Ronnie Howard will have to be written by asking him questions, and judging him by the fruit he bears. An apple or peach tree cannot talk, but we know it is an apple or peach. This little boy has been loving the children of God, which is the church of the true and living God, for five or more years, he says. Also, he said that Jesus called him to come and follow Him. Jesus became flesh and blood and dwelt among men. This Word gives life and is the Light of men. Therefore the one it shines in is changed from natural darkness to the marvelous light of God.

On the memorable night when Elder Mitchell finished his message and announced that the door of the church were open, Sister Whol went forward; and Ronnie said, "I could not stay away any longer." This was on Tuesday night, and the baptizing was put off until Sunday afternoon. It seemed I could hardly wait, and when the time came I was over-joyed again, for my Mama came forward at the water and was received by the church, and was baptized. Oh, it just seemed that heaven had come down to greet Sister Whol, Mama and myself. We were baptized by Elders Stokes and Mitchell. We were carried beneath the waves, which would be significant of our Saviour's burial and resurrection.

I truly love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone; which would be the same words spoken unto me to follow Jesus. I dearly love hymn No. 4 in Lloyd's Hymn Book; "As on the cross my saviour died." It seemed that I could see him with my spiritual eye: hanging, bleeding and dying for me. Who could help but loving such a God? This same Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who said, "none can come unto the Father but by me."

I do thank the Lord from the depth of my heart that He does love little children, for He said in his word, "Except ye become as a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom."

Now I have told you all how glorified and how high I had been lifted up; but then after a few days, old Satan stepped in and tried to devour me, as he tried to devour the little baby Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger. This old Satan tried to make me believe that I had deceived everybody, and that I was no more than the ashes off of a cigarette tip: that I just as well throw all this experience of Christ away. You are not fit for such a place, I said to myself. But Grand-daddy read to me about the Apostle Paul, who felt to be less than the least of all saints. It was this grace given which strengthened my hope, for ye are saved not of works but by grace. If you will read Acts, chapter three, you will know about me.

I will soon be eighteen years old. I have to sit in a wheelchair. My Mama and Daddy have to feed me, and lift me in and out of my chair or car. But thanks to God of heaven that my mind is very good. I would be glad for anyone who reads this to pray for me. Also, write or come to see me. I am Ronnie Howard, and live in Pollocksville, N. C.

I would be glad to hear from anyone who loves the lame and afflicted, for I love the people I think are the children of God.

I am Ronnie's Grandfather. What you have read is the truth or I am badly deceived.

Oscar Howard
Pink Hill, N. C.

11458 Hartley Road
Houston, Tex. 7701

Dear Editors and the
Readers of the Signs:

Enclosed you will find a check for \$10.00 for two years renewal, and the balance as you may see fit.

I feel at times that the *Signs of the Times* is the last crumb of bread that I have in this wide world. I know I am not gifted to write as others do. I have been thinking of Peter 1:2-9, that we should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. And I often ask myself who it was that called me out of darkness into his marvelous light. I certainly don't believe it was my sinful self.

Another scripture, James 4:41, I will mention, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." I believe that if we were a people worshipping the things of the world, we probably would take pictures of our meeting houses showing what a fine building we had, and try to get the picture printed on the front page of the newspaper.

My time is passing on for I am now at the age of seventy-four, and it will not be long until I will be laid in the dust, and there I will await the second coming of our Lord and Master.

My love goes to all the dear readers and writers of the *Signs*.

C. L. Berry

HAS READ THE SIGNS
LONG TIME

P. O. Box 294
Salida, Cal. 95368

Dear Editors of the True
Signs of the Times:

O how I love to read it! Have read it since my young days, and I am near eighty-three. My parents used to subscribe for it, and they are now gone from this world of grief.

I enjoyed so much the article by Eld. Bernard Greenwood. It was heart-felt, as was the editorial. I could just picture all

the dear ones in the associations in this issue. It was precious food to read.

I was at two associations last year. All was peaceful, which was a joy to the heart. My mind is on the church nearly all the time. I read and write a lot — and always have. I read other Baptist papers along with my Bible, the Book of All Books. I read it in my teens, and it never grows old,—always new. Our Lord is a wonderful teacher. I find Him most fit for me, and find myself most unfit for Him. I do love His Word. He is The Word, both sure and steadfast. I never tire hearing the true gospel preached in its fullness.

My subscription is due in February, so now I will send you an amount to help edit it. May God bless all of you. In sweet hope — and hope is sweet.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

A COMFORTING MEETING

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky. 42025

Editors of our Family Paper:

Fine enclosed check for another year's subscription.

The last day of the old year 1972 a very comforting meeting was held with Zion Church in Mayfield, Ky. The Elders present and bringing messages of truth, were Albert Brock of Fayette, Alabama; Waymon Chappel of Memphis, Tenn.; Elmer Prince and Paul Poyner of Clinton and Murray, Ky.

We feel the Lord still gathers his children together and makes them sit in heavenly places in Christ, desiring to know nothing but Christ Jesus; and how we hope He is our Saviour, Redeemer and all in all. We believe we have been taught of this Lord, for we could not learn the Truth unless we had the Teacher to teach us.

Our hope is as we linger on here in this old world of turmoil and strife, that our Lord will continue to be gracious, and gather us together as he sees fit, and feed us at His will, with Truth, and give us peace in Him. Not that we deserve this, for we know we are sinners, but have hope we are in the Elect Family chosen

in Christ before the foundation of the world.

I remain a sinner and hope saved by Grace.

Effie Bowden

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

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Mr. Sherman F. Buchner, Okla.....	\$ 1.00
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CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Muddy Creek Church, Dalphin County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in April.

Those going south get on Highway 11 to Pink Hill, from Pink Hill to Beulaville on Highway 41, go through Beulaville on 41, and about three miles turn left on hard road. The church will be located on that road on the right.

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

W. E. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Danville, Virginia

April, 1973

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (1 Timothy 1:2-4)

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto

you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 1:3)

EDITORIAL

ARTICLES OF FAITH

In my observations regarding Articles of Faith, I would first make it very clear that the Scriptures are the only Divine Rule of Faith and Practice of the Church of God. Articles of faith are used to set forth to others what our understanding is concerning certain passages of scripture, as a support and defense of the doctrine we hold. Most religious bodies have some in method of presenting their beliefs to others, and their reasons for that belief. Some are founded in the Word of God, others are the imaginations of men, or professed revelations from God. Those who set forth articles of faith without acknowledging that the Word of God is the authority for their articles, are not worthy of recognition.

The question will be asked, How long have we had Articles of Faith? referring to Baptist Articles. According to history the first Confession of Faith denominated Baptist, was published in Switzerland in 1527. And in 1689 the ministers and messengers of above one hundred churches in England and Wales met in London for the purpose of writing their Confession of Faith, known as the London Confession of Faith. In their Prologue they asserted themselves as "denying Arminianism."

The first Baptist churches established in America embraced this confession of faith. There were at that time no Missionary or Old School Baptists — all were known as Baptists. It appears that all Protestant confessions of faith are either Calvinistic, Semi-arminian, or Arminian. Most of the earlier confessions of the Protestant churches, including the Westminster Confession adopted in 1643, embraced the doctrines of Election, Predestination, Effectual Calling, Justification by Faith, the Perseverance of the Called unto Eternal

Glory, the Preservation of the Saints, and all related principle doctrines of Grace.

Most denominations have long since abandoned the preaching of the cardinal doctrines of Grace. And though there are certain expressions in the London Confession that we may not understand or agree with, the doctrines of Eternal Unconditional Election, Predestination, The Fall of Man (and all mankind involved in the Fall), the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Effectual Call, Justification by Faith, Sanctification of the Elect, the Final Glorification and the Resurrection of the Dead, as included in the London Confession, are in our present Articles of Faith; and we hold them dear. As Old School Baptists these principles of truth are, as they should be, important, and are preached in every Gospel Sermon.

If our Articles of Faith are not founded in the Word of God, they are worthless; but since they are founded there, they should be expounded and defended as an exposition of the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace Alone.

I wonder how many of our people are familiar with the Articles of Faith as set forth in our Associational Minutes and Church Records. Read them and compare them with the inspired Word of God, that we may be ready to give the reason of the Hope within us — not only from an experimental standpoint, but also in defense of God's Truth, as set forth in our Confessions of Faith with Scriptural References in an abbreviated way.

D. V. Spangler

VOICES OF THE PAST
 "He being dead yet speaketh"

SEEING AND NOT SEEING

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard

these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John ix. 39-41.

Dear Brethren:—If you will permit, I will try to suggest a few thoughts upon the above words for the readers of the *Signs*. Like every one of the words of inspiration, they are valuable, and contain lessons for our profit to-day. It seems to be a part and parcel of poor, feeble, human nature to look at things in parts, and to regard the Bible in the same way. We are apt to get certain ideas (even those which may be true) in our minds, and fasten our gaze upon them, to the overshadowing of other equally important things; and so we are apt to have our minds and hearts drawn to one class of texts, or to passages which specially bear upon some one principle of doctrine, and to pass by other portions of the word lightly, which present other principles of equally important truth. This should be guarded against, as far as we are able. I have seen some people who were impatient, and thought time was wasted, and who were even disposed to call in question the soundness of a man, if he did not all the time preach or write about election, predestination, and salvation by grace, and did devote a part of his time to preaching or writing about the multiplied obligations of Christians to God, to each other, and in all their relations among men in the world.

I do not find fault with those dear brethren whose gift leads them to speak or write oftener about some one theme than about another; but, on the other hand, let them also remember that other gifts and other themes are equally important and profitable to some one, if not to themselves. I think that every text and every theme in the bible is for our learning. There are lessons in them all, from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation. I may differ from a brother's views of a text, or I may think that he has unwittingly perverted it; but I dare not say that his text was unprofitable, or that it was not for profit

that it was given him to use. If what he says or what he does not say sets me to examining the text, that is the profit God meant for me in that discourse. And so I will try to suggest a few thoughts upon this Scripture, believing that it is intended, as all the Bible is, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Almost all the discourses of our Savior grew out of certain circumstances which had occurred, or were replies to things done or said by others; and if we would at any time know the real drift and bearing of his words we must know the circumstances and ascertain the thoughts, ideas and words of those to whom he spoke. This is the only safe way of interpreting anybody's words; and it is very manifest that the same words spoken under different circumstances may bear a great diversity of meaning.

In the words of Jesus under consideration it is therefore very needful that we know the occasion of their utterance, and to whom they were spoken. The occasion was this. Jesus had in a wonderful way healed one who was born blind. It became a notable case. The disciples, before the healing was performed, had questioned much as to why he had been born blind. Afterward the man's neighbors noticed him, and inquired after the manner of his healing; and in response he testified of Jesus, and told the manner of his healing. Soon they brought him to the Pharisees, and their miserable formality and hypocritical ritualism at once became apparent. Instead of praising the infinite power and goodness apparent in this work of the Savior, they begin to question and quibble because this had been done on the Sabbath day. They said, "This man is not of God; because he keepeth not the Sabbath day." But others said, "Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" It is wonderful to read along through this chapter and trace the workings of the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, in these self-righteous Jews. Their enmity was so bitter against the very name of Jesus that nothing

could change it or keep it in check; and because this blind man would continue to bear testimony of Jesus they cast him out of the synagogue, that, is, they excluded him from all his rights and privileges as a Jewish citizen.

That a miracle had been wrought by the Lord they did not and could not deny, but he had done this work on the Sabbath day; and because the poor blind man could not testify against the man that had done him so much good they were ready to destroy him also. They did not find fault with the works of the Lord, but they hated his doctrine. He made light of their traditions. He trampled upon their multiplied forms and ceremonies. He stripped the mask from their religion, and showed them up in their true colors. He taught that neither birth nor rituals nor outward morals could avail anything when the heart was filled with pride. he proclaimed to them that they were but whited sepulchres. No wonder that they hated him, even as they hated all goodness and truth and genuineness of every kind. Hypocrites and formalists themselves, they loved their kind, Because it was no better than themselves; but incarnate goodness and truth they hated, because it constantly stripped the covering from their sin, How little Jesus thought of forms! how much of what was genuine and real! Let us all, brethren, have a care, lest we be satisfied with mere forms—forms of worship, forms of speech, forms of doctrine. When any church becomes wedded to forms it is at once a petrified church, and there can be no more growth; and then right on the heels of formalism comes Phariseeism, and then persecution.

But God appoints and overrules all the persecutions of his people to their spiritual good. In this case the healed man might have been satisfied to remain where he was, still a communicant among those who had no experience in common with his, and where there could have been no real joy of fellowship; but when he began to tell his experience, and to ascribe all the glory to Jesus, they at

once demurred, and a division was apparent at once. There was a difference the very moment this man was healed, nay, there had been a difference ever since he was born. Now he begins to just tell how it has been with him, and how things are with him now, and at once it is seen that the story is irksome and hateful to them. It is irksome and hateful not because he had been blind and is now healed, but because Jesus had healed him, and he would persist in saying so. They hated Jesus, and now they hated this man to whom Jesus had done such great things. It is so today. Let any man rise up among the popular orders of the day and begin to tell an experience that is all of grace, and keep on telling it, and never deviate from it. and in every case he will soon find himself hated and cast out of their churches.

But God works good for his people in such ways. He worked good for this man. No sooner was he cast out of the synagogue than Jesus found him, and revealed himself to him as the Son of God, and spake comfortingly to him. There had been great things done for him in the flesh, and besides God had given him an honest spirit, so that he would not lie for fear or favor of men; and now to his honest heart Jesus comes, after he has been tried awhile, with further revelations of himself, his grace, and his love. This is the invariable rule in every case. To him that hath shall be given. He that has the grace of God in his heart shall find more grace as he has need and as he can receive it. When forsaken of those who have been to him as a father or mother, the Lord will take him up. This man was turned out of the earthly, formal system of worship, but in this he lost nothing; and immediately Jesus finds him, and leads him up into higher truths and feeds him in greener pastures and by stiller waters. He already knew the work of Jesus, but the Lord now reveals to him his person. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is he?" "I am he." When importuned to tell his enemies who and what he was, he always pointed to his works; but he grants a boon to a poor, humble blind

man, which he had denied to doctors and lawyers. Other men may see his works and cavil at them, but to the humble inquirer he reveals himself. With such he freely communes. If therefore any one, the poorest, the vilest of all, wants to know Jesus, to such an one he says, "I am he."

Now, out of all this narrative preceding Jesus says to the healed blind man, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Here the word "judgment" signifies "a sentence; an award; an administration; decree." Jesus came into the world to execute these two things. On the one hand to give sight to those who see not; and on the other to take it away from those who have it. So in chapter five Jesus said again, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." To the same import were the inspired words of Simeon, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." This was Jesus' work in the world; it is still his work. All that he said or did tended to this end. He divided all men and all things; he does so still. He did not in his ministry make men other than they were, but he revealed them. In the ministry of the world of Jesus he does the same to-day. There is never a preaching of Christ anywhere to-day where Jesus does not still come forth as a judge; and the thoughts of many hearts are still revealed. Men are either saying "Amen," or "This is hard doctrine; who can hear it?" Men who did not know that they were believers in the Bible, gospel sense, find it out by this holding forth of Christ; and men who think that all is right with them, hate the doctrine because it tells them that they are all wrong. It is still true that for judgment Jesus came into the world, and for judgment he abides here in his word and ordinances. He passes sentence, he issues decrees, he declares awards still. He reveals what men are; he shows them their true place in the sight of God.

But solemn and awful as these words

were, they were like healing balm to the soul of this blind man. He had been blind in regard to his natural vision, and Jesus had given him sight. He had made no pretensions to any understanding, such as could be gained at the feet of the doctors of the law. In this respect he was blind also. There was no room for boasting in him, either naturally or spiritually; and now Jesus preaches good gospel news to him. "I am come that they which see not might see." If anybody is blind, halt, maimed, poor, sick, hungry or thirsty, to that man I am sent. I come to seek and to save that which was lost. All these expressions present the same truth. Jesus is the Friend and Savior of those who humbly confess their sins before him. He not only saves them if they come to him, but he seeks and saves them. What need of an anxious-bench or of an altar if this be true? All such things imply a distrust of the power, love, and all-sufficiency of Jesus. Jesus seemed to say to this blind man, "This which I have done for you is not a strange work for me. You need not think strange of it. This is what I came to do, and this is what I shall continue to do."

But there is also another part to Jesus' work: "That they which see might be made blind." It is manifest that Jesus does not speak of natural blindness. It is evident from what follows that the Pharisees did not so understand him; and neither did he mean that in any case he would destroy the power to discern spiritual things. This need not be argued, for none will claim this. I have no doubt this sentence belongs to the living experience of his chosen one, as well as the first expression. All men suppose themselves capable of seeing spiritual as well as natural things. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died." It is just as though he had said, "I could see without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I became blind." That is, he came to realize that he was dead, or blind. The same word that afterward comforts now condemns. The glad

gospel news at first only causes trouble instead of joy. Such ones are beginning to find out that they are ignorant and blind; and they humbly confess it.

One who is now a dear sister in the church said to me that there was a time a few months before when, if she came to the meeting and heard the preaching, every word seemed as a word of cursing, and she was by it hopelessly cut off; but there came a time one day when "every word seemed a word of blessing." So Jesus, the same Jesus, is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. Thus this poor blind man was taught that in Jesus Christ the lowliest is exalted while the lofty must be made as lowly as he. Here is the one common brotherhood of the saints.

The Pharisees heard these words, and said unto him, "Are we blind also?" Blind as they were naturally, and blinded also by hate and passion, yet they could perceive in his words that for them there was promised no blessing in his coming. They could not confess that they were blind, for they did not believe it; and if they said that they were not blind, he would say, Why concern yourselves about me then? If ye have no need of me, why be troubled because I go to those who have need? So they propose the question, "Are we blind also?" No doubt they hoped, as they often did, to catch him in his answer; and Jesus answered them in bold words of accusation and condemnation. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." For some time I understood these words as though they had read in this way: "If ye realized and confessed that ye were blind, ye should have no sin; that is, it would be evident from this that God had granted you repentance and forgiveness. But now ye say, We see; that is, you do not confess your sin; therefore it is evident that ye are unrepentant and unforgiven." Of late however this has seemed to me a forced construction of these words, however true all these sentiments may be in themselves. I have come to think that these words mean the same thing as the

words of Jesus recorded in the fifteenth chapter of John. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

Read also the whole connection, where it will be seen that Jesus exhibits to view the natural enmity of the human heart to God. I now understand the words of Jesus in the text thus: If ye were blind, that is, if ye had not both seen and heard my words and works, ye would not have been chargeable with this sin of wilful rejection of me; but seeing these things, and rejecting them, and hating me, the sin of your hearts and your stubborn rebellion against God and unreconciliation to his will are plainly manifest. But now, after all this, ye say, We see; that is, they claimed to know the things of God, and therefore that they needed no instruction, but rather could instruct others. Now if all this be so, if indeed ye do see and know divine things, it is evident that your rejection of me and my words is from deliberate hatred to God and rebellion against him. They were in rebellion against God in reality before, yet they claimed to be the friends of God, but their rejection of him in the healing of this blind man showed plainly the bitter enmity of their hearts. Their sin remained in them. It was an evil heart of unbelief, of rebellion and hatred. If the time, however, should ever come when one of them should begin to bewail his blindness, then he would no longer hate Jesus or his Father, and he no longer would have that sin.

Now just a closing word. The comfort of all this is for the poor blind ones who confess their need. Their sin does not remain. They no longer hate, but love, Jesus and his word; and their chiefest comfort is that they may love God. If you confess your blindness, you do honor and love God.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. Chick

(The above was by Elder F. A. Chick July 22, 1887)

SPECIAL REQUEST

We received the following from one of our subscribers and correspondents: "Dear Brother: I don't want to complain but I do wish that the writers of Obituaries would not be so lengthy as to take so much space in the Signs. HUNDREDS of the subscribers are not the least interested in these, save the names and addresses, and pertinent information. We are all human, and loved ones are dear to us, but Jesus should be more dear than everything else."

Others have expressed about the same as above, and we have several times requested that the brethren be mindful of the length of the obituaries they write. It is difficult for us to edit them so as to make them shorter and not take up too much space.

About 250 words will require a little more than half a column, and would be acceptable for most accounts of those who have passed on. We sometimes have thirty or more obituaries waiting for insertion due to the length of some of them.

Keep this in mind when you are called on to write an obituary. If you type them please double space for our convenience.

EDITORS

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOSHUA CALEB HAMMOND

It is with sadness that after a long period of mourning within, that I will attempt to write a brief sketch to serve as an obituary for our beloved brother and Father in Israel, Elder Joshua Caleb Hammond.

His departure from this life came after 90 years and 11 months in his pilgrimage here below. Only a few weeks of serious illness preceded his death which occurred on July 14, 1972, in McMillen Hospital at Charleston, West Virginia.

Elder Joshua C. Hammond was born August 15, 1891, in Jackson County, West Virginia. He was the son of Andrew Hammond and Perlina Rhodes Hammond. On January 4, 1903 he was united in marriage to Minerva Page Hammond who preceded him in death on November 8, 1949. To this union were born eight children. Surviving are three sons; Zeland L. Hammond and Howard Hammond of Charles-

ton, W. Va., and Leonard Hammond of Dunbar, W. Vir. Three daughters; Mrs. Dessie Walfinbarger of St. Albans, W. Va., Mrs. Bessie Sigmon of Glasgow, W. Va., and Miss Elizabeth Hammond of Cincinnati, Ohio; two foster daughters; Mrs. Mary Maddox of Charleston, W. Va., and Mrs. Elma Halstead of Frame, W. Va., 39 grandchildren; 75 great grandchildren, and 6 great, great, grandchildren. Two sons, Alvin D. and Delbert A., preceded him in death.

Elder Hammond received a sweet hope in the mercy of God early in life. His preaching reflected his deep convictions in the sovereignty of our God. He joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church and served as a faithful member until his death. He was appointed clerk of the Hopewell Church on May 2, 1925 and served in that capacity until 1941. He was liberated to the Gospel Pulpit on July 2, 1927, and ordained to the full work of the ministry on December 5, 1931, which work he faithfully followed until the summons came that called him home. He was installed as the pastor of the Hopewell Church on May 31, 1941, and served as a faithful under-shepherd for 31 years, until his death.

Elder Hammond served as clerk of the Pocatlico Association for more than 10 years, and as moderator for 37 years. He was held in great esteem by Primitive Baptists far and near, and in the year of 1950 he was appointed to serve as moderator for the Tygart's Valley River Association during the illness of Elder J. S. Murphy.

The many duties he performed are too numerous to record accurately. Surely his labors in the service of God were labors of love as he traveled over the rough roads through heat and cold, storm and sunshine, not for hire, or man's reward, but for the love of God and his blessed children. He fulfilled the command, "Feed my Sheep", and "Feed my Lambs", as he spoke his convictions to the satisfaction of the Children of God, giving all praise, honor and glory to the God of all grace.

To know him was to love him, and he was known for his firm, steadfast adherence to the doctrine and disciple of the church that was founded upon the precepts, examples and admonitions as set forth in the Bible. Few were more familiar with the scripture than he. In my humble opinion, Elder Hammond was the last of the line of Old Baptists of his era.

In the last several years he made his home with his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Zeland Hammond in Charleston, W. Va., where he was cared for tenderly.

The funeral service was held at the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church on July 16, 1972, by Elder R. H. Pennington and Elder V. B. Linn. A large crowd of people as-

sembled to pay their final tribute of respect. He was laid to rest in the Page Cemetery on Kelley's Creek to await the resurrection, to which his faith looked.

Although we believe for him to die is gain, he will be sorely missed, not only by the 126 surviving members of his family, and his many brethren far and near; but by many friends and neighbors. May the Lord of all grace comfort all those who mourn the passing of our precious brother.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

ELDER HOWARD D. MURPHY

Elder Howard Dennison Murphy, son of Deacon Burr G. Murphy and Olive (Phillips) Murphy, departed this life at 11:50 A.M. August 20, 1972. He had been in failing health for the past few years, but still it came as a shock when he was called away.

He was born February 28, 1923, making his stay in this life forty-nine years, five months and twenty-three days. On May 17, 1947 he was married to Mary McNiell Murphy who survives. Also surviving are three daughters, Dianna and Brenda at home, and Mrs. Charles Likens of Germany: three sons, Billy and David at home, and Howard Junior serving with the United States Navy: also two grandchildren. Three brothers preceded him in death.

Elder Murphy was veteran of World War Two, serving in the U. S. Navy aboard the U.S.S. Bunker Hill.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Leading Creek Church June 20, 1959, and was baptized by Elder V. B. Lynn. He first spoke in public by request of the church on June 19, 1960; and was ordained to the full work of the ministry August 29, 1964. He last spoke in public July 16, 1972, at which time, in his weak and frail voice, he spoke comfortingly of his convictions.

Funeral services were held at Leading Creek Church, Montrose, W. Va. on August 24, 1972, conducted by Elder V. B. Lynn. He was laid to rest in the adjacent cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by request of the family.

(Elder) V. B. Linn

ELNORA WINCHELL SICKLER

Sister Elnora Winchell Sickler was born December 5, 1893 at Shokan, N. Y., and died October 20, 1972. She was the daughter of Orville and Eva L. Winchell. Her husband was George Sickler, who died some years ago. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Coralie Buel, and four grandchildren. Also by a brother,

Harry Winchell, Kingston, N. Y., and a sister, Mrs. Lelah Hill of California.

Sister Sickler died suddenly. She suffered for many years with diabetes and a heart condition. Her sister was visiting her when she dropped dead shortly after having breakfast.

She had lived at Prattsville on her daughter's farm for many years. Her great grandfather Winchell built the O. S. Baptist Church at Shokan, N. Y. and she united there in June, 1927. She was baptized by Elder George Ruston who was then her pastor.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder A. J. Slauson, and she was laid to rest at Shokan, N. Y. She greatly loved the church and her brethren, and was firm in her belief in the doctrine of God our Saviour. She loved to visit among the brethren, and especially the associations.

May the Lord give grace to those who mourn her passing that they may be reconciled in their loss.

John D. Wood

GEORGE VIRGIL ADKINS

As it pleased God to take from our midst our very dear friend, George Virgil Adkins, on January 15, 1973, after having spent eighty-four years on these mortal shores, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that He has an appointed time for all things.

He was the son of the late George W. and Martha Phillips Adkins and was married to Mary (Mamie) Staton who passed away in 1965. To this union was born one son Jeff Staton Adkins who passed away in the year of 1963. Surviving are one sister, Mrs. Ethel Ratliff of Morven, N. C. There are also one nephew and three nieces who survive.

He was a man well liked by many, and was associated with the W. E. Sheppard Wholesale Grocery Co. for many years. However, his health not being very good, he spent his last few years in the Eastern Shore State Hospital where he passed away.

He was not a member of the Old School Baptist Church but attended the meetings as long as his health would permit. It is our prayer that all who knew him so well may be blessed with a mind to have no doubt but that our departed friend has gone to a better land, where all the tears and sorrows of this life will be wiped away.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Hill-Baker-Bounds Funeral Home and his body was laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery, on Jan. 18, 1973.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

IN MEMORY OF
SISTER MYRTIE FOSTER

I beg the grace of God as I write in memory of one very near and dear to me, Sister Myrtie Foster, who passed from this life January 19, 1972. She was born in Pickins County, Alabama, March 25, 1882, to Brother Joe Awtry and wife, Sister Permelia Sanders Awtry. In 1912 she was married to Mr. Mack Foster, who preceded her in death several years. They lived and reared their family of one daughter and three sons: Mrs. Helen Cash, with whom she was making her home in Hattisburg, Miss. and whose hands administered to her mother with tenderest care; Monroe Foster, Tupelo, Miss., Adolph Foster, New Orleans, La.; her youngest son Awtry, and his wife, who preceded her in death about a month. Her children can call her *Blessed*, as she died as she lived, trusting in God.

After the death of her husband she lived in Birmingham, Ala. for a short time, taking care of her mother. While there she joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1952, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, where she remained a faithful member. Besides her children she leaves three brothers, Hubert, George and Elder Henry Awtry; three sisters, Sisters Florence Pate, Ella Shoemaker and Effie Cowart, all members of the same church.

She suffered much pain, not being well for several years, but bore it with much patience, trusting that God would one day remove her from all pain that was appointed to her in this time world, and would waft her spirit to Paradise with Him, where all is peace and rest.

She spent much time with me while attending meetings and associations in many states. We often talked of the wonderful mercy of God in permitting us to enjoy these last sweet years together. Our communion together will never be forgotten, as we often talked of the cords of love which bound us together inasmuch that we felt to be sisters in the flesh, and a blessed hope that we were made sisters in the great handiwork of God.

A more serene and gentle sister ever lived among us. God blessed me with her companionship and encouragement in the many miles we traveled to hear the joyful dew-drippings of Jesus and His love, and in hunting Primitive Baptist history, and looking up old churches, ministers and members.

Her funeral was conducted by her former pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, and her present pastor, Elder H. C. Moon. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Artesia, Miss. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, but not one as beautiful as her life.

May God give us to say, "Thy will be done."

In hope of eternal life,

Maggie L. Hayes,
Vernon, Ala.

BROTHER HARVEY EDWARDS

God called one of his little ones home October 23, 1972.

Elders Henry Jones and Joe Sawyer officiated. The funeral was held at Joyner's Funeral Home in Wilson, North Carolina. Burial was in Cedar Grove Cemetery at Elm City, North Carolina.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Carolyn Baker Edwards; a daughter, Mrs. John Pitt of Pine-tops; a son Harvey Roy Edwards of Pine-tops; and three brothers, Jimmy, George and Bernice Edwards. One grandchild.

One of Brother Edwards' desires was to go to Otter's Creek and worship with the brethren. As I sat beside his bed and listened to him talk, I can tell all of you that didn't know him, he did not unite with the Church just to have his name put on the book. He believed in God and he loved every one of you. John 15-17 "Christ said, This I command you. To love one another." If we be what we hope to be we have no choice. The choice is not ours. For it is written **THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN**. His will, will be carried out.

Brother Edwards suffered a lot. He was a very sick man. Yet I don't feel I have seen anyone that wanted to be Baptized anymore than he did. We thank God for giving him the strength to walk into and out of the water. I can see him now as he came out of the water. He looked at the sisters and brothers that were singing as if to say thank you. As I was helping him put on his clothes, he said, Everyone needed to go through that water. He knew he had something. Brethren it was a hope. Something that can only be given by God. Its something we would not part with and those that don't have it wouldn't give you anything for it.

I believe with all my heart that brother Edwards was a child of God and now waits his call to enter into heaven. No more aches, no more sorrows. May his soul rest in peace.

I do wish to thank the family for the nice letter they wrote to the Church. As the letter was read it brought tears to a lot of eyes. The letter alone would lead me to believe Brother Edwards was a child of God.

Written by the request of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Written By Brother J. C. Edwards
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1973

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ABRAHAM'S SERVANT

By

ELDER STEWART McCOLL

*"Come in, thou blessed of the Lord;
wherefore standest thou without?"
(Gen. 24:31)*

These are the wonderful words of Laban to the humble and obedient servant of Abraham when he arrived in Mesopotamia seeking a bride for his master's son Isaac. What joy they must have brought to this weary sojourner after such a long journey! What joy they bring today to the weary traveller desiring a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God!

At Abraham's bidding, the dutiful servant set off from the land of the Canaanites among whom they dwelt, for the homeland and kindred of his master Abraham to take a wife for his son Isaac. The mission was awesome, to say the least, being a long journey to an unknown country, seeking a damsel whom he knew not in a place he knew not where. Only Abraham's assurance that a kind Providence would superintend his journey and direct him to the chosen bride, enabled him to leave with any degree of confidence.

Since all the goods of his master were in his hand, the servant chose some men and ten camels to accompany

him. In addition he selected a golden earring and two bracelets as gifts for the bride. Resolutely he set off for Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor, where he made his camels kneel by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

Scarcely had he stopped at the well, when a young damsel named Rebekah came from the city to draw water, offered him drink, gave to the camels also and invited him to her father's household. She was the daughter of Bethuel, the grandson of Haran, Abraham's elder brother. A kind Providence indeed, had guided this humble servant in fulfilling his mission as he was quick to acknowledge in saying, "... the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."

In a moment, Laban, Rebekah's brother, ran to meet him at the well and said, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?"

Rebekah, after hearing the mission of her servant, unhesitatingly voiced her willingness to go with him to Abraham's household as Isaac's bride.

The account of the servant's journey is wonderful even in a literal way as it underlines his devotion to his master Abraham, his dependence upon an unerring Providence, his recognition of the bride in answer to prayer and his welcome into an unknown household in a far country. Even more wonderful is it, however, when viewed spiritually since it typifies the journey of a child of grace searching and longing resolutely for the Household of Faith. The likeness is remarkable in detail as we shall soon discover.

Abraham sent *his* servant unto *his* country and to *his* kindred just as God the Father directs *His* children to look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10) The bond between the servant and Abraham was sealed with an oath, while the servant placed his hand under Abraham's thigh (a custom yet extant in some eastern countries). This oath signifies for us the covenant which Moses exhorted the Israelites to enter into with God that He might establish them as a people unto himself. (Deut. 29:12-13) In addition it typifies the fact that "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." (Heb. 6:17) An unbreakable seal is therefore established between God and His people.

The journey of the servant was superintended by an angel of God being sent before him as an angel was directed later to keep the Children of Israel in the way, to touch Elijah, to commune with Zechariah, to release Peter from prison and generally to prosper the way of His people in mercy and in truth.

Ten camels were used to carry the servant and his party of men across the desert. How fitting! The camel is the ship of the desert suited in every way to its work and its environment. Its hoofs are broad and hornlike in the sand, its stomach is lined with numerous cells to store water, its hump is a reservoir of food, its pinched nostrils can be closed to shut out the sandstorm and its rubbery lips are able to grub the thorniest plants. Not only is it adapted to its environment but found useful in every conceivable way. It provides milk, meat, transportation and hair for weaving. Even the camel's excrement, when dried, is used for fuel.

Upon careful examination a striking similarity becomes evident between the camels (ten in number) carrying the humble servant across the wearisome desert and the law (ten commandments) serving as our schoolmaster unto Christ.

As the camel is adapted to its environment, so the law is designed for its specific purpose; as the camel is useful in every conceivable way, so the law provides every instrument necessary to purge our sins; as the camels knelt by the well so the law must bow before Christ; as the camels were given water from the well, so Christ satisfied the law to a jot and tittle; as the camels were released from labour having been given straw and provender in Rebekah's home, so the law must rest once faith has come for "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. 3:25)

It is very significant that the search for Isaac's bride came to a climax at a well. Isaac, being a clear type of Christ as the perfect sacrifice, stands out among the Patriarchs as the man of the well; Abraham being the man of the altar, and Jacob the man of the tent. Indeed Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi meaning the well dedicated to the Living One who seeth me. In addition, his name is connected with the well at Esek meaning contention, the well at Sitnah meaning enmity and the well at Rehoboth meaning roominess or freedom. These he redug after the Philistines had closed them up following his father Abraham's death. Abraham had dug the wells originally. How clearly they reveal to us spiritually the contention that exists in us between the flesh and the spirit, the enmity between God and man in our natural state and then the freedom from bondage which comes when Christ gives us a drink of living water. The particular well by which the servant stopped at eventide, just outside the city of Nahor, beautifully typifies Christ as the source of that living water.

Our experience under the law occurs in dry places similar to the natural desert across which the servant had to go. Frequently we are in darkness . . . even gross darkness . . . in which no light appears to guide our path. We seem alone, without the camp, seeking refuge from an indulgent God. It all

serves to bring us to our knees in prayer for:

“Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.”

How wonderfully significant, then, is the servant's arrival at the well, after a long journey, seeking the bride, at the time of the evening, without the city in an attitude of prayer.

His prayer was God given, “O Lord God of my master Abraham . . . let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; . . . (Gen. 24:12-14)

His prayer was answered, for before he had done speaking, Rebekah came out . . . hastened . . . and offered him drink and his camels also. No wonder the servant bowed down his head and worshipped the Lord.

Mesopotamia means the land between rivers spiritually signifying the promised land which in type was given of God to Abraham when He said, “Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” (Gen. 15:18) The city of Nahor means breathing hard to remind us of the expression in Psalm 42:1, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.”, or in Psalm 119:131, “I open my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.” How clearly the account describes the condition of the weary sinner at this point in his travels.

Even the names of Rebekah's kindred are highly significant. Bethuel meaning abode of God plainly portrays the Household of Faith. Milcah being interpreted counsellor, indelibly refers to the One prophesied in Isaiah who was to be called, “Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6) Laban means white telling us that,

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:14) Without doubt, Abraham's servant was led to the house of his master's brethren, giving him a foretaste of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Cor. 5:1)

To this house he must come to find Rebekah, the bride of Isaac, a lovely type of the Church of Christ. Like the mystical bride she typifies, Rebekah, too, was “very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her.” (Gen. 24:16) She “went down” to the place where the water was, “filled her pitcher”, “hasted” to draw it, “drew” for the camels also, and “ran” and told those of her mother's house the things concerning the servant. Her joy was evident in the manner in which she served. Even greater joy is evident in the Church when someone comes to ask a name with it. Common it is to see the members “run” to tell others in the household the good news. The pitchers are full . . . haste is made . . . as Rebekah clearly portrays.

At this juncture the servant's demeanor was certainly becoming and we can but feel to fellowship him fully as he cried in humility, “is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?” (Gen. 24:23) This reminds us of others in the scripture who groaned like the humble publican, “God, be merciful to me a sinner,” or Peter, “Lord, save me”, or the Leper, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” God has promised his people that he will not despise the prayer of the destitute. Of some comfort are the words of another servant who after bringing in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind at God's command said, “Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.” (Luke 14:22) Nevertheless, to every poor sinner the anxiety persists . . . the cry remains . . . am I one of His or no? and “is there room?”

Not only did Rebekah reassure the servant of her household's provision of

straw and provender for his camels, but ran to tell her kindred the wonderful events which took place at the well. What is even more remarkable is that when asked later by the servant whether she would return with him to be Isaac's wife, she said unhesitatingly, "*I will go.*" (Gen. 24:58) How we are made willing in the day of His power!

Laban appears at this time to reassure the servant by saying, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" What a joyous greeting! What a monumental blessing! Especially if it comes from the Church—but more especially if it comes from Christ. The word "come" in itself is all sufficient if from Him. How frequently it is used in the scripture! For example God said to Noah, "*Come* thou and all thy house into the ark . . .", Jesus said to Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree, "*Come* down," and to Lazarus in the tomb, "*Come* forth," and some day He will say to all that wait for His appearing "*Come*, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34) Only at this juncture will the word "come" reach its full significance.

The joy of the servant at this moment, having been given all the comforts of Rebekah's household, must have been unspeakable for truly he had been greatly blessed. No wonder he exclaimed, ". . . the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." His joy can only be compared to those who, after waiting patiently without the camp, have been brought into the Church and await in hope the promise of better things to come.

Now the servant's camels were ungirded to show that he was no longer under the law, but under grace. His feet, too, must be washed to remind us that:

"Th'appointed time rolls on apace
Not to propose but to call by grace:
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

Then meat was set before him to eat

signifying that he was now ready and anxious for the doctrine as well as the sincere milk of the word. Christ was now his portion as clearly declared in John 6:56, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

One more task the servant determined to do before he could enter into the full fellowship of the household. Graciously and humbly he declared, "I will not eat until I have told mine errand." With these words he began to relate how he was Abraham's servant; how the Lord had blessed his master with great substance . . . even a son in his old age; how Abraham had made him swear to seek a bride for his son Isaac in the house of his father's kindred; how an angel had been sent with him to prosper his way; how his prayer had been answered; how he had found the bride and how he had been led to the house of his master's brethren. A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE!! Every word an exclamation to His praise. It is little wonder that Laban and Bethuel could simply declare, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord . . ." How we love to hear those to-day who must "tell their errand" to the Church before entering into the full fellowship of the observance of the Lord's Supper.

It seems very fitting that God in his infinite wisdom would show us this example of a humble servant being led to the Household of Faith especially so early in the pages of the Old Testament. His servitude clearly reveals to us our relationship to the law while we are in bondage to it under the elements of this world, until Christ sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts whereby we cry ABBA! FATHER! as declared in Galatians 4:7, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Abraham's servant was elevated from his servitude to the full freedom of sonship in the house of his master's brethren. That a similar unmerited favour may be your portion and mine, spiritually, is our humble

prayer in Christ Jesus, Amen!

Elder Stewart McColl
R. R. #4, Appin,
Ontario, Canada.
NOL-1AO

AWAITS THE COMING OF
THE SIGNS

722 S. Alvarado, Street,
Los Angeles, Cal. 90057

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

Am sending \$10.00 for my *Signs* to be extended as far as it will go. It seems I am paid up to March, 1973. I read them twice and rush them to a brother and sister. So I just casually see the date of the time due. I always read them the first night.

It is encouraging to see articles from the young brother. Every so often I hear of members and occasionally elders that leave the church in which they have been in fellowship for years. Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:3, 4 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." He is not talking about so-called religionists, as they have never endured sound doctrine. A lot who profess do not believe in Predestination to the fullest. It can't be too strong, as some say, to suit me. Whatever we believe has no effect on the Lord, as He is unchangeable, and will not give his glory to another.

At breakfast this morning I opened my Bible to Ezekiel, chapter 47 and started on the 48th, only reading about six verses. I have wondered about Manasses supplanting Dan in Revelation, seventh chapter. In Ezekiel 48:1-6 it mentions Dan, Manasseh and Ephraim in the portions to the seven tribes. I once wrote Elder Ruston, and he wrote some of it, but finally said that it remained one of the mysteries of God. There is much in the Bible when I read

it, that has no meaning to me. I understand nothing unless the Holy Ghost opens my understanding. If you or anyone have any light on it, I would appreciate seeing something written on it in the *Signs*.

Always waiting to receive my *Signs*.

A brother I trust, but a poor mortal
Harry T. Vories

ISOLATED FROM THE BRETHREN,
THE SIGNS IS COMFORT AND JOY

A225 Emerson Street,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is again time to make my little contribution to our family paper, the *Signs of the Times*. It is indeed with a thankful heart, if not deceived, that I am able to do this. I am isolated and separated many miles from my brethren and sisters in the Lord, so the *Signs* is indeed a comfort and joy to me, who am the least of the household of faith, if indeed I am one at all.

The Apostle Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am" — to which I say Amen; for it is the grace of God that makes the difference between the believer and the unbeliever--between the saint and sinner: between those who have a lively hope and those who are dead in trespasses and sins; between those who are afar off and those who are made nigh by the Blood of Jesus Christ. Yes, it is the grace of God that makes the difference between those who have the Spirit of our God and Jesus Christ, and those who are without God and hope in the world.

There is a great gulf that separates the dead from the living, and that gulf is the grace and love of God. Paul the Apostle, who was moved by the Holy Ghost, says of God that He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. This is a hard saying, who can hear it? that is, Who can understand it? No one can understand it until he is taught of the

Lord.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift continue to lead, guide, guard, direct and protect his little flock through the remainder of this sinful world, so prays this unprofitable servant for Jesus' sake. Amen. Brethren pray for me.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Elder Louis Stewart

A JOY AND COMFORT

843 Glendale Ave.,
South Charleston, W.Va. 25303

Dear Brother Wood:

Once again it is time to renew my subscription to my favorite periodical, the *Signs*. What a joy and comfort it has been to me during the years!

Many times I have prayed for an answer to something that was troubling me, and a copy of the *Signs* would come and I would read where a dear brother had written an answer to my prayer — of course I know it was performed by the hand of God. I believe He uses some of his children to comfort the others. I read in the January issue where a sister mentioned about how soon we forget the blessings we receive from our Lord. How true!

We would thank Him for inspiring the brethren to write and publish the *Signs* down through the years — always holding to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. So many of God's people would never hear the Gospel if they didn't receive this dear old paper. May He ever bless and inspire you to continue publishing it.

Enclosed is a check for another year's subscription, the remainder to be used as needed. Give Sister Wood my love.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

NEVERTHELESS GOD'S WORK IS PERFECT

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

If I don't say anything other than that the November and December, 1972, issues of the *Signs* were the best reading I ever read, and that I regret being late in sending my renewal, it will at least be the truth; and if I just tried to write of spiritual things with a carnal mind, it would be of no value. But for some reason my mind has been on the carnality of man.

"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." I know there are differences of opinions as to what the Creature is, but I feel to know that "I" in my carnal flesh am altogether vain. An yet I have been given hope, and this carnal person has been subjected by or in that hope — not made better, for I still suffer because on my carnal inclinations, and rebellion at times because they can't have sway. Subjection, when it comes in love, is easy and lovely; and the subjection to these things which are contrary to my flesh, is precious with reconciliation, and I feel so thankful to God that I am in this way. But when this subjection comes in the form of chastisement, and hindering a way I feel is good, it is hard to bear.

Nevertheless God's work is perfect, and there is a reason man was made subject to vanity — and we have to say, "So be it." But I believe I hunger and thirst after righteousness with all my heart; and sometimes Christ's sermon on the Mount comforts me. The verses beginning with the word BLESSED, I have read through many times: But in my Bible the whole sermon is on heavy slick paper, with floral colored designs. One night I decided to read the whole Sermon, and when I reached the last verse, where "Jesus ended these sayings", for some reason I was so shaken

with fear that tears streamed from my eyes, and I honestly felt that I was barred from everything He said. I too was astonished at His words, and I felt I had just grasped at these truths and had a faint *head knowledge* of them. I was alone, and sat there a long while in this dreadful state of mind, fearful that after all these years of believing and hoping and rejoicing, feeling the Lord had been mindful of me in much mercy, I surely was mistaken in it all, and that it had sprung from the imagination of my natural mind.

Suddenly a question came to my mind, "Could this be the fear that God said He would put upon his people?" Like, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." I felt some relief, and comfort seemed to drop from somewhere and distill into my being: precious thoughts like, "The secret of the Lord is with those that fear Him." This fear was so real, yet it now seemed a reverential fear and awe, love mixed. And I remember it today in the same way. I *must* believe these experiences come from God and are his dealings with his children, if I have hope.

If they are the imaginations of a carnal mind, I have no hope. For all these things link together from the time I first felt the quickening love by the Spirit, which was so sweet to my soul.

I had no idea of writing what I have when I started a few lines to send my renewal. I am sending enough for two years and a little extra. I hope the Lord will be gracious to you and make the task of getting the paper out easy.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

MATTHEW 25:1-13

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the

bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise. Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, not so: lest there be not enough for us and you: But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." (Matthew 25:1-13.)

Jesus spoke the above and the entire 25th chapter of Matthew in parables. A parable is spoken in figurative language and never the real thing of which it is a figure. All scripture is given by divine inspiration, including the parable; but a parable or a narrative is in that sense different to the plain written word. No man by the natural mind can receive nor understand any part of scripture given except by divine inspiration, and neither can he receive nor understand the parables Jesus spoke while here upon earth. And he spoke several in comparison of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is both called the kingdom of God and the kingdom of God's dear Son. All these refer to a spiritual kingdom of which a man must be born of the Spirit before he can either see or enter into the kingdom.

In the parable given above, this is the beginning of the manifestation of the kingdom of God's grace given in Christ; as is spoken of 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, it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Also that spoken of in Isaiah 9:6-7, which we may mention later.

Notice all ten of the virgins slumbered and slept right on until midnight, for it was at midnight when the cry was made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Until now there was no discovery of any difference in the ten, for all were virgins; all equally virgins. Midnight is a dividing between two days, the ending of one day and the beginning and manifestation of the kingdom or gospel dispensation. The one that made the cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him" no doubt was John the Baptist. John came preaching in the wilderness; "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." All the virgins heard the audible voice of John. This is proven by many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized of him in the river of Jordan. But what five of the virgins did not have was oil in their lamps. This is the first manifestation of any difference between the ten virgins. The oil in the vessels of the five wise was all that made that difference. The oil made them wise, just as grace makes his people wise unto salvation. The wise, being vessels of mercy, have an entrance by grace through faith into the kingdom of heaven with the bridegroom. But the door is shut against law worshipers. Though they say, "Lord, Lord, open to us," yet, his reply is, "I know you not." Jesus said, "Many shall say unto me in that day, (the gospel of the kingdom of heaven day), "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." This, as said above, is the gospel of the new and everlasting covenant day, given of God in Christ Jesus, who is not only our Lord, but our almighty, eternal and everlasting Saviour, who shall save his people from their sins with an everlasting salvation.

As for the DOOR, Jesus said, "I am

the door of the sheep, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Not be saved later on, but saved presently and that eternally. May we further say, the five wise virgins that were ready and went in with him (the bridegroom), were ready because Jesus made them ready and kept them ready; and they went in to the marriage, (the kingdom of heaven), with the bridegroom — both with him and by him.

We wish now to consider the third parable Jesus spoke in this 25th chapter of Matthew, beginning at the 31st verse. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left." For briefness we will not quote more of the parable; others may read it for themselves. I wish to first state that this parable has no reference to the resurrection, neither of the just nor the unjust. Jesus still has reference to the gospel day, as described in the first parable; and the likeness of separating the sheep from the goats in the gospel dispensation; and has no reference to a final twenty-four hour day as in time, nor a general resurrection. After Jesus rose from the dead, before he ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, he told his disciples, "All power in heaven and earth is given into my hands; Go, ye into all the world (all nations) and preach the gospel unto every creature, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

Therefore, in that sense the believer is already saved and the unbeliever is already damned. Jesus is NOW upon the throne of his glory, the throne of his kingdom, with all power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. And this he did, is doing and will continue to do. He also has all power in heaven and earth and rules all nations with a rod of

iron; and his people with loving kindness and tender mercy. The king's (all kings) heart is in his hand as the river of water, he turneth it wheresoever he will. The apostles of the Lamb and all his true ministers in all the gospel dispensation are his angels; they were and are with him and he with them even unto the end of the world or the end of time. The parable has no reference to all nations that have been or will be, being gathered at one place, at one time (as we count time), before Jesus to be separated, sheep from goats, but rather it has reference to the gospel dispensation and this separation continually takes place. Neither does the parable refer to every individual human being; for the parable shows that it has only reference to righteous possessors and religious professors (who are not possessors). Jesus is no such finite being as man, nor as man imagines. For man is prone to think that God is just as stupid as he himself is. Man is such a finite being that he has to have objects close to his eyes before he can see them, then he can't discern very much about what he sees; not even his own self. God is infinite, eternal. He declared the end from the beginning. He filleth not only space, but eternity; He himself is Eternity. All things that ever have been or ever will be are naked and open before him, neither is there any thing new or old with him. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."

In God's eternal mind, will and purpose he separated his sheep from the goats when as yet there was none of them manifest. And all nations present, past or future are open eternally before his face. In time he manifestly separates the elect (vessels of his mercy) from the non-elect (vessels of wrath); and commands the elect by the grace of his spirit of love to be separate. When he commands things to BE, they BE. So it is God that calls his elect with a holy calling. Jesus calls his own sheep by name (new name), they hear his voice (know his voice), He goes before them

(already has done it) and he is still before them and they before his face and he is with them and they with him. The lambs are in his bosom. He keeps them as the apple of his eye. It is always, "come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," yes you, "before the foundation of the world." "Fear not little flock, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The conversation that takes place between the Saviour and his sheep (who are always set on his right hand of favors) is constantly being repeated between him and them; He is continually expressing his love to them, ("Thou are all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.") Also, they are continually confessing their sins and nothingness to him. It is not an audible voice, but, small still and sweet voice, wherein he talks to them; Likewise, he blesses her by the same spirit of communication to himself. This is verified in the Song of Solomon. But it is in his wrath he deals with the wicked; they are under his JUST wrath and curse. He speaks to them just as he did the wicked that crucified the Lord of Glory, "Saying, Awake, O sword against my shepherd, the man that is my fellow, smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." How sweet it is to know and believe the truth, "JESUS, the way, truth and life."

Jesus says of the goats, "And these shall go away" (not immediately in hell) "in everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Jesus is not here, teaching that the righteous will immediately enter into heaven and immortal glory; for he does not have reference to heaven and immortal glory in the parable; but he is teaching the same which he had already spoken in verse 34, the same parable, which reads "Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This is the kingdom of God's grace which was given us in Christ Jesus; and

of his fullness have all we received, grace for grace; grace in time for grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. "Fear not, little flock, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus also obtained eternal redemption for them; likewise, the inheritance is eternal. They receive an earnest of it here and will receive the fullness in glory. This they will be made meet (a meetness) for in the glorious resurrection: to see Jesus as he is and ever be with him in glory.

The 41st verse reads, "Then shall the king say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Satan was cast out of heaven (Jewish heaven) into the earth and his angels were cast out with him; but neither Satan, nor his angels were ever in the kingdom of God's grace, nor ever will be. All Satan can do is to cast out of his mouth a great flood (of his false doctrine and lies) that he may cause the woman that is clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, to be carried away with his lies; but God who is her refuge, shield and hiding place, causes the earth to help the woman, and swallow up the flood the dragon casts out of his mouth. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Jewish heaven)." There was war in that heaven: "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." "They overcame Satan and his angels, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Do we not know when Jesus redeemed his people unto God, out of every nation, tongue and people, that they were then before his face, ever before him? "He shall see of the travail of his soul, he shall see his seed, and shall be satisfied." Mark 13th Chapter reads, "Then shall he send his angels, (ministers) and shall gather his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." As has been said, these angels are all his true

ministers in all ages of the gospel dispensation. He first sent forth fishermen to fish them, then huntsmen to hunt them out of the caves and dens of the earth, where the Lord God had driven them. The sweet part is, "they shall be mine in that day, (gospel day) when I make up my jewels, saith the Lord; and I will spare them as a father spares his own son that serveth him."

The parables I have been writing on have no reference to the personal appearing of Jesus Christ, when he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation. No, not by any means does it refer to his second personal appearing. For then shall his people be raised in his glorious likeness, to see him as he is and so ever be with the Lord. There will be no goats on that scene. The separating of the sheep from the goats, as demonstrated by the parables, was clearly manifest when John was baptizing in the river of Jordan, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: (don't forget that) therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Matthew 3:5-10).

This saying and action of John speaks for itself to those that have eyes to see and a heart to understand the spiritual teaching of divine things of the kingdom of God. Those Pharisees and Sadducees could hear from an outward ear the audible words John spoke to them, but to see and understand the spiritual teaching of him, they could not. That's just the way it is concerning the parables

Jesus spoke. I've heard ministers sing off these parables from the letter of the word to their congregation, when neither they nor the minister knew anything of the true spiritual teaching of our Lord in the parables. Had the members known the true teaching of Jesus, they would at least have later tried to correct him as a brother, beloved in the Lord. Such may need to go to Jonah's school and they will if God sends them. Do we slumber and sleep as do others, or, are we children of the day (gospel day)? If so, let us walk as children of the light (Jesus) not of the night or darkness." "For they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint."

Read the second and several chapters of The Acts to again see how God manifestly separated the elect from the non-elect, sheep from the goats. There were at least people out of seventeen nations under heaven present on the day of Pentecost and at least some of them heard Peter and other apostles speak in their own tongue wherein they were born. May we note that here the apostles preached the gospel to many nations, as Jesus had formerly told them to do so. About three thousand souls (sheep) were baptized, for the remission of sin; not in order to get remission but because they had already received it. But I think most all the goats get mad, being cut to the heart by the WORD the apostles preached. I'm sure many goats don't like to hear Christ preached in this gospel day. Some have said that it wasn't Jesus that showed these wonders on the day of Pentecost, that it was the Holy Ghost, that the Holy Ghost ruled in the kingdom (how pitiful a King without a kingdom and a kingdom without a GREAT KING). I wouldn't dare to try to separate Jesus from the Holy Ghost, seeing they are one in the essence of divine nature. Peter said, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath shed forth this, ye now see and hear." Isaiah 9:6-7 said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given;

and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal (Spirit) of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Glory to God, the most High, Peace and good will to his dear and precious children.

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

FOUGHT THE BELIEF
AS LONG AS HE COULD

P. O. Box 19152
Tampa, Fla. 33616

Dear Elder Spangler:

My dear brother, may I say it is time for me to renew my subscription; and I just want to say a few words to tell you how delighted I was to talk with you two years ago. How I would love to be able to visit in your section of the country, but I have no idea I will ever have that pleasure. I will be eighty-five years old March 18th, and my wife is also eighty-five and has been sick for three years.

So you see I am tied down in two ways. I haven't been able to leave her and go to church in the last two years. But thank the good Lord, that by you and others of the *Signs of the Times* I can get some pleasure out of what I believe, and have believed it as far back as I can remember.

My father was an Elder, and one of the elders in the Chipola Association about one hundred years ago, in Jackson and Calhoun Counties in the western part of Florida, and most of his children were members of the church, but several of his sons did as I: fought the belief

as long as we could.

My hope and prayers are that you and others will continue the wonderful work of the *Signs of the Times* for all of us poor sinners.

May the good Lord continue to bless you and yours.

Love,
Andrew J. Beauchamp

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. (1 Pet. 3:15-17)

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 4:6, 7

“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ? and

what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

If these questions could be spoken or sent from my pen into the heart of men everywhere, it would terminate in the ending of a lot of self praise. This I can not do, and the fact that self-praise has not ended is definite evidence that there are many people who are glorying when they have not received.

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32:1) Does this imply that some of the time you and I are to rule in judgment? Will any of my dear brethren say that? If the prince (Paul) is to rule in judgment, I would kindly (and I hope brotherly) ask, What have I, as a servant of God, got that I did not receive? If any thing, what is it? If not anything, then by what right would I say that I have brought about a state or condition in the kingdom of heaven that I did not receive? Not long since I read in a paper an article by a regular contributor to that paper in which he said, May our Lord ever give grace sufficient to move His children forward; for we will never get anywhere standing still. The first part of that prayer is lovely, The second part of it is self contradictory to the first part. The first part is an acknowledgement of helplessness, of genuine need, of having received from the Lord of the spirit of prayer. The second part is a statement that we can get somewhere even if we do not have the first part answered.

"Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." (Psa. 65:4) Jacob is said to be the lot of God's inheritance (Deut. 32:9), and the Lord has corroborated that testimony time and again (Isa. 41:8, 9; 43:10; 44:i, 2); He chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the

world (Eph. 1:4); He tells His disciples that they have not chosen Him, but that He had chosen them (John 15:-16); His people are referred to as having been elected before the foundation of the world (Isa. 65:9, 22; Mark 13:27; I Pet. 1:2; Rom. 9-11; Psa. 139:16; Isa. 34:16, 17; Rev. 13:8; 17:8). It would be a pitiful sight to hear a man say that this choice or election is based on anything that the creature can do. Yet, as pitiful as it is, I have heard many men say so. Surely there is not a member of any branch or faction of our people that say that. If they do, I will show to that man or woman in their own original church and associational minutes that they did not at one time believe that. This work is by gift. God gave them to the Son in eternity and he gives us him (not to Him) in our experience. This is by grace that this two fold gift is given. It is not by works of righteousness which we have accomplished.

Dearly beloved readers, this is the soul comforting doctrine of election. Not only has it been the foundation of the gospel as it has been preached by the prophets and apostles and by our blessed Saviour, as well as by every minister since His and the apostles day. It is still the essence of the great truth of the gospel; that which was comforting to our fathers in the ancient day, is our comfort today. The gospel has not had an iota of change. It is true that some have changed that once broke the communion bread with us, and they feel that they are to be commended for the things that they have accomplished. But let us, *as given grace*, be satisfied with the goodness of the house of the Lord. Our belief and our enjoyment of that belief, and our walking in that belief and doctrine, is not by the volition of our will. It is by the gift of God. From time immemorial we have said by tongue and pen that the natural mind did not receive nor understand spiritual things, and the reason being given was because that they are spiritually discerned. It has been one of the main

tenets of the faith (doctrine) of our people that we were all alike in nature; that any entrance into spiritual things was by the work of God in us. These spiritual works and blessings come not from the earth; they come not by the works of the flesh or natural mind. Men do not have them in order to have them, anymore than a baby cries in order to be a baby. Men do righteousness because they are righteous, not in order to be righteous. Each and every lovely thing or thought that a man or a woman has done in this life, is of the Spirit of the Lord. These things do not have a law against them. It seems that these things are worthy of being looked into in detail.

Much persecution has been cast into the lives of God's humble poor by saying that we do not believe in all of the good things of the Spirit. I have not understood my brethren to advocate this as a body, but if I am mistaken, and this is the doctrine that my brethren mean to advocate, then by all means excuse me for I will not travel with such a thought. I do not have any fellowship for such a thought as saying that the fruit of the Spirit and the work of the flesh are of equal importance, and that He approves of and is well pleased with both of them. What a well ordered garden it is that brings forth love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance and what a blessed state that little plant in this lovely garden is in when it is able to show the working in them of God's Spirit that which is well pleasing in His sight. I would not associate nature with a single one of these fruits. I do not believe that it can produce these fruits nor do I believe that this nature can hinder them. I will not dwell on all of them singularly, but I will notice some of them rather closely.

In eternity God loved us, and this love was made manifest unto us and in us. God made it manifest. We did not make our love manifest to Him, but we did make manifest to Him our hatred

of Him. His loving us, caused us to love Him. Did we receive this as a gift from Him? Who would fling such a thought as us earning it into the face of the beloved apostle (I John 4:19)? The world is full of men and women that claim to have reversed the order of John's teaching about this, and that they loved God, and then He loved them. It is a serious thing to think that our dear brethren are falling into such a trap as that. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, therefore it is one spiritual blessing that was given us in Christ before the world was, and it was given by God, and given at the precise moment of our being chosen in Him, and given according as He chose us. If the choice was sure and effective, the gift of blessings will be effective. If not, I answer to one and all that would tell me that I can love or leave it alone, that the election is built on just as much sand as is this.

Faith is a fruit of the Spirit; it is a gift of God. If all of my brethren were to tell me that I could have faith; that I could have faith in order to have faith; that I could exercise that faith, then I must say that we have not been to the same school nor the same teacher. Faith being one of the lovely fruits of the Spirit, one of the lovely things of Christ, one of the gifts of God to His people, I must declare for the mutual comfort and edification of the poor and afflicted children of God that having been blessed with these blessings of a spiritual nature that they will receive them all in time. If not, I have just as little evidence of, and confidence in, the election as I do the blessings of Spiritual significance. If God had made ever so many arrangements for us in eternity to receive these blessings or gifts and had left them dependent on this poor sinner not one would have been received. This faith was given us in Christ and made manifest by the coming of the Comforter who takes them from Christ and gives or shows them unto us. Only by the working of this Comforter in us will we receive the gifts that we were blessed with at the time, and from the

same source, as was promised us at that time.

What have we received from the Lord? We have received the grand and glorious election to salvation. This election was not by works. God was not moved by anything outside His own divine will and purpose in electing or choosing us to this salvation. We that were elected receive it as a gift from God the Father. God loved us from all eternity. If any of my readers know when eternity had its beginning, they, at that time, knew how long that God has loved His people. He has hated Esau as long as He has loved Jacob. We have not received hatred from Him, but, if we are His, we have received love. This love and hatred were not because of conduct. Their names were written in God's eternal Book when as yet there was not any of them. (Psa. 139:16) I am indeed sorrowful towards any deluded sinner that would claim *that this was based on something that we did not receive from the Lord*. If we did receive it according to the election, according to Him that calls, why do we act so arrogant as to say that we did not receive it, and why do we hold in utter contempt our dear brethren that preach *and act* as though they do receive it from Him? God did not love us nor choose us because of our righteousness. We have not received this eternal love as a reward for our merits. We received it because He loved us, and gave Himself for us. Would a poor recipient of such mercy act as though he did not receive it? Would he or she act and preach and write that we received it because of our works?

How did we receive this work of God's election? How did we come into possession of it? Did God do this in eternity and pitch it at us and say, Catch it if you can, for I have done my part in it? Is that the way that we have received this knowledge? If it is not, then how can we act as though we did not receive it from Him? If it is by grace and love and mercy that we have received it, it does seem that we will act and write

and preach and believe that it is by these precious and glorious things. This knowledge comes about by the effectual workings of God's Holy and divine Spirit. This knowledge was revealed in mercy to the malefactor on the cross. How did he receive it? Ah, poor sinner that has robbed, or rather that has attempted, to rob God of His glory, how was the joyful news of your deliverance given to you? Was it because of merit on your part? Ah, never, Oh no, not that, My God, My God, deliver us from such blasphemy. If the acknowledgement of this thief has not been brought from our lips, as it was brought from his lips, then we have not received the gift of eternal life. We are sinners; we are guilty; we do not have a single plea to make to God, even though we have received it from God. The difference between the two malefactors was made by the love of God. It was not made because the thief was worthy. The reception of it was not received as though he did deserve it. John did not receive it by efforts of his own, but he did receive it because God loved Him and chose him unto salvation. Oh, how we frail creatures make manifest the depth of our fall when we dare lift our voices and pens to support such a far fetched theory as that we receive the impartation of this knowledge because of our merits. The modern preaching of their so-called gospel as a means to born dead alien sinners into the kingdom of heaven would fall as a useless means to bring John into a knowledge of Jesus, but his leaping in his mother's womb shows conclusively that he had been born of the Spirit before the mentioning of the name of the Jesus.

Paul was the apostle, the minister to the Gentiles. For this the gospel day, he is our pattern as to how that one receives the knowledge of God's election. We receive him as the New Testament pattern as to how it comes about. What tragic results come about when the pattern is left out in any preaching or writing. Surely the recipient of a gift would know the manner in which it was

made known. What religious manipulations are made in advocating that we are Christians and followers of Jesus Christ; that we hold to what He has given us in the Scriptures, and yet we are acting as though we did not receive it from Him; even acting as though our receipt of it would not have been had we not decided for it to be. As people profess godliness, and yet deny the power thereof; as people claim to be believers in God, and yet do not believe Him on oath, just so, no more, no less, do they believe the eminent Apostle to the Gentiles, the pattern for the way aliens are brought to a knowledge of the electing love of God. I assure you, dear readers, that Paul certified or attested to the way and manner in which he received the impartation of the knowledge of God's election of sinners of Adam's race to salvation. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," etc. (Gal. I) This teaching of Paul concerning how that he received this knowledge was received by every church that he preached it to. He told us about it; he preached and wrote it everywhere, and it was joyously received by them all. They received it as a gift from God. They acted as they believed; to wit, Everything is a gift of God pertaining to the religion of His Son, and we have received it from Him.

There is a highly rated belief in the world that we receive the impartation of the knowledge of this electing love by the preaching of the gospel. If so, the Corinthians would have said that they received it that way, and they would have acted as though they did receive it that way. The experiences of both Peter and Cornelius as to how this gift is received is outstanding and con-

vincing to the lovers of the truth — to those that have received all things pertaining to life and godliness. To others, it has not been received, *but there has been a lot of demonstration that it has been received from and by Him*. Peter received a great gift and superb teaching. Cornelius received a great gift and superb teaching. If, in this lesson, a man, even if a professed recipient of God's mercy, can open the Bible and show one scintilla of proof that either man received this knowledge because of any learning or merit in himself, I will not write and preach anymore in defense of us receiving all things from the Lord. Cornelius feared God before that Peter arrived; he was a devout man before Peter arrived; he gave much alms to the people (The dictionary tells us that the giving of alms was to the poor, a charitable offering, charitable deeds. The Hebrew for *alms* is that it was kind deeds and acts), before he ever heard the gospel; he prayed to God alway, even before Peter left home. It is not said that he prayed *at* God, but that he prayed *to* God. Let this be noted carefully. There is a difference, and I think it is a legitimate question to ask, Who made the difference? From whence did they receive it? This was a believing household. If the jailer's household were believers, then why not Cornelius's house? The marks of a child of God were clear as the noon day's sun; the tree having been made good was known by the fruit it bore; therefore, Peter's preaching did not make him a child of God, but it did teach him whatsoever things had been commanded to be taught a child. Peter was wrought upon by divine power in the same miraculous way, and they both received great learning and great good from the Lord. They both received it, and acted that way.

God willing, the subject will be pursued.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Water Valley, Miss.
 June 28, 1887

Dear Elder Beebe:

.. What does the apostle mean, "He was made sin for us."? Was it by imputation, or was it because he was made of a woman? What law was it under which he was made? Please answer this in your editorial . . .

E. A. Meaders, Sr.

CHRIST MADE SIN.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
 —2 Cor. 5:21.

In reply to Elder E. A. Meaders, Sr., of Mississippi, on page 189, we submit the following as our limited understanding of the subject presented in his inquiry; not that we presume to be capable of instructing our venerable and highly esteemed brother, but that our views may be tested by the infallible standard of inspired Scripture. All that endures this trial is truth; all else is false, however it may be cherished by the wisest and best of men.

The expression cited by our brother in his first question is a very common phrase; and while it is in substance authorized by the text quoted above, we have not found it in that form in the apostolic writings. It is unquestionably true that only through that principle of unity with his people by which their sin is his, could he bear their sins in his own body on the tree. — 1 Peter 2:24. By no law either natural or revealed could the sin of the guilty be imputed to the innocent. Even though there had been found a sinless angel willing to die for the sin of Adam, without life unity with the sinner infinite justice could not accept such a substitute. The holy law de-

mands the life of the transgressor. Any proposition to substitute something else for that life must be regarded as an attempt to bribe divine justice. Then, even if the sinner might be delivered from suffering the penalty of the law upon the ground that a substitute had borne the punishment for him, it would leave the guilt of sin still abiding upon him. He would not be free from the sin, although released from suffering its punishment. Nor could the sufferer assume the guilt of the sinner. But in the text this is just the wonderful mystery of salvation which is declared by the inspired record. Christ, the sinless and holy, bore the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." From the preceding context it is clear that it is God who hath made Christ to be sin for us. This agrees with all the testimony of revelation on this important point of truth; and it is also the ground of hope in the experience of all who are led by the Spirit to know the truth of salvation by grace through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus. In this wonderful truth is involved the whole system of redemption; both in its manifestation to lost sinners and in its complete fulfillment in the glorification of Christ Jesus as exalted at the right hand of God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." — Eph. 1:21-23. It is not in his eternal Godhead that he is exalted; for as God he is infinite in all the perfection and glory of his own self-existence, and can receive no additional exaltation; nor yet is it in his humiliation as the Son of man

that he is thus exalted, for in that character, while foxes and birds were provided for, the dear Redeemer had no where to lay his head. But in his identity with his body, the church, including all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, he was brought low, even to the depths of condemnation and death, and raised again by the glory of the Father. In his death all his members for whom he died were dead with him. Since in himself as the Holy One of Israel he was without sin, as such death could have no power against him. Yet he alone could save his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself. In order that he might be qualified for this work He must be made sin. This was done by his being identified with his body, the church. It was not a new design after sin had been developed in the world that Christ should be made sin for us. He was from the beginning chosen of God to bear the iniquities of all whom he justifies. They are his seed, his portion, and his own peculiar people. — Pslam 22-36; Isa. 55:10-12; 1 Peter 2:9.

It is exclusively on the grounds of this unity with his people as their very life that he could bear their sins. When after his resurrection he opened the understanding of his disciples that they might understand the Scriptures, he said to them, "Thus it is written, and **THUS IT BEHOVED CHRIST TO SUFFER**, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke 2:-4; 46, 47. This wonderful truth can never be received or known without the same gracious work of Jesus in each saint which was so essential for those favored disciples. Even the clear statement of it by inspired servants of the Lord can no more manifest it to the natural man than the testimony of others could satisfy the disciples of the resurrec-

tion of Jesus. This is seen in every case where the proclamation of divine truth is joyful gospel to some who hear, while to others it is but the empty sound of words abstractly true, but without vital power. This difference is often witnessed even between those who are alike subjects of divine grace. Hence it is very important that all should continually remember that it is only by grace they are saved from delusions and error, as well as from all sin. This consideration will enable the strong to bear the infirmity of the weak, and lead everyone to be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility. — 1 Peter 5:6. Any knowledge which exalts its recipient in his own estimation is of the world, and is opposed to that wisdom which descendeth from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." — James 3: 17, 18. It is very essential to our own comfort and peace that we examine ourselves by the divine standard whether we be in the faith in every sentiment we hold; for all must be either approved or condemned by that inspired record.

In his unity with his body, the church of his redeemed people, the condemnation of all law which rested upon any of them fell upon Christ, since "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." As justice could admit of no arbitrary transfer of iniquity, it necessarily must be that he is one with his people in the sight of that law which condemns them. This was beautifully expressed in the first Adam. When Eve was made, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Notice he does not say this *was*, or this *shall be*, but "This *is now*." This is essential to a correct understanding of the figure. Eve was under no law but

that which she received in Adam; and being still acknowledged and identified in him when being deceived she was in the transgression, it is evident that in unity with her, Adam was involved under the condemnation which rested upon Eve, although he had not as yet eaten himself of the forbidden tree. If he had not transgressed, can we not see that his bone and flesh was already dead? Now here is the figure of him that was to come, and the likeness of God in which man was made. It was after the transgression that the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," &c.; the likeness was then complete, and he is "the figure" of Christ.

It is a common error to speak of every married couple as a figure of Christ and the church; but the inspired apostle specifies particularly "the similitude of ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION, who is THE FIGURE of him that was to come." In some legal marriages among men there is a more striking figure of Satan and his synagogue than of Christ and the church. In his life unity with his wife Adam stands alone as "*the figure*" which was never duplicated. When Eve had sinned death had already passed upon that much of Adam; so when his people, the elect members of his body, the church, had become involved in sin, their life was the only satisfaction which could be accepted by the infinite justice of God. Therefore, it is not any remedy devised after sin had come into the world that made Christ to be sin for us. He in himself is indeed holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; yet in his unity with his children, who are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. — Heb. 2:14. It is only as identified with his people that he could be made under the law. In that relationship he is not only under all law to which they are accountable,

but with them he is under condemnation for their sins.

While we are sure that there is no law in earth or heaven which can demand of one member of the body of Christ anything which Jesus has not rendered, it seems to our view that the particular law referred to in the text is that law whose penalty is death, under which all the world is guilty before God. The giving of the Sinai law made neither Jew nor Gentile any more sinful than they were without it. Yet it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. — Gal. 3:19. As there were some of the chosen vessels of mercy held under bondage to that law which was given by Moses (John 1:17), it was needful to their deliverance that Christ Jesus should be sent forth as the Son of God made of a woman, made under that law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they should no longer be under that schoolmaster. The one offering of himself without spot to God thus delivered all his people from all condemnation, whether under the Sinai law or among the Gentiles. While the whole race of man was under death in Adam, those among the Jews were under still further demands from the law given by Moses. Hence, it was needful that they should be redeemed from the law also; and this was completed in the perfect work of Jesus. He took that handwriting of ordinances out of the way, nailing it to the cross. This was needful for the benefit of his people also who were among the Gentiles, since while that legal dispensation yet existed there could be no salvation revealed outside that nation to whom that covenant was given. Hence, when our Lord sent forth his chosen twelve apostles to preach before he was crucified, he bade them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the

house of Israel." — Matt 10:5, 6. So also the seventy were limited to "every city and place whither he himself would come;" which was only to the same "lost sheep." — Luke 10:1; Matt. 15:24. But after he had broken down that middle wall of partition by fulfilling its every jot and tittle, he then sent them forth with the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." — Mark 16:15.

In finishing the work of saving his people from their sins he fulfilled every demand of infinite justice which was against them, whether written in the law given to Adam in the garden or in the Sinai law, or in any revelation of the righteousness of God. He came under the deepest requirement which could rest upon one of his chosen people. He paid their whole debt, and thus redeemed them from death, and ransomed them from the power of the grave. The purpose of God in all the work and suffering of the dear Redeemer is clearly stated in the text.

"That we might be made the righteousness of God in him." In the experience of the saints it is not often that the tempter will question the fact of the suffering and death of Christ; but he would rather rob them of their joy in believing by the suggestion that their conscious sinfulness forbids their hope in his salvation. The text shows conclusively that the very object of all the humiliation and suffering of Christ is that we, poor, vile sinners, might be made in him the righteousness of God which justifies us in his sight. That this is sufficient none can question; but they are sometimes ready to perish in despair in view of the very infinite display of such amazing grace to such worthless worms. The more earnestly they realize this great grace the more they will tremble with humble joy in their trust in the salvation which is alone in Christ Jesus.

In the hope that what is written

may bear witness to our venerable brother of our sincere wish to comply with his request, we submit it to his riper judgment. The truth will bear examination; nothing else is worth a thought. We feel sure that those who remember Elder Meaders' visit to the eastern associations and to Canada, in 1857, will be glad to hear from him, and to know that even in old age he is a living illustration of "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." — Psalm 92:13-15.

(Editorial by Elder William L. Beebe, August 15, 1887.)

OBITUARIES

J. FRANK TUCKER

Brother Tucker died February 1, 1973 after a long illness, at the age of eighty-seven years. His family lived in the Ramah Community near Cottonwood, Alabama, since the foundation of the church there about a century ago. They were firm believers in salvation by grace, and supporters of the Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by two brothers, John N. and Lewis J. of Dothan, Alabama; and a sister, Mrs. Tom Herndon of Abbeville, Alabama, and many relatives and friends. He was a railway man.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder J. J. Collins and minister John Payne at Union Hill Church, February 2nd, with Ward-Wilson in charge. Interment was in Ramah Cemetery.

and

SARAH ANN TEW

Sister Tew, the devoted wife of Elder J. A. Tew for more than sixty years, died in a Dothan Hospital February 27, 1973, after a long illness. She was a member of Wrights Creek Primitive Baptist Church, of which her husband was pastor, and was connected with the Primitive Baptists for many years and active in her church. She had lived in the Malvern Community for seventy-six years.

She was the daughter of Deacon John Bessole and wife. She is survived by two sons, Arthur and Grady, and five daughters: Mrs. Lelia Nave, Mrs. Mamie Morris, Mrs. Willa

Mae Johnson, Mrs. Clara Flowers and Mrs. Ruth Shivey; also a sister, Mrs. Mae Hudson, and twenty-four grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Her husband has been an active Primitive Baptist minister for many years, and the writer of many articles for the *Signs of the Times*.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Early B. Hughes, B. A. Anderson and J. J. Collins at Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala. March 1, 1973. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

J. J. Collins

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart that I feel so unworthy to attempt to write this respect to a member, whom I feel was a saint of God.

I feel it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove our dear Sister Lossie Brown from our midst to a more perfect place than this sinful world. Her trials and tribulations have ended and all is well in the house of our Lord.

Sister Brown died December 3, 1972, after living ninety years on earth. She was born March 31, 1882, to a well known family in Edgecombe County. She was blessed to unite with Tarboro Church on the first Sunday in August, 1929, along with her husband, Brother Clay Brown. Sister Brown was a very faithful member all those years, and she will be missed in our church, as she loved to entertain the visitors to our church. She was of great help in preparing for our unions and yearly meetings. These things we will never forget.

I was blessed to visit Sister Brown on many occasions, and when I would leave I always felt to be lifted up by her talking. I felt her advice to be that of a Mother and she never advised me to do or say anything wrong.

Sister Brown was blessed to have four daughters: Mrs. Mary Cox, Mrs. Ethel Willett, Mrs. Mildred Bedone, and Mrs. Frances Lawrence; and one son, Bennie D. Brown. They were blessed to have a loving mother, who appreciated their kindness so much.

Her funeral was preached by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder S. R. Boykin at Tarboro Church. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, Tarboro, N. C.

It is by request that the church had this respect written. Therefore we resolve: (1) that three copies be made; one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to be sent to the family, and one to be kept for church records. (2) We the members of Tarboro Church feel our loss is her eternal gain, and she is at rest with our Saviour. (3) That God will reconcile her family to His will, and

we feel it was His will to call her. May He comfort you, as he has promised that the Comforter will come.

This done by order at our January conference of 1973.

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

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst, dear Sister Martha Andrews, whom we loved so very much.

Sister Andrews was born October 20, 1887, and died December 14, 1972, making her stay on earth 86 years. She was blessed to attend Tarboro Church many years before God saw fit for her to ask for a home with us. She joined our church in September, 1971. Sister Andrews was never baptized by water, but we feel she was baptized by the holy spirit many years before she asked for a home at Tarboro Church.

In her last years Sister Martha was a bed patient, although she was blessed to have a dear daughter-in-law that saw to it that she was well cared for. She was a patient that never complained and was always praising her God during her afflictions. Sister Andrews was always glad to see her pastor and friends who came to visit her. She was a firm believer of Salvation by the Grace of God.

Therefore we resolve: First, We the Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she is resting with our dear Saviour. Second, We send our sincere sympathy to her family. Third, Three copies of this respect be made: one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*, one to be sent to the family, one to be used for church records.

This done by order of our January conference.

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

GUSTAVE M. STEWART
AND
CORA T. STEWART

In loving memory of my father and mother I will attempt to write a sketch of their lives.

My father, Gustave M. Stewart was born in Harnett County, N.C. near the small town of Coats, the son of William I. and Kizady Stewart on July 2, 1872. My mother, Cora Turlington Stewart, whose parents were Devereaux and Betty Stewart Turlington, was born in Harnett County, N.C. February 2, 1879. They were married November 25, 1900, and lived together almost fifty-nine years, celebrating their fiftieth anniversary in 1950. They were

the parents of seven children, four daughters and three sons. Two daughters and one son died in infancy, another son passed away in 1934 at the age of twenty-one years.

Papa united with Gift Primitive Baptist church, which was located in the town of Coats, N.C., Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1912, and was baptized by the pastor, Elder J. T. Coats, the following day. He was ordained deacon the third Sunday in July, 1920. This office he faithfully filled as long as he was physically able. He was very faithful to his church, to visit the sick and afflicted and take care of visiting ministers, brethren and sisters who visited the church. He traveled many miles to convey the visiting ministers from one church to another.

Papa was wonderfully blest with good health until he was past eighty years of age when he suffered an heart attack in March of 1954, from then on he was in poor health and very limited in his activities. He suffered the fatal attack on March 5, 1959, and lived only a few hours, being eighty-six years eight months and three days old.

His funeral was conducted from the home by Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder E. C. Jones and Elder C. D. Turner and his body was interred in the City Cemetery in Coats, N.C. Surviving, were his wife, two daughters: Vara Stewart Hardee of Raleigh, N.C. Brookie Stewart of the home; one son, T. D. Stewart, of Route 3, Dunn, N.C., together with two small granddaughters.

My mother united with Gift Primitive Baptist church the third Saturday in September, 1918, and was baptized the next day by the pastor, who was also her uncle, Elder J. T. Coats. She was faithful to attend her church services and helped entertain and care for many ministers and visitors who came to our home.

Mama suffered a stroke in December, 1959, from which she never fully recovered but did recover sufficiently that she could attend to some of her duties, and was able part of the time to attend her church services. Five years later she suffered another stroke with complications and was mostly confined to her room afterwards. A good part of the last two years of her life was spent in hospitals seeking relief from a rare glandular disease, which required Cobalt treatments. She was relieved to some extent but was left in a very weakened condition. She was hospitalized the last three weeks of her life in Rex Hospital, Raleigh, N. C., and quietly passed away July 3, 1972, being ninety-three years, five months and one day old. She bore her affliction with much patience and was an inspiration to all who visited her.

Her funeral was conducted from the home by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler of Dan-

ville, Va. assisted by Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, N.C.; and her body laid to rest in the family plot in Coats Cemetery, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Having lost her last son in 1966, the only ones surviving are two daughters, Vara Stewart Hardee of Raleigh, N.C. and Brookie Stewart of the home, together with two granddaughters and two great grandchildren.

At the time of their deaths they were both members of the Primitive Baptist church in Durham, N.C.

Written by their daughter
Brookie Stewart

NOLIE WORLEY GREGORY

On December 5, 1972, it pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Nolie Worley Gregory. She was 75 years of age. Sister Gregory died in Liberty House Nursing Home, Roanoke, Virginia.

She was the widow of Daniel W. Gregory and the daughter of George A. Worley and Jennie Dalton Worley. Nine children were born to this union. They are as follows: Five sons, Earl W. Gregory of California, Md., Daniel W. Gregory, Jr., of Radford, Va., Nelvin W. Gregory of Jackson, Miss., Charlie R. Gregory of Hurt, Va. and Norman C. Gregory of Roanoke, Va.; Four daughters, Mrs. Ruby G. Adkins of Hurt, Va., Mrs. L. C. Sydnor of Lynchburg, Va., Mrs. Clifton R. Scott and Mrs. Clifford B. Robertson of Vinton, Va.; also thirty-one grandchildren.

Sister Gregory united with Weatherford Primitive Church in 1937 and attended her church as long as her health permitted. May we all be reconciled to the Will of our Heavenly Father.

Her funeral was conducted at Finch and Finch Funeral Chapel, Altavista, Virginia by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at the Worley Family Cemetery.

Written by:
Marvin Brumfield

SISTER BERTHA FOSTER HODGES

We, the members of Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, North Carolina, mourn the loss of a loving member, Sister Bertha Foster Hodges. She was born November 18, 1893. She was married to the late Johnnie E. Hodges December 19, 1915.

On the first Saturday night in August, 1968, after services at Pleasant Grove church, she asked for a home in the church. She was baptized the following third Sunday morning by

our Pastor, Elder Donald Smith. She often expressed her love for all of us, and wanted to meet with us every chance she could. She manifested this love in many ways.

Sister Hodges told me she was not so concerned about things of this world, but hoped her treasures were laid up in Heaven. She was faithful to attend her church meetings as long as she was able.

She passed away December 22, 1972 in a Burlington, N.C. hospital. Funeral services were held at Pleasant Grove church, on Christmas eve, by her Pastor, Elder Donald Smith, whom she loved so well, and Elder Leonard Key. Her body was laid to rest in Prospect Methodist church cemetery, near Yanceyville, N.C., beside her husband.

Sister Hodges is survived by twelve children, eight daughters and four sons, who cared for her so tenderly all thru the years, and especially her last days. We miss her at Pleasant Grove so much, but we try to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, who takes his loved ones home at his own appointed time.

The church desires a copy of this obituary to be sent to the family, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one for the church records.

Written by Sister Nellie Hodges, as requested by the church.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER LUCY WHITE JOHNSON

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints." Though our beloved Sister was called from our midst to that rest which is eternal on December 16, 1972, our hearts leap with joy at the comforting thought that he had removed from our presence one of his beloved saints in whom he had implanted his divine spirit of love within her breast, giving her a precious hope in the redeeming blood of his beloved son, Jesus Christ. It was the writer's blessed privilege to spend many hours in the presence of this dear Sister over a period of approximately twenty-five years. Fond memories linger within my mind of the many hours we were blessed to enjoy in the homes of one another as well as the many, many times we were blessed to attend the meetings together at the various meeting houses. Our beloved Sister by the grace of God was indeed an inspiration to this poor worm of the dust and we received much comfort in our conversations from time to time as our dear Sister expressed a firm belief in salvation by grace, rejoicing in the doctrine of election and redemption of God's little children through the atoning blood

of Jesus Christ because of that great love and mercy of a sovereign God excluding the will and work's of man's hands in attaining salvation. She was a member of Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church for approximately forty-five years.

Sister Johnson entered this life on August 13, 1894, the widow of the late Rufus McDonald (Don) Johnson and the daughter of the late Elder King White and Linda Taylor White. Thus her sojourn upon this earth was for 78 years, 4 months, and 3 days.

Surviving are one son, Don E. Johnson, two daughters, Mrs. Hazel McKeel and Mrs. Mary Ann Burroughs, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in your moments of sorrow but trust you might receive comfort from God's love and divine promises.

Her funeral was conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church by Brother Johnny Ray Gardner and Elder E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Spring Green Church Cemetery.

Resolved, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written at the request of our deceased sister and the members composing the Spring Green Church.

Done by order of conference the fourth Saturday in January, 1973.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR
BROTHER JAMES THEODORE LEE

It has pleased God to call from our midst our beloved brother, James Theodore Lee. He was born March 15, 1912, and died August 22, 1972. He united with Mingo Primitive Baptist Church at a called meeting at the Veterans Hospital, Fayetteville, N.C. Sunday July 19, 1970, and was baptized after he came home from the hospital.

Brother Lee manifested great love for the Church and was faithful to attend when his health and strength would permit. He frequently had a seizure of the heart and sometimes rushed to the hospital for treatment. He was a firm believer in election, predestination, and salvation by the grace of God — of whom is all our righteousness. He was a good citizen and a good provider for his family.

Those who survive Brother Lee are his wife, a son, a daughter, two brothers and three sisters. We, the church at Mingo, feel a great loss, and extend our heart felt sympathy to the family.

Funeral services were held at West's Funeral Chapel by Elder W. D. Godwin, assisted by Ministers C. W. Kirby and Nathan Hanchey. His body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await that great day when those in the graves shall come forth. We have a good hope Brother Lee shall be in that number that shall come forth unto life everlasting, be like Jesus and be satisfied.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed in our Church Records, a copy sent to the family and to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church in conference Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1972.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Mod.
Sister K. Belle Lee, Clerk
Elder W. D. Godwin,
Committee

BROTHER JOE OWENS

On December 20, 1972, Brother Joe Owens was called home, at the age of eighty-seven. Funeral service was at Farmville Funeral Home, Farmville, N.C., conducted by Elder Joe Sawyer. Burial was at Queen Ann Cemetery.

Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Heber Tyson and Mrs. Edward Morris; three sons: Eddie, Willie and Curtis Owens; four sisters: Mrs. Ida Cobb, Mrs. Lena Cobb, Mrs. Edgar Webb and Mrs. Annie Norman; two brothers: Henry and J. B. Owens; six grandchildren; eight great grandchildren, and four great great grandchildren.

I have known Brother Owens all my life, and never expect to know a finer man than he was. He believed in God with all his heart, and trusted him seven days a week. Brethren, you know Sunday religion will not stand.

Brother Owens was married to the late Sister Callie Edwards Owens. He stopped farming to take care of her in her last days. I believe this to be an act of God: to me, this was one of His little lambs looking after the other. I pray that God will bless Brother Owens children for making this possible, and will bless the daughter-in-law who looked after them in the home.

He always had time to speak to you and shake your hand. He was an humble man. I feel that Matthew 5:16, fits Brother Owens, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He was a member of Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and attended the meetings as long as he was able. He loved the brothers and sisters.

Knowing Brother Owens as we did, we know

we are not able to put in words how we felt about him. I believe with all my heart that he is now waiting for God to take him to that beautiful land; to the place of no more worry, no heart aches, no pain and no sorrow.

Written at the request of Otters Creek Church. Four copies to be made for the following: one for the church record; one for the family; one for the *Signs of the Times*, and one for the *Landmark*. Written by Sister Briley, Sister Brown and Brother Edwards.

Elder Joe Sawyers, Mod.
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

ELDER PAUL E. WEISINGER

Elder Paul E. Weisinger of Grapeland, Texas, was born July 29, 1882, the son of Ruben Weisinger and Mrs. Martha Williams Weisinger. He died October 8, 1972, in a Palestine, Texas, hospital. Funeral services were held October 9, 1972, in the First Baptist Church, Grapeland, Texas, with Elder U. V. Wallace and Elder Lynwood Jacobs officiating. Burial was in the Murdock Cemetery. Grandsons were pall bearers.

He leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Vera Weisinger; four sons, five daughters, one step-son, four step-daughters, fifty grandchildren, eighty-eight great grandchildren, and seven great great grandchildren.

We don't know the exact date Brother Weisinger joined the church but we know he was a young man. He was ordained January 1, 1925, and was chosen Moderator of the Union Association in October, 1927. He had not missed an association meeting until October, 1972, during which meeting he died on Sunday. Brother Weisinger was a strong believer in the predestination of all things, and salvation by grace a gift of God. He was kind and considerate, and left us an example unto the flock. Wife and I have made many trips with him and Sister Weisinger to Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. We will miss him but cannot forget him.

I believe he could truthfully say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing."

To the family the apostle says, "Sorrow not, even as others who have no hope."

Written by request of Sister Weisinger.

C. U. Landers

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1973

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

3016 Summer St.
Shreveport, La. 71109

Dear Elder and Sister Wall:

We have talked and thought so much about the good meeting and sweet visit in your home, and regretted so much that we were unable to return on Sunday . . . We hope to be at our next meeting. We hope that Sister Fowler is better and every one else is too. Brother Gould is improving slowly — they hope to be able to go to meeting next time . . .

I don't know if anyone ever gets in shape or condition that I do at times. I know that I am nothing, and know nothing as I ought; but, if I am not deceived, I do love the truth and love God's humble people everywhere. There is no comfort in this "do it yourself". or "just accept God" religions for me. I tried that work system for years when I was a child with the Missionaries. At the age of thirteen one night while I was asleep, I saw this natural world on fire — the worst fire I ever saw, and in the sky I saw Jesus gathering His people up in the Heavens with Him. I was looking out of the window, hoping and wanting to be carried up too: I was talking, expressing my fears and hope all at the same time, fearing I would be left behind, and yet hoping I would be taken.

My mother awakened me by shaking me and telling me to get back into bed, and asked what I was mumbling about. I couldn't say one word. I laid back down but couldn't go back to sleep. Dear ones, I still don't know if I will be carried up into the Heaven of rest to ever be with Jesus and His saints. I have never forgotten this experience, nor one I had when I was even younger — about eight years old. I do not know how many days and nights this lasted. I only know it lasted or went on for a long time. I couldn't eat without it making me sick. My mother would make me eat, then I would slip outside and lie down some place, or hide under the bed, and at night I could not sleep, for this ugly, big black mountain was always before me, and a bright, beautiful white light shining from behind it. I worked so hard to get to that beautiful light: I could not move that ugly mountain, and I could not go around it no matter how hard I tried. I knew I was going to die I was so sick. I wanted to reach that light for I seemed to know that it would save me, but the ugly mountain was killing me.

One night after many days and nights, relief came and I slept peacefully. The ugly black mountain was gone from my sight, and there was peace and rejoicing in my heart. It was a miracle and I know I had nothing to do with it. All my life I tried to be a good child. My sisters, brothers and others would tell me that the devil would get me if I wasn't a good girl. Well, if I know anything at all, I was taught of the Lord to fear Him who has power to destroy both body and soul in hell; and to know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom — not the wisdom of this world.

I still fear and tremble, for it is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the Lord: He teaches us what we are, and shows us to ourselves the sinners we are, and how unfit and unable to help ourselves; and then shows us His power, love, mercy, grace and truth. No wonder the Apostle said, "I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengtheneth me." Yes, beloved ones, it is all God's perfect work and ways, manifesting His power, love, wisdom, grace and strength and mercy towards His little children. For such love bestowed upon poor, hell deserving worms of the dust, we cannot find words to describe, nor words to praise Him as we ought.

Sin is condemned in the flesh, and sin is mixed with all we do. We long and desire to be free of sin and to be with our Saviour God who has done all things for us: We rest in His finished work, and rejoice in our Saviour God. Our little hope is the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. We hope for that we cannot see, yet long for. Whether I be one in that vast number, He knows, for "The foundation standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his." I firmly believe He teaches his children and calls them by name, and a stranger they will not follow. Such wisdom and knowledge is not learned anywhere but in the school of grace. He said if any lack for wisdom, let him ask of God, who freely giveth and upbraideth not.

Dearly beloved saints, I do not know why I was impressed to write and express some of my experiences and feelings. I only know I felt strongly to pen this, and humbly hope I was led of the Lord. All praise belongs to Him who only doeth wonderous and glorious things for, to and in the subjects of his love and mercy: His children. I hope I am one, though the least of all.

Pray for us and visit us when you can. Much love. Your humble brother and sister in Jesus we hope.

Copal and Robert Miles

DESIRES TO RE-READ THE SIGNS

Rt. 2, Box 318,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Brethren:

I enclose check to pay for two year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I ask you to please, if possible, include the January, 1973 copy, as I would like to keep the names and addresses of our Primitive Baptist Churches in the different sections of the U.S.A.; also I want to keep the letter of Brother Bernard Greenwood's written April 22, 1860.

A sister lets me read her *Signs* but I decided to subscribe for it so I could keep the older copies to re-read. I am eighty years of age — was baptized in August, 1915, in Patrick County, Virginia, near where I was born and reared. There have been trials along the way, but I have never doubted Election, and Predestination of all things, which helps me to bear the sadness and sorrows, along with the occasional glimpses of light which are given me. Praise the Lord!

A sister in faith and hope,
Mrs. D. M. (Lucy T.) Stone

PSALM 23:4

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:-

It is with a deep sense of humbleness that I begin this article, and asking the Lord to enlighten me and remove all thought of self or feeling ability to myself, to write words worthy of the attention of His followers, unless He directs my thoughts. Without His enlightenment and guidance, such as I write of myself will be but dross.

Now this rather short Psalm stresses David's confidence in God's grace, and has, I believe, been memorized by many of those of our faith as well as by many of other faiths. Altho I have read it many times in the past, it was only recently that this 4th verse rather got hold of me, so-to-speak, and was given much thought and meditation. David's

mention of "Walking thru the valley of the shadow of death" seemed to call for much thought and many things come to mind that had never heretofore been seen.

First, the word valley as generally used, denotes an area more or less lying between hills or mountains when somewhat limited as to size, but when the lower area stretches over a great expanse, it loses the name of valley, as in great expanses of desert land, or large areas of swamp land such as the Everglades in Florida. I believe it in order to say that scripturally, the word "Valley" is figurative of man's dwelling place on this earth, down in, or on, the very lowest areas, while God's Holy Realm is, and has always been, far above in that Celestial City that no man can reach while in his natural state. This is significant, in that we see that no habitation possibilities were set up by "The Creator of the Universe," other than here on earth, regardless of what we may hear about man being able to establish himself and live on the Moon, etc.

While thinking upon man's habitation being in the lowlands, my mind turned to the very highest areas, or the great expanse of high mountains found over the world, which seem to me to be symbolic of God's Majestic Power and Dominion. Man can survive but a very short time at their highest elevation, and his habitation really ceases far down below. We find that the higher areas, the hills and mountains were highly favored by our Lord God in olden days, as settings for many great events recorded in the scriptures. Genesis, chapter 22, tells of the Lord showing Abraham the mountain upon which he was to take Isaac to be a burnt offering; which was reached in three days travel. Some distance upon this mountain the event occurred and the Ram miraculously appeared, horns entangled in the vines or bushes; thus Isaac was spared, etc. Abraham named it the "Mountain Of The Lord, Jehovah Jireh". Luke 4:1-7, records that during the

forty days the devil tried to tempt Jesus into worshipping him, he took Jesus up into a high mountain, but Jesus' resistance was no less up there. Also Moses, (Deut. 9:9-13) as directed by the Lord, went upon a mountain of some height to receive the tables (tablets) of stone and was up there forty days and nights, neither eating or drinking water. Further, in Isaiah 2:2, we find, "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountains of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains," etc. Finally, the greatest sermon ever preached on earth was when Jesus went up into a mountain, and there preached (taught) to His disciples. Many more references could be given along this line.

Coming to the word "shadow", I see there are two shadows, each different when we view them in a spiritual sense. The greater one is that of the Lord's power, it being a protection to His followers and is mentioned many times in the scriptures. The other, or lesser one, is that of Satan who casts it over his subjects to mislead and confuse them, inducing as many as possible to come under his power and dominion; even trying to snare the Lord's own elect little ones. God only allows him to go so far, and no further. One definition of the word shadow is, "It is the representation which anything makes of itself," and it is in this light that I see Satan casting himself, as-it-were, between the great shining Light coming down from God, and those whom he designs to ensnare, or those already under his power and dominion. It seems that he surely used this means of working his deceitful wiles on Eve, for he darkened her mind and for the moment shut off her reasoning, to the end she went against God's directive, eating of the forbidden fruit and induced Adam to do likewise.

When we look further into what occurred high on the mountain when Satan had Jesus up there, and made that great offer. — "And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed

unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time," and telling Him he would give Him all the glory of them, and all this power, etc., if Jesus would worship him; whereupon Jesus said to him, "Get thee behind me Satan," etc. This would strongly infer that Satan had, in his great effort, confronted Jesus to the point where He, Jesus, was somewhat hindered in seeing, whereupon Jesus said, "Get thee behind me Satan". Could it not have been that Satan cast more than a shadow, as-it-were, in his frenzied effort? We must not forget that he has great power; being god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) and the existing conflict on mankind is terrible and awful, he having many subtle devices and cunning wiles. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light". (2 Cor. 11:14) In just what form Satan was in, when present with Jesus, is impossible to determine. And, too, just how, or in what way or manner did he take Jesus upon the mountain. Verse 9, after his failure to tempt Jesus, "And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple", etc. Was Jesus in the bodily form of the "Son of Man" as is inferred in verse I of Luke 4th Chapter, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness". And verse 2, "Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing and when they were ended, he afterward hungered." If so, what a mysterious and marvelous event it was, for Satan to convey Him from the high mountain to Jerusalem and set him on top of, or somewhere near the very top of the pinnacle?

David mentioned the word death, identifying the valley he went thru as being one where the shadow of death prevailed over it. I'm inclined to believe he meant the "spiritual death" and not the natural death, for he said, "I will fear no evil" which infers that surely he went thru a fearful area where Satan held forth, working his iniquitous ways

under the shadow he cast over and about it, shutting all thereabouts off from God's Holy Light, excepting His chosen remnant who can never be shut off from His all-seeing eye and Light, by Satan or his workers, unless and if it be God's will that He remove Himself from them for a moment of time. David said, "For thou art with me" which tells us that God did not leave him to the wiles of Satan when he was down in the lowlands of despair, and neither will He desert or leave any of his little ones in Satan's wicked domain while they travel thru it here on earth. David surely had been down in Satan's low valley, that is, such a dismal darkness as is the place of the dead, or so gross and palpable darkness, that by its horrors and damps, may take away men's spirits and even their lives, —the natural lives of those not within God's select, chosen ones. Many have, in ages past, and in these present times, lost their lives in "Hell Holes" and "Dens of Vice" found the world over where Satan and his angels hold forth, which the Lord's people fear and avoid.

Concluding, will say that these are only a few of the thoughts that come to me. Much more could be written, but I do not want to take too much space in the *SIGNS* for there are many others capable of writing so much better and enlightening articles than I, a poor helpless one who would easily fall prey to Satan's guiles and evil designs, were it not for that assurance felt by David, which I also feel, — "I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

In hope of eternal life,
Wm. O. Hall
P.O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

REJOICED WHEN THEY UNITED
WITH CHURCH

Rt. 2, Box 233,
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing \$5.00 for subscription to the *Signs*, with the balance for the Indigent Fund. I feel thankful for getting the wonderful *Signs*.

I have just been reading the March issue and the writing of H. Claude Thomas, telling joining the church at the age of ten years. Which brings to my mind my granddaughter, age thirteen, Phyllis Gunter, joining the church at Martinsville the 3rd Sunday in April, 1972. The 3rd Sunday in September, 1971, her mother, our daughter, joined at Martinsville. I thought I was happy then, but when Phyllis was baptized the 2nd Sunday in May, 1972, our oldest daughter, Frances Mason, along with brother and sister Plaster, joined at the water and were baptized the same day.

I was so lifted up I thought I could have no more doubts and fears. But that lasted only for a season. My sister-in-law, Clare P. Jones, joined at Chestnut Church the same day, having her membership at Martinsville Church. I have had membership at Martinsville since 1949. All that I have mentioned were baptized by our beloved pastor, Elder Cecil Turner.

I will tell you a little of my experience, or hope it to be. One night many years ago I dreamed that Brother and Sister Turner were visiting us, and there came a storm; and they had left and the storm was over. Everything seemed to be washed away, and I was left sitting on a large rock with water all around — seeing no one or anything. Another dream or vision was so plain: Jesus came down in a cloud near me and spoke the words, that time would be no more. These things, I hope to be spiritual, are just as clear and plain to me now as they were then.

This daughter that I mentioned, Lois P. Genther, is a widow at age thirty-five, with three sweet girls, the oldest being Phyllis. We have six children and they are all good to us, and are well respected. I feel that the Lord of heaven has blessed me. If you think this is

worth printing in the *Signs*, you may do so; if not just throw it away.

An unworthy sister by grace,
Julia Potter

HAS THE 100th BIRTHDAY ISSUE
OF THE SIGNS

Rt. 1,
Loganville, Ga. 30249

Dear Editors:

My date line is not clear but I am sending subscription for another year, with the balance for the Indigent Fund.

I have a number of the *Signs of the Times* that were mailed to my dear Daddy many years ago. One that stands out: Volume 100, September, 1932. Published each month by J. E. Beebe and Co., Middletown, N. Y. Elder H. H. Lefferts, Editor; Associate Editors Elder R. Lester Dodson, Elder George Ruston and Elder Charles W. Vaughn.

In this issue is an article concerning the 100th Birthday of the *Signs*. The first publication was August 8, 1832.

May our dear Lord richly bless you in health — in all that means your continuing to send out the dear old paper, to those awaiting the truth contained therein. Sincerely.

The least if one of the fold,
Ela Watson

WE HAVE TO WAIT UPON
THE LORD

33 Hillcrest Avenue, N.E.,
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Precious Brother and Sister Wood:

In our weakness we are glad to have the Lord to depend on. The Scriptures tell us, Cursed is the man that leaneth upon the arm of the flesh. It is my nature to depend on my own short arm, or the unpredictable help of those around me; but when the Children of Israel got to the Red Sea with the Egyptians behind them, they were in a

very helpless and fearful position by nature. As you both know, it was the Lord who took them through, and destroyed their enemies.

If we are spared even in nature, it is by the same divine power: and how much more so, if we poor, depraved creatures are saved from Hell. Yes, you know how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.

About three weeks before Sister Susie (Carter) passed away, I read your most recent Editorial to her. I had not read it before going to see her, so it was a pleasant surprise to me also. Sister Susie sat and listened to it like a hungry little sparrow eating a few cake crumbs. It was in that Editorial that you expressed that we find, from time to time, how good it is to wait upon the Lord!

It was very seldom that I found the time to read to Sister Susie. When I would do good, evil was more present. But one Sunday morning before going to church, (and it wasn't long before she died,) I went by the Nursing Home and read Elder Mewborn's account of the association. That account was a homecoming on one of Israel's little camp grounds, and was like a little bouquet of Summer given to her. How well you knew that your precious sister's affections were on Jesus Christ, and His precious bride, the Church. For her and many others of like precious faith, their suffering is finished. May God keep us comforted in that they are now safe in His love.

I have thought of you two several times since your sister's funeral. I felt that I would rather write to you than send a sympathy card.

What the unseen future hours, days and months hold for the two of you, and me and everyone whose hope is in Jesus Christ — not any of us know the future, only that which it has pleased the Lord to reveal. And thus we are back to the poor Christian's theme: *We have to wait upon the Lord.*

The two of you answer our letters when you come to our associations, and

when you put forth your efforts and sacrifices on behalf of the *Signs of the Times*. Extra writing would be quite a burden, so I don't expect you to answer my letter. I have received a card and note of appreciation from Viola. She was with us at Roanoke Church the first Sunday.

With Christian love, I hope,
Sister Mamie Rose Ferguson

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is again time to renew our subscription to the *Signs*, so please find enclosed an amount to cover the next two years.

This morning while reading the *Signs* our mind was so led while reading a letter from Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, that we feel a desire to express some of the thoughts we had concerning this scripture.

"And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9-10)

Down through the ages many saints of God have suffered corporeal death, and have become martyrs for the cause of Christ; and time was when we felt that it was of these who were under consideration in this scripture.

In the Garden of Eden was the tree of life (Christ our Lord) where God placed Cherubims, and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. Those whom God hath chosen and are drawn by his love, to approach the Tree of Life, must be *slain* to the love of sin, and cut asunder and come under the flame that burns away all dross. Yes, dear Elder, the things we once loved we now hate, and the things we once hated we now love.

And where, dear one, do we find these? Under the Altar. It was on the

sacrificial altar that the Lamb was *slain*, and his blood ran down for the preservation of the saints of God. And there is not one for whom He died that was not under the altar; and no power on this earth can place one under the altar for whom He did not give his life.

Therefore, I do not feel the blood referred to in this scripture as "our blood" to be the blood of any natural man, but rather the blood of Christ; for if he is *our* Lord and *our* Saviour, we can use the possessive pronoun *our* in reference to the blood of the Lamb of God.

It was this blood that cleansed, ransomed and redeemed. Whom? those that were and are under the altar. And may it please God to place us there.

Give our love to all the brethren.

In much love,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes

ALL HE HAS IS HOPE

2050 Greenway Blvd.,
Wichita, Kansas 67213

Elders of the Signs

Dear Brother Wood:

They say you know a tree by the fruit it bears: you Elders surely bear large and sweet fruits to my way of thinking.

I have received so many letters from dear brothers that I cannot answer all of them. I want to thank one and all for writing me. The twenty-eighth day of March I will be seventy-seven, and my health is not good. The doctor says I have angina, which is fat in the blood.

We are told that one must be born again to be a child of God. How do we know when we are born the second time? I am not sure, but I do know that when I was a child ten or twelve years old, I would say that God did not know everything; and at that time I was not afraid of the Lord, and was free of mind and had no sins. Then one Sunday at church I was making light of the Elder while he was preaching, when, all at once, something hit me, and I ran out of the

building crying. My mother came out after me and said for me to go to the carriage and wait until the services were over. I did not know what to do — it seemed that part of me wanted to go back in, and part of me did not. Mother said for me to make up my mind and do as I felt like doing. I stood outside for a few minutes and then went back in for the rest of the meeting.

From that time on one part of me wants to do good, and the other part won't let me do the things I would love to do, and I do not bear any good fruits. I only hope that Christ died for my sins and that I am in the first resurrection, and that at His coming I will hear the Lord's voice and will be resurrected with the other children of God.

I wish one of you elders could come and see me this summer. Let me know before hand and I will try to be at home. The only thing left for me is Hope.

From a sinner in trouble,
Fred C. Winfrey

Boones Mill, Va. 24065

"Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye doubleminded." (James 4:8)

Dear Brethren:

Thy Hymn "Nearer my God to Thee," is Jacob's experience which recorded in Genesis 28th chapter. After the Lord revealed himself to Jacob then Jacob was nearer to God in his thoughts. This is the only way a sinner ever has, or ever will, draw nigh unto God, for He has from the beginning been our dwelling place.

"Cleanse your hands" and "Purify your hearts" intend the same thing; and since this is God's work only, "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. 20:9) And since, according to promise, the Lord is faithful to cleanse His people in a Trinity way as appears from the shedding of His blood, and the power

of it, from the sanctifying and almighty influence of His leading Spirit; and from the answers to the prayers of the saints that God would create in them clean hearts, and wash them thoroughly from their iniquity. (See Psalm 51)

Now, since this is the truth, that man is depraved and incapable to cleanse himself from sin, it will be asked, *To what purpose are such exhortations as James 4:8?*

We answer: To convince men that they stand in need of being washed and cleansed of which all are naturally ignorant. Also to bring to remembrance our inability to cleanse ourselves: which the Jews thought to have washed themselves by the blood of bulls and goats; which are rejected of God. And they in spite of all their legal doings, are yet called upon to wash and make clean; and so this preaching from heaven is profitable to point saints to the only way of cleansing, and so to the fountain of Christ's blood and the cross James preached while contending for the faith. Faith lives upon the riches and righteousness of its Author and Finisher Jesus Christ; and knows it would be a failure without His prayers.

That which depends upon another, is faith. And God given faith will look to none but Jesus. Real faith lacks for strength, and hungers for righteousness and wisdom according to its every confession. Therefore genuine faith receives its obedience from Another whose obedience is finished.

False religion will worship the obedience of man, which is of the flesh. And there are millions who are, "Pure in their own eyes, and yet not washed from their filthiness." (Prov. 30:12)

James 4:8 serves to remind those who know the Lord, that notwithstanding the fact that saints have been born again, we yet stand in need of cleansing until this corruptible shall be put on incorruption. Then our song shall be unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His precious blood.

To the household of faith it is revealed that all washing and ablution

from sin, is from above, "and cometh down from the Father of lights . . ." As for me, my only hope of ever being washed from my sins, depends upon Jesus who revealed Himself to me about the close of the Second World War. And when He put me down I was drawn nigh to Jesus, and I know He is the Head of His house — a great wonder in Heaven.

In bonds,
J. L. Boccock

BROTHER HOLLANDSWORTH
RECOVERING

Rt. 4, Box 104,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

I want to thank the many brethren sisters and friends for the cards and gifts and phone calls local and from North Carolina and Georgia. I am sorry that so many that visited me in the hospital and in my home, were turned away because I was not able to receive them; but I hope that they all understand.

I was operated on for gall stones February 5th, and was in the hospital fifteen days. And after I came home my tension was so high I thought I would not get well, but the Lord was not ready to take me. I am much better now, and am trying to serve the churches and enjoying liberty most of the time. I know that the Lord is the one to be thanked above all, for He is the God of all comfort; and He that made me keeps me alive, and will until my time comes that He has allotted me.

Elder Wood, will you please publish this in the *Signs*. I would appreciate it very much.

Yours on sweet fellowship,
(Elder) J. R. Hollandsworth

EXPERIENCE

Roanoke, Va. 24017

Elder L. J. Brammer

Dear Brother in Christ:

I felt I would try to write you some of the way the Lord has led me, that you might know some of the reasons I ask your thought on Thes. 5:23 yesterday. I did not come to Union with a question but felt after hearing you preach and the expressions you made concerning the Resurrection, the mentioned scripture came to mind again, and it relates in some way to how I believe the Lord has led me. Sometimes it troubles me because I am, in thought, so far from the first things that the Lord manifests to me while I am trying to speak. That is, to enter into the first sinking down and raising up.

When I was a lad of seven, one night I looked up in the Western sky and beheld the moon that appeared about one quarter, which is not unusual for children to be looking at and wondering about the stars and the many bodys in the sky that are not visible in the daytime. At that time I had no fear of darkness and hardly knew anything of trouble, except maybe a stone bruise on my foot; and especially knew nothing of sin. But as I viewed the quarter moon it appeared a full moon, which was a wonder to me; then it appeared a smiling face and I felt a great calmness over me that I have not been able to describe or know the fulness of. I say sometimes it was a feeling that *all* is well. From then on I had a fear of darkness that I did not look up much, and a knowledge of sin in my members, that increased as the years passed for a little over eight years. Before the eight years were up the burden of eternal death weighted me down day and night, and I could in no way set that burden aside, though I cried day and night, God be merciful to me a sinner, and when I could live no longer, and had wept because of my sins until there were no more tears. And in that last night our family physician was called and the family, as many as could bare to look, stood by, and I was brought to the end

of all strength in an earthly way, and I was so impressed that I had sinned so greatly that the Holiness of God forbade that I could be saved; and I was assured that the moment I died my soul would drop into the furnace of hell. I was reconciled to my just lot because His Holiness demanded the just punishment for those that die without hope, and I felt to say, "O Lord not my will but thine be done." And there I fell asleep not knowing but what I had departed this life into the place prepared for the Devil and his angels.

This was well after midnight on August 13, 1928, and I had the whole family and our family physician in an uproar. The whole eight years had not been as that night, but as if the knowledge of sin in me raised and lowered as the tide, and as I have said it increased and I could not, even at an early age rest but a short while without the terrible knowledge of my great sins being present. Sleep had departed from me and whether I dropped into natural sleep or fainted I still do not know but I was assured the moment I closed my eyes I would die and go immediately to hell, and was willing for His will to be done even though hell was my forever habitation.

I awoke early in the morning following with a calmness I had not known for eight years, and slipped quietly out of the house without awakening my family; and if any poor soul ever had reason to kiss the Son, I did, because if any poor soul was ever set free I enjoyed that liberty. Not only me but all I could behold was in praise to God with me, and I just sat in the grass and marveled at the love of God, and I was assured that nothing stood between me and my Saviour, and if my life was taken I would be forever in his presence and behold his face in righteousness. There was a change because that one that had no hope and was assured in all truth hell was my home, now, if I be taken, I would see the smile of his face. Never have I felt that burden so great since. How long the state of earthly

bliss lasted I do not know now but soon I found a warfare that has not come to an end yet. The fulness of the grace of God will be manifest when we see Him as he is.

When this took place, it was noticed by my family and the children I went to school with, and if the state I first felt had remained I would have joined with those that say the old man is now suited for heaven, but I trust he gave me ears to hear the glorious gospel of His Son who is perfect, and a desire to see him and be like him.

Now I believe we are given the Spirit of adoption after we are born again. Now I do not feel and it is according to my experience, that anything returns to the dust as it was except that which was first taken from the dust. John saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony they held. (Rev. 6:9-10-11.) In my meditations, that altar was the promise, the promise under which the children of God of old were kept by the power of God until the fullness of time should come, etc.—those that had died in the faith; but when the work of redemption was completed (finished) they were given white robes and to rest yet for a little season (not time). And also we notice that they are still protected and in communication, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Though his people have rested under the promise that Jesus would (Him will ye hear in all things) come, and the white robes are evidence recorded, that Salvation in Him is complete.

Brother Brammer, by experience, I am a sojourner in this world living upon the grace of God, and not very wise; but to me, there is no rest except in His work, and no peace except that He giveth. To me, it does not lessen his love for his people nor the greatness of his work, to say that the body returns to the dust as it was, and Spirit to God who gave it. The Spirit is of God and needed nothing therefore returns im-

mediately to God who gave it. Unknown to me I was born in sin, and by the mercy of God the law became my master, and by trying to fulfill it I found I was a servant of the devil. Jesus in His great work of redemption, (unknown to me, and indeed all I could seem to know at first was that I was blind.) He redeemed me, and sin was condemned in the flesh. And there is the often word, who will deliver me from the body of this death. Farewell,

Your least servant,
Noel F. Conner

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1) Genesis 1:26 says, “All things were made by Him and without him was not anything made.” According to Ephesians 1:4, the man was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world—so that would be before man was made; also he predestinated us unto the adoption of children.

All of this was done before Adam was made; so man is clear out of the arrangements of establishing the Church of God. Adam and Eve were made, and commanded to be fruitful and multiply. In this I say that the Church of God was planted in Adam, because he has a people in all kindreds and nations . . . Jesus refers to His Body as having many members which make up the church, and they all came through Adam naturally.

When one is born in this world, he is just born of the flesh; for, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.” When we are only born of the flesh that is all we know anything about, and the things of the world are our first love, our first husband, or first heaven.

The Word spoken of in the text, was born of a woman, and became flesh and dwelt among us. He was conceived in his mother in a bodily shape by the Holy Ghost. He was born into this world man

and God; and he says that it behooved him to come, bleed and die for those that his Father gave him out of the World: that none should be lost but the son of perdition. He lived here thirty and three years, and gave his life for His children that the scriptures might be fulfilled, and gave his life for His children that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. He had the power to lay down his life and power to take it up again .

The Adam family is still helpless, and I believe that Cain and Abel are true figures of the true and the false. Cain would be the type that has never been born again: the Lord rejected his offering, and accepted Abel's. The Word that came to be flesh and dwelt among men, came baptizing with the Holy Ghost, which puts His Spirit in them, and they are born of the Spirit. So, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Adam the first man is of the earth earthly; Jesus the second man is the Lord from heaven.

When a person is born of the Spirit, his blind eyes are opened, and his deaf ears unstopped: his first love is gone — his first heaven is passed away. He has received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and he has entered into his "second heaven," and behold all things have become new. Now he can eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, which proves that he is spiritually alive. This agrees with the Apostle Paul when he said that he was kept a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ—which means we are kept from doing the things that the lust of the flesh and the pride of the eyes would lead us into.

This new birth makes us love the Lord who gave his life for us — it makes us want to follow Him down into the liquid grave and be baptized as he was. It makes us love our brothers and sisters. It just makes a new person out of us. We

are fed on the spiritual food that Christ commanded Peter to feed His sheep and lambs. This Word spoken of in the text, is the vine and those that have been made alive by His Spirit, are the branches. They had to be chosen in Him, because the branch comes up with the vine. So those that were born of Adam and made alive by Jesus Christ, compose His Body, the true and living Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is in the world today.

These bodies of ours are terrestrial bodies which must die and go back to dust from which they came. 1 Corinthians 51:38 says that God gives it a body as it pleases Him. It is sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body . . . These are celestial bodies and are ready to be said unto, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This is the risen, glorified Church of God.

Written by a poor worm of the dust.

Oscar Howard
Pink Hill, N. C.

ENJOYS READING WRITINGS IN THE SIGNS

1902 McCutcheon
Shreveport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time for me to renew my subscription. I do so much enjoy the writings of comfort and love from those who have God's laws in their hearts and minds, and are saved by grace and not by works, lest they should boast. It is free — a free gift from God, given to those chosen in Christ in the beginning, who were His, are His, and will always be His, for nothing or no one can pluck them out of His hands: for by the shedding of His own precious blood Christ has redeemed them. He paid the debt that saved them from their sins, and there remains no more price for sin.

There are those who are under the

law and whatsoever the law saith, it saith to those under the law, who depend of their good works to save them; but we know that all our righteousness is as filthy rags. I know well that in my flesh dwells no good thing. Paul says, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." (Romans 3:21) It says also, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 4:28) There are those who depend on God to work all things after the counsel of His own will. These are those Christ prayed for, not for the world but for those the Father gave Him. They depend on Jesus, for He is given judgement over all things in heaven and earth. Jesus was the only one without spot worthy to open the way — righteousness is of the Lord and He is the righteousness of His elect who were chosen in Him in the beginning.

I surely enjoyed reading Gregory Duren's article. He is enlightened, if I understand, and God has blessed him to write so that even I seem to understand his meaning.

I also enjoyed Elder Hardy's letter to a brother. My eyes filled with tears as I read it. Every word seemed to me to spell love, love, love. And God is love. O thank God for giving me eyes to read this book of love. I try sometimes to write, but when I read what I write it doesn't sound good, and I never feel it is fit to send in. Anyway I know that if it is not in accord with Old Baptists you will not print it; and I wouldn't want you to.

I believe our teacher is God, and through experience we learn. God's will be done, not ours.

A little sister in hope,
Kate Mathews

HAS TRAVELED A ROCKY ROAD

Rt. 1, Box 223B
Exmore, Va. 23350

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have wanted to write for a long time, but it seems my mind becomes blank whenever I start, so I leave it off. Since I know there is no good thing in me, I make no excuse for my negligence in renewing my subscription when it was due.

I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for forty-two years, and every one of the same faith, whether far or near, I love dearly. I have a wonderful experience and I have traveled a rocky road, but Jesus has traveled every step of the way with me, or I would have perished along the way. It is so beautiful and sweet to me that I can't tell it — it is locked in the secret recesses of my heart, between my Saviour and I.

God is truth, and whenever I hear the truth preached so ably as I have been blessed to hear, I can't keep back the tears: for it seems that I am at the foot of the cross with my precious Saviour, feeling the anguish and shame he bore for me. I ask myself why He had to suffer for so vile a sinner as I; then the answer comes, If He had not borne the pain then I would not have the blessed assurance that I am His and He is mine. What a sweet assurance! it is more precious than gold, silver or precious stones.

I am enclosing \$4.00 for my renewal. I hope I will be more aware next time, if I am still around. But twilight is stealing — it used to be over the sea but now it is closing in ever nearer. I feel a faith and peace serene.

Looking forward to seeing you the 5th Sunday in April. May the good Lord bless and keep you both. Give Sister Spangler my love.

In hope of a better home beyond the skies. Remember me in your prayers.

Sister Nell Gaskill

BEEN READING SIGNS LONG TIME

Charleston, W. Va. 25320
Legg Star Route, Box 354

Dear Editors:

I am a little late in sending check for the *Signs of the Times* renewal. I love the paper so much, and am so thankful for all the editors, for I love the doctrine the *Signs* stands for. I have been reading the paper ever since I was old enough to read. My dear father and mother took the paper, and I have some of several years back.

I always would go to the meetings with my father at every opportunity. I do not get to attend meetings very often as I am getting up in age and my husband is not a believer, which makes it very hard for me. Sometimes I don't understand it and get very low, but then I know it is the dear Lord's will. I get much comfort and feel I am blessed in reading the dear *Signs* containing the experiences of the brothers and sisters. I look forward each month for its coming.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His loving care. When you have a mind to pray please remember me, if the Lord blesses you.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,
Lurecy S. McCutcheon

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pigg River Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1973. (August 3, 4 and 5)

Camp Branch Church is located in Henry County, Virginia: leaving Rt. 220 at Martinsville, Va., go 8 miles east on Rt. 108 to Rt. 657. From the north turn left off Rt. 220 on Rt. 619 and go to Rt. 890, turn right and go to Rt. 657 on Leatherwood or Dyer's Store Road. The meeting house is just around the curve.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Sister Nancy Haynes, Clerk
Elder Rufus Brown, Mod.

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in February, 1973, the Mill Branch Church met in conference and agreed that we ask that Brother Leon Griffin be set apart to the office of Deacon; and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning February 4, 1973 the church met, and conference was opened with hymn and prayer by Elder Wayne Mitchell. The Presbytery was organized by electing Eld. Wayne Mitchell, Moderator, Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the service, from Black Creek, Contentnea and Skewarkey.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacon Amos Williams and seated in front of the ministers: Elders Wayne Mitchell, Harvey Holland and Kenneth Windham. Elder Windham read First Timoty, 3rd chapter; Elder Holland spoke generally on the duties of a deacon; and Elder Mitchell read scriptures and delivered the charge.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, administered the laying on of hands with prayer.

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

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

Conference adjourned, and dismissed by the moderator.

Elder Wayne Mitchell, Mod.
Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1973)

Jean Burns, Ark.....	\$ 1.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, W. Va.....	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Chopell, Tenn.....	3.00
C. Wesley Bond, Ore.....	1.00
Mrs. Fred Cobb, N. C.....	1.00
Mrs. Ruth Daniel, Tex.....	1.00
Myrtle Lefferts Estate, N. J.....	3,000.00
Mrs. Esther Ruston, Can.....	11.00
Dr. F. G. Ruston, Can.....	11.00
H. C. Adams, Ky.....	3.00
Mrs. J. D. Neely, Ark.....	1.00
O. L. Hallins, Va.....	3.00
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N. F. Conner, Va.....	7.00
Rosa Meadows, Va.....	1.00
A Friend, Amarilla, Tex.....	3.00

STRICT BAPTIST LITERATURE

Sermons by J. C. Philpot, long out of print, are being re-published. Also sermons and writings by other Strict Baptist Ministers. We are glad to announce such good literature can again be supplied. Write for complete list and prices.

PRIMITIVE PUBLICATIONS

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U. S. Distr. for these publications

FOURTH OF JULY MEETING

The regular Fourth of July services will be held at Pine Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia.

The Meeting House is located just off U. S. Route 221, leading from Floyd to Roanoke, Virginia. Those going by way of Floyd Court-house, turn off 221 to the left about five miles from Floyd at an old store building. Those from the east turn right at the store building, and the Meeting House is about one-half mile. Services to begin at 10 A. M.

For a number of years an all-day service has been held at Pine Creek Church on the Fourth of July, attended by a number of ministers and a large gathering of members and friends.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

D. V. Spangler

Danville, Virginia June, 1973

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

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EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 4:6,7

“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another, for who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”

Why did the apostle say that he had transferred to himself and Apollos in a figure these lofty things? It seems that neither one of them had indulged in such fanciful thinking as this, to wit, that they had received anything save that which came from the Lord. A man with a history like this man could never

say anything else than that he had received all from the Lord. He could never say that it was by his achievement that he was different from other Jews. I kindly ask that we carefully examine his status before the brethren and before the Lord. He did not know Christ; he did not know how to do the work that is required of a child of God; he did not know how to perform that which is good; he did do the things that he did not desire to do; he did not do the things that he desired to do; he was the chief of sinners at the time of all his history in the time state; he did not know anything as he ought; he was constantly being brought into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members; he did not have anything good dwelling in his flesh; he was the least of all saints; he was not meet (sufficient) to be an apostle; he was the least of the apostles. It is not his intention, either by word or precept or example, to say that any gift or talent or reception of it, is from his efforts. Wouldn't the apostle be a poor specimen to lay down such a claim as that? Wouldn't he be the weakest excuse for saying that our merits are the cause of what we receive? I am well aware that some will say, What dry technical matter the elder is dealing with. Yes, that is true, but only if we feel that we have received something from a source other than the Lord. How do you feel? That is the important question. Have you been thinking of your merits when gifts are dispensed? If so, the apostle is specially transferring the doctrinal thesis to himself. Why does he do that? Because the Voice of Inspiration is looking down the vista of time and is viewing the tendency of men to think too highly of men, to think of themselves as having received these things by their own worthiness and ability. He has set himself forward as not being worthy of the least of the gifts that the Lord has bestowed upon them, much less to have wrought them out by his skill.

After giving us all of the ways in which he is not fit, not able to attain

unto the high calling of God, he then tells us so clearly and fully and explicitly how that these things are given to him. He is telling us that it was by the grace and calling of God that changed his life from that of an ignorant persecutor to that of a humble recipient of God's mercies; that he has not received anything save what the Lord has given. Could any forbid his clear language that he was what he was by the grace of God? Did he misrepresent the experience of God's children when he declared that he was what he was by the grace of God. Or is that when the pattern was cut it was cut wrong? In his writing to the Corinthians, he tells them (and us, or does he?) that he was what he was by the grace of God. Was this true? If it was true with him, what relationship is there between the apostle and us. We must ever remember that he is presenting himself as an example so that men will not think more of one another than they ought. Too, the apostle tells the Ephesians that they are presently saved by grace. Then this is not a weak grace; it is not a grace that the sinner can use or not use according to his feelings; it is saving grace among the Ephesians.

What I am reaching after is to know whether the grace that saved them at Ephesus was the same kind of grace that made Paul what he was at the time of his writing to the Corinthians. If so, then how fitting that the Holy Spirit inspired him to call attention to men that they not think more of themselves than they ought. He is the perfect example of one that is made different by the grace of God; he is a perfect example of one that has not received anything save that which the Lord gave. If a man is what he is by the grace of God, everything that he receives is something that he would not have had but for the grace of God. If a whole church is saved by the grace of God, then all that they get in the kingdom of heaven will be a gift from God to them. To the brethren at Rome he said, Even so then *at this present time* also there is a rem-

nant according to the election of grace. And if by grace (in the present time), then is no more of works (in this present time): otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works (in this present time), then is it no more of grace (in this present time): otherwise work is no more work (in this present time). I am unable to see how that any of the Corinthians or Romans or Ephesians could ever say that they had received anything except from the Lord's hand. For them to have thought so certainly would have been thinking too highly of men.

Our blessed Lord was thankful that His Father had hid things from the wise and prudent and had revealed them unto babes. O, do you really mean to say that these babes had to earn the things given to them? Would you say that? Now turn back to the apostle. He was thankful to God at all times on behalf of his brethren. Why was he grateful? For what was he grateful? He was thankful for the grace of God which was given them in Christ Jesus. This is the source from whence we receive our blessings. Surely our heavenly Father would not have loved us in such a manner as to sacrifice His Son to die for us, and yet treasure and lay up in Him an inferior grace that would not save us in the hour of need. If the throne of grace is that weak, what would be the use of praying to it, or coming to it for help in the hour of need?

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men." (Psa. 31:19) This goodness was laid up for us, and wrought for us. O my soul why art thou cast down? The Lord has laid up and wrought all of the goodness and mercy that you will ever need in this vale. It is not any wonder that Paul thanked God for His grace which was given to his brethren. What did this grace do for them? Did it give them some of the things that they received? And did they have to earn the

others? If language means anything (and it does) then by all means this grace enriched them in everything. If this grace did enrich them in everything (and it did) what did they ever receive except that which God gave and which His grace enriched to their benefit? Remember, dear reader, that it enriched them in everything. Remember the language of our text, to wit, that the example used did not permit the thinking of more than we ought of any man. *Who* hath made thee to differ? Please tell me, other than Christ, who has made you to differ. *What* have you got that you did not receive? Please, let us have the truth of the matter. What have we got that we did not receive? If thou didst receive it, *why* do you glory as though you didst not receive it?

Yes, I know the usual argument just here. It is being said that I am making Paul say that grace enriches us to use profane language, to drink intoxicating beverages, to frequent places of ill repute and all other vices. You do not believe any such a thing, dear brethren. You know that for nearly fifty years my pen has assailed such a blasphemous doctrine. The Lord has wrought all of our works in us, but he is not talking about any other works than Paul is referring to when he tells us what the fruits of the Spirit are. These fruits come from His work, definitely not ours. Every one of them is wrought in us by His grace, and this is the most enriching work, the most satisfying, the most enjoyable work that has ever been given to a poor sinner; and when it is thus wrought, he or she will say that we have received it all from the Lord. This grace will enable us to talk right, for there is not a word in our tongue but what the Lord knows it and His grace will discover to us at the proper time rich utterances, and give us such a measure of knowledge that we will break out in singing and say, "I know that my redeemer liveth." This grace, even this grace to live by, will be exactly like it was in the day the testimony of

Christ was confirmed in us. Was ever anything so beautiful, so lovely, so confirming? Paul has prayed for us all in every place that this grace be given us, and that it be as effectual as it was in the first movement of it in our lives when Christ said unto us, "Thy sins are all forgiven." This confirmed our hope; this testimony was effectual in weaning us from thinking too highly of any man; of thinking that we get anything save as a gift from above. (James I:16,-17) And this first reception of the things of Christ are to be continued as was the first confirmation of His testimony to us to the end that we do not come behind in any gift. If there has been anything found in the Bible better than this, I have not found it. If there is anything needed except these gifts of grace I have not found it in the Bible, nor have I ever heard of one that experienced it. If any one claims to have achieved anything by an effort of their own, I hereby declare most emphatically that the same gift from above gives that same thing.

Once more I call your attention to our election. The sun is getting too low; the shadows are lengthening out too far for me to tamper with salvation. Tomorrow will find many of us gone the way of the earth, and one day, ere long, the poor sinful writer will fall to rise no more in this life. Please deal with me in a tender manner; please deal with me in my weakness. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. 1:3,4) If God did choose us in Christ before the world was founded, then as he chose us, he, also, blessed us with all spiritual blessings. I never finished the ninth grade (I regret this) but I am not afraid to say that in the same manner, at the same time, and according as he did the first, so also, did he do the second; that as much certainty as there

was in the one, that equally so, no more, no less, as much in the other. If I do not get the blessings that I am blessed with in Christ, I see just as much likelihood that I will not get the ultimate of my election in Christ. I am sure that no grammarian, no linguist, no composer of sentences will destroy my meaning and use of the little word *as* as used in this passage. God did choose His people in Christ, and at that time He did bless them with all spiritual blessings. The man or woman that is able to find a flaw or lack in the blessings being received by the objects for which they were designed, will, at that time, and with the same arguments and the same Scriptures that he uses, find a flaw and failure in the election of God. According to Paul's writing by inspiration, which is my text at this time, the brethren at Ephesus, and those that the other epistles were written to, will receive these spiritual blessings in time, and that they will not have any other spiritual blessings in time.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." (Rom. 8:32) As I write, it is the holiday season. I have already heard parents threaten their offspring with the time worn threat, If you are not a better child, I will not get you anything for the holiday. If I could follow them a few days after the holidays I could find some that take the gift away because of bad conduct. This is called in modern vernacular as Indian giving. This kind of giving from God to His people is not found in the New Testament. God's word is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:89). How sweet this is to my poor lamenting and troubled heart; how it buoys up my drooping spirit. His word is settled in the region *of sublime bliss and glory where the evil passion of men will never change it, where the religious fanaticism will never add to it. If His word had been settled in many minds of any on earth how long, dear tried soul, would it have been before it was unsettled? Since it

is settled in heaven before the sons of men trod the shores of Galilee, how shall He not with him freely give us all things. It is not, *how can He give us all things*; it is not that way, but it is, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things? Will any of my readers answer the question? Will you say that he can not, or that He will not? The language simply means that since He did not spare His own Son, but did deliver Him up for us all, that He will, having entered into covenant to do so, give us all things. (2 Sam. 23:5) All of these things belong to the people of God. We would not have gotten one thing, had not God spared His Son, but having delivered Him for us all, He likewise bought and paid for all of the things of the kingdom, and, since that He can not deny Himself, He will not, nor He can not, deny us one of these gifts. Our Father knows the things that we need, and He gives them to us (Mat. 6:8; 7:11). Our Father will not withhold any thing from these that walk uprightly (Psa. 84:11). He has given us all things, and they are promised and incorporated into the whole of the covenant before the world was founded; and Paul tells us about this twice (Eph. 1:3,4). "Let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (I Cor. 3:21,23)

I am not dealing with a bi-sected or an isolated portion of Scripture. The text carries us all over the Bible. If given grace and a spirit of understanding the subject grows and grows, and I do hope the contemplation of so vast a fulness as is this, lifts up the down cast eyes and causes the heart to leap and skip in holy ecstasy, and the pace of the tattered and gnarled feet to step a little faster towards that which is so sweet. These are they that have experienced the receiving of grace, the receiving of a kingdom that cannot be moved (Heb. 12:28; 13:9), and, having received grace, they rejoice in the same

and give glory and honor to Him that lives and abides forever. Their faith will not be in traditions and formalities and customs and rites; and, praise God, they will not be thinking more highly of one another than they ought. As I write my eyes are lifted heavenward to the everlasting and inexhaustible love of God for poor sinners; I am carried backwards forty-nine years ago this week (December, 1972) to a time when my resources gave out. I write from experience, not from hearsay, not from observation. I came to the end of my own strength. I played my record out. I had absolutely nothing left that could be brought into the presense of God as an offering for atonement. I feel to hope that I lost my life (that is, I lost it as a quality worthwhile), but that He, the one that reduces all His children to poverty, gave me another life in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I do hope that since then, I, too, have not counted my life dear unto me, but that as much as has been given me, I have been ready to preach and write and get up at midnight to speak and to talk to poor troubled hearts and minds. And, when I am carried back in retrospection to that illustrious day of deliverance, I am blessed to sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me,"

And as I look back and come to the present, I continue to sing,

"'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home."

God willing, more later.

WDG

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

VIRTUAL UNION VS.
ACTUAL UNION

We have read some very labored articles which have been written against the doctrine of eternal, vital union of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mystical body, the Church, in which the writers

have attempted to draw a line between what they call a virtual eternal, and an actual eternal union, admitting the former, but denying the latter. Some of the less discerning of the saints have become perplexed, and we have been frequently called on to define the difference.

Before attempting to do so, we will remark, that every expression of Bible truth by which the Church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is or over has been distinguished from the world or anti-christ has been assailed in the same sly and insidious manner. Predestination, election, special redemption, regeneration, final preservation of the saints in grace to glory, the resurrection of the dead, and ultimate glory of the heirs of salvation, have shared the same fate. Read to the arminian, "Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," &c. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children," &c. "Him being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Ah, says he, I believe in predestination; but not in absolute predestination! Well let us see: What kind of predestination can that be which is not *absolute*? Something like this. The Lord had a design, a purpose or a will to do certain things if men or devils would allow him to do so; but nothing in reality made certain by the counsel or predestination of God. This is in reality a flat denial of predestination in toto, yet it is what predestination must be if it be not absolute.

We believe in election. O, yes, says the self-conceited freewiller, certainly, I believe election; but not eternal sovereign, personal election. But that God chose to save all who would comply with certain terms, perform certain conditions and makes use of certain means. A man must be lamentably stupid who cannot perceive that this is a full denial of election altogether. Special redemption, yes, says Andrew Fuller, and all

his motley echoes, we believe it is *special* in its design and in its effect, but general in its nature, and so general that all sinners, if they are so disposed can avail themselves of its full benefit. Thus professing to believe it to be *special*, deny its specialty, and rest its efficacy on the will of the creature, and thereby disallow the saving virtue of the blood of Christ. Regeneration. With one voice all the work-mongrel tribes of the earth agree the sinner must be born again. But at the same time deny that the new birth brings forth anything that the sinner did not possess before the birth; no seminal pre-existence of the life which the birth brings forth — no begetting by the heavenly parents, but a mere change of purpose and pursuit, a new-modeling of the carnal mind, and a new formation of the old man. Perhaps this may be a *virtual*, but not *actual* regeneration. All who are this *virtually* born again, if such a thing could be, would present a race of fatherless children — bastards and not sons. Perseverance is admitted, if they may be allowed to supply the condition, *if they hold out faithful*, &c. Anything that will strip the crown from the head of Christ, and crown the sinner as his own savior, they seem very willing to admit. The resurrection is only admitted with such qualifications as either, *it is past already*, or that it does not mean what the scriptures affirm, that "He that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwells in you."

We come now to our subject, and will enquire, What is meant by Eternal Vital Union?

2. Does such a Union exist? And if so,
3. Is it Actual or Virtual?

By the term eternal we mean that which was before all time. The word *vital* means life, and union is oneness — identity as a unit.

What kind of life does God give to his people; is it eternal, or is it only time-life? John says, this is the record that God hath given us eternal life. 1 John v; and Jesus says, "I give to them *eternal*

life." Many other express declarations of scripture prove that the life given to the children of God is eternal, and consequently did as fully exist before they individually and experimentally received it, as afterwards. If it did not exist before it was implanted in us or communicated to us by the new birth, then why is it called eternal? The eternity of it is attested by the declaration that it was with the Father and was manifested. (I John I.) This life is hid in God, those who receive it, receive it by being begotten of his own will, and born of God. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This vitality then is eternal vitality or eternal life which was with God, the Father, before it was manifested. Having then settled by scripture testimony the two points, namely, the life and *its eternal character*, we come to the word *union* in its connection with the terms *eternal, vital*.

2. Did such an union exist? It seems almost like insulting the intelligence of the reader to ask, was this life a plurality, was it legions, or was it one life as it was with the Father before all worlds? Was it more than a unit, when given to us in Christ Jesus according as we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? If it was more than one life perhaps some one can tell us how many lives it was, but if it was one and the self-same life as it originated in God the Father and is hid in him, if it was but one and the same life as given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then the controversy on the subject of eternal vital union may cease, for one of the two propositions must be admitted or the Bible rejected. To deny that a vital union or a union of spiritual vitality did so exist in eternity before all time, is rank infidelity, for God has so declared it. This life was and is, and forever shall continue to be that which makes us one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and that Christ and the Church are thus identified in, is positively asserted by Christ himself. He is in them, and they are in

him. He also is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and so completely, so that he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. And we ask, who has ever seen the Son, who hath not seen the Church also, seeing that he is in the Church, and the Church is in Him. He is the head, the Church is his body; and does a head and its body make more than one man or person? "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." 1 Cor. xii, 12. Then Christ the head and his Church with all her legitimate members, being many in membership, are but one unit in life or vitality. Christ says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." If it be admitted that Christ is truly the life of the Church, the true God and eternal life, then that same life which unites him to the Church as his body, unites his body, the Church, to him as her head. If it be admitted that Christ is now to-day the head of the Church, will they presume to say that he was not the head of his Church yesterday? Dare any one deny the announcement of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Of course, when we speak of Christ in his oneness with the headship of the Church as his body, we speak of him in his mediatorial character as the Son of God, and so revealed with power.

3. Is this union of oneness of life in Jesus Christ *actual* or only *virtual*? As neither of these words are used in the inspired writings in connection with the union of Christ and the Church, we must depend upon our lexicons for their signification; Webster's Dictionary is the recognized standard of our language in the principal colleges of our country. His definition is—*Actual*: 1. real or effective, or that exists truly and absolutely; 2. exist-in act; real; in opposition to speculative.

Virtually: In efficacy or effect only; by means of some other influence, or the instrumentality of something else.

According therefore to the established and acknowledged laws of our language, those who hold the doctrine of eternal, actual, vital union, believe that the life of the Church of God is one life and that it really, effectively, truly and absolutely did exist in eternity before the world began, in a sense opposite to that of mere speculation.

While those who deny that it was *actual*, deny that it was *real*, or that it existed *truly* and *absolutely*, in a sense opposed to that which is only *speculative*. And those who deny that this union was actual before the world began, but admit that it was *virtually* existing in eternity, deny that it was *really, truly* or *absolutely* so, but in efficacy or effect only; and that efficacy or effect could only be developed or produced by the *means* or *instrumentality* of something else.

Now which of these positions, if either, do the scriptures and the teaching of the spirit in our experience establish? To us it is very clear that if this union of the life of the Church in Jesus Christ existed in him before the world began, it was more than a speculation — that it was a reality. If it was not then a reality, a fact, what is there in the communication of that eternal life to us experimentally in the new birth, that can make the life what it was not before we were made to feel its power? But one will say, the word *actual* signifies an *act* or *action*. This Webster admits in a secondary sense, not in its primary signification. Well, be it so; are we not told that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord? Does not the giving a thing imply an act or an action? Certainly it does. Well, when was the act or action of giving us eternal life in Jesus Christ performed? We are told that God hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Is eternal life a spiritual blessing? It certainly is not a mere temporal blessing, then it was actually given us in him before the foundation of

the world. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The *gift*, not *gifts* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is given us in him and through him it is in due time communicated to all the members of his body when they pass from death unto life, are born again, and brought into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. If the work of the Spirit in the new birth is the action which makes this union actual, then we set aside the reality of grace given us in Christ before the world began, and instead of the *gift* of God is eternal life, we should read it the *gifts of God*, there are as many distinct gifts as there are members in the body. And as the relationship of *nearest of kin* could not exist in *reality* before the life union existed, the consequence must be that when the Lord Jesus died for his members on the cross, we, who now live upon the earth, were not really, truly and absolutely so united with and related to him, as to allow us any part or lot in the atonement.

Much confusion prevails where brethren confound this *vital union* with our individual experience of it when brought into it. The union, spiritually, was as perfect before we were brought experimentally into the enjoyment of it, as it is now, or ever will be. But in our earthly, carnal, sinful nature we had no union with Christ, but were children of wrath even as others; nay, we were dead in sins and enmity against God, and enemies to him by wicked works. But although the holy law of God cursed us in the earthly Adam; yet for the great love wherewith he loved us in Christ Jesus, even when we were in ourselves, that is in our earthly nature, dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in him; and thus by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which

God hath before ordained that we should walk therein.

We all know that our earthly nature is estranged from God; and in it we are strangers and foreigners, requiring to be redeemed from the earth, called by grace, quickened by the spirit and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This gift of God, which is eternal life, was not given us in the earthly Adam, neither was our earthly carnal and corrupt nature given to us in Christ. The first Adam is of the earth, earthy, and as is the earthy, such also are they that are earthy. But it was given us in the Son of God, who is the Lord from heaven; as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly. Our natural birth developes us in the one life in which we were created in the earthly Adam, and a spiritual, new and heavenly birth developes or makes manifest in us, experimentally that one life which was hid in God, and which is now made manifest by the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we do not regard either the words *actual* or *virtual* as necessary, or they would have been supplied in the divine volume. But when men deny the reality of this eternal, vital union or oneness of life and say it is only *virtual*, or that it is not so in fact or in truth, we are compelled to resist them, and contend that is an eternal reality.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 1, 1860)

OBITUARIES

DESSIE MAE LAMBERT

As we continue to advance in life, there are few things more keenly felt than the departure, one by one, of dear and esteemed brethren; and at each departure is a loud, personal, and repeated warning to us that we too shall soon be numbered with them, although this does not remove our grief that in this world we shall see their face and hear their voice no more.

On November 4, 1911 it pleased God to send this precious one into the home of Leander and Emmaline Williams. She was married to Elder E. J. Lambert November 17, 1934. Sister Lambert asked for a home with the Primitive Baptist Church of Cedar Hill near Amity,

Arkansas, received and was baptized by Elder Lambert in 1935. After moving to Winnsboro in 1949, she asked that her membership be moved to Good Hope Church near Winnsboro where she remained as active member until her death.

Sister Lambert departed this life on January 4, 1973 in her home at 306 Richardson Street, Winnsboro, Texas. She leaves to mourn her death, her husband Elder Lambert of Winnsboro; one son, Charles Lambert of Hot Springs, Arkansas; one sister, Florence Boggs of Camden, Arkansas; several nieces and nephews along with a host of friends.

Her sudden death came as a shock to her beloved husband and many friends, but not so to her all wise God for He knew before the foundation of the world the exact moment he would call her from the walks of this life.

Sister Lambert was a true and most faithful companion to her husband for over 38 years and was so much a part of the cause for which he has been called. Very few people realize the added sacrifices that God called ministers' wives have to endure. They find it necessary in most cases to travel many miles, to be away from home on most week ends. The ups and downs that are prevalent in the lives of a minister are also prevalent in theirs. But oh, how faithful they are in understanding that the life of a minister is not his own but belongs to the dear people of God. Sister Lambert fully realized this, and the welfare of her husband was her constant concern. She was a true servant of the church and had a fervent love for the brethren often entertaining great numbers in their home.

Our great loss is her eternal gain for God in his word sets a special value on the death of the righteous. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints." "The memory of the just is blessed." They are as a sweet odor ascending to heaven. They are removed in kindest affection. They are described as "not dead but sleeping." They are also classed by the blessed Spirit as "the dead in Christ." John in his vision saw the saints, "dead in Christ." clad in white raiment with palms in their hands, and crowns of glory on their heads.

Sister Lambert's remains were laid to rest at Good Hope Cemetery six miles east of Winnsboro to await the appointment of God 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."

Her funeral was conducted by the writer, along with Elders John Lee Smith, W. W. Taylor, C. M. Haygood, Lloyd Wall, and C.

M. Morris.

Joe L. Hamrick

Be it resolved, at Good Hope Church on Sunday March 25th, that the obituary of Sister Dessie Mae Lambert be written by Elder Joe L. Hamrick. That a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy recorded in our church book.

Elder Lambert, Moderator
Sister Gertrude Jones, Clerk

DEACON CLAUDE TIPP HALL

The subject of this sketch, Deacon Claude Tipp Hall, of Person County, N. C. was born May 13, 1890, and departed this life October 1, 1972. He was the son of Joseph H. and Ninnie Jones Hall, and grandson of Elder Andrew N. Hall.

He was united in marriage to Miss Addie Jones October 14, 1915. He is survived by his widow and five children: Madeline Eaker, Huldah Berryhill, Nancy Hall, and John L. and C. T. Hall, Jr.

Brother Hall was received into Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, N. C. in July, 1910; and was ordained Deacon in July, 1918. He served as Assistant Clerk of the Lower Country Line Association from 1919 to 1929.

He operated a very large farm, and filled a number of responsible positions with the Federal Government in relation to agriculture.

It was my privilege to have a close acquaintance with dear Brother Hall, whom I loved very much. He was of a gentle disposition, yet firm in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. To him the doctrine of Absolute Predestination of all things was as much a part of the doctrine of Election as any other cardinal principle of doctrine. Yet he manifested a charitable attitude toward those who did not see as he did.

The family, church and community have suffered a great loss, but our brother has left evidence that he died in the triumph of a living faith; and our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer walked sweetly in the gospel with our dear brother over forty years, and was privileged to baptize all his living brothers and his son, C. T., Jr., while supplying at Shiloh Church. Little did I think when we parted on the fourth Sunday in September, that I would see him no more here below.

May the lovely spirit manifested in our brother abide with his family, and may God bless his dear widow and family with reconciliation to His Holy will. His funeral was conducted by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., and the writer. Interment was in the Shiloh Church Cemetery.

D. V. Spangler

BROTHER MERILL SHOCKLEY

Brother Shockley was born December 27, 1875 and departed this life January 24, 1973.

Born to John H. Shockley and Sarah Elizabeth Dickerson Shockley, he married Sarah Lizzie Fooks. To this union nine children were born, two having passed away and seven survive. Two sisters also survive, as well as many grandchildren.

Brother Shockley was baptized October 26, 1924, by Elder J. C. Mellott, and united with the membership of Nassaongo Church the same day, and remained a faithful and loving member until his death. Some time afterwards he was appointed a deacon and filled that capacity well.

About two years ago he became ill because of age and other infirmities, and went to stay with a daughter and later transferred to the Frederick Memorial Hospital where he passed away.

The funeral service was held at the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., by his present pastor, Elder James F. Poole. Burial was at Wicomico Memorial Park Cemetery.

His presence will be missed among the churches. He was loved and greatly respected. We bow to the wise act of our Holy God, who gave him life and then called him home.

Written by Sister Mollie Fooks at the request of the family and by direction of the church.

Elder James F. Poole

BROTHER WILLIAM L. CASEY

Brother Will Casey was born near Pyatt, Arkansas, on September 21, 1893. He died October 23, 1972 in Crescent Convalescent Home in Yakima, Wash. at the age of 79. He and Ader Price were married in 1913. They moved to Yakima County with their family in 1936. He owned and operated a fruit ranch on Summitview Extension and Cowiche until he retired in 1958.

Brother Casey was shown the truth in Christ at an early age and when he learned where the Primitive Baptists were meeting, he and Sister Casey came and asked for a home in Pleasant Grove Church. They were baptized by Elder Ernest Attebury in July, 1964. Brother Casey was strong in his belief in salvation by Grace and never missed a meeting when he was able to attend church.

Survivors, besides his wife, are two sons, Ulis of Cowiche, Wash., and Ewell of Tieton, Wash.; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth Smith of Spokane, Mrs. Retha Bogle of Yakima, Mrs. Joy Witherell of Tieton and Mrs. Dorothy Jo Iverson of Seattle, and four sisters, also 15 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

We of the Pleasant Grove Church miss

Brother Casey, but grieve not as those who have no hope.

Daisy A. Baker

JAMES P. SCEARCE

By request I will try to write an obituary of James P. Scearce. He was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, November 24, 1888. At the time of his death May 28, 1972, he was past eighty-three years old.

He was the son of Thomas and Betty Green Scearce, and lived in the Mount Cross Community for twenty-five years. He was never married.

He joined the Mount Ararat Primitive Baptist Church August 18, 1968, and faithfully filled his place in the church until his death. Written by

S. A. Clark

BERTHA BRINSON WHALEY

Sister Whaley, age 79, departed this life September 6, 1972.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Duplin County, N. C. June 8, 1958. She was faithful to attend her church and meetings almost until the end. She manifested an humble hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We feel in our hearts that our loss is her eternal gain.

Surviving are two daughters: Thelma Southerland and Martha Dixon; also one grandson. They were very faithful in taking their mother to church as long as she lived.

Her funeral was conducted at Sand Hill Church by her pastor, Elder Curtiss Rains and Elder D. B. Stokes, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1972.

Elder Curtiss Rains, Mod.

Brother Brantley Kennedy, Clerk

RUBELL TRIPP PILGREEN

Sadly we write of the death of our beloved sister, Rubell Tripp Pilgreen, who departed this life May 16, 1972, at the age of sixty-five. She was the daughter of Luther and Lucreta Stokes Tripp, and was the widow of Zeb Pilgreen. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Joseph L. Sawyer and Elder A. P. Mewborn at Wilkersons' Funeral Chapel, Greenville, N. C., and she was laid to rest at Winterville, N. C.

She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Sadie Lou Braxton of the home; a son, W. L. Pilgreen of near Greenville; two sisters, Mrs.

Jack Tripp, Fountain, N. C. and Mrs. Willie Gray, Greenville, N. C.; one brother, Horace Tripp, Greenville; and by seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Sister Rubell was a gracious woman, gentle, kind and compassionate. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and united with Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1928, and was a faithful member until her death. She had been in failing health for many years, but was always at her church meetings unless providentially hindered. She loved her church and loved to mingle with her brethren. It gave her great pleasure to be in their midst and to hear the gospel proclaimed. Her faith was evidenced by her walk in life.

The church has suffered a great loss, but feel that our loss has been her eternal gain. We extend heartfelt sympathy to her family.

Done by order of conference in regular session February 17, 1973.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

LONNIE J. STOCKS

It is with a sad heart that we write of the passing of our esteemed brother, Lonnie J. Stocks, who was born June 7, 1891 in Ayden Township, Pitt County, N. C. He departed this life June 17, 1972, at the age of eighty-one years. He was the son of Benjamin and Josephine Simmons Stocks. He was married to Rosa Harrell September 17, 1924, who survives. In addition to his wife he is survived by two sons, Elbert Lee Stocks, Tarboro, N. C., and Benjamin Harrell Stocks, of the home; and four grandchildren.

Funeral services were held June 19, 1972 at Farmer's Funeral Chapel in Ayden by Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Joseph L. Sawyer, and he was laid to rest in the Ayden Cemetery.

Brother Stocks was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and by a confession of faith united with Hancocks Church several years ago. He was ordained a deacon in May, 1941. He was a faithful member and deacon who loved his church, and attended regularly as long as health would permit. Brother Lonnie was a man of quiet dignity, a man of honor and integrity: one whose walk in life was worthy of emulation. The members of Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church feel a great loss, and extend their heart felt sympathy to the family.

Done by order of Conference in regular session February 17, 1972. Written by A. F. Rowe and Nina B. McLawhorn.

Elder Kenneth Windham, Mod.
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1973

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It was such a joy to see you once again at the Primitive Baptist Home Trustee meeting, and reminded I had not written anything just lately for the *Signs*.

Most of my beautiful spiritual experiences have come to me while among the herbs and flowers, so I will relate one by comparison with the Coriander plant and it's seed.

The manna of Old Testament times fell at night in the wilderness journey and was found under the dew in the morning as the sun rose. It was white and round like a Coriander seed. Moses compared the manna to its seed. Much spiritual meaning is alive in this little round white seed, for white is suggestive of spiritual purity, and its roundness gives evidence that eternal life has no ending. But something more comes to me with much sweetness; the fresh seed and foliage of the plant is unpleasant to smell, but, strange as it may seem, the ripe seed is fragrant and becoming even more fragrant with age. How liken are my days to that of the Coriander seed, when through seasons of unpleasant experiences I have come little by little, precept upon precept, to glimpse the spiritual fruits of life. And

it is not until now have I became aware all the unpleasantness has passed away, and a wondrous fragrance is in its stead, growing ever sweeter as I experience or perceive it all about me. I quote: "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." (Proverbs 2:10-11) So I have been blessed in faith by the gospel word, and strengthened from time to time with needed understanding to where I can say I have been made to rejoice in these fruitful seasons.

Love—Sister Mary L. Hellings

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1, Box 297
Purlear, N. C. 28665

Dear Editors:

The Lord willing I will try to write something of my experience. I am in my 88th year and cannot remember much about spelling or writing. I have feared the Lord as far back as I can remember. I dreamed one night of singing, "Oh the Glory Gates are ever open wide to welcome me home." When I came to myself I was yet singing, and it was a wonderful day. Everything seemed to be praising God. The leaves on the trees — everything was praising Him. But doubts and fears came soon afterwards.

Elder Isaac Jones came to the church where my parents and I attended, and he preached so wonderfully that I wanted to praise God from whom all blessings flow. When I got home from church I opened my Bible and as I was reading a power came down on me and shook me, and a still, small voice said,

Fear not little one, this is thine and all will be well with thee in the end.

My husband did not see as I did. I wanted to join the church and be baptized. I dreamed I was baptized and I could hear the water sloshing. Then I dreamed I was sitting in a little room all alone, and I looked at myself and had on a beautiful robe of many colors. A small, still voice said he is carnal and you are a subject of grace.

One summer it was dry and the crops failed. I was praying if it could be the Lord's will to make a way for us to live. I dreamed a little soldier dressed in uniform stood by our cook stove, and then went to our mail box, stooped over it and made the sweetest music I ever heard. Then he went out through the house, and was gone. From that day on the meal box wasn't empty. My son Dean came home from school with the flu and had a high fever. It was so high he felt he could not live. He was praying, and so was I. I saw a vision of a banner up in the air above our house, and it was made known to me that it was a banner of love and mercy to overshadow Dean and me. When I came to myself I laid my hand on his face and the fever was gone.

... A preacher by the name of Carter came to our home church and preached so wonderfully. I couldn't stay away any longer and I was telling them a little of my experience and was baptized the next day. I left something there I haven't had since. I was traveling in His love and mercy over a month, and not a wave came over my peaceful breast. But in this sinful flesh we can't have that sweet Spirit all the time, and I have had my troubles, sorrows, and fears. My husband professed a hope in Christ, but never joined the church. He went to the meetings with me.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Mrs. Charles (Lessie) Craven

"THE OLD MAN AND THE NEW MAN"

And now, as I take my pen to write

upon the subject embraced in your question, I only wish to kindly and candidly express my views, with some of the reasons for them, and I trust what I may say will hurt the feelings of no brother or sister, even if they feel compelled to differ with me.

First, you ask me what I understand by the terms "old man" and "new man." These terms occur but twice in the New Testament. In both cases they are the language of Paul. In Ephesians 4:22-24 he says, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Here he says to his brethren at Ephesus, that the teaching of Christ is that they should put off the one and put on the other. In Colossians 3:9, 10, he says, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the "old man" with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Here he declares that his brethren have already put off the one and put on the other, and upon this fact bases some admonition to the conduct of his brethren.

First, I desire to call attention to this one consideration, viz; that the "new man" is not addressed and told to put off the "old man", neither is the "old man" addressed and told to put on the "new man". But Paul is addressing his brethren, saints at Ephesus and at Colosse, just as I am now addressing you, Brother Tompson, and the readers of the Monitor. And he says to the believing men and women that they should do this, or have done this, viz.; have put off the "old man" and have put on the new. Here, if I may so speak, are three men intended of two. But indeed the expression, "old man" and "new man" are simply figurative expressions, for the two opposing principles which every believer finds dwelling in his own heart and mind, waging ceaseless warfare

there. We are not to suppose for a moment that the apostle means that we are to understand by these terms two full developed men, with soul, body and spirit in each, and both dwelling in us, you and I, who constitute a third distinct man or women.

It seems to me that anyone who has the slightest acquaintance with the use of figures of speech would see at a glance that the apostle had no such meaning as this. Neither does he mean by the "old man" the body nor by "new man" the soul. When told to put off the "old man" he does not mean that we shall commit suicide. In Romans 7:23, we read, by the pen of this same apostle, "But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Here we have Paul speaking of the two men, but under the terms, "Law of my members" and "law of my mind." Notice again, here is Paul the speaker, and in Paul are the two laws, or the "old man" and the "new man". The figure of speech has changed, but the idea presented is the same. In Galatians 5:17, Paul says, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Here he calls the "old man" the flesh and the "new man" the Spirit. And here again, notice that he says these are contrary the one to the other, so that "ye" believers cannot do the things ye would.

All the way along he addresses men and women, and tells them that in them are two opposing and enduring forces, the one of which they are to put off, and the other to put on. Sometimes this "new man" is called "the hidden man of the heart." But by whatever name they are called, Paul always means the same thing. On the one side he means that tendency to evil which grace makes manifest in every child of God; and on the other he means that disposition to serve God, which grace implants in every heaven born soul (child). The

one he calls "the flesh" the other "the Spirit." The one, "the law of the members," the other "the law of the mind." The one is the "old man" the other the "new man." The disposition to evil he is told to put off, the tendency to serve God, he is told to put on. The putting off and the putting on of both have respect to the outward life, the daily conduct. It is as though Paul, or you, or I, or anyone should say to the children of God, you have two natures within you; one is the old nature, prone to sin, the other is a new nature, which you received in the new birth, and it hates sin, and cleaves to that which is right. Now, brethren, do not act out the old nature, but act the new. Fight against evil, and strive that your life may be clothed with obedience. Put off the filthy rags in which you have been clothed (in nature) and put on the spotless fruit of the Spirit. Put off malice, anger, wrath, blasphemy, filthy speech, etc., and put on love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, obedience, etc. The former belongs to the "old man", the latter to the "new man".

I do not think any christian (child of grace) need go outside of his own daily life to find what all these things mean. And every narration of christian (child of grace) experience tells the simple truth about all these things. No one ever heard a child of God say, "my old man," or my "new man," felt, said, or did so and so. But always I felt, saw, heard, or acted so and so. We all say when we are telling the simple story of our experience, I saw myself a great sinner; I could do nothing to save myself, I grew worse and worse, and at last Jesus was revealed to me as my Saviour." We never say, "my old man," or "my new man," felt all these things, but I myself. When in Romans 7: Paul says, "I sin", straightway he says, "Yet not I, but sin that dwelleth in me." It is I, and yet not I, and yet it is I all the time. And so, on the other hand, when Paul says, "I labored more abundantly than they all." Immediately he corrects himself and says, "Yet not

I, but the grace of God which was with me." His language appeals to all our feelings on both sides. I do not know that a volume would make it all any plainer. I labor, but yet I must be humble, for it is not I that labor, it is the grace of God. How humbling this is! In one place Paul speaks of the Spirit crying, "Abba, Father." In another place he speaks of the Spirit by which we cry, "Abba, Father." Now, both are most blessedly true. The Spirit cries Abba, Father, but it is, after all Our cry. We are not left out.

I have introduced these texts for the purpose of showing the terms, "old man" or "new man" do not shut out the believer, but that in every child of God is found the warfare caused by these two men, or laws, or principles. It matters not by what name they are called; I do not understand that the "old man" is the "Adamic man", but a law or principal in the Adamic man. And the "new man" is also a law or principle in the same Adamic man. The old man is not redeemed, and neither is the new, but the Adamic man is redeemed from the dominion of the "old man" and to the dominion of the "new man." The old man is not born again, and neither is the new man. But the Adamic man is born again. And the new birth is when this new man comes in and abides, to go out no more forever. The old man is sin and death, the new man is life and righteousness. *From* the one we are redeemed, and *to* the other we are redeemed. Neither the old or the new man are redeemed, (but the Adam sinner is). The one needs it not and the other is that from which we are redeemed. The new man is entirely a new man, and his origin is of God. He is a new man so far as we are concerned, but he is older than the hills. This new man is the law of truth and holiness, and they are eternal. But we receive this in our hearts when born from above, and so it is new to us. With us that which is natural is first, and then that which is spiritual. But in reality the spiritual world is first, only

we do not see or enter it until we are born again, or born from above. No greater mistake was ever made than when the two terms, "old man" or "new man" were supposed to present two literal whole men in a literal sense. Out of this grew all that absurd theory, but I have never got a clear conception of the theory in my head, and my heart rejects it at once.

Again you ask "Who is the new creature?" "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," etc. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." What you have written about in your letter seems to me more satisfactory than anything that I can write. I certainly think the subject of the new creature, is the "new creature." Of the "new creature" Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Apostle says here WE are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, etc. If therefore, we are created in Christ, WE must certainly be "new creatures" in Christ. I did not know that it was claimed that any other being than a renewed, quickened sinner was called the "new creature." There is a text in the eighth chapter of Romans which seems to me to bear upon the same matter. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Mark, it is in US. Now, he goes right on to talk about the name— "creature," Saying, "For the earnest expectation of the creature" (the same new creature, the man in Christ Jesus) "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and so in the verses that follow all along in these verses in Romans, 8th. Chapter. The new creature is indeed meant; but it is the "new creature" which we ourselves become as the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We are never called new creatures, except as we possess the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Jesus is not

called a new creature, except as it is one of the sinners, where it dwells. Indeed, the term "creature" could not belong to an eternal Spirit or being of any sort. But it may well belong to us who have begun to be.

Naturally and spiritually the sense in which the man in Christ is a new creature is seen as we glance further on in the text: "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." A wondrous change has taken place with him, He is not the same (mannered) man he was before in many ways. And to be born again and renewed in the spirit of his mind is all that will avail him. Circumcision or keeping the law availeth nothing. Rejecting circumstances avail nothing either. To become a new creature is the essential thing; and to be a new creature is the result of the work of God in us. All is done for the sinner, all is done in the sinner. There is no "new creature" but the saved sinner. What a wonderful contrast between the "old creature" and the "new creature."

(The foregoing article was written by Elder F. A. Chick, and was published in the Primitive Monitor, February 15, 1890. Copied by Elder John L. Sanders.)

TRYING THE SPIRITS

P. O. Box 551
Monticello, Ark. 71655

Little Children and Brethren:

In Christ Jesus our Lord, not by the works of the flesh, or by the will of man, but by the loving kindness, mercy and grace of the almighty, all wise and ever loving God; yet whose word is sharper than a two-edged sword: who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. To Him be all honor, praise and glory throughout all ages.

I have received letters from some of God's humble poor, requesting that I write my views on the subject of "Trying the spirits to see whether they be of God."

It is not possible that this poor, weak sinner of himself, is able to write words of comfort to the dear, precious ones, or myself. Thus you may know that I am wholly and completely dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ for all my needs. Without Him I am nothing, even less than nothing. If I am blessed that I write a few words of mutual comfort both to you and me, then all the praise, honor and glory belongs to Him from whence the blessing comes.

Let us begin with 1 John 4:1-3, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit the confesseth that Jesus Christ if come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now is already in the world."

Who has the right? and how will we try the spirits? That right belongs to every little child of God who has been drawn out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light by the grace of Almighty God, through His only begotten Son Jesus; and given understanding by Him to separate truth from error. The Apostle declared that the true believer in Christ has a two-fold seal: 1. That we, if so be that I am one, are of the truth; and 2. That God abideth in us. But it is not to be supposed that all this would remain unimpugned from without, however clearly it might be to the Spirit within. At the same time we are not easily moved from the foundation of truth wherein we stand.

But if any attempt is made to persuade us from the faith, we are to apply a very searching test. I dare say that since the human race began, there have been two separate classes of men: Those who are taught of the Spirit of Christ; and those who remain in the spirit of error. Even at the time the

Apostle John wrote this letter, many false prophets had gone out into the world and were teaching false doctrines: which were not acceptable by those whom God chose in Christ Jesus before the world began. And know ye this, little children, that anti-Christ are increasing in great numbers day by day, and would deceive the very elect if it were possible.

It is a great blessing that the Apostle John took the occasion from this fact, to administer a caution to the true believers not to give ready acceptance to any doctrine without submitting it to a test, both exclusive and inclusive, which would serve the churches for all time. The Lord Jesus Christ himself repelled objectors by statements of infinite dignity and power. One assertion He made and maintained, was that He was the Son of God and the King of men. And this was a charge on which He was crucified. For the first part of the assertion He was condemned by the Sanhedrin, as if he were against Moses. For the second, He was charged by the Roman power as if He were the rival of Caesar.

But on six or no fewer lines did He suggest on which the proof of His teaching might be tried: 1. His character, John 8:46; 2. His work, John 14:10-11; 3. Prophecy, Luke 24:37; 4. Testimony, John 8:17-18; 5. His Resurrection, John 2:19; 6. The promise of the Holy Ghost, Acts 1:4.

Let us take note that the scriptures are of no private interpretation: neither can I single out two or three verses or phrases of the Scriptures, and expect to get a full understanding of them within themselves. The scriptures interpret themselves by one passage bearing witness of others, or proof of others. All the holy scriptures are by the inspiration of God the Father, for the purpose of showing forth His decree, will, and power. And no man may at any time have the right to question God on any point; for God is all and in all, according to his will, grace and mercy. Herein has the true believer

power to try the spirits whether they be of God. We are admonished to try the spirits and also the test to apply to them through all time.

A study of the scriptures will disclose teachings of great vividness and power concerning the false prophets: the point of their beginning, the mission for which they are sent, and the extent of their power. The Apostle views their action as part of anti-christ which has been foretold, and which had already made appearance in the world, and which would be fought against and overcome.

We remember the warning God gave to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, concerning the fruits they should and should not eat. He told them that they could eat of all the fruits of the garden except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and if they ate of that fruit they would surely die. But there was that old serpent, a true anti-christ by action, who persuaded Eve that she would not surely die, as God had told them. We could point out other illustrations, such as: Christ and the tempter; the tempter and the individual; Christ and the world; Error and Truth, and others. The Apostle shows us that it is the business of antichrist to deny the truth. We have a record from the Prophets and Apostles concerning great lies that have been told, such as: Jesus is not the Son of God; and the serpent to Eve, "thou shalt not surely die." A lie is an untruth, and cannot have fellowship with truth, no matter who tells it, or for what reason it is told.

It is an unspeakable mercy that the indwelling Spirit of Christ in us, by virtue of His unction, light, and might, has an inward and effective guard against the heresies of all ages, and the surest prevention against the snares of infidelity and seductions of false philosophies and doctrines. May we be confirmed in the truth by the pure and holy Spirit.

May God bless the truth and pardon errors. If possible pray for this poor,

weak and unworthy lump of clay, that he may be kept by the grace and mercy of Almighty God, in the way of truth as it is in His precious Son, our Lord and Saviour.

Yours in sweet hope,
David B. Lawson

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER
MARGUERITE RETA CAMPBELL

October 19, 1970

I always enjoyed going to church. All of the other little girls in school talked about Sunday School and said their prayers. I told Mother about this and said I think I will say a prayer just for fun. She said, "Oh, you must mean what you say." and I have been saying them ever since, but not for fun.

When I was in high school in Strathroy my Mother had to go to the hospital with heart trouble. When I went to see her I would do nothing but cry. Mother was in the hospital for six weeks, then came home and seemed to improve so I thought, but again went to bed at home for the winter. The next spring she was sitting up in bed when she keeled over. I felt as if the earth had gone from under my feet.

My older brother said, "Well she is gone now and we can't do anything about it but we must think of our own lives now." I have often thought of that since. It seemed to weigh on my mind as we, my sister Florence and I, were inexperienced in keeping house for my Father, all my brothers and one sister.

Time went on and one night I had a dream. I thought my Mother was away up on high with three gold strings twined around and my older brother and older sister and I had a hold of them. A few years later I dreamt I saw many angels of so many colors flying above me. It was a beautiful sight.

When my father would bring the minister home over night I would be afraid I would miss hearing them talk of their experience, and then we would

kneel down at our chairs while the minister prayed. Afterwards I would think I will lead a better life but it would only last a week or so.

A few years later I was working at a place and I couldn't sleep, so naturally I wasn't able to do my duty. The words came to me, "When through the deep waters I call thee to go the rivers of woe shall not thee overthrow for I will be with thee thy troubles to bless and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

In 1924, I married my late husband Wesley and we were so happy together. I would go with him to his church and he to mine.

One and one-half years later our first child, a boy, was born. We thought he was so lovely but in four days he started hemorrhaging in so many places. I learned later that the specialist who examined him told our own doctor he would never live. At this time the words came, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

Our boy seemed to have so many troubles until he was seven. When he was four and one-half years old he had his appendix out. While waiting for two hours instead of one while he was in the operating room I was praying that he would be better when words came, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." I looked and looked for that in the Bible but couldn't find it. He is a kind son now helping me do the little business I have, not saying that my two daughters and other son are not kind to me. They are just as kind.

Wesley and I, along with the children, enjoyed going to the meetings. One year at Dunwich, Elder Westbrook spoke on, "Come unto me all ye heavy laden and I will give you rest." I thought it wonderful. He was to be in London the following Tuesday evening. We went to hear him but I got nothing from his sermon. I much admired him as a man and speaker in the pulpit and in our home. I would often think about staying in church but didn't and was sorry afterward.

In November of 1941 as I was going

to the hospital for a minor operation, this rang in my ears, "Let not your heart be troubled neither yet it be afraid." After the operation I took pleurisy and pneumonia at which time I thought I will ask to join the church, but I recovered and when the time came I would go out as before.

Time went on and I was busy with our family eager for them to get educations. On October 8, 1956 I took a stroke. While in the hospital the fourteenth chapter of John seemed in my mind so often, especially "that where I am ye may be also." It is a wonderful chapter all through.

One morning as we were dressing I said, this is running through my head, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Wes, whose heart was failing, had to go to the hospital a number of times for oxygen. I would pray that he would be good enough to come home but the last time he was taken by ambulance it seemed to come to me that it would be the last time he would go through that door. The following week I prayed that he would return but couldn't help finishing off with "But thy will be done." He seemed better during the days that followed. We saw him different nights and Mildred, living in London, saw him every day but one week later, he passed away (October 1959). At the funeral Elder Ruston spoke along the above theme. I missed him a great deal but was pleased to have my family and the new baby (granddaughter) that arrived two weeks later.

Then one morning perhaps a year later this scripture came to me, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench till he sends forth judgment unto victory." St. Matthew 12:20.

Back in 1956 when I had the stroke, I had time to think of my many wrongdoings but the fourteenth chapter of John, which is lovely throughout, seem-

ed to be on my mind. While in hospital, Elder and Mrs. Ruston came to visit me and sang, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," and it was so lovely to me. The minister often mentioned coming into the church but I just couldn't tell him the way I felt; and besides, I felt it wasn't the time.

I missed putting this in before but in 1958, I asked Wes, "Did he think of joining the church?" He said, "No, there is nothing in me." I thought I must be imagining things if there wasn't anything in him there must be nothing in me. At the quarterly meeting I had the minister and some ladies home. On Monday, I listened to every word, and at dismissal I started out but felt I must stay in. I told my experience and they took me in.

As my eldest son, Donald, was being married the first Saturday in October, the first Sunday in November suited me for the baptism. Of course I worried the whole two months. The Saturday night before baptism, Sister Flossie Hodgins came out with words of comfort for me. I felt as if I could never sleep for thinking about the next day and was reading the Bible when I came to, "Get thee behind me Satan for thou art an offense to me." I shut the Book and had a good night's sleep.

In the morning while combing my hair the 103rd Psalm ran through my mind. "Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all his benefits." It seemed quite calm, going to church, and the minister quoted that in his sermon. I seemed quite at ease and satisfied that I did the right thing for a few months but have since wondered if I was a fit subject for the church or if I deceived them; and always felt so unworthy to be there.

I had often talked to Sister Rogers in London by phone and she said when you can't sleep, sing a hymn. I started "How firm a foundation," and when I came to the 3rd verse which runs, "What more can I say than to you I have said," I was impressed and thought

of the many times I had sung that before without being impressed. My father always asked us to sing that when we were at home around the piano on a Sunday evening. I went right to sleep afterwards.

I must have been on a mountain then, for now in the last year or so I feel down in the valley, as if the Lord has forgotten me. In the spring I took a cold in my head and cannot hear the minister but still I go hoping to hear. I take dizzy spells and am afraid of falling but really hope my mind stays clear and I be able to wait on myself as long as possible. My daughter-in-law, Lorna, brings in a good dinner every noon for which I am thankful.

If I live for a few years, I may add to this.

The Lord said, "You have not chosen me but I have chosen you," has always been sweet to me. The words of this verse express my feelings much of the time:

"Tis a point I long to know
(Often it causes anxious thought),
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Mrs. Reta Campbell

(See obituary this issue)

ROMANS 4:2-4

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Romans 4:2-4)

"Abraham believed God." He had the witness within, because one cannot believe without a witness. Abraham was blessed with the faith to believe God. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the

land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:8-10) Please keep in mind that Abraham was blessed with the faith within his heart.

"It was counted unto him for righteousness." If you will run the reference, you will see it says: "It was accounted unto him for righteousness," and "it was imputed unto him for righteousness." (James 2:23, Gal. 3:6) The righteousness of God was imputed to Abraham or put on his account. In connection with this, let us consider these words of Paul: "If he hath wronged thee, or owed thee ought, put that on mine account." (Philemon 18) Notice that Paul requested Philemon to charge him for any of Onesimus's debts. Please keep in mind that the sins of God's people were charged to Jesus. Divine Justice was looking to Jesus to answer for the sins of his bride. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

Jesus has washed away the sins of his people and he clothes them with the garments of salvation. I think of this as the debt paid in double. (see Isaiah 40:1 and also Ezekiel 36:25-29)

Jesus puts or places his righteousness on his people. "I will greatly rejoice the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) The blood of Jesus has washed away all the sins of his sheep.

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Paul was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee and he was familiar with all the details of the law.

The law was conditional, and there were just natural blessings promised under it. Please keep in mind there was

not any eternal life promised under the law. To sum up what was promised under the law, briefly it is this: "If you will obey my laws and keep my statutes, then I will bless your land. Your crops will flourish, your flocks will increase . . . But if you disobey, I will curse your land." (see Deut. 28:1-22) Old sayings we hear today were gotten from the curses of this law. If the rain comes in an area, one person may not get any rain on his land, while his neighbors have gotten plenty of rain. Someone might say, "You must not be living right, or otherwise you would have gotten some rain."

If one works for his reward, he earns it, and it rightfully belongs to him. The other person is indebted to pay him for the contract of his labors. We trust we can see the setting. If salvation was conditional, then man would have a just cause or reason to brag and "pat himself on the back" for earning this salvation. We trust we can see satan at work in attempting to rob God of the praise that belongs unto him. If Salvation was conditional, then creature praise would be heard in heaven, and the name of God would not be glorified. Who is it that will gladly drink up the works doctrine? The person who feels that he is capable of helping the Lord, the person who feels himself able to perform good works, able to meet certain conditions in order to make his salvation certain, and is the person who naturally desires credit for his works in performing the conditions. The strong man will eat up that doctrine of the works system, because it builds up his ego. It makes him feel good to help the Lord, and it makes him feel good to receive credit for all his works. This man naturally desires to glory in himself. This reminds me of a parable that Jesus spoke: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself,

God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." (Luke 18:9-12) Actually this Pharisee was boasting, and glorying in the things that he had done. He was certainly trusting in himself that he was righteous. His prayer was similar to the world as it is today. Let us examine this matter a little further. Do you see any evidence that the Pharisee praised God? Do you see evidence that the Pharisee praised himself? Did he feel the need for mercy?

Is it true that the works system gives the glory to man? The strong man will drink this up. But, what about the poor one who finds that he is not capable of performing the conditions? The poor broken hearted sinner will not find any food from the doctrine of the works system. He will go to meeting hungry and come back hungry. Dear reader, do you have any confidence in a God who is pleading for men to let him save them? Do you desire a God who is able to meet your case? Do you find that you do not have the ability to perform any conditions at all? Do you find that you are not able to help the Lord, and that you desire a God who is able to save you to the uttermost? You do not have confidence in a God who is pleading with man to just take the first step, but you want one to come down to you and meet your case. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms . . ." (Deut. 33:27)

What causes one to feel his depraved condition? Why did he feel his inability? Why is he sick of sin? Why does he desire a closer walk with God? What caused the change in him? "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the

flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3) You find a new principle within you, which is an heavenly principle, and the change is in the heart. "They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." (1 Peter 4:4)

Dear reader, do you know anything about the condition of the poor man? Do you have fellowship with him? "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12) Please notice that these afflicted and poor people will not fail to trust in the name of the Lord. They shall trust him. What causes them to trust the Lord? We have to admit there must be something within one that causes him to trust in a higher power. Where did it come from? It certainly did not come from the nature of man. It is the indwelling spirit of God that causes one to trust in the name of the Lord.

The world by wisdom knew not God. The research and efforts of man cannot make the change in one. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23) This shows that the nature of man is not to do good. I like to compare the nature of man similar to the nature of a hog. We may wash a pig, put a blue ribbon on him, etc.; but that will not change his nature. "—The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:22)

It is God that makes the change in one. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." (Luke 11:22) Briefly, we believe the strong man represents man by nature, and the stronger represents the Spirit of God that dwells within the Children of God.

Let us remember that salvation is of

God. We read that salvation is of the Lord, therefore if one desires to break it down into time and eternal, he must not forget that salvation is of the Lord. If *time* salvation is conditional, then man would have the right to praise himself, because his works would have earned the blessings he receives in time. Therefore God would be indebted to man to pay him the blessings that he earned. Man's reward (blessings) would be by debt. Notice the text: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Following this line of reasoning, who would man praise for the blessings he receives? He would not praise God because God would be indebted to pay him the reward.

This line of reasoning or doctrine is not backed up by the Scriptures, and cannot stand up to the test. Where did this doctrine come from? What is the beginning and what is the purpose of it? The motive is to give man credit for works and to rob God of the praise that rightfully belongs to him. To sum it up, we can see the work of satan in attempting to rob God of the praise that belongs unto him. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21) The children of God shall praise the name of God. God seeks his people to worship him and this people are the only ones who praise the name of the Lord. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: *for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*" (John 4:23)

All of the blessings of God's people have been stored up in Jesus Christ before the world began. "Who hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) It is not left up to man to earn these blessings by his works. Man does not have the ability to do anything to merit the favor of God. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12) Man can do nothing by himself. The Lord directs the steps of the righteous. "The steps of a good man are

ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalms 37:23-24)

We believe that the "reward" (Rom. 4:4) represents salvation, and this takes care of eternal life as well as blessings here in time. This reward is by grace. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6) This shows that grace and works are not mixed together.

Salvation is a free gift by God. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) This is a gift that is bestowed upon you. It is yours because God has given it to you. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (Psalms 18:2) Notice that the writer used the expression: "my salvation." It is his salvation by ownership because God has given it to him. Please notice that this is in connection with the text because the reward is not by debt, but it is by grace. The reward or salvation is not earned by works, but it is a free gift by the grace of God.

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

HAS ALL POWER IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Rt. 2,
Stamford, Texas 79553

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see that with the April issue my subscription expires, so am sending \$10.00 for two years and the rest to

the Indigent Fund.

May I say a few words, the Lord willing and directing my thoughts, on the 28th chapter of Matthew, 18th through the 20th verses. Jesus spake unto the disciples, "Saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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 thing whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

You notice here that Jesus told them to baptize *them* (the elect, the chosen) and not the nations of all men, but the sheep. This meaning *them* is in St. John chapter 10, 24th through the 30 verses. The Jews wanted to know, saying, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep (the chosen *them*) as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life . . ."

Then in St. John, 17th chapter, Jesus speaks to them: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh (all nations — go thee therefore and teach all nations) that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Not to all nations of mankind, but to the elect — the sheep. John 10:11 Christ said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And He spoke of other sheep I have which are not of this fold: not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles, *them* I must also bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Notice that He says, they shall. He did not say if you will, like Arminianism teaches. They teach it is God's will to have all men come to Christ and be saved — and He will save them if they will but come.

Jesus said, "I pray for *them*; I

pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: and I am glorified in them. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. In Revelation 5:9, we read, ". . . For thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation . . ." "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." Not all nations of people. Paul writing to Titus said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men (all nations), teaching us . . ." — the elect *them*. He gave himself for us, that He might redeem us, the sheep, from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people. The *us* are the chosen people, they are *them*.

In Jeremiah 32:37-40 we read, "Behold I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in my anger and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way . . . and I will make an everlasting covenant with them . . ."

Here at my small store and station, I have quite a few who challenge me on the elect or chosen, saying that God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. But who is it that believeth? Jesus told them. "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Paul wrote in Acts 13:48 . . . "and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." These are the only ones that will believe, and give God and the Saviour all glory and praise in heaven and earth. "He that believeth is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already." And Jesus said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

With love to all the saints: grace be

to you and peace from God Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord give us grace and strength to resist the enemy of the truth which come in sheep's clothing.

Elder C. L. Ely

THE MONTHS SEEM LONG

902 Maple Avenue,
Torrance, Calif. 90500

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is Money-order for \$4.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year.

All the good writings, especially the Editorials, mean so much to me. The months seem long waiting for the next issue. I read and re-read each one many times, and the old ones of years ago give me much comfort. I am in my eighty-eighth year and spend much of my time reading. I hope I am given a deeper understanding and can say my later years have been my best; which I have only God to thank for.

May God bless you dear editors and all who write the truth it contains as long as there is one of us to enjoy the *Signs of the Times* in this world of trouble.

I thank you all,
Sister Neva Brooks

DOES NOT WANT TO MISS A COPY

3256 East 49th Street,
Cleveland, Ohio 44127

Dear Brother Editors:

I see that it is time to renew for my paper. It is such a joy to get it, for it is all the good preaching I get. O how I do praise the good Lord for you Editors who stand for the truth.

I do not want to miss a single copy as I am just about a shut-in. I will be seventy-eight years old in May. I love the *Signs of the Times* — I have read them many years. They are next to my Bible with me. I am looking for a home not made with hands eternal in the

heaven.

I am sending \$10.00 to renew for two years; use the balance as you see fit. May the good Lord uphold you editors, Brother Wood and Brother Spangler. Yours in hope of eternal life when my race is run in this life.

Mrs. A. M. Smith, Sr.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 28512

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The next session of the *Staunton River Union Meeting* is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat Church, the 5th Sunday in July, 1973, and Saturday before.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mod.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pigg River Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1973, and continuing through Sunday, August 5, 1973. (August 3, 4, & 5)

Camp Branch Church is located in Henry County, Virginia: leaving Rt. 220 at Martinsville, Va., go 8 miles east on Rt. 108 to Rt. 657. From the north turn left off Rt. 220 on Rt. 619 and go to Rt. 890, turn right and go to Rt. 657 on Leatherwood or Dyer's Store Road. The meeting house is just around the curve.

Our Correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder Rufus Brown, Mod.
Sister Nancy Haynes, Clerk
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The *Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, located on Highway 750

in Pittsylvania County, Va. July 6, 7 and 8, 1973.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. A special invitation to the elders.

R. S. Payne, Mod.
R. T. Holley, Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

Brother C. H. Greathouse of Grants Pass, Oregon, writes that the church there now holds their meetings on the first and third Sundays; and that a three days meeting will be held July 27, 28, and 29th. They invite the brethren to meet with them.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-seventh session of the *Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association* will be held with Lick Fork Church the third week-end July 14, 15 and 16th, 1973. Services beginning Saturday the 14th at 11:00 a.m.

Lick Fork Church is located along the extreme east boundary of Caswell and Rockingham Counties, N. C., midway between Ruffin and Highway No. 158. Watch for association pointer on Highway 158 about 8 miles east of Reidsville and 12 miles west of Yanceyville. Lick Fork Church is located in Rockingham County, N. C.

We extend to ministers, brethren and friends of faith and order, a cordial invitation.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY NOW ON THE PRESS

We are pleased to announce that this outstanding *History* written by Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell over a nine-year period is now being printed. God willing, orders can be shipped on June 15th or soon thereafter.

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So that your order may be shipped promptly when the printing is ready, may we have your order prior to June 15, 1973. Send to:

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Dr. George W. Paschall, Professor of Greek at Wake Forest College fifty years ago and himself a prominent historian, wrote in 1924 in a letter to Elder Sylvester Hassell:

"... I am writing this to tell you how much I was impressed with the excellence of the 'Church History' by your father and you... In my view your book is the very best piece of historical work ever done in North Carolina. It will be a monument to you both through all time..."

Your order will be appreciated.

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"The elder unto the elect lady and children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. Grace be with you, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoice greatly that I have found of thy children walking in the truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

(2 John 1-6)

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 1:6-7

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another, for who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

The historian Josephus tells us that wickedness was rampant in the time of Christ's coming. Moses tells us that God saw the greatness of the wickedness of man when He sent the flood. Paul tells us that we were in nature dead in trespasses and in sin. How sad it is to relate that men were the only ones of God's creation that sinned unto death, but what a sad picture it is to find that he is the only creature to boast of his skill to become acceptable to God again. Are we in that numerous assembly of men that claim this? If so, we are thinking too highly of ourselves; the figure of himself and Apollos that Paul transferred to usward, has not been received. To those that the text applies to, they do not think too highly of one another. They have learned, as Paul had learned, that it was not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showed mercy.

If God had left man in the day of his sinning, where would he be, yea, where would you and I be? If we know where we would be, the figure has reached us—we will never think too highly of any man; we have the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, and it has abounded unto us—we have received it. (Rom. 6:15) Seeing that the man died, of necessity it follows that had God not moved towards that man that he, you and I, would still be dead in sin. Seeing that this is true, what have we got that we did not receive? If God had left the covenant of grace in the wickedness of

Noah's day, what would be the status of the world today? What is more important, what would our status before Him be? Then, dear reader, what have we got to glory in? What have we got that we did not receive? Seeing that the wickedness of man was so rampant in the time of the Saviour's coming the first time, what would have been the result had He not made that illustrious descension to earth? Where would you and I be now? Would we have ever received *anything* from Him? Seeing that this is true, what have we got that we would have had if Christ had not come? Then is it not true that all we have is the result of Christ coming? If not, why not? And now to come to you and me who were dead in sin. What would have been the result if God had not made us alive in Christ Jesus? Being dead, we did not contribute anything, anything at all, to our life in the Lord. If so, we have something in which to glory, and it was useless for Paul to set himself and Apollos before the brethren in a figure that they not think too much of one another. Paul did not have anything to bring as a factor in his own behalf, or that of the cause of Jesus Christ, after his experience on the Damascus road. Thinking of that experience, he brings it before the brethren as an example. Now if Paul was dead in sin, and God acted upon and in him that he be different than he once was, what did he have that he did not receive?

Sometimes, it would seem that we place Paul above Peter as an apostle. I dare not do this. I dare not think so highly of a minister as to think he has been a contributing factor in his usefulness. Paul said, We are able ministers of the New Testament, not because of qualifications of our own, not because we contributed part of the ability, not because that we received something by our works, but our sufficiency is of God, who makes us able ministers. When Paul used the little word *us* he included himself and Peter in it, if we have been called to the ministry, he

included you and me, and we received this sufficiency as a gift from Him, and if we have received it, our testimony will be most peculiar before one and all. It will be the same testimony of Joseph and Daniel and Jeremiah. (Gen. 41:16; Jer. 10:23; Dan. 2:30)

Paul and Peter were in sweet fellowship one with another. Paul and Peter were by nature Pharisees. They each received the measure allotted to them when they were blessed in Christ with all the spiritual blessings. Sometimes it is said that all of us were blessed alike. We were, in that we were blessed in Christ, but not in the same measure. God giveth not the Spirit in measure to Christ, but He does give it in measure to us. This faith is given to all by measure, but the word itself shows that the gift is limited to the measure. Every man is dealt this measure, and he is commanded not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. (Romans 12:3). We will not boast of things beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God distributed to us, a measure to reach unto you, etc. (2 Cor. 10:13, 14) Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. 4:7) How lovely when this measure is dispensed to us. It will make us bold but humble; it will make us courageous, but cautious; it will make us count the cost, and yet hold back nothing when the travel gets hard; it will make us covet the better gifts but will keep us from coveting our brother's gift.

This precious giver of all things to usward according to the measure of the gift of Christ, gives to some, apostles; to some, prophets; to some, this gift and the other, all by measure, but all from the Spirit. In this well ordered way, both Paul and Peter were given their respective field of labor. Paul's measure was such that he did not go back to the law at any time in his preaching and his writing. His measure was so magnanimous that he did not ever indulge in any denial or backsliding from the Lord. While the meas-

ure of faith and grace was great, he did not think too much of himself or any other man. On the other hand, Peter's measure of faith and grace was like unto mine, (if, indeed, I have any) so that he often was impetuous and unbelieving. In this we are to see that he thought too highly of himself on the night of the crucifixion; and also when the question came up about preaching to Cornelious. In the case of Paul going to Jeresalem he did not know the things that would befall him, and yet he went, not counting the cost, not putting his life in the balance with the joys of those to whom he was sent and the sweetness of faithful stewardship. On the other hand, Peter, like this writer, was cowardly and afraid of what others would say. But when that which is a gift of God was received he stood up in the face of the same mob that he had cowered before, and called them wicked men. Thus we see the amazing sufficiency in the hour of need of the two men. In this hour when all things were supplied from above they did not esteem their brethren higher than they ought to, nor exalt themselves above measure.

They preached together, and they preached the same glorious doctrine. We have seen several times that Paul has told us that all of our help is from above; that all things needed are provided in Christ. Now let us examine the testimony of Peter and see if they agree. He tells us, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2nd Peter 1:2, 4) If the elect vessels of mercy get this, will they need anything else? If so, who can find out what it is? Certainly,

if they need and get something other than these things it will not be by gift, nor by promise, nor by the Lord. Furthermore, if the elect get something else it will not be something that pertains to life and godliness. If they get something besides this, what is it that they get? If they need and get something other than that which pertains to life and godliness, will it be for the glory of God? It will not be, unless it is in His giving what they get to them ground into powder and put in their drinking water. If so, that would be for life and godliness, for verily, a child of God could not get any sustenance from drinking the powder of a golden calf, for they must have pure and living water flowing out from the throne of God, and if it takes becoming thirsty because of a powdered drink, they will soon be ready to confess what Jonah confessed in the belly of hell, and certainly methinks that it would be as much hell to drink powdered water as it would be to lie in a fish's belly. Thus, if we get to thinking too much of ourselves, the Lord has a rod that He assigned unto us as a covenant blessing and it is administered also for our life and for the teaching and correcting of us in godliness. (Psalm 89)

But let somebody else speak for a moment. So many people, even lovely saints of God, will bring forward Peter's calling us to diligence and to the adding together of the things of the Spirit. That is lovely to talk about; it is lovely to write about in relationship with the things that have made us a different people; that have been received as gifts from above. Addition is the simplest form of things that pertain to working sums. A little pupil will take hold of addition much quicker than it will the other simple things of mathematics, and especially is this true in the field of the religion of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must certainly acknowledge that diligence is an important thing in a well ordered life. A person that is not diligent could never hope to accomplish much either in a natural or

spiritual life. As our subject pertains to spiritual gifts, it becomes clear where this diligence comes from. There is much diligence in the earth, and I would encourage that pursuit in the field of scholastic learning. However, Paul lost his diligence in persecuting the church, and Peter lost his wavering when the Lord had dealt with them, but the diligence that Peter is writing about was the fruit of the Spirit in them growing in rich and abundant clusters. It was by the gift of diligence that the adding was done, for, while Paul's brethren had received all from the Lord, yet it did not make them careless in their life.

It is hard to tell which is the most belittling to the grace and mercy and love of God, to say that we have something that we get from the flesh and the world, or to say that it does not make any difference how we live. The text forbids that dear readers. This is a people that are different. They are not like the unregenerate or dead; they are living people of God; they have been born again, not by a corruptible seed, but by an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. This birth is something you have received from the word of God, and it lives in this poor sinner; it abides there as long as he or she is in the world. This work having been consummated, everything is now different. In the first birth, this man or woman lived on earthly things; they desired and relished them; they did not know nor care for anything else. But now a new life has been given them, and this life has its supplies from God. It is a life that lives on things that come from its source. They can not long survive without things from the heavenly country.

If they are blessed with a season of faith it causes them to love and desire and hold to the things that this faith brings to light to them. They reach for it, as the tiny twig of a branch reaches up after the light above; they take hold and they add the virtue that is given them by touch (Luke 6:19; 8:46) to the faith which is always the prerequis-

ite to acceptable service to the Lord. This adding to faith of these lovely things (Phil. 4:8) is worthy of speaking and writing about each time the saints come together. There is not a gift that means any more to the child of God than this gift. Wherever it is found there is an acknowledgement from each poor sinner that nothing short of the mercy of God could have given it to them. I do hope that we will all be able to see the harmony and consistency in what Peter has said to us. God having given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, it is the most orderly and lovely thing for him to give the charge he did, Besides this, that is, in addition to the having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, add to your faith virtue and the other lovely gifts. He then sums this charge up by saying, If these things be in you (by gift) and abound (by gift) they make you (by gift) that you are not barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The grace that was given the Corinthians enriched them in all things. Child of God here is your rest; here is your peace; here are your good works, and they identify you among the saints of God. This rich gift does such a wonderful work for you that you do not come behind in any gift. Have you ever heard of anything as precious as that? Do you say that you have not received it? I do not believe that I have a reader that would say that. It has made the difference between dead works and the well ordered walk and talk of a child of God. This grace made manifest in the life of a child of God will make them sing and shout and praise the Lord.

These blessings that pertain to life and godliness will make you acknowledge him in all your ways as a child of grace. It will make you count and appreciate your blessings; it will make you careful in your walk and talk. It will make you rejoice in God your Saviour, and will be in you as a balancing and guiding light in your life. They will

make you fruitful in every good word and work. Peter did not say, and I do not say that you receive the things of the Spirit by your works; that you make these things abound. He did not say that, and I do not say that, but he said, and I say, that if they are in you and abound that it makes you fruitful.

Salvation is of the Lord .

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

Paint Rock, Ark., April 3, 1861.

Dear Brother:—I address you to-night for the first time, for the purpose of asking for your views on Matt. viii. 11, 12.

The Old Baptists here are well pleased with the *Signs of the Times*, so far as I have heard. May the Lord enable you to continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

LOVETT LEE.

REPLY. — *The text proposed reads thus: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

These words appear to have been spoken by our Lord soon after he had come down from the mountain where he had preached the sermon on the mount. Having finished the instructions to his disciples, and descended from the mountain, a great multitude of people thronged around him, and in their presence he touched and healed a filthy leper. And when he was entered into Capernaum, an officer of the Roman army came and besought him in behalf of a servant of his who was sick of the palsy and grievously tormented, and Jesus also healed the centurion's servant. This display of miracles very naturally excited the jealousy of the Jews, who regarded the touching of a leprous person as a violation of their laws, and the favoring of a Roman centurion as little if any less defiling. But when he

had positively declared that he had not found so great faith in Israel, or among the Jews, as this centurion manifested, the surprise and astonishment of the self-conceited pharisees must have been raised to the highest degree. And yet he had something more to tell them — that many shall come from the east and west, even of publicans and harlots, as he had elsewhere declared, and shall sit down with the patriarchs and prophets, and these self-righteous pharisees be cast out. Publicans and harlots, redeemed and washed in Jesus' blood, and clothed in his spotless righteousness, shall be qualified to participate in the spiritual privileges of the gospel kingdom; while children of the kingdom, or those who legally occupied that position, should be cast out. As the Canaanites were cast out of the promised land, to make room for the heirs of the promise which God had before made to Abraham, so the carnal Israelites should be severed from Abraham, the true olive tree, for the grafting in of the Gentiles.

In the sermon on the mount, Christ had declared, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom." The kingdom in its gospel organization is spiritual, and human righteousness is insufficient to qualify any one to enter it, therefore Jesus has declared most positively that except a man be born again, born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into it. No legal righteousness can exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees; but the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of the Son of God, does exceed. And Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, (his people,) that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. This will do; with this even publicans and harlots are cleansed and made holy; and unto them is Christ made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. And this is his name whereby he shall be called — The Lord our Righteousness. Men are fatally mis-

taken when they presume that their works of righteousness or obedience to the law will justify them before God; for, By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. Justifying righteousness is not of the law. If a law had been given that could give life, righteousness should be by the law; but that no man is justified by the deeds or works of the law is evident, from the fact that, The just shall live by faith. Hence, Paul, who understood precisely the difference between the righteousness of men and the righteousness of God, could cheerfully forego everything else, that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Christ could and did declare beforehand that many of those shall come from the east and west, and, as in another text he adds, and from the north and south, from every point of the compass, and as its members, clothed with the garment of his salvation, covered with the robe of his righteousness, they shall enter his kingdom, come with songs and everlasting joy to his Zion, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There in his kingdom shall they sit down with Abraham, having the faith, not the flesh, of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are recognized for the seed. These are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John the Baptist told the scribes and pharisees to think not to say they had Abraham to their father; that plea was sufficient to admit them to a standing with carnal Israelites under the law, but now the axe is laid at the root of the trees, and every fruitless tree is cut down; and all the trees are barren until they are first made good trees, and then the fruit will be good, for a

good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. But God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

The carnal Israelites were in the kingdom, as it existed under the ceremonial law, in the types. But that dispensation is abolished, and they as children of the kingdom in that sense are cast out, as was the rich man, in the parable, while Lazarus is now in the bosom of Abraham, and a great gulf is fixed between them. Gentile sinners redeemed from all the tribes of the earth are gathered into communion with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the carnal seed are cast out into outer darkness. The kingdom of Christ is illuminated internally. The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of it. But without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. With these the carnal workmongers are associated, and of their doom they shall partake. The light which is in them, of which they boast, is darkness, and it is outer darkness — and how great is that darkness! Darkness signifies death, the opposite of life. In the Word, which was made flesh, is life, and the life is the light of men. The opposite of that life and light is outer darkness, and in it shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Weeping, when it proceeds from contrition, shows a godly sorrow, working repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of. But the sorrow of the world worketh death. The first shows the work and yields the fruits of the spirit; but the latter is accompanied by wrath, violence, and gnashing of teeth. Unreconciliation to God, opposition to holiness, and implacable enmity to the truth and to all who hold and love the truth.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; so we see the declaration not only bears upon the carnal Israelites, but extends to all who are of the works of the law, or rather all who are seeking for justification by obedience to the precepts of the law;

and to commend themselves to the divine favor by their own works — they are all of them in outer darkness, and have not light to see that salvation is by grace alone. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but of his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. But the very darkness which hides these things from the eyes of the wise and prudent, they call light, while all the things of the Spirit are unto them foolishness, and they call it darkness. Such was the wretched condition of all men by nature, and those who are now translated from the power of darkness into God's marvellous light were by nature children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. It surely is no less than the works of God himself. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Then give all the glory to his holy name;
To him all the glory belongs; [fame,
Be yours the high theme still to sound forth his
And crown him in each of your songs."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 15, 1861)

APRIL 7, 1973

WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Wilson, N. C.

ORDINATION OF
BRO. BRUCE JONES AS A DEACON

By request of the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery was called, for the purpose of ordaining Bro. Bruce Jones as a Deacon for the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church. Conference was called to order with song, and prayer by Elder W. L. Everett. The following Elders were called; Elder D. B. Stokes; Elder Wayne Mitchell; and Elder W. L. Everett: Deacons: Bro. M. D. Simmons, Sr.; Bro. George Pearson; Bro. Johnny Ray Gardner, and Bro. Gordan Smith.

Moved and agreed to call Elder Stokes as moderator.

Moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as Clerk.

Bro. Jones was presented to the Presbytery by Bro. Preston Gay, Deacon of Wilson Primitive Baptist Church.

The Presbytery was given the opportunity to question the candidate and the Church: Elder Everett asked the Church if the candidate was involved in any activity that would reflect on the Church. The Church had complete confidence in the Brother. Elder Everett told Bro. Jones that there would be very little spoken here, that he would remember. Your capacity as a Deacon will be a hard road; you will come to circumstances that you will be required to make decisions, remember to let your conscience determine your judgment. To his wife; There are going to be times you will not be able to understand. Stand by him, comfort and give him all the help you can. May the Lord Bless you both.

Elder Mitchell: The office of a Deacon is an humble office. He must be able to rule the Church and his own house as well. A Deacon's duty is to visit the sick; be interested in the welfare of Wilson Primitive Baptist Church. Be a right arm to your Pastor, and stand firm for the Doctrine and Faith that was once delivered to the Saints. The office of a Deacon is a calling of God. Sister Jones visit with him and make people welcome. May God Bless you both.

Elder Stokes: As your Pastor I feel that the Lord has given you a gift to take care of the business of this Church. Always keep your own home in order. Do not judge quickly. Listen to all things, and hold fast to that which is good. Do not be ashamed to pray. Search by Prayer the will of God. Take the word of the Bible as your guide. Remember you can only speak for this Church. Make decisions prayerfully. Think and meditate. To the Church: Do not tie this Brother's hands. The Lord has taken care of this place and will continue to bless this Church. To His wife: Walk with him: there will be burdens and joy. Serve the Church in bonds of Christian Love and fellowship. Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in Prayer.

The Brother was returned to the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church as an ordained Deacon.

Moved and agreed the minutes stand approved as read.

Moved and agreed the minutes be turned over to the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church.

Moved and agreed the Presbytery be adjourned.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

OBITUARIES

LULA FLORENCE (COLTRANE) SNYDER

It is with much sadness that we write of the passing from this life of our beloved Sister who was a member of Camp Branch Church for several years before her illness and death. Sister Lula Florence (Coltrane) Snyder was born January 11, 1885, in Randolph County, N. C. to Shubal Gardner Coltrane and Sarah Haseltine (Lanning) Coltrane.

Sister Lula was married to Bunyan Linville Snyder May 17, 1905. To this union four children were born, three boys and one girl. Two of the boys and her husband preceded her in death. Brother Snyder passed from this life February 26, 1965. They both, along with their daughter, joined Camp Branch Church by experience on June 6, 1959, and they were baptized July 25, 1959 by Elder Rufus Brown. This baptizing is one long to be remembered by some of us who were there. There were six baptized in the little creek near Brothr Snyder's home. This was a beautiful sight to behold. All six of them joined Camp Branch Church.

Sister Snyder had been bedfast for a number of years and lived in the home with her daughter, Sister Geraldine Beeson. Our Heavenly Father called her home on May 21, 1972.

Survivors include one son, Richard Snyder, one daughter, Geraldine Beeson, one sister, Eva (Coltrane) Taylor, and several grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a host of friends. She was a faithful member to her church and attended regularly until her stroke and illness from which she could not walk. She was loved by all of us, but we do feel that our loss is her eternal gain, and that she has gone to her grave to await the coming of our Lord, when He shall gather his jewels to meet Him around our Father's throne in that heavenly home on high. Sadly missed and loved by all who knew her.

Eld. Rufus Brown, Mod.
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MRS. RENA WORLEY MOORE

Sister Rena Worley Moore, age 98, departed this life on Sept. 24, 1972. She was born Feb. 3, 1874, and was the daughter of Charley and Laura Worley. She was married to J. W. Moore who died July 6, 1941. He was the son of David and Angline Moore. Sister Moore was a member of Concord Primitive Baptist Church, and was a lifelong resident of Morehouse Parish, La. Survivors include a son, Leon Moore of Memphis, Tenn.; four daughters, Mrs. J. W. Westbrook, Mrs. Olevia Day and Mrs. Maylor Harrison, all of Bastrop, La. and Mrs. Thelma Carpenter of Monroe, La.; 18

grandchildren, 41 great grand-children and 7 great, great-grandchildren.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. I had known Sister Moore for over 20 years and must have carried her to Concord for 10 years or longer. My experience was that to even be in her presence seemed to some how, some way strengthen my very existence. She was one who lived and loved her church. She went to church as long as her natural body was able. She loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Yes, I believe that she was one of them that was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. The evidence of her walk gave me that belief.

Services were conducted by the writer, and her body was laid to rest in the Causey Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

David E. Turner

DEACON ALBERT CALVIN BROOKS

Brother Albert Calvin Brooks departed this life September 30, 1972. He was born April 11, 1912, in Franklin County, Virginia, to the late Elder Joe Brooks and Effie Cundiff Brooks. He was married to Dotsie Holland December 23, 1934, and to this union one son was born.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Dotsie Brooks, and son, Carlton, and one grandson, Michael Brooks; also by his step-mother, Sister Jimmie David Brooks, four sisters, five half-sisters, and five half-brothers.

He united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in June, 1940; and was ordained to the office of Deacon July 3, 1948, and served in the fear of God until death. Brother Brooks believed that God is a sovereign Lord who does His will in all things in heaven and earth or hell.

We realize that Brother Brooks lived out all the days that God appointed him. Time has come to the end with our brother, for there is no knowledge or understanding in the grave. His dust will remain until it pleases God to quicken it and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, with the rest of the saints in the resurrection, when God shall gather his jewels home to forever praise His holy name.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, James R. Hollandsworth and Elder Leonard Brammer. Burial was in Franklin Memorial Park. Written by

James R. Hollandsworth

ALICE B. CHAMBERS

It is indeed with a sad heart that I attempt to record a tribute of respect to my Dear Sister, Sister Alice B. Chambers.

Sister Alice was born April 6, 1897, and God in his Mercy and Loving Kindness called her home March 2, 1973, making her stay on earth 75 years. She was the daughter of Lucious A. and Nancy Meadows Bullock and was the widow of W. T. Chambers, Sr. To this union, seven children were born, the oldest one passed away when just a year old. Other survivors are: Clarence, Woody, Jr., Garland Louis, John William, Mrs. Lola C. Russell and Mrs. Cyrina C. Howerton.

She offered to Gooch Memorial Church at the water on Sunday morning, July 11, 1948, and was baptized the same day with her husband by Elder Lester Dodson in absence of the pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was a faithful, loving, humble and precious servant of our most High God. She stood firm for the doctrine of election, salvation by grace, and the absolute predestination of all things. She was blessed to hold fast to that which was good, her countenance, walk and talk in life was to praise God from whom all blessings flow. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be his Holy Name.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, at Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Oxford to await the second coming of her Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who in sometime unknown to man, will come to call his bride, present her to the Father without spot or blemish or any such thing. Then will his people be conformed to the image of his Dear Son, be like him and be satisfied. The beautiful floral offering showed in some measure the esteem and respect felt for her by the family, friends and membership of Gooch Memorial Church.

May the Good Lord reconcile her dear children to his will.

Written by her sister at the request of the membership of Gooch Memorial Church in conference March 10, 1973.

Submitted in Love,
Nancy B. Allen

DEACON THOMAS W. TURNER

Brother Turner was born to George K. and Pricie Turner April 22, 1888. He passed away October 14, 1972.

He was married to Miss Susie Nunn December 18, 1912, and to this union were born six children — four sons and two daughters, all still survive. Sister Susie passed away August 19, 1945. Brother Turner was again married to Miss Grady Hagood September 11, 1946, who also survives.

Our beloved brother united with Chestnut Church, Franklin County, Va. June 11, 1921, and was ordained deacon September 8, 1951. It

can be truly said that Brother Turner served his church faithfully. But few times during his long membership did he fail to fill his place as member and deacon. He was kind, gentle, patient, and humble; and more could be said.

Both wives were members of Chestnut Church: the late Sister Susie and his widow, Sister Grady.

Now may we bow to God's will in removing Brother Turner from our midst. We feel that he is at peace with his Lord.

Written at the request of the family by his unworthy pastor.

C. E. Turner

NETTIE PASCHAL

Sister Nettie Haney Paschal was born Sept. 4, 1895 to the late Alben T. and Salley Haney and died March 4, 1973. Making her stay in this troublesome world 78 years and 6 months.

She was married to Charlie Paschal and had nine children, four of which survive her. One daughter, Mrs. Aubrey Loftis, three sons, Melvin, Willard, and Francis Paschal. Five sisters, Mrs. Gertie Pascal, Mrs. Evelyn Chilton, Mrs. Dora Moore, Mrs. Ollie Brande, and Mrs. Edna McCubbian, four brothers, Robertson, Alvin, Pete, and Jack Haney, twenty-five grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and one great great-grandchild.

Sister Paschal joined Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church about thirty-five years ago, where her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith and W. J. Berry on Tuesday, March 6, 1973.

Sister Paschal was a true and faithful member of her church and was always ready to give God the praise for the hope and grace she felt she had. She lost her mother and three sons in one year's time. Though her heart was sad she was quick to tell anyone that her God never forsakes nor leaves His little ones alone. She felt that his Love and Mercy had carried her through this and many, many other troubles over her 78 years.

If it is God's will we hope that those with sad hearts shall be given to know that all things are right with our God. Written by Sister Nannie Page.

Elder Donald Smith, Mod.
Dobert F. Walker, Clerk
Pleasant Grove Primitive
Baptist Church

SISTER MARGUERITE (RETA) CAMPBELL

Sister Reta Campbell, age 81, died at Strathmere Lodge, Strathroy, Ontario, August 27, 1972.

Sister Campbell was born in 1891 in Lobo Township and was raised in Caradoc Township, both in Middlesex County, the county where she lived all of her life. She was the daughter of the late Archibald Fletcher and Flora C. (McNeil) Fletcher. She had three sisters and five brothers. One brother, Hector, survives.

Sister Reta married John Wesley Campbell of Lobo Township, Middlesex County in 1924. He died in October 1959. Two sons, Donald and Keith, live at Ilderton. Two daughters, Mrs. Karl (Marion) Tallman, Wiberfore, Ontario and Mrs. Ian (Mildred) Davidson of London, Ontario, also survive. Sister Campbell had seven granddaughters and five grandsons.

Sister Reta Campbell resided on the family farm with her son, Keith, and his wife and family until eight months before her death. At that time she moved to Strathmere Lodge, Strathroy.

Sister Campbell joined the Covenant Baptist Church of Canada at the Poplar Hill Church in Lobo Township in 1958.

She was a humble and valued member of the Church. She and her husband Wesley were respected and honourable members of the community. Their home was always open to the Baptist members and friends. They were always attentive to "assembling themselves together" where prayer was wont to be made.

Sister Campbell left on record, for her children and grandchildren, her most wonderful experience, in providence and grace. The Elders who conducted her funeral service were privileged to be able to read her life's journey. After reading the above, the one who was charged with preaching the funeral sermon was impressed with and spoke from scripture found in Jeremiah Chapter 31 vs 3; "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee".

Funeral services were conducted at Denning Brothers Funeral Home, Strathroy, August 29, by Elders Stewart and Alex McColl. Interment was in Ivan Cemetery.

A large company of friends attended the service.

Sister Campbell is greatly missed by her family, her church and her community. We that remain take comfort from I Thess. IV which is paraphrased to be sung as follows:

"Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
in Jesus fall asleep;
Their better being never ends;
why then defected weep?
Why inconsolable, as those
to whom no hope is given
Death is the messenger of peace,
and calls the soul to heaven."

Elder D. A. McColl
Elder J. S. McColl

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1973

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
8/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED BROTHER DUREN'S
WRITINGS

Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I too have enjoyed reading Brother Duren's writing in the February, 1973 issue of the *Signs* — a soldier of the cross rightly dividing the word of truth. Surely those taught of the Lord, can never fall from grace and be forever lost, as some contend.

Brother Duren made it very plain that we are not justified by the law of Moses; but by faith in Jesus Christ. He did not write in fear of man, but in power, and of love, and of a sound mind. We read in Psalm 110:30, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And in Romans 11:29, we read, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

We are not saved by the works of the flesh, but in and through the blood of Christ saved by grace given us in Christ before the world began. God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure by His Spirit, and it is our desire to render all praise, honor and glory for his love and mercy towards us.

May His grace and the communion of the Holy Spirit remain with us forever.

Yours in fellowship,
Mrs. Harry D. (Mattie) Underwood

GIVEN A STRONG CONSOLATION

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Elder Griffin:

I'm addressing you, having read your article in the March *Signs*, along with Elder Hudson's, and all the rest, and enjoyed them.

I am sending some letters for your consideration — if they can mean to the readers of the *Signs* what they have to me, there will be given them a strong consolation to again lay hold of the Hope that was given them from above. I hope that is not saying or claiming too much.

As I look over the way behind me — the ups and downs, trials, sorrows, the still waters and green pastures, if I can but feel that the hand of the Saviour of sinners has been guiding me along, keeping me by his love and power, I feel such a flow of peace and serenity that I can actually rejoice, and count all the sufferings and trials as naught, not worthy to be compared to the blessings of His love. If there was any way I could stay in this frame of mind, I most surely would.

You can tell by these letters which are in answer to one from me, what frame of mind I was in when I wrote them. And their response was exactly what I believed, and needed. There are times when these things are so dear, and I'm convinced that I am one that has been quickened by the Spirit: born of it, move by it, and alive: which I consider the work of God. I know the election is past and the God of all wisdom knows all his works from the beginning. The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal: the Lord knows them that are

his. I am neither in, or out of the kingdom of God. I don't think that is fatalism — there is a purpose involved: wisdom hath builded her house, hewn out her seven pillars, mingled her wine, etc. This all tells me that its all been done by the One who is able to bring all things to pass exactly as He purposed.

There is a scripture in Rev. 21:5-6, where John was being told and shown some things too wonderful for me: "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of water of life freely."

Now isn't that beautiful to think upon? It's a restful place: love swells my soul, tears sting my eyes, and Oh the praise I would render unto Him, if I but knew how. But sometimes I lose sight of these beautiful truths: I find in me a dull, wayward mind. I would cast it from me if I could, for I hate it. I seem to be looking through different eyes: I look about and see churches going down: two or three members in places, and some are not peaceful. I so wish it were different. But Why? If I believe what has preceeded this, why do these doubts and fears concerning the Church and her welfare distress me? I guess it is as Clover said, "Satan in our flesh."

I know I am viewing the militant church, and I do know that the weakness is in me. And I feel to be the neediest creature among God's children, if I am indeed one. I pray with all the praying power that's given me, to be kept at the feet of all fellow worshippers. I feel amazement at times that one so prone to sin as I, has been kept thus far; and I know that if I have been kept from *one* error, it has been by the power other than me. For our thoughts and our mind are as prone to sin as the water to flow down hill.

I am thankful for a people who confess being sinners such as I: yet be-

lieve in an all wise, covenant keeping God, who from all eternity purposed, decreed, and predestinated a people, and will take care of them *here*, lead them about, even through the fire, instructing them, and house everyone of them in heaven and immortal glory one day.

If I have written this for any reason other than glory of God, I hope you will have a mind to toss it in the waste basket.

Clover Wall and Asineth Jones are dear ones, and many more who live near them. The truth is, all are dear ones who believe in salvation by the shed blood of Jesus the Christ: a Sovereign who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Recently I read something that sent me to the encyclopedia. I found the name "Dort", and I was amazed to learn that in 1618-19 there were one hundred fifty-four formal sessions held to determine which was sound Apostolic doctrine: the Calvinist view, or the Arminians. And these canons of the Synod of Dort April 23, 1619, are a reaffirmation of the Calvinist doctrine.

And what seemed so good about it was, the five points brought out were first, Divine Predestination; second, Death of Christ, limited atonement; third, Corruption of man; fourth, Irresistible Grace; fifth, Perseverance of the Saints. Aren't these exactly the basis of our belief today? I felt so glad to read this. You may smile at my ignorance, you having known this a long while. The man Arminius began to teach what, I suppose, led into Universalism.

Dear Elders and Brothers, you who decide what should be good for the readers of the *Signs*, please look over me, and if at any time I write things you "question", cast it away. Don't let it take up space that could be better filled.

I wish we could see you all face to face Elder Wood and Elder Spangler. We do see Elder Griffin and Elder Lambert occasionally. May God continue

to bless us all in his love and mercy.

A weak one,
Lucille Young

COMFORTING LETTER TO
SISTER YOUNG

Rt. 3,
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Lucille and Edd (Young) :

Received your good letter; and you asked a lot of questions which I can't answer. But I can tell you what I believe.

It looks like the true believers have hit bottom — or that is what the world believes, and looks on with scorn. But hasn't it always been this way?

When Christ was here doing many miracles, they sought to kill him; and did when the time came, according to the will of God. It has always been that way, His will is being fulfilled to a jot and tittle. If the true worshippers get smaller in number, and the churches fewer and fewer, never the less God still reigns supreme, and there will always be, as long as this world stands, people who love one another; for that is Christ's promise before He left here: that He and God the Father will come and make their abode with you. I in you, you in me, and as *one* in the Spirit: and that is love shed abroad in our hearts.

Christ gave a new commandment to his people before his crucifixion, that you love one another as I have loved you. This is a great blessing that the world can't understand. We are here in the flesh in this world, and in it is sorrow, and everything contrary to the Spirit — a war that will go on as long as we live here. But thanks be to God who has overcome for us, and purposed a place for us in the world to come.

Aren't you glad you live in this age, where you can meet in heavenly places and worship in spirit and in truth, forgetting the trials and troubles, and not be killed in the flesh for doing so. In

every nook and corner God's people dwell in this sin cursed world, and when He comes in to dwell with them, there is peace and joy beyond compare. Let the world scoff — let them hate, it is the old Devil in the flesh, but I know God has a purpose in all things. He rules all things. He is all love and power.

What sorrow Peter had when the Devil entered into him! He wept bitterly, as we do when we stray and enjoy the world haven. We have to suffer, but how we glory when we realize it is for *our good* and *God's glory*. He does everything that is good for us, and makes us to have no confidence in the flesh, and to worship a true and living God who understands all our way: supplies our needs and forgives all our sins.

Edd, Raymond and I are in company with you — we are not volunteers; but if the time ever comes, which may never, we will ask for a heavenly home here. I hope you will, Edd. It would be nice for you and Lucille. I do feel like an outsider sometimes; and other times I feel its best never to ask for a home; and think I never will. God knows how frail I am, and maybe He has revealed it to me, for I know it too. I hope and pray I never do or say anything to hurt the church, and I will defend it with all my power, but I know what the world would say, "Why don't you join the church and help out," etc. In fact it has been said to me. I told Ruth we would do all we could, and she said that every little bit helped . . .

We went to Boaz Chapel today. Brother Prince loves to tell the story, and he did real well. Annie Botts and I were talking about Swayne — how he could say so much in a short time there at Cane Creek. I never heard the beautiful truth preached so plainly, and Annie thought so too. I wish we could hear him more . . .

Come to Cane Creek the week-end. We have had the flu, and someone said Ruth Chapel was taking it. It will be hard on her if she isn't able to go to Cane Creek this meeting. The Veaseys from Walnut Fork Church were at Boaz

Chapel — they are doing good. Levenia Biggs goes back to work soon, after having surgery.

Hope to see you Sunday.

Love,
Clover and Raymond Wall

ANOTHER LETTER TO
SISTER YOUNG

Dear Lucille and Edd (Young):

I was glad indeed to get your letter, and how I would like to write you in a way of comfort. I can say of a truth, if I know anything, the words you were given to pen, are the things I daily go through.

Oh, I can't *know* the way. I almost give up when I have searched my soul and self inside and out, and haven't found anything but corruption from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet — no soundness in me. And as you said, I have no right to call the great I AM in question, for, to me, if justice was applied I long would have been where mercy never comes.

But I am made to believe all things are in God's hands, and he knows the hearts of all men; and none but His children can truthfully say that Christ is the Son of God. And many times this is said in anguish of soul, because of their sins. No wonder we are tossed about: sometimes up, sometimes down.

Lucille, have you ever been (and I am sure you have,) made to feel as Peter when Christ looked at him after the cock crew? It must have been crushing: he wept bitterly. At times there is an appearing of something while down in the valley of doubts and fears, so low. I think, if the Lord should call and I be chilled in death, can I say, All is well? No, not of myself; but as you said, I do believe He is the only way, the truth, the life and the resurrection. It is all one eternal now with Christ.

So it is not at all strange to hear you say — though it is to the flesh, can we say, "My Lord and my God unless we behold the nail prints in his hands"? I

believe all things are written in the book for the benefit of God's children. Are not these the ways by which you *must travel* to find the meaning sometimes? to find that the Lord is in front leading and guiding you in the Truth — in paths you've not trod, making rough places plain and crooked ways straight.

I have heard Elder Biggs say so many things I can't forget. While listening to his discourses he would look me in the eye, seeming to know I was nothing, and less than nothing and altogether vanity. He was so richly blessed to point you to the Lamb of God, and declare the goodness of God, saying, "Could a child be more secure than to be clothed and in his right mind? He was a precious gift from the Father of Lights. As you say, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Surely His children have to travel in this world by faith — not by sight.

I believe it was faith that caused those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, when Christ told them things they had ministered unto him, clothing, feeding, visiting, giving him drink; and they answered as all heaven born children, "Lord when did we these things?" "As much as ye did it to one of the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me." All these things were fixed back in eternity. God purposed, elected and chose his people in the furnace of affliction, and if the afflictions are not some of the things you wrote to me, tell me what they can be. We are here where storm after storm arises — we are carried down in the depths with sea weeds wrapped around us. Then our works are consumed. So what else can you cry, only salvation is of the Lord? You feel forsaken, yet He is so close, though you can't know it then: and the works of the flesh is all I can do, and it brings me down in misery and woe.

I find out that the things I most desire, are not the best for me. But how do we find out these things? if it is not through sufferings. Isn't it through suffering that you believe in God, and

Him only. Not only to believe but to suffer for His name's sake . . .

At Sister Carnes' the night you and Richard were there, I kept thinking after you left, "O why did I have to talk as I did. I am so ignorant it would have been much better if I had just sat and listened. But, Lucille, the things I tried in my weakness to speak of, are what I live in from day to day. Yet, after expressing myself, I often feel I am deceived, and deceive the brethren. But I will have to say there is a love for them over which I have no control. My hope is that God will keep me at your feet, and never let me hurt you; and I know I have to be kept. Was so glad to hear from Lavenia and all the others you spoke of; and I also appreciate the poem you sent. . .

You all are so richly blessed to meet every Sunday — it is so sweet to meet. Oh the goodness and mercy of our Lord can't be described by puny man. My hope is that it is His will to tarry with me while I am here on the battle-field so rugged: that by Him I can say of a truth, "The Lord was in this place," and be made to realize that His promises are sure, though in this world you shall have tribulations, "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." If I could only know that what I have suffered was for His sake. I am here by the will of God, and in Him I believe I live, move, and have my being; so all is pleasing in His sight. If I am one of His, I beg Him to keep me in his mercy. If I glory, I have to glory in the Lord, for His glory doesn't belong to graven images.

If you can, I beg you to remember me, one that is vile and sinful. Will say again that the things you wrote, I am glad you felt like writing them to me.

In bonds of love and sweet fellowship,
Asineth Jones

(In reading the above letters, the following verses by Newton came to mind—J.D.W.)

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?

Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do:
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will;
Find my sin a grief and thrall:
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find, at times, the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy peoples Sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray:
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin today."

NEWTON

SENDS LETTER WRITTEN IN 1948

602 Mass. Avenue
Norfolk, Va. 23508

Dear Elder Wood:

I hope this finds both you and Sister Wood in good health. It has been too long since we have seen you. I think the last time we talked was by phone in July. The Lord willing, we hope to be at Rock Springs the 1st week-end in September.

I have enclosed some letters from a fourteen year old boy. They were written almost twenty-five years ago, shortly after he was blessed to come before the church asking for a home. The boy who penned these precious words was a

stranger to me because I didn't know him until he was twenty-five years of age. Yes, the young brother who wrote those things that were close to his heart, is my husband, Corrone. I did not know such writings existed until January of this year, when Elder Liliston, who was visiting our home, said that he had read Corrone's experience in Zion's Landmark, a 1948 issue. Yesterday I received a copy of that letter from Corrone's mother.

I thought perhaps you would be interested in publishing it or a part of it, in the *Signs*. To me it is a rare thing for one so young to be able to express himself so beautifully. It might be said that I am prejudiced because he is my husband, but I would have thought it beautiful from anyone that young. Not all the education in the world could have taught that boy to write and what to say.

If he was "taught" at all, it was given to him by the School Master in the School of Grace. There are many who have known Corrone all his life who might want to read it again, as well as those who have known him only a few months.

I hope you do not think me presumptuous in sending these to you.

The Lord bless you; and we hope to see you in September.

Yours in hope,
Joanne

A LETTER FROM A YOUNG MEMBER

October 25, 1948

Dear Mr. Gold:

You will find herein a letter written to me by one who is, perhaps the youngest member of our church. He is just 14 years of age, and just recently joined our folks at the Flat Swamp church. As a general rule I am not a great believer in publishing personal letters. But in this particular case, I really believe it would be of value to your Landmark. A large number of our folks have asked

me to let you have it to publish if you care to do so. So I have talked with his parents concerning the matter, and have their consent to send it to you. It, of course, will need some corrections. You, therefore, may look over it and should you care to publish all, or part of it, then I believe it will be deeply appreciated by our folks. Everyone who knows him is completely in love with him.

Yours truly,
A. C. Owens

Williamston, N. C.

Dear Brother Owens:

I received your most welcome letter a few days ago, and have been wanting to write you ever since. We went to Pleasant Hill today and ate dinner with Brother and Sister Edwards. I really enjoyed going there and hope to go again. I wanted to hear Elder Berry preach, but he couldn't come. I did, however, hear Elder Weaver. Oh, how the Lord does bless his people. How good and how blessed it is for us to partake of his riches through his servants of which I hope to be one if it is His will. For I do desire to pour out to the hungry and thirsty the goodness and mercy that the dear Lord has shown me. How I like to meditate over these things, the unsearchable riches of God, only open to a few and they can see only a small part of it, as much as the Lord desires them to see.

I like to feel His presence so close to me, just as I am feeling His presence now as I try to write a few words that are not of men but of God. Oh, I hope I am thankful to the Lord for being so kind and good to me. I sometimes want to shout and sing praises to His name. I often hear the brethren speak of things that they liked in the years gone by, but since they have been a witness to God's grace and mercy they no longer like the things of the world, but now they enjoy the spiritual things of God.

I am so thankful to the Lord God

Almighty that I do not like the things of the world. I have never liked her things, but have always loved the brethren and sisters of the Old Baptist Church, for I feel as though He has brought me down to know that I am a sinner and chief among them, says Paul. How wonderful it is to know that eternal life is not bought or sold, but is a free gift of God, given to all those who ask for it with fear and trembling, and the ones who have been hewed down are the only ones who will ask for it and receive it.

How wonderful it is to me to have a hope in Him. The kind of hope that makes me put my trust in Him. I really feel that the Lord has increased my knowledge of Him. For He has shown me many wonders. And while I am quite young—only fourteen years of age—I feel as though He has taught me very much indeed, but the more He teaches me the more I want to know, and the more I am ashamed of myself, and the poorer and lower I feel.

Sometimes I don't feel like going to see the Lord's people, because I feel to be unworthy. But then again I like to be with them, because I hope that I am one of them and that they are my people. How blessed it is for us to have that hope, the kind of hope that gives us the feeling that we are some of His little flock that were chosen by Him before the foundation of the world. Satan knows full well that he can't get even one of us, though he makes all kinds of false promises. Satan is always at hand, no matter how good we try to be, even when we are in the presence of the Lord, he is at hand though we don't know it.

Aren't we all so glad that God is not the kind of spirit that tempts us, but instead is full of loving kindness. He is one that takes us from the pits of hell and lifts us up into His marvelous glory. He is never in a hurry, yet He is never late. He is one that does His own work at His appointed time. How good it is to know that God is just, kind, merciful and one who doesn't need the advice of

men. For if God says you are one of His children, He will hew you down so you will know that you are a sinner and then He will reveal His love to you. Hence, you can't have religion today and lose it tomorrow.

If the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ever gets hold of you, it will never turn you loose. I like to think of the time when Jesus said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," because the righteous are the ones who have been born again and have been taught of the Holy Spirit. They are the ones who have been brought down and have gone through the valley of the shadow of death. They are the ones who know no other help except that which comes from God, they are the ones who would die if God would withdraw himself from them, they are the ones who try to praise Him and thank Him for what He has done for them.

Yes, those are the ones for whom God sacrificed His Son, they are the ones whom Jesus came to save. Therefore, I hope that I may be blessed to praise, honor and love Him all the days of my life, and on that Judgement day that I may also be on His right hand with his sheep. And this is my prayer. For Christ's sake, Amen.

Corrone Bryant
Williamston, N.C.

P. O. Box 3423
Panama City, Fla. 3423

My dear Brothers:

I'm sure that you do not understand my persistence in sending written material to you, and neither do I, but for some reason known only to our God, I am led of his Spirit to do so.

According to all natural evidence I am subject to be going to my eternal home at any time. The doctors seem to have come to that conclusion. However, I am not in the least discouraged, nor am I worried. I know in whose hands

my life is resting; and to depart from this body is eternal gain — where there is no more suffering or pain. My one desire is to honor and glorify my Heavenly Father through Jesus my precious and beloved Saviour. He has been made to be all things for me and unto me, and I trust in Him with all my heart and soul.

May God bless you,
Ethel Gilland

The following is one of the writings referred to:

After a visitation from the most high God, a man finds that it truly is not in himself to direct his footsteps. It is then that we learn for sure that we are not "free-agents", and are wholly dependent upon a higher power to lead, guide, protect, and keep us.

Before this visitation a man goes about boasting that he is self-sufficient, and is wrapped up in his own self-righteousness importance. His attitude toward others plainly speaks of his puffed up condition, as he tells others in his actions that they are not as good and deserving as he is.

But, lo and behold, what a difference it makes when we come face to face with the fact that we are not all-sufficient at all, but are entirely dependent upon the most high God. It is then that we learn that our lives *do not* belong to us, and that we are no more than a lump of clay in the Potter's hand. It is then that we learn that without Him we can do nothing; and find that we must look to him for every breath we breathe. Then we forsake that puffed-up attitude of self-importance, and live at the feet of our precious Lord Jesus, and cry daily to our holy and righteous Father for our every need, and know that it is not in us to direct our footsteps.

How small and dependent we feel, knowing that every footstep we take is directed by the most high God; and that His Spirit and power is forever flowing through Jesus Christ our Lord, who has been made to be all things for

us and unto us. I believe that Jesus is my righteousness, my holiness, my sanctification, and because of Him I have my Father's every good and perfect gift of love, grace, and mercy. When He died and arose and ascended into heaven, He forever sealed our eternal salvation. This I believe with all my heart.

Ethel Gilland

THE GREATEST BLESSING: A HOPE

Dear Elder Wood:

Finding that my time is out for the *Signs*, I am renewing. I don't feel that I could do without the *Signs of the Times* while I can read. It was in my father's home ever since I can remember, and mine, for I grew to love it when I was young; and to listen to father talk of the goodness of our God.

I married in 1908 and had many trials and disappointments, but blessings all along the way. The greatest blessing was a hope He has given me that He was leading me. I feel so little I wonder if He has ever looked on me, yet if I know myself, I am made to want to worship Him in spirit and truth: as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

It is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Enclosed is my check for two years — the rest is for you.

In fellowship,
Mrs. W. B. McGregor

OBSERVES 99th ANNIVERSARY

Hartford, Ala.

May 29, 1973

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Alabama, observed the 99th year of its existence on the second Sunday in May at

the time of its annual communion, which has been kept by this church for almost a century. The charter members were Elder W. T. Bell and wife, Sarah, Isaac Stewart and wife, Rebecca, (who were relatives of the writer) Nicholas Edmondson, and Elsey Bond. The Presbytery was composed of Elders Jesse Tomlin, J. W. Parker, and Amborose Pellum, on April 26, 1874, in Dale County, Ala. Soon after its organization the church was moved to its present site on Newton's Creek in the new County of Geneva, where one of the largest cemeteries in this section exists. It is most beautiful, and contains the remains of Elders J. N. Purvis, W. J. Harrison, and W. H. Smith, with countless other faithful believers in Christ such as the families of S. H. Tew, John J. Collins, Colwells, Stewarts, Bonds, Halls, Underwoods, Barbers, Bedsoles, Harrisons, Swanns, Carrolls, Daltons, Vinsons, Mitchells, Barnes, Rice, Hartzogs, Tra-wicks, and countless others.

Among the pastors have been, Elders W. T. Bell, J. W. Parker, Isaac Stewart, J. W. Collins, E. D. Ivery, J. N. Purvis, H. A. Smith, W. J. Hartzog, F. A. Collins, J. J. Smith, J. A. Tew, W. J. Harrison, C. C. Hornsby, and J. J. Collins who has served in all about thirty years, and has been in the ministry fifty-five years, and is ably assisted by Elders D. W. and Henry H. Collins, distant relatives of his.

Among the Clerks have been, Isaac Stewart, Jesse Carroll, H. S. Everett, J. J. Hall, Dr. C. C. Dalton, E. C. Purvis, B. M. Joyner, W. W. Givens, F. Belcher, W. T. Swann, J. N. Underwood, M. A. Barber, O. H. Tew, H. C. Harrison, H. T. Collins, J. T. Collins, P. J. Hartzog and Charles T. Collins.

This church has been a haven of rest for true believers in Christ since pioneer days, and holds its regular service each second Sunday at 10:20, when all are invited to attend.

Among those members who have kept the torch of faith alive in this church for ninety-nine years have been E. C. Purvis, Jesse Carroll, Jasper Barnes,

M. A. Barber, S. H. Tew, J. A. Mitchell, J. W. Bledsole, H. T. Collins, W. T. Swann, J. A. Tew, J. T. Collins, R. C. Collins, J. J. Hall, W. J. Harrison, J. N. Purvis, J. N. Underwood and many more.

Among the ministers present last Sunday for the annual communion were Elders Eugene Taylor, A. B. Chumney, J. J. Watson, Henry H. Collins and the Pastor.

May this church be blessed to carry on in the faith of our Lord and Paul until Jesus comes again with all His holy angels.

J. J. Collins

ENJOYS READING *THE SIGNS*

Rt. 1, Box 318,
Eustace, Texas 75124

Dear Editors:

Please renew my subscription for four years, and use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the *Signs*, and especially the *Voices of the Past*. It seems that the dear ones of yesteryear were blessed to give their accounts of happenings in this world. The eloquence of the language, the terminology and presentation strengthens our hope that there is and was, and is to be, divinely inspired writers and speakers here among us.

I use the term "us" loosely, as I fear that such as I could not be worthy to count himself among the saints. The subject also strengthens our hope that God is an unchanging and ever living God, and that His power exceeds all other power. Men have tried and are trying, and some claim they have succeeded, but they cannot equal let alone exceed the Power of God.

Yours in Christian faith and hope,

B. J. McLaughlin

EXPERIENCE OF
MRS. MARY SURRATT,
MAX MEADOWS, VA.

Dear Brother:

I have been reading your good paper for sometime, handed to me by a brother who takes it; and while I read from those scattered over the land and sea, I love to ponder in my heart the greatness of their God, and the helplessness of themselves. For truly I do believe that God is Almighty, and I am a fallen helpless creature. But I hope I have learned in the same school of grace, the bitterness of their sorrows, and their comforts and joys, and that I understand their tears; yet I have been pressed on every side for an answer to these things that I hope I have received.

I am told that we get our belief from childhood; but not so with me. As my thoughts go back to my childhood, I remember as I traveled along to Sunday School with my sister. Our names were hung on the wall of the Cradle Roll at birth, and at the age of three passed on to a member of the Sunday School; and at twelve sprinkled into membership of the church. Death seemed so certain I worked for a home in heaven in mission band and Epworth League, and every branch connected with the church. I worked, and played my part, I will say, from posing as an angel of mercy carrying fruits and flowers to the sick, down to a beggar filling "dime books" in my father's place of business. So I feel I can say of a truth that it wasn't the way I was brought up that made me an Old Baptist believer.

Then on the other hand those nearest and dearest to me by the ties of nature, who have never seen the shortness of their own arm of flesh, (except this one sweet sister I mentioned, who has fallen asleep, — we could converse and agree,) but the other brothers and sisters in this large family, tell me that I am an Old Baptist because my husband is: that he talked me into

believing this strange doctrine. But while it was from him in my early married life, that I heard there was a church of this faith and order, it was I who tried to teach and show him time and again just how unjust this God of heaven would be to have a chosen family; and it was to prove to him that my God loved everybody, and sent his Son to die for everyone who would accept Him. For the first time I began reading the Bible; but as I searched and pondered over, "Thus saith the Lord," for days and months and years, mystery after mystery loomed up before me. While the holy law heaped curses on my head, it also demanded an answer, Who art thou that repliest against God? And in the midst of all these mysteries, I saw plainly that heaven wasn't gained by works, but it was a gift bestowed on a helpless little flock by the Father. Thus I saw all the works of mine own arm of flesh as filthy rags not acceptable in His sight.

As I read and pondered in my heart this little flock, the church, the gospel by which they were fed; of Jesus their wonderful Saviour of sinners who prayed for them, and not for the world, — from here on I saw my Creator in a new light. He was no longer weak and depending on the acts of a big devil, or the help of almighty man; but He was the creator of heaven and earth and everything therein, whose great wisdom covered the whole universe. And so, with this complete turning around in making that last which was first, and first that which was last, I locked this secret up; and it was as fire in my bones. I did not turn to mother or to my husband, but mourned within. So I feel that I can say truthfully that I never received this belief from my husband, neither did it come by father or mother.

While I live in the flesh I don't expect to be free from sin, for there is none good but God; neither maketh He any man to sin, for the flesh is carried off of its own lust unto death. The warfare goes on within me, — the flesh

warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, is the greatest tribulation I know, because it strikes closer home than any other trouble or trial. So I have to say that the perfect cloak of God's grace and electing predestination will hang gracefully as a cloak over this crooked body of mine.

I have been blessed to go and enjoy many feasts of the gospel table, all praise being given to whom they were due. This past fall I went back to the old Meeting House I had seen in vision, and my heart was made sad, for there on the ground lay the old brown walls I had loved so well to meet within. As I passed on to the near neighbor house where the meeting was held, I could not hold back the tears that flowed; but in that meeting with those favored few, and many brethren and sisters from elsewhere, I saw them filled to overflowing. Here to me again was the church whose maker and builder is God, that can never be removed.

I only meant to mention the paper. My excuse is that sometimes it seems I get a little peep into this great storehouse of love and there I see so much stored away in Wisdom's way for those who both love and fear God, and it just seems so simple and easy that I long for the talent of an hundredfold to lay it out before all who profess a hope in this same Jesus; and then humbly ask those who differ with me, Do we really disagree or am I just misunderstood?

Now who is able to separate us from the love of God? I feel I can truthfully say Amen to the testimony of Paul, That father and mother, sisters or brothers, houses and lands, trials and persecutions, etc. cannot; and I am glad. For to take from me these blessed truths would be taking away my comfort by day and my song in the night, my hope, my salvation, my all.

To the helpless may I say, Remember me. Truly I need the prayers of those I love.

(The above was handed to us by Sister Surrat's daughter, Mrs. Dewey C. Dean, of Alexandria, Va. who attends our meetings.

Sister Surratt died in May, 1959, and her husband died in May, 1963, and they were buried in Little Vine Church Cemetery. Elder Secrease conducted the services. We enjoyed reading this experience, and felt the brethren and sisters would also.

How true, as stated in her experience, "I plainly saw that heaven wasn't gained by works, but it was a gift bestowed on a helpless little flock by the Father." — J. D. W.)

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church the 5th Sunday in September, 1973, and Saturday before.

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

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

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association is to convene with Charity Church, Patrick County, Virginia, the Lord willing. The Church is located on Rt. 40 about 18 miles west of Ferrum, Virginia, and about 5 miles east of Woolwine, Virginia.

We would love to meet with some of the saints there on Friday, Saturday and 1st Sunday in September, 1973. (August 31, September 1 and 2, 1973)

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Hancock's Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July. The church is located near Ayden, N. C.

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

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association*, the Lord willing, will be held with the Church at Hickory Grove, Johnston County, N. C., beginning on Friday at 11 o'clock and continuing Saturday and Sunday, (September 14, 15 and 16)

Hickory Grove Meeting House is located approximately seven miles east of Benson on Highway 50.

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Mod.
James Young, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Pleasant Valley Association* is appointed to be held in the Community Building at Stockdale, Texas, August 17, 18, and 19, 1973, where we hope to meet our brothers and sisters of the same faith and order.

A hearty welcome is extended to all who would like to enjoy this meeting with us. Elder C. M. Haygood is our beloved Moderator, and Elder G. D. Shipman, Clerk, and Brother Jimmy Lindsey, Asst. Clerk.

Lela Culpepper, Clerk Mount
Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To June 1, 1973)

Raymond May, Va.....	\$ 3.00
Mabel Ellis, Va.....	3.00
Mr. Andrew Agee, Va.....	3.00
Mrs. J. T. Flippen, Gift in memory of parents, Elder & Mrs. J. P. Helms, Va.	18.00
Julia Ada, Md.....	3.00
Mrs. Allridge Slaughter, Ala.....	3.00
Mrs. Vercie Bolejack, Va.....	1.00
Miss Cathrine Houchins, Va.....	3.00
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In memory of Mrs. Ida Ray and bro- ther Bruce Ray from Children, Miss.....	13.00
A friend, N.C.....	3.00
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Danville, Virginia

August, 1973

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 10:35

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."

As we are reminded that it is time for us once more to address the household of faith, we are conscious of our inability to command the spirit, or even of ourselves, to speak one word in season to those that be weary. It is an act of divine mercy if one shall comfort another, and when the occasion arises that one must write, the thoughts are ever present, "What am I that I should presume to give my opinion or attempt to write to God's dear saints?" Perhaps it was this feeling under which Gideon labored, when the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and sat under

the oak which was in Ophrah, as Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. The angel said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Let us consider Gideon's reply. He said, "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 up from Egypt? but now the Lord has forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

It is evident that Gideon mourned an absent God, feared the common enemy, and the only way to obtain food, that which sustained him at that time, was to hide away behind the winepress, so fearful was he of the Midianites. Let us continue with this blessed man for a while. It is written, "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? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

It is evident from the above that Gideon had little confidence in the flesh, and the subsequent experience through which he was made to pass taught him also to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of. Gideon was stripped of all false confidence and his only hope was the presence of the Lord in accord with the words He had before spoken unto him. Thus it is, we hope, with us, we have foes without and foes within, and we at times would hide behind the winepress which Jesus trod, to get our morsel of sustenance for fear of the enemy. It was there where the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon. He has appeared to us, and all the confidence that is worth while, that is true and not false, is wrought in us by Jesus, the angel of the Lord.

There is much false confidence in man and it is not a pleasant thing

to be stripped; the Lord has a place where he strips each of us, if we be what we profess to be. We do not know, either, what we need, but we believe the Lord knows, it is very mortifying to the flesh when the Lord takes us into the stripping-room. Humbling grace not only teaches us to look to Christ, but to trust in him, also, and to come to Christ one must be killed to self and self-confidence, and often when we seem to have attained unto this the Angel of the Lord shows us greater abominations, so that we despair of self and self-confidence. It is God's teaching when one learns that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. Peter, full of self-confidence, could say, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. How humble Peter was under the teaching of his God. He went out and wept bitterly. His self-confidence left him before the knowing eye of the maid. Just as it is God that humbles, so it is he only can lift us up, David said, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works; I will triumph in the works of thy hands."

It is the Lord who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth and all of them that are afar off upon the sea, and it is his love and mercy manifest in us that is our joy and gives us confidence in him. Thus when persecuting Saul was changed to praying Paul such was the blessing and favor showered upon him from above that he did not even consult with the brethren of Jerusalem, but such was his confidence in the Lord that he went about preaching him whom he once destroyed. Sometimes this confidence is manifest in a person who is made to know he has passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. Others find their afflictions are those of the saints of God. Some are enabled to-day to endure a great fight of afflictions, partly being made a gaz-

ingstock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly while they became companions of them that were so used. Paul in Philippians tells that many of the brethren in the Lord waxed confident by his bonds and were much more bold to speak the word without fear. Thus by a diversity of operations the brethren are given confidence in the Lord, and such a confidence have they in him that they know that he who hath begun a good work in them will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Yet at times there are those who creep in unawares, to which condemnation they were before of old ordained, teaching a duty religion, some effort of the creature, instead of a continued work of the Creator. Where such a doctrine is listened to and believed there is a casting away of their confidence, for creature attainment will carry with it creature glorifying, and Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He had confidence only in Christ Jesus the Lord. Job was sorely tried, his house destroyed, his cattle stolen, his children dead, and, last of all, he was afflicted with boils. In the dust he mourned an absent God, searched for him forward, backward, and to the right hand, but could not find him, yet such was his confidence that he declares, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Just as Job was tried, each of us will have our portion, for if we are to walk with Jesus it will be in the furnace of affliction, and we shall ever prove that the mount of danger is the place where we shall see surprising grace. It is often in trials that we learn what wretches we are and how very little real religion we have when put to the test. It is at such times that Satan will harass and tempt us to despair. His efforts are always directed to undermine our confidence in the Lord.

We remember very well an occasion, some years ago, when after a season of joy in believing, we felt forsaken of our God, and in our distress it seemed that ours was a stony ground hearer's experience. We experienced nothing but condemnation. Day and night his hand was heavy upon us. What with Satan's temptation and a heart of unbelief we had almost come to the place where Peter said, "I know him not." Our former confidence was gone and we believed Satan's lie rather than what our living, loving Lord had spoken to us. The day came when by a word from on high our confidence was renewed, for he said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Then our mountain was strong and we thought we should never question his love and mercy towards us again. Paul has been putting the brethren in mind of their fellowship with him and those of like precious faith, and says, "Cast not away therefore your confidence." They could not cast away that which they had not, and they would learn, even as Paul himself had learned, that it is only the grace of God that enables us to hold fast this confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

The grace of God is an enabling grace, and the faith of God's elect is an overwhelming faith, and it is in and through these blessed and heavenly gifts that the righteous does hold on his way. Paul says this confidence hath great recompense of reward. Each evidence of God's love and mercy is a sweet foretaste of what heaven hereafter will be, and the rougher the way the sweeter is the rest that remains for the people of God. It is true that there seems little account of what heaven will be, but we are confident that when He shall appear we shall be like him, and what a recompense of reward it will be to see him as he is, and be like him. It was in the confidence of faith that Paul said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh

for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." His whole ministry was a plain declaration of the truth that was revealed to him and of which he was confident, and in his concluding testimony he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." We have loved his appearing in the past, for it is in his appearing that our confidence abounds. May he grant us grace to stand fast and hold our confidence even unto the end.

(Editorial by the late Elder George Ruston, December, 1929)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

I PETER 3:18-20

In our last number, brother J. W. Livingston calls for our views on I Peter, 3:18, 20:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit:

"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."

In our attempt to comply with the request of our brother, to give our views on this text, which has puzzled those of more light and understanding than we possess, we hope we may not be left to darken counsel by words without knowledge, or to embarrass, instead of edifying those who honestly enquire after the truth. We frankly confess that the

latter part of this text has been very dark and obscure to our mind, and what we shall present on the subject is only to be regarded as *our views*, until at least the reader shall find them sustained by the testimony of the scriptures.

In the context, the apostle has been treating upon the new and spiritual birth, which is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; in distinction from that birth which is of corruptible seed, or of the flesh, which (like grass) is corruptible, and the glory of which is as the flower of the grass, which must also perish, or fall away. The subject of this new birth, like the living and ever abiding word from which it preceeds, must live and abide forever; and those who are so born, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, (that is, of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever,) as it is congenial with the production of the new birth which is by the same word. Having drawn the line between the distinct elements of which the christian, in his present state, is composed; the one of the flesh, which is grass, corruptible, mortal, and perishable, the other, of incorruptible seed by the word of God, and, therefore, incorruptible and abiding, he goes on to show that in our earthly and fleshly standing, the relationship in the flesh is not annulled, nor changed by our new birth; the production of the corruptible and that of the incorruptible seed, are brought into personal identity, for the time being, but still in opposition to each other, inasmuch that the spirit wars against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit; or, the corruptible against the incorruptible, until the grass shall wither, and the flower thereof shall pass away. Having defined this subject in the most lucid manner, Peter proceeds to show some of the obligations which are binding on christians in their personal relations to each other and to mankind, in the flesh, as well as what is enjoined on them as children of the spiritual and

immortal birth. In their spiritual identity they are "A chosen generation,"—to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. In their flesh, they are admonished to have their conversation honest among the Gentiles, and to submit to every ordinance (or constitutional law) of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers. Honor all men, love the brotherhood, Fear God. Honor the King. "Servants," that is, christian servants, for Peter as an apostle, has nothing to do with any but christians, "be subject to your masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." The same as christians in their fleshly relations are bound by the laws of Christ to be loyal to kings and governors, or to whatever form of constitutional government they may be placed in the providence of God, to let every soul be subject to the higher power. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands," and in all our fleshly relations, to observe the same rules and authorities, which would be binding on us if we were not christians. And as this fidelity is enjoined on all christians, not only to the good and gentle, who may have dominion over them, but also to the froward; the apostle admits that a faithful obedience to these laws of Christ, will, beyond all doubt, subject them sometimes to suffer unjustly from the dominion of tyrants, still he says it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing, and then adds the words of our text, giving us a pattern and example in the person of our divine Lord and Master.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." He would not call on his children to suffer unjustly from the froward and tyrannical, who may have a brief authority over them, if he had not himself suffered the just for the unjust. The will of God was so, that Christ should suffer,

though holy and harmless, and separate from sinners; although no guile was found in his mouth. He did not object to drink the bitter cup, which was pressed to his holy lips, saying that he had violated no law, transgressed no rule that was binding on him, but recognizing his Father's will in the matter, he said, when pressed with the unutterable agony, "If it is possible, let this cup pass, nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done." Learn then, ye suffering christians, to bear with patience so far as men are concerned, and when reviled, revile not again. Christ suffered for sins,—not for sins which he had committed, for he knew no sin. Holy, pure, spotless and immaculate, in every respect, he was emphatically just, but he suffered for the sins of the unjust. He was crucified by wicked hands, of those whose wicked hearts were full of violence. But who were they? The Jews and Romans! The men of Israel and the Gentiles were the immediate agents in the bloody tragedy on Calvary!

"But knotty whips and jagged thorns
In vain do I accuse;
In vain I blame the Roman bands
And the more spiteful Jews —
'Twere you, my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were;
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief the spear."

The sufferings of Christ were vicarious. He suffered the just for the unjust. The Lord has laid on him the iniquities of all his people. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised from the dead for our justification. And he has himself said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The sufferer was personally just, but those for whom he suffered were legally unjust. He was as a lamb without spot or blemish; but those for whom he bore the penalty of the divine law, were guilty sinners, and by nature, children of wrath, even as others; and the object or design of his sufferings was that *he might bring us to God*. "All we, like

sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." There was no other way to bring us to God, or to reclaim us from our wanderings, but by redemption; and none but Jesus had the right of redemption, he being the nearest of kin; and none but Jesus had the ability to redeem us to God, for there is salvation in none other. It was not possible that the blood of bulls or heifers could purge us from our sins, and in our sins we could not see God. The design then of the atonement was special, definite and exclusively for his people. The iniquities which were laid on him he has put away by the sacrifice of himself; he bore them in his own body on the tree; and by one offering he has perfected them that are sancified.

"Being put to death in the flesh."

The second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every one for whom he was delivered up. The Word which was with God, and which was God, in whom was life, (that life which is the light of men,) was made flesh, and dwelt among us. This flesh was indispensable for the work of redemption. He took not on him the nature of angels, for in the nature of angels he could not taste the death for men. For men in the flesh, he was to die, and to represent them in the flesh in which they were sinners, he must be made flesh, and stand before the law in the likeness of sinful flesh. He was, therefore, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem us from under the law. Bear in mind the theme of the apostle in the connection of our text, *the flesh and the spirit*, the incorruptible and the corruptible seeds,—the flesh which is grass, and the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The Word of God, which is the fountain of our spiritual life, the Lord from heaven, &c., to represent us in the flesh and die the just for the unjust, must

be made flesh, or take on him a fleshly body that could suffer and die, in which to be put to death. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil, and deliver them who through death were all their life time subject to bondage."

He was put to death in the flesh, not in the spirit which liveth and abideth forever, for that aside from his flesh was immortal and could not die; and hence his assumption of flesh, that he might taste death, or be put to death in the flesh. By the term flesh, in regard to what Christ took him for the purpose of suffering, we understand, according to Christ's own explanation, to be, That which is born of the flesh; namely, the seed of Abraham, or that which his children are partakers of; soul, body, and all that Adam was, when Man became a living soul. Before he took on him a body in which to suffer, and a soul which was poured out to death, or which was made an offering for sin, Isa. 53:10, he was the Lord in heaven, and the anointed Mediator, in whom all the Church of God was chosen, and in whom God had blessed them with all spiritual blessings, before the foundation of the world. But for the suffering of death he took the same nature on him, in which his people had sinned, a body in which he bore our sins, a soul that was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, and a spirit which could be troubled, could groan, and which he committed to his Father, when he yielded up the ghost on the cross. His whole person, including soul, body and spirit, was just, holy and pure. The holy thing which was conceived in the womb of the virgin, and born of her, was unblemished, undefiled, spotless and pure, although he was made sin for us, or in other words, all the sins of his people were laid upon him, and he was legally held responsible for them, and did suffer the full weight and penalty of the law to the complete satisfaction of Eternal

Justice, for them, the same as though they had been committed personally by him; for the Lord had laid them on him, and he was able to put them away by the sacrifice of himself. It was in his being found in fashion as a man in the flesh that the law could recognize him as the legal representative of his people in their flesh, in which they had sinned, and in the flesh to put him to death. The importance of the doctrine of the incarnation is most vital, for John testifies that, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come: and even now already is it in the world." God was manifest in the flesh. All fulness dwelt in him. All the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily; and all the fulness of his Church also dwelt in him, and is complete in him who is the head of all principality and power. The spirit of Immortality, the power of an endless life by which he is made a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, was in him, as the life which was with the Father and was manifested, 1 John 1:1, 2. And which God hath given to us in him, 1 John 5:11, 12. He was put to death in the flesh.

"But quickened by the spirit." By what spirit was he quickened? By the spirit of life and immortality which was made flesh and dwelt among us. That spirit which is the fountain and source of regeneration of which Peter is treating in connection with our text, and which he distinguishes from all flesh which is grass, which is corruptible, which can die or which is mortal. His flesh qualified him to die; but his flesh, in itself, aside from the indwelling, the Eternal Spirit, through which he offered himself without spot to God, had no power to rise from the dead. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit," &c. His simply dying in the flesh, did not of

itself demonstrate his divinity: for All flesh is grass, all die, all flesh is subject to death; but the power of his resurrection, shows that Christ was in that flesh; and being quickened by the Spirit, justifies the character which he assumed, and proves that he is the Son of God, and the complete Savior of his people. The spirit which raised him up from the dead is not only a life producing spirit, but it is life itself. Thus Paul, in discriminating between the flesh and the spirit, says, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin: but, *the spirit is life*, because of righteousness: But if the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:10, 11. Thus clearly identifying the spirit that quickened the crucified body of Christ, and which dwells in us by regeneration now, and which shall ultimately resurrect the mortal bodies of all who are born of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. In this flesh, like grass, even Jesus could bleed and die—pour out his soul, yield up his spirit, and slumber with the dead; but in the Eternal Spirit of life and immortality, he had power to take up his life again, and destroy death, and swallow up death in victory. His crucified body was raised up from the dead, by this quickening spirit, and by this quickening spirit, in regeneration, all the saints are born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, and by this self same spirit the mortal bodies shall finally be clothed in immortality,—and be fashioned and made like unto his raised and glorified body. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First born among many brethren." The spirit which brought again from the dead the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the same spirit that now dwells in all who are born of God, by which they are sealed until the day of redemption, to-wit: the redemption of our body. And

it is called the spirit of the Lord God, which is upon him, by which he is anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, &c., Isa. 61:1, and that "*By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.*" The spirits in prison were those unto whom Christ was anointed to preach good tidings, whose prison doors he came to open, and whom he came to deliver out of their prison houses. If they were not prisoners, they would not need deliverance. They were prisoners, yet they were prisoners of hope, Zech. 9:12. As Paul says, "In hope of Eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." They were captives, sold under sin; lawful captives, but Christ has led their captivity captive, and received gifts for men. In one general view, all whom Christ came to redeem, were prisoners, and his ministry to them all is by the same spirit of the Lord God, by which he was raised up from the dead, and his preaching or proclamation of deliverance to them, is by that spirit; whether we understand it as applicable to his personal manifestations in their individual experience respectively, or through the prophets, apostles, evangelists, teachers and pastors, or by what ever gifts the saints are edified; for, there are different gifts, but all by the same spirit, and that is the spirit of Christ. The prophets sought diligently to know what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it spake of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. This spirit is that with which the apostles were endowed from above, and which came upon them in a mighty rushing wind from heaven on the day of Pentecost. And, in short, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

"*These spirits which were in prison, were sometime disobedient.*" And in all time until called by grace, of every redeemed child, it may be said there has been a time in which they lived in disobedience to God, and on opposition to this spirit of life, of truth, of holiness,—

and the apostle refers to an instance, in the days of Noah, when the ark was a preparing. The spirit of Christ was then in Noah, who, by it, was a preacher of righteousness; but his preaching by that spirit was resisted by the antediluvians, and Stephen charged the Jews, "Ye do always resist the Spirit: as your fathers did so do ye." &c. And all who oppose the truth as it is in Jesus, do also in like manner resist the spirit. We do not, of course, mean that God, the Holy Ghost, attempts to operate on their hearts, and they successfully resist and prevent him. Such a sentiment would represent the sinner as being stronger than God. But the spirit of Christ as it exists in all the saints is opposed by the flesh which wareth against it, and by the world which cannot receive it, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. Christ came and preached to you, dear brother, and to you, dear sister, when your spirit was in prison; when arrested in your mad career of sin and folly, quickened and made sensible that you was a guilty sinner against a holy God; when you, as a prisoner, was under arrest, and brought before the awful bar of Justice; when you was compelled to plead guilty to every charge; when your sins were set before you, and Justice with uplifted sword demanded satisfaction, and your mouth was stopped, and you stood guilty before God—were you not bound hand and foot, so that with your hand you could do nothing to expiate your guilt, and with your feet you could not run away from or escape the avenger of blood? Strong chains of darkness bound you in your cell, and you could not open the prison door. Were you not then a spirit in prison, until the anointed Jesus came and preached peace and salvation, life and liberty to your captive spirit?

And are there not seasons with old christians when they find themselves shut up as with hewn stones, so that they cannot come forth, and the prison none can open until Jesus by this spirit comes to preach to you?

He went by this spirit and preached

unto the spirits in prison, when he entered the dark domains of death, when he dwelt among the dead. This was loud preaching to them; it told them that he had bowed his heavens and come down, that he had descended to the lowest parts of the earth; that the iron gates were opened to him, and that he had come to destroy death and the grave, and to deliver them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death. When he arose, he opened the doors of death, and destroyed the power of the grave. And as he arose as the first-fruits of them that slept, he gave the assurance that he would also quicken from the dead, and in due time raise up and glorify the redeemed bodies of all his saints who sleep in the dust of the earth.

To illustrate this bearing of our subject, the apostle uses the figure of the ark, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved. This he calls a figure; and, as a figure, sets forth the doctrine of salvation through or by grace. As Noah and his family were preserved from the destroying waters of the deluge in the ark, so Christ and all the spiritual family are saved from wrath, in the church of God. And as, while the ark was being prepared, some were disobedient; so while God is gathering into his church the heirs of immortality, some are disobedient, and some who are called by grace are conscious that they were of that number.

The like figure, whereunto baptism doth also now save us.—Just as the temporal deliverance of Noah and his family in the ark was a figure of salvation by grace, so is also christian baptism a like figure, signifying the same thing. Baptism cannot save us from the curse of the law, or the blood of Christ might have been spared; neither can it put away the filth of the flesh, which is grass, but it is the answer of a good conscious toward God. It is in answer to an eternal principle implanted in us by an incorruptible seed; it shows our willing subjection and allegiance to Jesus Christ, and our

joyful espousal of his cause, and open profession of his name. And at the same time sets forth the doctrine of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and of our being buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also are to walk in newness of life.

Brother Livingston, we have made rather a long article of this, but if any thing herein written shall be of service to you, or to any of the readers, we shall have cause to be thankful to God. May you and they carefully and prayerfully compare our views with the infallible standard of truth, and endorse our views only so far as they are clearly sustained by the scriptures of truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1861.)

Mark 16:17-18

Brother Beebe: — Will you give your views on the last words which our Savior spake before his ascension, namely: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

F. Brendell.

Hamilton Co., Iowa, March 10, 1859.

R E P L Y .

In the early ministry of the apostles of the Lamb, and of the primitive disciples of our risen Lord, all these signs did literally follow them that believed, for it is added in the closing verse of the same chapter, "And they went forth and preached, everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

Many instances are recorded of miracles performed by them in the name of the Lord Jesus, such as healing the sick, casting out devils; and we have an instance of the deadly viper which

lit on Paul's hand, and which he shook off into the fire, to the utter astonishment of the heathen with whom his lot was providentially cast, and all these signs were performed in confirmation of the word of the Lord. To prove by ocular demonstration the reality of the exaltation of the Son of God, and his divine omnipotence, external evidence was thus given, and such as confounded and stopped the mouths of infidel philosophers, but having thus by the most supernatural testimonies established the certainty of the resurrection and exaltation of our Divine Redeemer, ocular demonstrations were to cease, and the saints in all subsequent ages were to live by faith upon the Son of God, and not to walk by sight. If these ocular demonstrations were to be continued, the natural judgments of men might be convinced without any radical change of heart, as many were in those days of miracles. *But our knowledge of God, of spiritual and divine things, is not by informing or convincing our natural senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c., but by special revelation of the Spirit to the faith of the children of God.* The carnal Jews, whose religion was the service of a worldly sanctuary, and whose ordinances were carnal, relied on signs, desired signs, required signs, and the learned Greeks who sought after wisdom, were in their carnal state, incapable of appreciating any other evidence, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. But the children of God shall all be taught by the Lord. The Spirit, the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, is the teacher of the saints. He, said Jesus, shall take of the things of mine, and shall shew them unto you. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord.

Miraculous displays of the divine power are not now made to the natural understanding of natural men, as in the

apostles' day; but we do not hold that the day of miracles is passed. The work of salvation by grace is as miraculous now as it ever was. The work is superhuman, supernatural, and in it the naked arm of God is as visible to the faith of God's children at one time as another. The ministry of the gospel, in a spiritual sense, is as healing to the sick, and quickening to the dead now, as formerly. Not that preaching in itself ever quickened or healed any one, but these signs follow in all those whom God has quickened by his Spirit. It is the power and wisdom of God. In his name devils are now displaced, cast out, and believers in Christ are secured from the rage of wicked men and devils. The old serpent, and all his brood of vipers, are in this day, in a spiritual sense trodden upon by the saints, and all their venom is rendered harmless to God's people by and through the matchless name of our ascended Lord.

G. Beebe

(Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1859)

OBITUARIES

NANNIE M. NUCKOLS

Once more the Lord has called from our midst a dear mother and sister in Israel, Nannie M. Nuckols, Feb. 5, 1973, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. R. Dodd.

She was born in Pittsylvania County, Va., Oct. 19, 1871, the daughter of the late William S. and Labinda N. Myers. On Nov. 14, 1905 she married the late James Lee Nuckols. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. W. R. Dodd, Dry Fork, Va., Mrs. H. B. Williams, Penhook, Va. Four grandchildren, four great grandchildren: one brother, W. M. Myers, Halifax, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Posie M. Boaze, Danville, Va.

Mother was a good wife, mother and neighbor. She had a way and word for every situation that arose. She was a believer of the Primitive Baptist Doctrine from childhood but did not offer to the church until in her 98th year. She attended associations and church meetings far and near as long as health permitted. She fell and hurt her back on Monday after attending the Staunton River Association convening with the church at Weatherford July, 1959. Her last meeting in attendance at Strawberry Church was the first Sunday

preceeding above mentioned association.

She requested a church meeting at our home July 16, 1969, as she wanted to offer to the church; which was done. She related an experience of grace satisfactory to the church and was given the right hand of fellowship. She remarked that day that, "she did not know why she had been rebellious so long."

The baptizing was the following Wednesday in Sandy River. She was taken into the water in a chair by Brother Posie Holley and Elder Wallis Smith who helped Elder R. S. Payne with the baptizing. It was a beautiful picture. I have not words to describe it.

This was her last trip out of doors. She was bedfast for over three years, and the last three months fed like a baby.

Mother was patient during her long confinement. She would make the remark at different times, "101 years is a long time to stay in this sinful world." As she could not see or hear she'd quote scripture, often giving the interpretation; and sing the songs of Zion. The one I'd hear more often was "On Jordans stormy banks I stand," etc. After she could not speak to be understood I'd hear her humming the same sweet spiritual songs in the dark hours of the night, no doubt in sweet communion with her God. The last complete understandable statement I heard her make was, "I wonder what my pastor's text is today, there's preaching at Strawberry, Caanan, and Malmaison today. "This was a week day but as she could not see or hear natural things time was blank with her. This showed us that her mind was centered on Divine and Heavenly things, not worldly trifles. She was strong in the faith of her God and ready to defend that doctrine unto the end.

Mother wrote her funeral arrangements in February 1960, which was held in Townes Memorial Chapel, Danville, Va., by Elder R. S. Payne, her pastor. She requested the reading of the 23 and 103 Psalm. Read the enclosed song and prayer by the preacher. Her son-in-law Elder W. R. Dodd was living then. We wonder if she ever visioned surviving him, and, over ten years. I asked Elder Payne to speak further as he was led, which was comforting and fitting, after which the following song was read and prayer.

There are six stanzas of the song so will give only the first and last to save space.

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign.
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain.

Fain would my raptured soul depart,
No longer here remain,
But dwell, dear Jesus where thou art,
For me to die is gain."

Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va., beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of her Saviour to call his jewels home.

Written by request of Strawberry Church, March 4, 1973.

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

C. W. VASS

It becomes my painful responsibility to comply with the wishes of our church to record the passing of our dear, devoted, and faithful brother and deacon. I am trusting God will enable me to do this in honor of him who was so intelligent in rightly dividing the word of truth.

C. W. Vass was the son of Henry F. and Mary Beamer Vass. He was born in Carroll County, Va., May 25, 1890, and was called home at the age of more than eighty-two years.

He was married twice, first to Miss Lois E. Moore, and secondly to Sister Catherine Meads Cartwright. To the first union were born two children: one son, Milton Beamer and one daughter, Francis Marie. Lois preceded him to the grave by twenty-one years. Brother Vass and Sister Cartwright were married September 12, 1958, and God blessed them with fourteen devoted years together.

He was a man of profound knowledge who believed in a complete and finished work of God: one God sovereign and eternal; one who purposed all things for his children before the foundation of the world. He was well known for his excellent penmanship and written articles, including scriptural poetry. He constantly looked for good, not evil in his brethren. He said he was tired of the often confusion in churches: For whom Jesus suffered, he will take care of without any help from man. Brother Vass was what I would consider a dialectic on church matters and the scriptures, constantly examining them for their value.

During his youth, he clerked in a general store, and later taught school. Throughout this time he was greatly disturbed about his soul's welfare. His pilgrim's journey was long, and filled with many experiences of Grace, beginning at the age of ten years. He often spoke to me of the time and place he felt the presence of the "precious Lord." With tearful eyes we shared often the joy in these memories. I and many others will greatly miss his sweet counseling on the true doctrine: salvation by the Grace of God; the predestinated powers that be that do not make God the author of confusion, but peace and love. Bro. Vass was a man of love and a true defender of the doctrine. He was not devious but steadfast and immovable. He loved to give the reason for his hope, because he felt hope was the manifestation of God's power.

At the age of twenty he gave up rural life for the city. The change of place did not make any change in his religious concerns. He continued often in great despair, and at the age of twenty-two he had a dream which was a pleasurable experience, in which the Saviour placed around him a long robe which had previously been dipped in something. Beginning with this experience and until death, he loved to talk about the robe. He felt this robe represented the robe of righteousness. He longed for the day that Jesus would wrap it around him in reality. His dream gave him much happiness until he became ill, an illness which caused him to become greatly depressed. He stated that many transgression arose causing him to fear he would never see trouble enough concerning his sins. However, Jesus completes his work in His time and for His purpose, and the things that seemed to be against him, God worked together for His good and glory.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1931, Brother Vass received the acknowledgement from God for which he had longed: "Loose him and let him go." He went before the church at New Fellowship and was received, and remained there until he moved to Portsmouth, Va. In January, 1947 the Norfolk Church received him on confession of faith, and later ordained him a deacon.

While living in Portsmouth he worked in the Navy Yard in a clerical capacity as a book-keeper: working there until his retirement.

After he married Sister Catherine he made his home in Elizabeth City, N.C., and he brought his letter and joined at Flatty Creek, serving as deacon until his death.

His funeral was conducted at Twiford's Funeral Chapel by Elder J. T. Prescott, with Elder I. S. Conner assisting. The services were appropriate and comforting to all. Brother Johnny R. Gardner, whom Brother Vass loved dearly, directed an inspiring service at Oak Grove Cemetery in Portsmouth, Va.; and it was there he was laid to rest among the beautiful flowers. I believe his favorite hymn, "O may I worthy prove to see the saints in full prosperity: to see the bride, the glittering bride, close sitting by the Saviour's side," expresses his final reward.

To have known him gives me faith to believe he is occupying his "humble seat beneath his Redeemer's feet." Submitted by

Beadie L. Meads

POKIE G. GEORGE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from this vain world of sin and sorrow, our Dearly Beloved Sister Pokie George. She was born in Franklin County, Va., February 27, 1882 and departed this life on April 19, 1973

have lasting memories in my mind.

at Lynchburg General-Marshall Lodge Hospital, making her stay on this earth 91 years. She was the daughter of George W. and Catherine A. Pearson Gregory.

Sister Pokie was a retired schoolteacher and a very lovely person, always putting others ahead of herself, and was a firm believer of Salvation by the Grace of God. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 31, 1913 and was faithful to attend the Church as long as her health permitted, and was very mindful of the welfare of Weatherford Church. She will be greatly missed by the members of the Church, her many friends and her family.

Sister Pokie was first married to the late William S. Simpson and to this union three children were born: one son, Wyatt J. Simpson of Springhill, La., and two daughters, Mrs. C. T. Worley and Mrs. Lloyd Lakes both of Lynchburg, Va., also, seven grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. After the death of Mr. Simpson, she then married the late William A. George. Sister George was given all the care that human hands could have done for her during a long illness.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 P. M. on Saturday, April 21, 1973 by Elders Denver Simpson and Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we all be reconciled to the Will of God and be made to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by—

Marvin Brumfield, as requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

DEACON O. M. BENNETT

It is with knowledge of my weakness and inability that I comply with the request of the Church, to write a few thoughts of the sweet memories of our dear and precious Brother Bennett. I want to thank God for giving unto us this dear old servant, who has shared the burdens and the great responsibility in serving his brethren in the office work of a Deacon; which office he filled for fifty-two or three years, and was faithful in the obligations and duties of a deacon.

He was always ready to spend and be spent for the good and comfort of his brethren. He loved his brethren dearly, and enjoyed church services greatly, and was always there unless providentially hindered. He missed but few of the meetings until the last few years of his life, when his health became poor and he was unable to attend for three or four years. During these years I visited him in his home several times, and the moments I spent with him

Brother Bennett was born in Stokes County, N. C. September 25, 1878, and passed away May 1, 1973, making his stay here in this life 94 years 7 months and 5 days. He and Dora Francis Pulliam were married February 28, 1904, and to this union were born 4 sons and 2 daughters. In Brother and Sister Bennett's early life they united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Piney Grove in Stokes County; and a few years later they moved from Stokes to Guilford County near Hillsdale Meeting House. They then come to the Hillsdale Church with letters from Piney Grove, and were heartily received at the July meeting in 1920; and remained faithful members as long as they lived.

Sister Bennett preceded Brother Bennett in death on June 20, 1954. Brother Bennett spent many lonely hours after he was left to look out and care for himself, but the good Lord gave him strength and courage to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. He spent much time in reading the Bible and other religious literature—he possessed great knowledge of things pertaining to the church and the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

The members of Hillsdale Church have greatly missed these two God given servants; but we humbly bow in submission to the great and holy will of our blessed God. We desire to thank the great God for the gift of His dear Son, together with these two dear ones that have gone on, and left us behind. We could not wish them back, but just say, Sleep on dear Brother and Sister Bennett until our Saviour descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be awakened in His likeness. 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. There our voices shall ring out in praise to the great King, saying, Worthy art thou Lord God allmighty, because thou hast redeemed us unto God out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and made us kings and priests unto our God. There we will be heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Saviour.

Written at request of the Church,
D. A. O'Bryant

POSIE R. HARRIS

As I undertake to do what I am asked to do—to write the obituary of our beloved brother Posie R. Harris, I feel so unqualified to do so. God called him from among us November 18, 1972. He was born January 11, 1892. One had only to meet and be with our brother to be

drawn to him and his companion. How many times have I been in their home to be met by both of them with a warm hand-clasp, and a smile of welcome. Their home radiated their love of their church, their pastor, their children, neighbors and friends.

We know that God is all wise and never has or will ever make a mistake, so our brother's departure was perfectly timed, leaving us with hearts overflowing in sorrow that we shall no more enjoy our brother's company among us. The church desires to extend her sympathy to Sister Harris and each of their children. We know you all miss your loved one; we do too, yet would not, if we could, call him back to this sinful world. He has finished his course and is at rest. We desire to bow in submission to God's will that our brother leave us. His walk was soft, slow to speak when needs be, and quick to esteem others better than self. We feel some qualities he possessed were not only God honoring but commendable among Old School Baptists. Some of his children's pastors visited him in his home and in the hospital several times, each with tolerance to respect each other in their beliefs . . .

He and wife were blessed with a family of children who showed their care for their parents, and seeing to their needs. Brother Harris offered to the church in August, 1960, and he and his wife were baptized the same day with another sister. Sister Harris offered in July, then he came before the church relating the dealings of the Lord with him. They were baptized by Elder Jesse C. Paschal, the pastor then.

His family are as follows: Sister Etta Harris, Reidsville, N.C. Sons are: Bro. Godfrey Harris, Eden; Clarence and Leonard, Reidsville; Arnold, Eden; and Dubra Harris, Ridgeway, Va. Daughters are: Mrs. Gaynelle Paschal, Mrs. Shirley Williams and Mrs. Julia Somers, Reidsville; Mrs. Pearl Hundley, Eden; Mrs. Catherine Cox, Burlington; and Mrs. May Connor, Martinsville, Va. Surviving also are, one brother, G. C. Harris, Eden, and one sister, Mrs. Ada Turner, West Virginia; 32 grandchildren and 31 great grandchildren.

The funeral was held at his church November 21, 1972, by his pastor, Elder D. A. O'Bryant, assisted by Elder Thornton Manley and Mr. Harold Townsend. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N.C., desire a copy of this obituary be given the family, one spread on our church minutes, and one be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by request of the church while in conference January meeting, 1973. Written by Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk.

Eld. D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1973

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED A GOOD ASSOCIATION

Route 7, Box 488A
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is the Circular Letter for *The Upper Country Line Association* for the session 1973, will you please print this for us in the *Signs* and make any correction necessary. It has been with much pleasure that I have been associated with you in a very small way with the *Signs*. I am most appreciative for the labours of you and your lovely wife. It is my prayer that sister Wood is feeling better. I feel God visited us with His presence during our association. At the close of the meeting two came forward and united with the church.

If there should ever be a time that I could be of any service to you I would be glad to be your servant. I wish to thank you again for the reminder of the notice of our association. I am hoping to see you at the Pigg River Association. I received some subscriptions and re-newsals and Indigent Fund for the *Signs of the Times*.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Donald E. Smith

CIRCULAR LETTER
UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMI-

TIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
JULY 14, 15 AND 16th, 1973

To our correspondence, brethren and friends we extend greetings and welcome to each of you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to this the sixty-seventh session of the Upper Country Line Baptist Association being held with the Lick Fork Church.

It is our hope that we may approach this session in deed and truth in the great and adorable name of Jesus and of His fellowship, desiring the blessings of spiritual fruits that comfort and strengthen our souls.

May we find the promise true that He has given saying, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I will be in the midst also. We would desire to give thanks unto our merciful heavenly Father, who has drawn us unto His Son and been given to feast in heavenly places. We give thanks for the evidence of His abiding love and grace that has enabled this great people to meet together as brethren.

As each day fully comes may we feel to say, they were all with one accord in one place. May the truth and word of God have liberty and all the labours and deeds be to the praise and honor of our heavenly Father. May the truth be upheld in love and peace, according to our Saviour, that it fall not in the street because of the will of man.

May the grace of our Lord be with us now and in the days to come, keeping us in the path of righteousness, for His name sake, that we might maintain these blessings.

Submitted by Haywood W. Wray,
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

PEACEFUL, QUIET ASSOCIATION

Dry Fork, Va.

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is the notice of the meeting time of our Union, which please publish as soon as possible.

We had a peaceful, quiet association, (The Staunton River) a blessing from the Lord. From five to nine Elders preached each day.

I pray the same to be with each of your meetings, and both of you be blest with health to attend.

Yours in hope,
Josephene N. Dodd

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES POOLE
RECORDED IN DAN RIVER
CHURCH, VIRGINIA, JULY 14, 1972

I know that those of you who came to hear another brother are disappointed, but I'm certainly not disappointed that I had the privilege of coming here to be with you in fellowship with the Lord's people who gather here as often as the Lord would bring us together. It is always a bright and precious time in our lives when we can come here to Dan River Primitive Baptist Church to meet with those of like precious faith, and I hope that our coming together this evening will be profitable as we trust it has been in times gone by.

I notice often in association minutes the various speakers have beside their names the texts they took. Occasionally they write beside a name, "no special text". Sometimes I wonder if they never had a text or if their case was like mine this evening: they had so many texts they couldn't single out any particular one to put in the minutes.

If the Lord might so direct, I wish to speak out of all four of the first four books of the New Testament — out of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John — on a subject I feel I know little about; but what I know gives me great feeling and comfort. I want to read

initially out of the book of Luke in the 10th chapter a part of the scripture I know that you know very well, and yet I wonder how much we really know about it.

38. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

(Luke 10:38-42)

I wish I knew how to begin speaking on this. I wish I knew what would be the best order to approach the subject — much too vast, too deep, too beautiful for us to fully gain an insight on it this meeting. We have here the same story in another setting that we find throughout the New Testament—something coming to pass, a certain woman, a certain village, something definite, nothing ambiguous about the lesson at all. It is a family setting. Mary and Martha and, of course, their brother Lazarus that we find in the book of John; and I might point out that in every case where they are referred to in the scriptures, and it is often, that Martha is always named first, except in one occasion and that's in the book of John in the 12th chapter. Martha seems to be the older sister, and she seems to be the wiser head; and apparently from the air she manifests, she was the one who was busy about the technicalities of life. If we might say so, she was busy about the techni-

calities of the service she rendered to the Lord, and were it not for one text in the Bible, I would be inclined to think that Martha knew nothing about the sweet hope of eternal life. But I read in the 11th chapter of the gospel of John that the Lord loved Mary and her sister and Lazarus, so I have to conclude from that, the love of the Lord being everlasting and being of purpose, she is included in the number of his chosen ones. Martha gives me no personal reason to entertain anything by way of hope for her, but the Lord does. She is typical of all of the adherence to the "works system". Her religion is doing; here religion is acting out something; she is more concerned with the pots and the pans and the meal to be served—the fishes and the loaves, the appearance of the table, the decor, the window dressing, and all the other—than she is in the being in the presence of his Majesty, the King of Kings. We see in Martha everything that one should be on society's level.

In Mary we find almost the opposite. She doesn't seem to be overly concerned about entertaining, about putting on airs, about acting out the part of the good hostess, or any of these things. She is concerned about being at Jesus' feet. I hope that you and I are equally concerned.

I was thinking today while we were riding to this meeting how I wish I could feel what Mary must have felt — not to be physically but spiritually close to the Lord: to be in such communion with our blessed Lord that all of the other affairs of life would disappear from the mind. Mary indeed was a blessed woman. And when Martha raised an issue about it—she said "my sister has left me, and I have all of the responsibilities to take care of. I have all the duties and the chores that are necessary to entertain you properly." And our Lord, as if in a tone of compassion says, "Martha, Martha thou art careful and troubled." Such are we so often: troubled. The Lord in his word teaches us, "to be careful for nothing."

Let not your hearts be troubled," and yet she was the very example of the things our Lord instructs us not to be — careful and troubled about many things; and were we to embark upon the subject of things, we could cover a great deal of territory that our Lord covered in his life about the things of this earth: the illustration of the man who built barns and accumulated wealth, and the Lord came to him in the night and said ". . . Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" I wish that you might take some consideration about things—things, plural.

Martha was careful and troubled about many things, and our Lord says but one thing is needful. I think I could almost take the liberty in the English language to change the wording here without changing the meaning when He says "but one thing is needful." I think I could say, "*only* one thing is needful." There's not but one "needful" order on the agenda of life and He says, "Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Whatever it was Mary had, Martha didn't have; and yet they both were loved by the Lord.

It would be easy to dismiss the subject and say that Mary was what she was by the grace of God, and Martha lacked what Mary had because the Lord wasn't pleased to dispense to her what she had. It's the truth. But, I don't think it would be a satisfactory answer to this lesson, and it has aroused my mind to some extent lately exactly what and why Mary chose the way she did. You and I are not left to ourselves in the matter of our spiritual affairs. We know that. A man's heart might devise a lot of things, but the scripture says the Lord directs his steps; and I'm glad it's so. I don't know your position on it; I think I do. I'm thankful to leave my time in His hands as David said, "All my times are in his hands."

But we have here two sisters, chil-

dren of the same womb, probably the same environment, many things similar; but they are just as different as day and night. And yet, they have one thing in common, and that is the Lord loves them both. And I cannot see where He loved one more than the other. I do not believe that the scripture warrants a teaching of degrees of the Lord's love. But what is there about Martha that moves her to the many things, and what is there about Mary that moves her to the feet of Jesus? I think every one of you probably ask that same question in some way or another in your own experience, whatever it might be.

I look out on the faces of the Lord's people every time I stand before them, and I see some whose tears flow down their cheeks at the very mention of the name of Jesus, and there is a feeling in my heart for those people. I think how I wish I could have that tender feeling. How I long to be one who could be brokenhearted over the name of my Redeemer. I see one like Mary in the scriptures who can lay everything else aside and bow at His feet, to take the very crumbs that might fall from His lips and feast upon them as if they were the greatest morsels that she'd ever known. I think of how I'd long to be that way—so much of my life is spent in waste, and I suspect probably a great deal of yours is also.

As I said, I had given some thought to this subject, and I imagine many of you have. You might be able to pass on a great deal more light on it than myself; but as I began to think on it in the last several days and on other occasions months gone by, I find that Mary wasn't alone in the Bible by name. I discovered, to begin with, that there were five Marys in the New Testament, and each of them was unique: Mary, the mother of Jesus; she had a sister named Mary; there was Mary Magdalene, out of whom was cast seven devils; the sister of Martha; and then there was Mary the mother of Mark. There may have been more, but

at least there were five Marys. As I began to look at them, I find that each one of them had her respective place before the Lord; but this one captured my attention as none of the others could because I found something in her that so resembled the experience that I have had, and I think many of you have had, that I feel a closeness to this woman.

These two women (Martha and Mary) have a common background, and if you had the time to go through the scriptures you might find countless illustrations just like this. You would find Jacob and Essau, a common background in different pursuits. You would find Issac and Ishmael, common backgrounds and different pursuits. You would find even in the family of faith, Abraham and Lot coming together so far and then parting company — one going one way and one going the other. And yet both alike loved of the Lord.

As I have spoken to our congregations in Maryland at length on the subject of the book of Ruth, there was Ruth and Orpah, both Moabitish damsels, one stays home to worship her heathen gods and the other goes to the land of promise, there to worship the true and the living God. And down through the scriptures, we find a common fleshly tie and yet a division just as much as if a sword had passed through that family and took one one way and one the other way.

Now, I hope you might bear with me for a few moments, because I hope that in reading some scripture, I might bring to your mind, the Lord willing, something of why these girls were so alike and yet so different. I would like to start out in the book of John, the 11th chapter. (Verses 1 and 2)

1. *Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*

2. *(It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

Now mark this well. There can be

no question that Mary, the sister of Martha and the sister of Lazarus, is the one identified by John as she who anointed the Lord of glory in the city of Bethany. I might read verse 5 to you while I am in this chapter:

(5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. In John the 12th chapter, (and all I want to read these for, as I say, is to put these together. And if this is not preaching, maybe it will be instruction. Maybe it will be of some benefit to you.) (verses 1-5)

1. Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead,

2. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

Without further reading there, I'd like to turn to the book of Matthew, the 26th chapter (verses 6-12)

6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?

9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Now in the book of Mark in the 14th chapter, you'll notice these verses are almost identical texts. (verses 3-6)

3. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5. For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

We have thus far read in three books of the four gospels, and it is worthy of note that each of these accounts differ, and yet this is what makes the scriptures beautiful. They differ, and yet they are exactly the same. Only one names Mary. Two of them refers to it as spikenard: Mark and John. Three texts, when we read in the book of Luke, refer to the box as an alabaster box. All four of the gospels refer to it as ointment. And the point I think most worthy of note is that all four refer to this as a supper—three of them being, "sitting at meat." All four of them refer to a man at the house named Simon.

Although, as I say, the texts differ, there is too much harmony for us to say they are different circumstances or different scenes at different locales at different times. Two of the texts refer to the anointing as being the pouring out of the oil or ointment on his head. The one in the book of John refers to it as being anointing his feet; and then when we come to the fourth one, I wish us to look at it in some detail.

In the book of Luke, I think we can begin to put all of the four gospels to-

gether and learn something about what we initially look for—the differences between Mary and Martha. Now, if you might bear with me a minute or two more, I'll read in the book of Luke the 7th chapter beginning with the 36th verse. (ending with verse 40.)

36. And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37. And, behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.

38. And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

Now, as I have pointed out the similarity in these four settings, I think any fair-minded person would say the burden of proof is in favor of all four gospels referring to the same incident. They may not, but I believe they do, and I believe it very strongly. I don't think we would have different setting with entirely consistent, harmonious, and similar circumstances. As I said, two of them refer to anointing of his feet; two of them as pouring the ointment on his head. At any rate the anointment there reminds me so much of the anointing of the high priests in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus, when the order of priesthood began, and as it is referred to in the 110th Psalm, as it was poured upon their

heads and ran down to their beards and down the skirt to the lower parts of their garments. It was an anointing or a covering with oil signifying something of the spirit with which they were endowed. And this woman, in doing this, the Lord said, did it toward His burial, toward His death, and He said that she wrought a good work upon Him. We know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the woman's name in one text was Mary; and we know also that in two places besides the book of John it said it was at Bethany; as I have said it was at supper—it was at meat—and the man's house in every occasion was a man named Simon; and in two places Simon was called a leper—Simon the leper. Matthew and Mark both refer to him as a leper, and something that almost makes me fear to remark on it, in John, the Simon there was the father of Judas. It may be coincidence, but I don't believe it is; one Simon mentioned in each of the settings. One Simon here, and if they are the same, Simon the father of Judas was a leper. And certainly I would say his physical leprosy was no more than the moral leprosy of his son. But at any rate, that's for someone to speculate upon.

But, the circumstances in all of these are so similiar, I think we can say with some degree of safety that the Mary who anointed the feet of Jesus and the Mary who is the sister of Martha, at one time was known as a common "street walker". If we understood the wording well enough, he said that if Jesus knew what kind of woman this was He wouldn't let her touch him, because she is a sinner. And I think the construction of the sentence here is such that she was an unchaste woman. She was a woman who had taken the low road in life, a woman who had debased herself publicly to such an extent that when she burst into that home that everyone there knew that she was unclean—that she was a "street walker" a no good, a tramp, a nothing. And yet there was something urging this woman when she discovered that Jesus was in

the house. She went in without invitation; she went in without a bid; she went into a house of a Pharisee, and furthermore into the house of a leper. Because there was an urgency within her that she anoint the Lord, that she weep over His feet with tears, that she pour out there the expression of her soul in this outward act. I consider here that it is a lesson of the highest magnitude in the depths of sin that one can be in and still approach the presence of our Lord. And I might say this for any of this congregation this evening that feel they are too bad a sinner or at too distant a point from the Lord of Glory to approach His presence or be numbered with His people, let this Mary be a lesson to you. She was a vile sinner, and everyone in the community knew how vile she was by instinct and by practice, and yet it was such that the Lord received her and received that of her hand that she had, and even though Simon said "Lord, you ought not to have anything to do with her," the Lord received her gladly.

But the lesson here that the Lord gives to Simon when he says "Master, say on," is one which really identifies the difference between these two parties. (Luke, chapter 7 verses 41-44 . . .)

41. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him the most?

43. Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him. Thou has rightly judged.

44. And he turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? . . .

I think that this carries a great deal for us. He asks Simon what he really sees. Simon had already decided in his mind what he had seen. He said "Now, if he Lord knew, He wouldn't have

anything to do with her." He (the Lord) said, "Simon, do you really see this woman? Seest thou this woman? What do you see in her?" I'll tell you what the Lord's people have seen down through the years. When one comes from any degree of sin, it makes no difference whether they were an overt sinner as this woman was or one who could only cry within themselves, "unclean, unclean" and had never really done any outward acts of atrocities or crimes, as far as the law of the land was concerned. They see in them one that the Lord has loved, and they love them also. I can look across any congregation of old Baptists anywhere in the world, and when I can see the expressions on their faces under the sound of the gospel that they love the Lord of grace, there's a feeling in my soul of love for them; and I think I can answer the question the Lord gave there, "Seest thou this woman?" I don't see them then as a sinner. I see them as those whom the Lord has cleansed. I see them as those who have been brought nigh unto the Lord of glory Himself, and I see someone that I wish I were like. I see someone there that I feel will someday rejoice in a beautiful world of glory with the Lord Himself; and when I look at them, it makes me doubt about myself. Because I feel to be inferior to all of those, such as this woman, and all the Lord would point me to look at. "Seest thou this woman?"

44. I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48. *And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.*

49. *And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?*

50. *And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. (Luke 7:44-50)*

This brings us back now to our initial text: Martha and Mary. If our assumptions are correct, Martha has spent the bulk of her days in what we would today call Armenian service to the Lord. And yet, she was loved of the Lord; and this has really caused me to look upon those on the outside in a great deal different manner than I have previously. If the Lord can love them, it is not my business to condemn them. I will condemn to the end any rotten, false doctrine, but there's not any need in our condemning the Lord's people who have not yet been brought to a place where the Lord can say to them, "But one thing is needful, and you have chosen that good part"; and when I look at the illustration that the Lord gave to Simon at that time when, being a leper and when criticizing this woman for her crimes, the Lord said:

Here are two people. One of them was indebted to this man five hundred pence and the other fifty. There is a difference of ten fold there, and yet neither one of them had anything to pay with. Does it really make any difference how much in debt one is if he doesn't have anything to pay with? if he has absolutely nothing to pay off? He's in debt, and he cannot get out. One owed 500 and the other 50, and yet it is said this creditor frankly forgave both debtors; freely forgave them. It doesn't even say so much as if they came and begged for mercy or clemency or asked for any favor. It just happened that frankly he forgave them. He wiped out and did away with the debt, and to me it is very illustrative of the Lord of glory wiping out your debt and my debt without our asking. We had nothing to pay with. How we got in debt is not a matter of this subject, but the fact

that we are in debt and cannot pay is a matter of great importance to us. But frankly He forgave them, freely wiped out the debt.

Up until now I used to think that the Lord here was drawing a comparison between Simon, the leper, and the woman who washed His feet. I cannot accept that view this evening, though as I begin to investigate the text, because I find here that He begins to tell him that there are degrees of love in the hearts of the Lord's people. I want to be cautious in saying that; I don't want you to think there are degrees of the Lord's love. But the Lord does give to men a measure of faith as it pleases Him. There are some whose eyes are wider open than others, and there are some who seem to love more than others. According to this lesson, the one who was forgiven 500 of her indebtedness had a great deal more feeling for the one who forgave her than the one who had been forgiven the 50 amount. And when I look back at Simon, I don't see that he had been forgiven anything. I don't see that his attitude had changed. I don't see that he entered into the picture at all. I see, rather, the Lord is taking two cases and showing Simon, the leper, something about the matter of love which he knew nothing about. Simon didn't change his mind. He manifests no remorse, no conviction, no repentance, no change on the matter. The Lord illustrates to him two individuals who had been freely forgiven, and one had greater feeling than the other.

This brings me right back to the 10th chapter of Luke. When we take the two together, we know one of them was Mary; I conclude the other was Martha. Martha was in debt to the degree of 50. Mary was in debt to the degree of 500, and the Lord freely forgave them both. The Lord loved them both, according to the scripture, and the results of the magnitude of forgiveness toward Mary caused to develop within her a feeling unlike that which was in Martha. Martha loved; and Martha cared; and Martha knew a great deal, as we find in the

11th chapter of John; but Martha was not brought to the feet of the Lord as Mary was. And I conclude that it had pleased the Lord for Mary to traverse further in sin than it pleased Him to allow Martha to go. They both came, as I said, from the same background. They both experienced the same normal things, and yet one was wayward and the other was not. When the time came that the Lord manifested Himself to them, the one could not feel as much as the other did. In Mary's life, there was nothing there that we can see except total gratitude for her redemption. All she could think about was being near her Saviour, even to the point of intruding into a man's home when he was having supper; and we find in the 12th chapter of John, after Lazarus had been raised, when the supper was made, Martha is still serving. And all of Martha's life she'll probably go on serving.

It brings me to this conclusion: I am and you are what we are by the grace of God. If I had been brought to a shallow understanding of the scriptures and a minimal amount of love toward my Saviour manifestly, and you had expounded or fathomed or researched the depths of God's truth and were at His feet constantly; I say the Lord did it, and to Him be the praise. I have no criticism, no fault, of that one who has been brought closer, as John was, to the breast of the Saviour—he whom Jesus loved, and he who loved Jesus. And we recognize we love Him because He first loved us, but what a blessing it is to realize that whether we are Mary or whether we are Martha, we are what we are by the grace of God; and though there might have been degrees of our sins—maybe we had succumbed to more temptations than another—the consolation is the Lord loves us alike.

You might be sitting here tonight feeling to be the chief of sinners. Another here might not feel nearly so wicked. The Lord looks upon you with the same intensity of favor as he does any wretch who ever was redeemed by

grace. There are no variations; there are no degrees with God. The degrees are in our lives, which manifests the consistency of the Saviour molding and fashioning all His family alike. And if our understanding of this is true, we find another contrast — two families, Martha and Mary in one family, and there are degrees of love. One loves more than the other. One is busy about serving, and the other one cannot stand to be anywhere but at the feet of Jesus. And we find another family—Simon the leper and Simon's son, Judas. Simon was a leper. Simon was unclean, and yet he entertained the Lord. And while he was entertaining Him, his son had intensified his wickedness to the point he was out trying to sell the Lord for 30 pieces of silver. There are degrees in the families of the apostates as well as degrees in the family of the Lord, and it makes no difference which family one is in, he is what he is by the purpose and design of Almighty God—will be no better and will be no worse than it pleases our Heavenly Father—and I'm thankful it's that way. I hope you are.

What a joy it must have been to Martha to know that the Lord was coming to her home; and she probably did enjoy it. But do you think she enjoyed what Mary did? Mary didn't get out the "welcome wagon" and wave the banners as Martha did. The thing she looked forward to was the communion with her Saviour. And I trust and hope that all of us who have been led to a feeling of hope and trust in our Lord for salvation in that great day, to some degree or another, feel like Mary did. Lord I'm a sinner; I'm unclean; and if I must burst into Simon's house to be at your feet, that's where I want to be.

I'd say this without any hesitation, the way I feel right now: If I were outside this place, and I knew that the gospel service was being conducted; and you had bolts on the door, and I felt as hungry as Mary did, I'd come through a window or up through one of these vents—I'd get in here somehow that I

might have some affiliation with the presence of my Lord. It means something to God's people. They cannot stay away from it. They cannot avoid the companionship and the fellowship of the Lord's disciples and his people, any more than Mary could stay away from the Lord when he was in a house she was not bidden to. She wanted to be where he was, and, brothers and sisters, God's people today are no different. They want to be where their Saviour is; they want to be at His feet; they want to worship Him; they want to bow there, and if necessary, to wash His feet with their tears—to look upon His feet would be sufficient. I need not see His face; I need not see the print in His hands; I need not see the scar in His side. If I can bow at His feet, I believe the Lord of glory would teach me something of what the prophet said: "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings." Although the apostle has that changed somewhat in the 10th chapter of Romans (verse 15) "... how beautiful are the feet of them . . ." When the prophet Isaiah said it was Him, one alone, who brought the gospel to us, Jesus the Lord of glory and when he entered into that home—when Jesus went into the house of Simon—although he went there at his bidding, He had a message, and He had a purpose far greater than you and I could comprehend; and it was there that he might meet Mary. It was there that he might be anointed by her; and it was there this poor sinner might find something, a communion with her Lord and hear the sweet testimony, "Thy faith has saved thee. Go in peace." And then we might ask: "Oh Lord, where did she receive such faith?" The same place all God's people have received it. One thing is needful, not a great deal of things, but "one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

If I wanted to just be an out and out absoluter this evening, and I'm "kinda" inclined that way anyway. I'd say she

chose what she had to. She took what nature dictated. The Lord gave her a nature to taste the graciousness of the Saviour, and when our nature has so been constructed by the power of the spirit of God, infusing his Son into us and radiating the sweet hope of glory there, we'll choose the needful part. You need not worry about making the wrong choice. You need not worry about worlds being sent between you—the world of glory and the world of doom—and choosing the wrong course. The Lord will design your direction for you, and so make it and so bring it about that you'll choose the needful thing and rejoice in it until the day when the Lord would carry you to the grave.

May God keep us as Mary, at his feet and rejoice to know that whatever our debt, He frankly forgives and to the extent He forgave is the extent of our love. And to whom much is given, much is required.

I'd bid you to think if you feel to be a great sinner like Mary, then your forgiveness is much, and your responsibilities are great. And I would hope that the Lord would guide you to affiliate with his people in a visible way.

EXPERIENCE

Atlantic, Virginia

Dear Editors of the "Signs":

It is with fear and trembling I take pen in hand to try to write my experience. It has been requested of me and I have wanted to be able to do so for a long time. It is my sincere desire that what I write may be in accordance with the truth, as contained in the Scriptures, and written in the hearts of all that are His. Knowing my own feebleness and being ever made aware of my inability to perform anything good — that is, by nature — I write nevertheless; for I am made thankful for this experience, which has given me a reason to hope. It is peculiarly mine and it is all I have, or could want.

I was raised from childhood in the

Methodist Church by devoted parents whom I love in the flesh, and was reasonably happy with my own ability to look after my spiritual welfare until about eighteen years of age, when I became very disillusioned with myself and life in general. It was about this time that I was blessed, I believe, to marry into the Davis family, my husband being Lawrence B. Davis, the youngest son of Evelyn and W. A. Davis, Sr., both members of Snow Hill Primitive Baptist Church (Mrs. Davis being now deceased.) She was a dear, sweet person, whom I felt it a privilege and a blessing to be so closely associated with, and also all the other dear members of our family. I can truthfully say that they have never treated me with anything but kindness and certainly this is a great blessing from a loving Father, to have such a wonderful husband and family.

After my marriage I would occasionally attend services at Snow Hill and other Primitive Baptist Churches and I was impressed, at that time, with the differences, if not the Truth, from what I had previously been associated with. And I must confess that I felt drawn to these "Peculiar" people from the start. I was, at this point, very confused and found myself constantly searching the Scriptures, as if by reading with an open mind (I kept telling myself) I could ascertain what the truth of the matter was. I was particularly impressed with the ninth chapter of Romans, which I read and re-read and could do nothing with. I tried to obtain help from my former associates but grew, nonetheless, steadily worse. I was allowed to wander about in this confused and dreadful state for about ten years, in the which I dabbled about in all sorts of sin and the lewd things of this world.

During this period I became extremely dissatisfied with myself and even considered taking my own life — so low had I sunk. Even during this terrible period, I was given re-assurance, through a dream, that Someone other

than myself was in control of all affairs of life, and I was given to believe that if He had, indeed, begun a good work in me He would continue it to the end. Some may scoff at visions or dreams, but my experience is precious to me and I am thankful for it.

Having come to the end of my own strength, I was given to ask for a home in the visible Church at Snow Hill in December, 1970. It would be impossible to express what I felt at that time, except to say that I believe I was made willing in the day of His power to take a step that, until the moment before, I had not even considered. Those beautiful people received me, unworthy tho I was, and am, and I was baptized on Feb. 28, 1971.

Since that time things have not all been uphill. Traveling in this time-world has never been easy for any of His children, nor were they ever meant to be. The trials and sorrows keep us low and teach us where our dependence is, but I have had an inner peace which I never dreamed possible, and joy unspeakable at times is mine. When left to myself, I am capable of anything and even wonder at times, if I have not deceived the Church and myself — so sinful is my nature. However, I believe I love these dear ones and enjoy a fellowship with them which the world cannot understand. When I am given to think that Jesus died for such a one as I, that this is possible, it is too wonderful for me to comprehend, and my heart is melted in thankfulness.

When blessed with the spirit of prayer, remember me and may the cloak of charity cover all errors. If this is not fit to print, I'll understand.

A little Sister in Hope,
(Mrs.) Dixie Davis

Rt. 2, Box 134.
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Editors:

After tossing and turning in the night, I looked and it was midnight,

and something seemed to say, "Write", and I said what shall I write?" I arose and started writing, under the command of my God, I hope.

This voice said, "Write, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. There is no God beside me. I am the cure for a sin-sick soul. I am God and I change not, the bright and morning star. I hold the keys of death and hell: I do my will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay my hand. I know my sheep and they follow me, and another they will not follow into a strange doctrine. My soldiers of the cross are all dressed in uniform, and they give me honor and praise as their Captain, and they shall have no other God before me. I bring them to the still water and they drink, and never thirst again. I go before them in all their troubles, and bless them in all their trials along the rugged journey.

My sheep and my lambs are carried about in my arms and I will not let them stray afar, because there are wolves on the outside, waiting to capture one for himself. I have shown you a wolf in sheep's clothing, and you know what they will do, and are seeing it manifested before your eyes.

These are some of the thoughts that were presented to my mind to write. Yes, I had a dream of a wolf in sheep's clothing and saw it manifested; and still see the results of the dream. The dear old servant that baptized me fought them, and I am proud to say that I have done the same. I am not ashamed of what God has revealed to me. My journey has been rough, but it all has grounded me stronger and deeper in the faith that was once delivered to the saints. I believe the old servant that stooped so low to baptize me, would be glad to know that I have been blessed with grace to fight a good fight. I have been so alone in my fight, but God said, "I will not leave myself without a witness." Which means that he does not need ten, or two, here on this earth;

but one will be sufficient for the day.

I have been made to hate the pride of the flesh. I seem to love the old meeting houses more and more. Years ago I read where barns were used for meeting houses; and they preached the doctrine in homes. I love the book of Elder Wilson Thompson, and have one. O what sermons are recorded therein! they are feasts to me. He stood firm in the faith I believe. I also love Pilgrim's Progress, and the *Signs of the Times* are dear to me. They feed my hungry soul from time to time.

I was blessed to attend the 4th of July meeting at old Pine Creek Church and heard the services. Some were strong on the foundation that stands sure and solid as a rock: the absolute predestination of all things.

The blessed Lord called my companion home this past February, leaving me alone. He was a firm believer in absolute predestination of all things. My home is lonesome, but I am only going through what God has predestinated for me, and I feel God's presence here; and blessed be the Comforter that He sends. Could we ask for anything more than what He sends? We are often cast down but not destroyed; cast aside as a heathen for the truth's sake, yet all these things are appointed for us, to make us grow deeper in the faith that was once delivered to the saints of old. We are no better than the saints of old to bear the cross. If we are made to stand in these last days when so many are falling away from the truth, then we are alone and shall suffer persecution; which is fulfilling the Scriptures this very day. "But when you see all these things coming to pass, look up for your redemption draweth near."

I remain a helpless sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

Mrs. Pauline Spencer

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Stump

Sound Church, Onslow County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in September, 1973.

The meeting house is about one mile off Highway 17, between Jacksonville and Wilmington. Turn off 17 at Holly Ridge, N. C. to left coming from Jacksonville, and go to first hard road, turn left on dead end road to the church.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

PLEASE NOTE

Sister Pearl Dudley desires the Elders, brethren and friends to meet at her house for a get together and singing the second Sunday afternoon in September, from two until six p.m. Her address is Rt. 1, Box 382, Hardy, Virginia on Highway 678.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Creeches Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in September, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

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

NOTICE

Elders J. Roy Agee and D. V. Spangler will fill an appointment at Pine Creek Church, near Floyd, Va. September the 16th., third Sunday in September at three o'clock P. M.

NOTICE

Elder D. V. Spangler will fill the regular appointment at Bellview Church near Roanoke, Va., the third Sunday in September at 11:00 A. M. and Elder Leonard Brammer will fill the regular appointment at Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C. the same day and same hour.

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association* is due to convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, located

six miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273 and go one-half mile west to Barnes Sawmill. (The church is located near the Sawmill.) The meeting begins Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1973, and continuing through Sunday. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Brother Ross Watson, Clerk
Tinsman, Arkansas

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association* is due to convene with Bethel Church, located six miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas on Hy. 167, 1/2 mile west, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Sept. 1973. Lovers of the truth are welcome.

Brother Eugene Patterson, Clerk
203 Line Street
Farmerville, La.

THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The two hundred eighth session of the *Kehukee Association* is to convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Bear Grass, Martin County, N. C. the first Sunday in October, 1973, Saturday before and Monday following.

Those coming from the north travel U.S. 13 and U.S. 17 to Williamston, N. C., take U.S. 17 for one mile, turn right on 1001 to church. Coming from the south travel U.S. 17 to 1001 intersection one mile south of Williamston, turn left on 1001 to church. Coming from the east and west travel U.S. 64 to Williamston, take U.S. 17 south for one mile to 1001, turn right on 1001 to church.

We extend to our correspondence, brethren who are of the same faith and order who are in peace with us, and friends, a cordial invitation to meet with us.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Mod.
Elder M. E. Garner, Clerk
Deacon Joseph Leggett, Asst. Clerk

Dear Elder Wood:

I personally extend to you and your wife an invitation to come to our association. If I am not deceived, I have been made to love you not as a man, but for the doctrine you preach and stand for. May God continue to lead you on in that way which leads to eternal and everlasting life that the Lord has in store for them that love him. Please, if possible, arrange to come and be with us.

With love to you and Sister Wood.

Elder M. E. Garner

Danville, Virginia September, 1973

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EDITORIAL

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." (Matthew 16:3)

To discern the "signs of the times" means to be aware to what a succession of events point; and to which they will eventually lead: this is the sum of accumulative evidences.

In this article we refer only to things which are commonly called spiritual: for under this heading many foreboding events are accumulating, which can only lead to further, and, if possible, wider departure from the primitive simplicity of the gospel.

As we begin to consider the subject, it is necessary to recognize that there are in fact just two kinds of churches abroad in the world: One follows the gospel doctrine and order, as declared in the beginning by the Lord and his Apostles, (and which still exists, since God said he would not leave himself without a witness); the other is after that which the apostle described as "another gospel"; against which he solemnly warned and admonished the brethren. Under this heading we cannot but include all other religions, since they are likewise opposed to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First. The Doctrine of the Gospel:

The gospel preached by the Apostles was, of course, identical with the teaching of Jesus. And of it Saul said he was not ashamed, "For it is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe . . ." The Gospel has its clearly defined teaching, and is the declaration of the fulfillment by Jesus Christ of all things spoken by the prophets. So, when Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," he sealed forever any other interpretation of them; or that there was any other reason for their preservation.

When Jesus clearly stated that his purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, it

is evident that He himself was *the way* his Father had provided for the redemption and salvation of His people. And it is apparent that those whom he called brethren, *believed all things which He preached and taught* after they were brought into the full understanding of what he taught; and it should be evident that none can properly be called Christian who believe otherwise than what he taught.

His Apostles taught no other things than those Jesus delivered unto them; and the churches were set in order and established upon these things. In spite of all the intervening years, and all the attempts of unbelieving men to rid His doctrine from the face of the earth by declaring that parts of it are inconsistent with the nature and being of God, there are yet those who believe and hold the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, without admixing the commandments of men. They believe and hold to these things because God has not ceased to call men out of darkness into his marvelous light; nor ceased to shine in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; nor ceased to bring all his own to the spiritual birth, and seal them with the holy spirit of promise — the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

God is no way dependent upon the voluntary zeal and work of men for the promoting, or the continuing of his church in the world. As the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he does all the work: the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling: He does everything for the bringing of his beloved people unto glory. He has ordained all things to this end, and for his own glory: whether men, times, or events, so that all things are accomplishing his determined purpose. God has set up his Kingdom in the world, and it shall not be destroyed, or left to other people; but shall stand forever, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

So, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures that God *loved His people, and chose them in His Son before the world began*. He sent His Son into the world to redeem all these from their sins: He died for their offenses, and rose again for their justification. All of these compose the Church of God: as individuals they are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began. God has his own way in bringing each one of them into the knowledge and comfort of his love and mercy, so that it is declared that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God has, of course, given gifts unto men, qualifying them to preach his gospel, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for edifying the body of Christ; but certainly not to go outside of the election of grace, and undertake to add to the redeemed family.

The above things make up the sum and substance of The Gospel; but there is

Second, Another Gospel:

Herein lies what we presently have in mind concerning the "signs of the times." Any other gospel — any other teaching, must be considered counterfeit; and, being so, has many similarities of the Gospel. It speaks of grace, of mercy, of being born again, of Christ the Redeemer, etc. But the emphasis is always upon the will of men being able to accept or reject what is called an *offered salvation* to everybody; which makes everything in the way of salvation dependent upon men, whether they will or will not accept and believe to the savings of their souls. This leaves the sacrifice of Jesus questionable both to its application and effectiveness. And, if true, would destroy the eternal choice or election of God; and, if true, would destroy the whole purpose of God in sending his Son into the world; and would prove that Jesus failed to do what his Father sent him

to do.

Such teaching is well called another gospel, since it is contrary to what Jesus and the Apostles left on record in the Scriptures. If God is unable to do his will, he ceases to be God. *We thank Him that this can never be.* But, if he is, it would confirm the recent pronouncement that, "God is dead"; and we really agree that the God which many have been preaching all these years, is dead. For many have preached and believed that he does not control all things, and that he has stiff competition in the Devil; and is even subject to men's wills as to whether he can save them, or not. It is true, there were those who would not come to him; but they were pronounced as being of their father the Devil, and not of those unto whom Jesus came as a Saviour.

Now, some more of the signs of the times: When I was a boy going to the schools of such teachers, it was freely asserted that if the churches could get enough money and men, (which they expected without question,) they would be able to Christianize the world, the whole world, save the heathen, etc.: Then wars would cease between men and nations, and there would be a sense of brotherhood among men. That was more than sixty years ago: The whole scheme is a failure. Men do not seem to learn that human nature cannot be purged of its failure by the urging of other things which are of the same nature; or that a profession of religion of sorts means there is a real change in heart. Even the quickened subjects of grace do not experience a change in their "old man," except as the Spirit subdues and controls him; and they are made to hate the things of their flesh, expecting someday to put on immortality. Paul knew what a wretched man he was in his flesh, and desired to be delivered "from the body of this death."

How many hundreds of years this work of men has been going on, I do not know; but it is certain that it has

been based upon nothing more solid than mortal men. Paul wrote Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of these that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: From such turn away." Also he wrote, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

This is a serious indictment; but the signs of the times all along have proved how right he was; and more: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:3-12)

The signs of the times today show

that men know their designs have failed; but, being nothing daunted, they now move to take a new start: to "back up," join forces, and use every available means — natural, that is. With individual church organizations giving up their long cherished freedom, joining with every conceivable and diversified doctrine, to form a mighty phalanx, reputedly to fight sin and the Devil, and save those within its clutches; to fight what must be a losing battle, since all the redeemed of the Lord have been taken care of by the eternal love of God, who deals with his people directly through his Spirit; and sends his servants to feed and comfort them, and perform those ordinances which he has established in his church, for as long as the church is in the world.

These are some of the signs of the times religiously. They seem good, we suppose, to everyone except those who do not name the name of Jesus, (and some of those are joining in,) and except those who have learned that the Lord made a new covenant, which he has applied in their hearts, in which it is said, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." And likewise those who believe with Peter, "For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Those who are so taught will not join in such things to which the signs of the times point. Those who have felt the power and grace of God in bringing them into the knowledge and joy of salvation, know that an empty profession cannot bring salvation; and that the mere act of being baptized is not regeneration; and that none of the other so called sacraments as commonly administered and adjudged, bring about that which is solely the work of the

Spirit of God, in revealing and applying what the election of grace has accomplished.

The signs of the times are not encouraging to us, but they do serve to make us glad that we know that all things are still under the control and disposition of our God, who said unto his Son Jesus Christ, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

There is a great multitude of people who, ". . . cannot discern the signs of the times."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God's judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity

of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." —Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto 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, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7.) By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." — Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah

unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized unto his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regen-

eration, and shall never again come into condemnation, for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law, but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third: The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, there-

fore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand the testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places; and they

are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine revelation assures us that "The Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us." — Isaiah xxxiii. 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into Hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

"Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin."

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1856. We are glad to re-publish it, for the truth it contains should put many at ease who have been concerned about the Judgment. — J. D. W.)

(The above Editorial and Voices of

the Past are re-published at the request of one of our correspondents. They are taken from the July, 1966 issue of the *Signs*.

Since we hold that these things are sound in doctrine, we are glad to re-publish them. — J.D.W.)

Franklin, Ind.
May 6, 1875

ELD. BEEBE — DEAR BROTHER:— I am seated for the purpose of trying to pen a few thoughts on the following scripture, recorded in Isa. ii. 2: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."

The last days here alluded to undoubtedly refer to the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when young men are to prophesy, and old men are to dream dreams, when the Lord shows wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; the time when he demonstrates by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, who the true Israelites are, the ancient rite of circumcision in the flesh gives place to that of the heart.

Jerusalem was built on Mt. Moriah, beautiful for situation; and especially in the time of Solomon's reign was the pride of the Jews, and the wonder and admiration of the whole earth. The Jews would point to Zion, saying, Walk about, and go round her; tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to generations following. But as this city is typical, and our text is prophetic, let us try to understand the true meaning. The Jewish world or service terminated when the vail of the temple was rent in twain. The former days were past, and the latter days are now come; and notwithstanding the Jews, as the peculiarly blessed people of God, and

Jerusalem, the place where his name had dwelt, still God in the last day's will exalt his house still higher, even in the top of the mountains, above all national or human government, even of the Jews, to whom laws had been given by their Creator. But it was temporal, shadowy and typical, and had served its purpose; and based on it is a structure erected that reaches to heaven. The ancients tried to build a tower to heaven, but the Lord confounded their language, and a Babel was by them built.

Often since do workmongers strive to unite to build a passage to heaven; but meet with no better success than their ancient brethren. This right God has reserved to himself, and will confound intruders wherever found, in christian or in heathen lands. But the hour cometh when neither in the mountains of Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall the true worshippers worship the Father. It is not the locality that gives it validity, but the spirit, and the truth required the divine service; hence those that worship in spirit and in truth, must be in the spirit and know the truth. Such service we must not expect from the natural man, whose mind is carnal and enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; and the scriptures show that Jews as well as Gentiles are by nature the children of wrath, that all have inherited a fallen, degenerate nature, being the children of one whose disobedience brought sin and death into the world. Sin and death has blighted, marred and spoiled all this degenerate family, so that pangs and sorrow, lamentations and woes are poured out upon them from the cup of wrath. The conscience-smitten sinner, whether in civilized or in heathen lands, is ever trying to hush the voice of his accusing conscience by offerings. This is true among barbarians, as well as among the civilized.

Early in the history of our race Cain and Abel were engaged in presenting offerings; although the former presented an offering, yet he did not present

a sacrifice; but the latter not only presented an offering, but also a sacrifice, a victim of blood, which showed his faith in the Lamb of God. So in all the long line of our race, the thing that discriminates between the true worshiper and he that worships only in form, is the one makes a sacrifice, while the other only presents a gift. It is difficult to find one so debased and sunken in sin, but he is glorying in some good quality he imagines he possesses; he thanks God that he is not as other men, whom he thinks to be worse than himself, looking to his better qualities as an offering to the Most High, and upon which he tries to trust. While it is true that all are under the law and its curse, yet none but those who are taught of the Lord know the spiritual import of the law. Paul said, I was alive without the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. For the first time he had a discovery of its breadth, height and depth, extending as it did to every act and thought, bringing to his memory every sin, all things that ever he did.

As he had before been, like all other legalists, living by obedience to the law, thinking its demands were only such as he could perform, being ignorant of its real intent and meaning, but now having an understanding of its true or spiritual import, he sinks, despairs and dies to all hope of acceptance by works which he has done, which now looks to him no better than filthy rags. Thus despoiled of all the rich legal apparel, and made to loathe it as the filthy dunghill, the heavy laden sinner laments his condition, feeling that woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. He has learned that the law of God is just and holy, but he is carnal, sold under sin, and justly condemned; so that if his soul is sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well; but he pleads, "Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord, whose hope still hovering round thy word." Jesus

said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The word *men* here is supplied by the translators. No doubt the same idea is here presented as is found in the language of the Savior elsewhere, when he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

In Revelation John says of Christ, that he has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. Here is the Church of the living God, established not upon the overthrow of the law, which man could not keep, but in its fulfillment by Jesus Christ, the head of the body, even on the top of an honored and fulfilled law. And all nations shall flow unto it; the people redeemed by Jesus out of every nation. If we look on this as a natural sequence, it would be an anomaly, for all natural objects, drawn by the centre of gravity, tend downward; if hard or solid substances they tumble, if liquids they flow, but all are drawn to the earth. All things akin to the earth have an affinity for the earth, and are attracted thereto. Among this class is the first man, Adam, of the earth, and earthy, and all his long line of posterity. The magnet will draw certain metals that have an affinity for it upward, downward or horizontally, to a limited extent, but cannot draw them from the earth; for unsupported, it will itself fall to the earth, being earthy.

But Jesus says, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Here is a magnet possessing rare properties and of great magnitude, but like other magnets, will draw none that have not an affinity for him. Where shall we look for those who have this

affinity? Not to the children of Adam, as such, but to those born of the Spirit, born again, having the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwelling in them. "A well of water, springing up into everlasting life"—an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the forerunner has for us entered; having his love in their hearts, which leads to God again. Thus we realize that there is an affinity, and not only so, but the hard heart is made soft, and we are melted like wax, ready to flow; now where shall we flow? To that which has the strongest affinity for us. We realize that we are in a strait; we are drawn to the earth, being earthy, and are, we hope, drawn to heaven, having a desire for that which is heavenly. But, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we feel that we are drawn, and we cry to the Lord to increase our faith and draw us, and we will run (or follow) after him. Thus melted, we lose all our cohesive strength, we become weak, we cannot stand, much less walk, helpless and entirely dependent on that which draws, as to whither we flow. "Thus saith the Lord, To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." And again, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and he that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Then Jesus is the great magnet that draws us to him, having by near ties of kindred made our sins his own, and by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified; and by virtue of the same relationship, his righteousness and the Holy Spirit, with its sanctifying power, becomes ours, thus producing a unity of sentiment, that makes us one with him; so that our affinity or love for him draws us to him. Hence we flow upward to where his church is, even to heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We have been made to rejoice in the

Lord of late for his manifest tokens of love to us at Bethel. Since last November there have eighteen joined our church; sixteen by experience and two by relation; two in November, nine in March, and seven in May, all giving very satisfactory evidence of a work of grace; some remarkably clear and pointed, and most of them date their experience back for years. Not only this, but many others are deeply affected; indeed the church and all who attend seem to be solemn and greatly wrought upon. We hope the Lord has begun a good work among us, and will carry it on. Our dear brother, D. Bartley, was with us at each of those meetings; we feel confident the Lord sent him to us with a message comforting and consoling; for the angels, or gospel ministers, are in the right hand of God, and he says, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; directing them to their field of labor by the guidance of his Spirit.

May the Lord still bless us, and add to the church such as he calls by his grace, and leads to the acknowledging of the truth; and not only us, but may he bless his saints wherever located, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother,

Elder P. K. BARR.

(We believe the brethren will read the above with much interest, for great truths are plainly set forth.—J.D.W.)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church — Guilford County, North Carolina, a presbytery met May 19, 1973, at 7:00 P. M. for the examination of Brother Wayne Edwards, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the discretion of their judgement, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity began with song 9 from Hymn and Tune Book and prayer by Elder Haywood Wray. All elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth Key, Leonard Key, Haywood Wray and Donald Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Kenneth Key as Moderator and Elder Donald Smith as Clerk. Elder Haywood Wray

was chosen to examine the candidate. Deacon Tommy Batts, who had been appointed spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Wayne Edwards to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Haywood Wray using scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter. The presbytery, being satisfied with the examination, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Leonard Key. Elder Haywood Wray delivered the charge to the candidate using scripture reference 6th Chapter Acts.

The Moderator asked Brother Tommy Batts if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Wayne Edwards and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro.

The minutes of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Kenneth Key.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Donald Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

THOMAS JEFFERSON FLEMING

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in regular monthly conference March 31, 1973, at Cash, Texas, requested that I write a memorial to Brother Thomas Jefferson Fleming; familiarly called "Jeff". He began his earthly pilgrimage December 7, 1888, in Collin County, Texas; and his appointed time to leave this world came February 12, 1973, at Hawkins, Texas. He married his wife Myrtle in 1911; who survives. They reared a large family — twelve or thirteen children. They celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary in December, 1962.

Brother Fleming made his living for himself and family by tilling the soil. As a result this family learned the dignity of work. They showed their respect for him the day of the funeral; as well as did his many friends and neighbors.

Brother Fleming's walk was a walk of circumspection — calm and heavenly. He never appeared frustrated or fanatical, although he had many bruises, ups and downs, short crops, low prices, droughts and floods. I believe he was well acquainted with Matthew 12:20: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench till he send forth judgement unto victory." His victory was swallowed up in the manner he departed this life, and the way he was graced before all who knew him.

He had been a member of the Primitive faith many years before he was baptized into the church on June 5, 1971, by Elder Lloyd

Wall. Elder Wall at the funeral paid tribute to Brother Fleming's faith and belief.

He was laid to rest to await the Great Trumpeter, in the Smyrna Cemetery in Rains County, Texas.

Guy Sisk, Church Clerk.

NANNIE SUSIE CARTER

Nannie Susie Carter was born July 27, 1892 in Franklin County, Virginia, the daughter of Jerman W. and Martha Franklin Carter. She died January 29, 1973 at the age of eighty-one.

Surviving are the following brother and sisters: Fletcher G. Carter, Mrs. Charles W. Dyer, Mrs. John D. Wood, Mrs. George E. Sisler, Mrs. Charlie Burgess, Mrs. John R. Deveraux, and Miss Viola Carter.

Susie united with the church at Roanoke, Virginia, in October, 1916, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hurst, along with four others. She loved to assemble with the brethren in the meetings, and rejoiced in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. At every opportunity she was with us in attending associations and other meetings far and near, and had many friends among the brethren.

The last three years of her life she was confined in a nursing home, but never lost interest in the meetings, always inquiring about them. She would say that she longed to hear preaching one more time. She always enjoyed the brethren and friends when they visited her and spoke of their hope of eternal life through the grace and mercy of God.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. E. Turner and Elder J. L. Bocoek at Oakey's Funeral Home in Roanoke, and was laid to rest in Sherwood Memorial Park, Salem, Va. to await the coming of the Lord, when she shall be conformed to His image in the resurrection, be like Him and to praise Him forever, receiving the end of her faith, even salvation.

Written by two who loved her, a sister and brother-in-law,

John D. and Virginia Wood

SISTER BIRDIE LAWSON

Our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove our beloved sister Birdie Lawson from the walks of this life, from this low ground of sin and sorrow, and placed her in that peaceful rest until He sees fit to come and gather his jewels who have been redeemed in the Saviour's blood.

Sister Birdie Adams Lawson was born in October, 1901, to the late Edd and Ora Adams, and was called to her eternal home April 28, 1973; making her stay here 71 years and 6 months. She was married to Lynn Lawson in August, 1924, who preceded her in death December 30, 1960. To this union were born four children, who are left to mourn her passing:

Mrs. Joe (Wanda) Williford, Mrs. Joe Edd (Linda) Emerson, Ted and Merritt Lawson, all of Murray and near Murray, Ky. She leaves 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild; also three brothers: Hill, Fred and Tom Adams; three sisters: Mrs. Berl Darnell, Mrs. Carl Hoke and Mrs. Marty Bloc — one sister and four brothers have already passed on.

She was a member of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. Eld. O. W. Perkins baptized her in August, 1960. The church has lost a faithful and loving member, and the children a precious and devoted mother, and the neighbors a kind friend. Sister Lawson believed in salvation by grace and the God who has all power in heaven and on earth. I don't believe she was ever absent from Zion Church services after becoming a member there, and had attended long before. She loved the cause and always ready to help support it, not only in her own church but everywhere she met with Primitive Baptists. She had her own conveyance and always saw that her pastor and his wife, and friends and members had a way to go with her.

The brethren and sisters always had a warm welcome to visit her in her home, and it was a blessed pleasure for her to have them. This was her whole life and joy. She was blessed to be able to go to church and assemble with them until the very last. She was stricken with a heart attack on Saturday morning, April 28th, and passed away at 12:20 the same day.

Eld. Paul Poyner said the last words of respect amid a host of relatives and friends, and her body was laid to rest in Murray Memory Garden beside her husband, beneath a beautiful floral offering, to await the second coming of her Lord and Master, to be called from the sleeping dust to that Eternal City whose maker and builder is God.

The writer knew her many years, and loved her very dearly. Her passing has left a void that can never be filled — she is missed more than words can ever express. May the Lord keep and sustain all the bereaved ones; but dear children and friends, let us not mourn as those who have no hope. Christ is coming again — this time to gather his children unto himself. What a sweet hope we have that we shall be with Him forevermore.

We humbly bow to the will of a Sovereign and Merciful God, believing our great loss is her eternal gain.

The members of Zion Church agree that Sister Trudie Adams write a Resolution of Respect for our beloved Sister Birdie Lawson, and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one for the Church record, and one to the family.

Elder Paul Poyner, Mod.

Sister Trudie Adams, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1973

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A PRAYER

Rt. 2,
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

Greetings to all of God's little ones, whether I am one or not. I am enclosing \$5.00 for renewal, and use the other for Indigent Fund.

One night after retiring I felt impressed to write some of my thoughts. As I could not sleep, I got up and wrote a few lines, but I know they may not be worth much:

Lord help me if I be thine; my precious Saviour look down upon me from thy heavenly place above: let thy light shine around me, and keep me near the circle of thy love. If so it is thy will to gently guide me along life's rugged path as I go,—as I travel through this maze of sorrow, be Thou near wherever I may go.

Teach me, Lord, to be more humble, that is my plea. O Lord forgive and make me walk more patiently in this life that I live. Guide, guard, and direct me, O Lord, that is my plea.

If one at all I know that my help must come from thee. I am so helpless when left to my self. I pray for your guidance in all that I may do. If it be thy will, remember me, O Lord I pray to you.

I know I do not have much light on

these precious truths. Which makes me often wonder if I have ever been taught anything in the school of grace. It is all in God's hands.

I enjoyed Brother Gregory Duren's writing. I hope he will write more, if he is given a mind to do so. May the good Lord be with us all.

A sinner in need of mercy,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

THINGS WHICH ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED ONLY

The blind and ignorant cannot see or understand the gifts and calling of our eternal Father; and neither can they be expected to understand, for these are spiritually discerned. Neither can any man know our Lord Jesus Christ except He be revealed by our Father. Also no man can come unto our Lord Jesus Christ except our Father draw him.

I have learned this precious truth by experience and revelation: and no man had anything to do with the experience. Therefore I surely know that the salvation of God's people is in no wise dependent upon a preacher or any other human source or effort. The world today is holding the theory that a child chooses a father instead of the father choosing a child, — or a lost man chooses a Saviour. This is a ridiculous doctrine to the child who knows the difference.

I have been ridiculed and rejected by religious people; but that does not bother me any more, for I know from whence my salvation comes. It is not from any source except the eternal God who holds all life and death in his holy

hand. Many have turned their backs on me and considered me out of reach. But the precious truth which lives within me, far out-weighs the trouble, grief and sorrow I have known. Our precious Saviour promised that it is through much tribulation and sorrow that we enter the kingdom. In order to enjoy a kingdom there must be a King, that knowledge is worth more by far than any wealth this world affords.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

PREDESTINATION

Our preacher said one morning that the word *predestination* doesn't need any adjective before it. I hadn't heard at that time of "limited" predestination, but now I understand why we say that we believe in "the absolute" predestination "of all things."

I've seen children take dominoes and stand them on end, one after another, and then thump one and watch all of them in a chain reaction tumble over. That game always causes me to think of predestination. But instead of children setting up dominoes, there is the Three-In-One God Who made, Who set up, Who established all things. He didn't leave anything for man to make, for the Scriptures say, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." All things were made in God's mind before "time" commenced. It's written (Gen. 2:1), "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Paul also wrote (Heb. 4:3-4), "... the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

When children set up the dominoes, they don't care which particular domino goes where, and they sometimes don't know when they start playing whether they will put the dominoes in a line or in a circle or in some other form, but they decide that as they go. But God is All-Wise. He knew everything before He created anything; and, being All-

Powerful, He made all things according to His Own will and for His Own pleasure. (See Rev. 4:11) Moreover, the entire creation surely is perfectly ordered. Where there is lack of order, there is confusion, and Paul wrote (I Cor. 15:33), "For God is not *the author* of confusion . . ." Each thing is in the place at any time where God determined before time that it should be, and each event in all its detail occurs exactly as before determined by God that it should occur. God made all things, set them up in order before "time" commenced; and this is what I see when children set up the dominoes. Events come to pass, each in its time, as before appointed; and this is what I see when the dominoes in turn fall over.

However, in watching that game, I've seen one or more of the dominoes fall sometimes to fall over, abruptly stopping the reaction. When that happened, the children expressed some mild disappointment and started over. It seems to me, although I don't know, that failures of that sort should be inherent in a system of "limited" predestination. That God is the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, is written in the Scriptures. God administered the "thump" to His creation which started time, and God shall stop time, for an angel shall stand upon the sea and upon the earth and lift up his hand to heaven and swear by Him that lives forever that there shall be time no longer. (See Rev. 10:5-6 and Daniel, Chap. 12) Understanding that God is the beginning and the ending, are we to imagine, then, that He has nothing to do with the interim or with any portions of it or people in it? If everything in the interim were not perfectly predetermined, should not God find the "chain reaction," which He started, broken unto chaos by man? What would—if man had his will—come of all the "shall's" of the Scriptures? But the interim belongs entirely to God, and He does His will not only in the army of heaven but also at all times among the inhabitants of the earth.

I understand that people who don't believe in absolute predestination sometimes ask believers how they get around admitting, as a logical conclusion, that God is the cause of all the wickedness in the world. To me that question is understandable, intelligent. But I think it comes from people embedded in the greatest of all relativity problems, people whose measurements, whose estimates, of all things are relative to the workings of the natural mind and the things of the natural world. But God is absolutely immeasurable. We can never measure the infinite, eternal God, the Creator, by the created, finite, puny human mind. But it's good to bear in our little minds (Isaiah 55:8-9): "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

It simply doesn't make any difference at all what conclusions we think are logical, reasonable, intelligent, rational. A revelation of the blessed Lord can crumble a whole world of rationalizations.

God is perfect and whatever He does is perfect, however it seems to us. We can't measure God or judge Him. We find in the Bible (Isaiah 45:7), "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." God is the Creator of all things. He creates what appears to our eyes and seems to our minds to be evil, to be confusion, but things are not evil in God's eyes and mind in that; even what we call wickedness was made by All-Wise God for His Own good pleasure. God is not only righteous but He is Righteousness, and I disbelieve that any evil or any confusion can be in, or come of, Righteousness.

I believe also that God made Adam and Eve certain to fall, but I don't believe that God must therefore bear the responsibility for the transgression. To me that is worse than foolishness, and anyone who imagines it must be submerged in that relativity problem, for

Almighty God is not obligated, not bound, ever to do anything, and, moreover, surely it was a "transgression" only in natural language, for the will of God cannot be transgressed.

But why did God make Satan and why did He make Adam and Eve certain to fall? He made Satan and everything else for His pleasure. I don't understand how the fall of Adam and Eve, or anything else, fits into the order of things because I don't understand what things have been ordered, and I don't think that I shall ever in this world understand these things, for no person has ever been the Lord's counsellor or directed Him.

Of all people, however, there are some — peculiar and afflicted — who are God's *elect*, and these were created (Isaiah 43:21) to show forth His praise. Paul wrote that they were afore prepared, were predestinated, unto glory. (See Romans 9:23 and 8:29-30) Jesus said to the mother of James and John, ". . . to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.*" Not even the Lord ever invited anyone to heaven, for the ones to have eternal life were created unto glory before the foundation of the world. And I believe that the fall of Adam and Eve and the law of Moses and everything recorded in the Old Testament was and is for the instruction and general good of the elect. Paul wrote (Galatians 3:24), "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

It's clear in the Scriptures that not all people are elect, and God only knows whom He chose unto eternal life. Jesus said to some of the Jews, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." It's also written (Daniel 12:10), "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." (These are *shall's* and not *may's*). And the Lord said that they that have done

evil shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29)

I've heard people say that it's "not fair" for God to make people come forth unto the resurrection of damnation. They are mired in that relativity problem; and they don't like the ninth chapter of Romans. But I remember that when I was young, I made things out of clay, and nobody ever told me that it was not fair for me to keep some of the things I made and to tear up others. I guess that it never entered anyone's mind. But people complain about what God does.

A little one in Christ, I hope.
Ann Folmer
P. O. Box 148
Fort Deposit, Alabama 36032

"GOD IS NOT MOCKED"

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6:7-9)

There are not any conditions about this text, just as there are not any conditions in any text under this Gospel dispensation. (The law was conditional. We are not under the law, but under Grace.) Man may attempt to make conditions by twisting the Scriptures around to suit the flesh. Law and Grace just will not mix together.

The thought that comes to mind is that God knows everything, God is everywhere, and there is no place where one can go to escape the presence of God. What a great difference between being man fearing and God fearing! Which one are we? We may appear unto men to be a religious person, but what does our walk show in the sight of God? We may profess to be an humble person, but are we humble within our hearts? We may profess to show

much love, and appear before men to be a person with love, but does that love spring forth from our hearts? We may fool people, but we cannot fool God! "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and *they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.*"

(Ezekiel 33:31) We may read much about love, and hear men tell us about love, and we may talk about love; but we cannot love others unless that love springs forth from our hearts. "—Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." (1 Thess. 4:9) "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19) Since God is love, then God must shine his love within our hearts before we can love God. Now, if we love God, then we cannot help but love others. How can we love God whom we cannot see and hate our brother whom we can see? "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can we love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20) If we hate our brother, then love is not in our hearts. If we hate our brother, then we are not sowing love. If we hate our brother, then we sow to the flesh, and what will we reap? ("He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.") If we love our brother, then we sow love, and we reap love." "—with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. 7:2)

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for *God loveth a cheerful giver.*" (2 Cor. 9:6-7) Are we free hearted? Do we help others in need? "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to

the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:15-17) Do we sow bountifully? Does this not tie in with the text? In a nutshell, we reap what we sow .

"He that soweth to his flesh." This means those who only think of themselves and self comes first in their walk and daily living. Therefore this means those who soweth to his flesh. Do we have the welfare of others or are we only concerned about our own welfare? Did Jesus have the welfare of others when he left the Father of Glory, and came upon this earth? He counted not his life dear, but he gave his life for his bride. Why did Jesus do this? It is because of the love that he had for you. Doesn't this make your heart tender to think of the love that Jesus had for you? Do you feel worthy of this love? "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16)

"He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Who are the ones that sow to the Spirit? These are the people that are blessed and directed by God to sow to the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God that blesses you to sow to the Spirit, and man does not have any part in the matter. Since it is God who blesses you to sow to the Spirit, and you reap life everlasting, then where is your praise? Do you praise your flesh or do you praise God? Since you reap love and you reap a wonderful peace of mind with your soul and with God; you sing praises within your heart to God. We find that we cannot praise God enough upon this earth. But we thank God for this sweet hope that when time will be no more, that we may be blessed to praise God to the fullest.

"In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." What a wonderful promise to poor strangers! This makes me think of the song: "I am a stranger here below, and what I am tis hard to know, I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that

I'm not born again." Dark clouds and heavy trials may come your way, but this is all to try your faith. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 24:10) "I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) God gives you sufficient grace to bear your present trials. What a faithful God we have! "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:30-31)

May the Lord bless you to "cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Peter 5:7) May you be blessed to wait upon the Lord for all your needs. Finally, may the Lord bless you to sow to the Spirit and remember this saying: "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

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

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION—1973

Dear Brethren:

Since the God of all grace has loved us from eternity with an everlasting love, and has manifested this by making us new creatures in Christ Jesus, may we, even here in this association, give unto Him the glory due His Name.

It was God that began the good work in us, and as sure as He has begun it, so surely will He complete it — in His own way and time. Our God is for us, and this is our consolation under all circumstances.

We shall soon pass through Jordan to the blissful shores of our heavenly Canaan. Our leader Jesus has taken possession of that inheritance for us: He has gone to come again for us. This should cheer us to the lot of our inheritance in this vale of tears, assured that

He will lead us on safely until we enter into that rest where none of the inhabitants will say, "I am sick." Then the days of our mourning will be ended.

It is this we are hoping for; it is this we are waiting for; it is the anticipation of this that sometimes causes us to rejoice. How delightful it is to the mind of a believer, to think that this inheritance is infallibly secured to all the family of God. Brethren, how bright are your prospects: Your Sun is rising to set no more. Soon you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory.

You ought to rejoice, though now, if need be, ye are in manifold temptations. You may be poor, you may be tried in body and mind, you may be sorrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land us safe on Canaan's coast:
Where we shall sing the song of grace,
And see our glorious Hiding-Place."

In bonds,
J. L. Boccock

EXPERIENCE

3433 Jae Valley Road, S.E.
Roanoke, Va. 24014

Dear Editors:

I want to write some things about my experience. I dream so much of being in old buildings.

I dreamed of walking in a big building, and there was a large crowd of people on both sides. I looked to the right and saw Elder J. P. Helms preaching and singing, and I went over and sat down. It was the sweetest place I ever saw. I told my husband that I had such a burden on my mind, and I wanted to go to the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Creek. The second time I went we stood up to sing and it seemed a big lump came out of my throat. I don't know how to tell how I felt, but it seemed my burdens were gone.

In 1962 I was baptized at Pigg River Church, and the whole world seemed

brighter. I enjoy the meetings so much. My husband passed away in September, 1972, and I get so lonely; but I know it was his time to go. Only faith, hope, and prayers help along the rough road. It came into my mind one night when I was so blue: the voice said, "If God is with you, who can be against you."

Love. A sister in hope,
Reva W. Abshire

COMFORTING TO THOSE WHO HAVE HOPE

Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to renew my subscription. I enjoy reading the writings that God blesses his saints to write. They are such a comfort to those who have a hope in the Lord.

I was glad to visit the Staunton River Association, and meet with those I believe the Lord has called to follow Him.

May the Lord bless you dear Editors in the future as He has in the past; also those who are blessed with grace to write those truths of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My hope is for a better home beyond the skies.

Inclosed is \$5.00 for one year's renewal, with the extra for the Indigent Fund.

In bonds of sweet fellowship.

A little sister I hope,
Fannie Mae Harper

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 10
Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I have been impressed to write some thoughts on experience, but I know my efforts in writing are very poor.

God's word is, "My doctrine (teaching) shall drop as the rain . . ." It does not mean that it may drop, or could drop if we will let it. It is positive with

no conditions. If one is truly taught of God, it is a blessing — it is a blessed experience if we have an understanding at all. The Scriptures teach, *to wait upon the Lord*. No man is due any glory, for all praise belongs to our sovereign God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

I never seem to have any doubt of what I hope to believe, but when left to myself, my fear is, Have I had a true experience, or any hope of His saving grace. The past few months I have experienced a very dark and lonely season, which has caused me much concern. In crossing this dark and lonely valley, it seems that I may have some consolation and hope of reaching the mountain on the other side. There, God willing, may I find a ray of sunshine — a little light to guide me in the right way: God's way. But am I His or am I not? If I have been made to know anything at all, I was not taught by man.

It is my hope that the good Lord will be gracious and sustain me as I travel along life's way, and make me more humble, and give me a measure of understanding of the blessed truth: if my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I beg the Lord to reconcile me to my lot here on earth, and enable me to run with patience the race that is predestinated for me; and give me strength to endure suffering as in Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

If not kept by God's saving grace, faith lives and labors under heavy loads. If I know anything at all, it is a guiding light through the dark hours for God's little ones, whether I be one or not.

"I need precious Jesus
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty:
My heart is dead within.

I need thee precious Jesus
For I am very poor:
A stranger and a pilgrim,
I have no earthly store."

May the good Lord be gracious to his little ones wherever they are, to give them assurance in their hours of need: to make them to lie down in green pastures, that we may have a taste of things to come in the land of eternal rest, when time is no more — no more toils, sorrows and afflictions. The Lord has surely appointed our walk here below, including all of our joys and sorrows. Our prayer is that He will supply our needed grace to await our appointed time, and to fight the good fight of faith, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This is my hope if I have any understanding at all.

"When thou my righteous Judge shall come,
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"

God's little ones are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and to follow after none save Jesus Christ our Lord: praying for guidance along life's way. May we be given gracious seasons, if it is His will, to wait upon Him and be reconciled unto our lot as we travel on. "Thy will be done, not ours."

One of the least if one at all, I need
your prayers.
Sister Veola Donaldson

THE NAPKIN —
IN A PLACE BY ITSELF

P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

"*And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.*" (John 20:7)

As I have had several requests to give a view on the above Scripture, I shall attempt to do so through the medium of our paper.

Having never read or heard a view concerning this matter, I have no way

of knowing how far or near from the truth of the matter I am, except as I feel satisfied that it is in harmony with the general tenor of Bible doctrine. The reader, of course, can and will determine for himself if the view suits his comprehension of the Word.

The first eighteen verses of this chapter deals with the early morning events of the first day of the week: the morning of our Lord's resurrection and subsequent manifestation to Mary Magdalene in the vicinity of the empty tomb. No event, Biblical or historical, before or since has ever been attacked and disputed by Anti-Christians as has been the triumph of our Lord over the unseen enemies of God's people. These unseen enemies are death, the grave, and Satan. And the resurrection of our Lord represents His triumph over these enemies. Christ made fourteen known appearances to attest to His coming forth from the bonds of death. Eleven of these were before He returned to Glory in the clouds. The last three were to Stephen at his martyrdom, Paul on the Damascus road, and lastly to John on the Isle of Patmos. Who, then, but the blinded fool would defy such proofs?

God's people today, however, care nothing for dry doctrinal proofs of what took place that great morning of the Resurrection. They love the testimony of the Bible relating to it. But a greater proof exists for them. Stirring in their breast is the sure evidence of a risen Saviour. Christ in them! Born from above they live and breathe their own proof of the Living Son. He reigns in them and is their only lasting proof.

From the beggar on the dung hill to the prince on his throne, those who, like Matthew, heard the Master say, "Follow me", know He lives and reigns. They may not be able to tell it without the tears choking their words, but they know. May we ever be blessed to praise Him if He has made known to us some little glimpse of Heavenly things and has blessed us to agree with Paul by saying, "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." (Phil. 3:10-11)

Our text truly offers us a point for serious consideration. Why was the napkin that was about the Lord's head not in the place one would have expected it to be? Why was it wrapped together in a place by itself? To begin with, the Disciples must have been amazed at the tomb in every respect. First, the guards has been instructed to make the tomb, "as sure as you can," Second, Matthew 28:1-2 tells us that there was a great earthquake as it began to dawn that morning. Third, for reasons the Scriptures do not say, all this commotion brought no other guards to the tomb than the present watch which fell down as dead men.

Upon gazing into that awesome sepulcher the now perplexed Peter and John see the graveclothes, but the body of our precious Lord is not to be found. Not knowing the Scripture that He was to rise from the dead (John 20-9) their consternation must have been great indeed. Truly miraculous things had taken place since our Lord was laid in the tomb.

From the orderly appearance of the linen wrappings it was obvious that grave robbers had not stolen the body. That the Lord was securely wrapped for burial cannot be questioned. All four Gospel accounts tell of Joseph taking His body, WRAPPING it and LAYING Him in his own tomb. Further, it would be a miracle nearly as great as the Resurrection itself to remove the grave wraps from the body of Jesus, to remove Him and then rewrap the bindings around thin air. The Gospel account is careful to maintain the orderliness of the wraps which contained our Redeemer for three days and three nights.

Yet, this is what the Disciples found. The Lord had risen! He was gone from the tomb. There were no signs of a struggle or a tearing away the death garment. Simply, our Lord rose up out of

the clothes as well as rising up from the tomb. In His now Glorious state nothing material might bind Him. Unlike Lazarus, who "Came forth bound hand and foot with graveclothes," He needed not any to say to Him, "Loose Him, and let Him go." (John 11:44)

Note well, also, that when Lazarus came forth he not only was BOUND with graveclothes, the Scripture states further, "And his face was bound about with a napkin." Apparently the binding of the head and that of the body were separate in that day.

Look carefully at the words again in the text concerning the napkin which is the head garment, ". . . but wrapped together in a place by itself." Still wrapped together, but apart from the graveclothes. Why would the Spirit of Inspiration have us observe the separation of the two grave articles? Only Scripture can answer Scripture and this lesson can be no exception.

This is not the first time our Lord was found wrapped in garments foreign to Him. Blessed thought it is that the Eternal Son of God became the Son of Man and was born of the Virgin and wrapped in swaddling clothes. As there was no room for them in the inn they were loaned the use of a stable. The Glory of God shone about Shepherds who came to view this Infant. Yes, though He was rich He became poor, even the poverty of a borrowed birthplace. Upon entering this world Christ was wrapped. Upon departing this world He was wrapped and laid in a borrowed tomb.

Little is known of Jesus of Nazareth until at the age of 30 years He came preaching, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." Some three and one half years later He uttered His last words, "It is finished," and bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Note well that His last physical act in this world was the bowing of His Head.

A bloody and thorn-pierced head it was. Out of its eyes had poured tears of grief. (John 11:35) From its mouth came words man had never heard be-

fore. (John 7:46) Its ears had heard the groans of the multitudes, the prayers of the Saints, and the cursings of the mobs. But of all things the Scriptures relate about that bowed head, nothing is as precious as the words, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." (Luke 9:58)

Can we then believe in the light of these words that our Lord would in death accept a resting place for His Head, especially in the tomb, which is the final depository for sinful flesh (our Lord's excepted)? I would rather feel that the sweet truth is that our Saviour's Head could *not* rest until, "After having offered one sacrifice for sin forever, He SAT DOWN on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12)

In conclusion, it would appear that the napkin was deliberately put in a place by itself to show all who have eyes to see that even death itself provided not a place for the Son of Man to lay His Head, thus telling us He must come forth from the gloomy tomb and ascend to the Father from whence He came. Yes, the Lord always gave, never taking. He could not take so much as a small place in death to lay His head. Lay aside the napkin! The King of Glory will not rest His Head until He enters the everlasting gates.

There may be other and better meanings in this passage. If so, please excuse this writer, as I prefer our Lord to be seen All Glorious than my views be approved.

James F. Poole

"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"

I have often heard people say, The Lord helps those who help themselves. I would like to say in all sincerity that the Lord helps those who cannot help themselves.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has said that without him we can do nothing. And again the scriptures tell us that in Him we move and have our being. We are

told that we are only clay in the potter's hand. Surely clay can only move at the potter's hand and will.

Many people boast of having a free-will, but when it comes to being sick or dying, they beg Almighty God to do something. If it is true that they have a free-will of their own, why don't they just tell Him they don't want these things to be, and go on their merry way?

I know I do not have a free-will of my own, but that my life is in God's great hand to do with as He will. Do those who boast of free-will claim that they can stay the hand of death, or tell almighty God when or where sickness or death should be? If they had a free-will of their own, they never would be sick or never would die. So why don't they just admit that they are helpless creatures in the hand of the great almighty God? Could they understand and admit this, they would stop their boasting and see themselves for what they really are: just poor worms of the dust who are dependent upon the mercies of a sovereign God.

Our God is the potter who has power over the clay, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. I see no place for the clay to be self-sufficient.

Ethel Gilland
Panama City, Fla.

The following is an excerpt from the Circular Letter of the Tygart's Valley Old School Baptist Association of 1894, written by Brother John P. Thompson. The letter is quite lengthy and contains considerable history of the Baptists, as well as the doctrine.

The Old School Bible Baptists do not claim to be Protestants; they did not derive their existence from that source nor from any creed or system originated and taught by uninspired men, but from the Eternal Word. "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." "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not," therefore the world knoweth us not, for it knew Him not. (John, 1st chapter) From this Word and His apostles and prophets, He himself being the chief cornerstone, our doctrine and church is founded. We did not receive our doctrine from men, neither are we taught it by men but by revelation of Jesus Christ, who declared himself that, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God and Christ are known only by and to each other. They dwell mutually in the secrecy of their own glorious, eternal and invisible personality, and no man (there is no exception to this *no man*) knows either except through their mutual revelation; and this revelation is through faith, which is the gift of God, a fruit of His spirit. If Christ saves men if they will, what is plainer than that He came to do men's will? But He says "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 raise it up again at the last day."

Christ himself was not a free moral agent, he did not come upon that principle; He came not to do his own will but came as one sent of the Father to execute the will of the Eternal Jehovah. The Saviour said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3) Is there any harmony between this expression and the doctrine of free will? Does not the one essentially down the other? Does not the fact that this birth is a necessity, prove most conclusively that all the powers and capacity of the natural man are wholly inadequate to bring him to God? Does it not absolutely cut off every shadow of a possibility of salvation through the combined powers of men, angels and devils? A Christian is a child of promise — just as much a child of promise as Isaac was. "We brethren

as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Galatians 4:28) A child of promise is a child especially promised which could not possibly come into existence upon natural principles. Isaac was by promise, he was not born after the flesh; his birth was absolutely impossible from that source. So the Christian comes by the promise of the Father and is born of the Spirit, because the flesh cannot produce it. If a man should preach that Isaac was born after his own will, or even through the procreative power of his parents, men would at once reject it as false. A man would be at once apprehended as insane if he were to preach that any man is born after his own will. It is just as unreasonable to preach that men are born again after their own will; or even through means of any kind. The man who has not been born again has no more existence as a Christian than the generations yet unborn have as citizens of this world. It is just as impossible and unreasonable for a man to come into the kingdom of God through the power of his own will as for a man who shall be born a hundred or a thousand years hence, to determine where, when and under what circumstances he will be born, or whether he will be born at all, or not.

The doctrine of free will is contradicted by every principle of salvation as taught in the Bible, and exemplified in the experience of them that are saved; it is contradicted by many direct quotations of scripture. "It is not of him that willeth," (Romans 9:16) "Not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man." (John 1:13) Salvation is always ascribed to the will of God. There is a willingness that accompanies the experience of the saints, but it is given them by God, the fruit of His spirit: God is himself working in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. All mankind while in the state of nature, are Arminians; that is they believe salvation from the effect or death of sin depends on their own freewill, and therefore they cannot be-

lieve in the Bible doctrine of absolute sovereignty of God's predestination, calling and election of all His chosen people. But to the believer in Christ, the sovereignty of God, in the dispensation of His grace, shines throughout both the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and throughout the history of the human race in every case of true conversion. It was shown in the salvation of the extortionate publican Zaccheus, the adultrous woman of Samaria, the thief on the cross, and the blood thirsty Pharisee Saul of Tarsus, and every other sinner whom Jesus came to save from their sins. This doctrine of the Bible is perfectly consistent with Christian experience and all other scriptural proof, with all the sweet promises of the gospel to every hungry, thirsty, sin-sick soul.

Every impenitent sinner is an Arminian; he walks about the world as comfortable as possible, thinking it all depends upon himself, and that some time he will repent and, as Arminians preach, go to heaven,—it may be just at the eleventh hour. But the doctrine of election teaches that he is absolutely in God's hands to be saved or damned, as God wills; and if ever he is quickened by God's spirit to believe and feel this truth, he will cry to God for mercy; and find it. Election hurts no one, it finds all men sinners, justly under God's wrath and condemnation. Election is the greatest possible and imaginable encouragement to seeking, because it declares that every sinner who has been made to feel the need of a saviour, and longs for God's holy salvation, is already alive from the death of sin, because he has been quickened by God's spirit, redeemed by God the Son, and elected by God the Father before the foundation of the world to eternal life; and, notwithstanding the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil, his everlasting salvation and glory is just as sure as that an unchanging and almighty God sits upon his throne, and consequently he is encouraged to give up in despair his struggle with his

spiritual enemies. All the Old Testament Scriptures are one type of prophecy, which finds and will find its full accomplishment in Jesus Christ, as He told his disciples both before and after the resurrection, "Think not," said He in his Sermon on the Mount, "I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am come not to destroy but to fulfill."

The golden vein of Messianic prophecy runs through the Old Testament scriptures and gives them a divine unity, and the New Testament with the same unity describes the fulfillment of these prophecies in Jesus of Nazareth. He is the only key in the universe that fits this infinitely complicated lock of the Messianic prophecy. God's chosen people, Israel, were a typical, figurative people, chosen in Adam, whom God called out of Ur of the Chaldees, one of the idolatrous nations of the world. All Bible readers know God's promise to Abraham, and that from him through his son, Isaac, who was a child of promise, and through Isaac's son Jacob, who was a twin brother of Esau and born after him; "But when Rebecca their mother, had conceived by one," as Paul says, "even by our father Isaac, 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 was written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:10-13) And through Jacob and his twelve sons sprang all God's chosen people, Israel. Nationally, they were a peculiar people, different from other people in the world. Moses, their leader, who being a servant and prophet of God and type of Christ, in his charge before his death, says, 'For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: The Lord thy God has 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 you

were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you; and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house bondsmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt."

God's chosen people have been the fewest in number of all people in all ages of the world; and the Old Bible Baptists are today the fewest in number of any other people, and just as their brethren in Christ have been in ages before, they are hated and persecuted for the truth's sake by the world, and all other religious sects of every denomination and name; and why? Because all others teach and preach what every man in the world in a state of nature, who has not been born from above, believes; that it is just left with himself and to his own will whether he will be saved or not; while the Old Baptist teach and preach just what the Bible does and what they know to be true, having realized the truth of it in their own experience: that God has an elect people of the sons and daughters of Adam's race who, in the everlasting covenant of grace, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that their spiritual, immortal, eternal life was hid with Christ in God from all eternity, and that having sinned in Adam, their federal head, naturally they came into the world in a state of sin, condemnation and death, and are so corrupted, polluted and defiled by sin they have no power, will or inclination to reform themselves into newness of life, or to reinstate themselves into the favor of a just and holy God. But God being unlimited in power, infinite in wisdom, perfect in holiness, justice, mercy and truth, declaring the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure," had already prepared a ransom and made it known to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden before driving them out, in the promised seed of

the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head: who was none other than our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is the seed of the woman, and his elect children are his seed, while Satan could only bruise the heel of Christ, the seed of the serpent who is old Satan, the devil, etc, (Revelation 12) and his angels, and the non-elect wicked race of Adam who die in their sins without repentance, (the term seed being understood not in a physical, but in a spiritual sense;) and while Satan and his seed may annoy and bruise the heel of Christ, or church of Christ, Christ is to bruise the head of Satan and finally overcome by destroying him that had the power of death. (Hebrews, Romans and I John.)

(To be continued)

PERFECT HARMONY

Dear Brethren:

The design and intent of this article will be to prove by the Scriptures that there is perfect harmony between the doctrine of Predestination and Obedience.

The Lord said, "Arise, and go unto Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." (Acts 22:10)

In these words of Jesus spoken to Paul, and their fulfillment in Damascus, we have the doctrine of predestination, command, and obedience all blended in beautiful harmony.

God had appointed what Paul was to do. Ananias was to tell Paul about it, and Paul was to do it. God appointed the obedience and Ananias filled his place in God's purpose in delivering the exhortation, and Paul obeyed in doing the things that were appointed for him to do. All this, because, ". . . we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Therefore, brethren, it is the truth

that God's children are, ". . . predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

Now since no man or devil is able to defeat that purpose wherein God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, we ask, Does God have a purpose in his children's obedience? The answer I say, is *Yes*. Certainly so. And He will bring about and use everything He pleases to cause that obedience. Moreover, He will cause all the obedience He desires. If not, Why? And if we desire more obedience than God desires, then whose desire is best? Ours or God's?

When saints see men walking in good works they know that God has before ordained that walk, according to Ephesians 2:10. The Bible is full of God's wisdom, purpose, love, power, goodness, and mercy, and is a record of His wonderful works to the children of men. His grace changes every precept into a promise, and the Spirit of grace changes every promise into a prayer.

God has a purpose in His servants, and in their instructions and exhortations to His people, and that purpose must be accomplished in them. Paul said, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21) According to this text it is God who does the saving or delivering from the things from which they need to be delivered, and He thus saves as sovereignly and effectually as He saves from sin and death.

Those — all those, who desire to limit the predestination of all things, do really want to divide the government and management of this world between God and Satan. It is only the evil presumption of wicked men and devils that undertake to stake off God's dominion, and set His bounds; and then turn the rest over to the destiny of the government of Satan, and the power of Satan and wicked men and devils.

Brethren, Jesus rules all things, and I believe my Lord has appointed our time to die, and has appointed every-

thing necessary to keep us alive until that time; and everything necessary to take us away when that time comes.

When saints are called upon to bury a loved one, they yet obey "love one another" by yet having a love for God's gifts in Christ after He takes them away; therefore the bond shall never break.

Only the genuine ministers of Jesus Christ can publish true and exalted sayings concerning the free and sufficient grace of God.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock,
P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

GOD EVER LIVES AND REIGNS

Rt. 2,
Suglligent, Ala. 35586

Dear Editors:

I see that our subscription has expired, so I am sending a check for two years renewal — use the balance as you see fit.

My wife and I both enjoy reading the *Signs*. There is great comfort at times to sit down and read of the experiences of others who have traveled the same path that we hope we have been made to travel for Christ's sake. It is our hope that we were buried with Christ; and inasmuch as He has risen also, our hope has risen. We sometimes speak of our hope as being little, but is as big as Christ, for it is in Christ.

We thank God that, through His love for His people, He determined in His eternal counsel to sacrifice His only begotten Son that the yoke of the law was broken, which we or our fathers were able to bear. There is unfailing evidence even in these trying times that He ever lives and reigns in the heart and mind of His people. When we are made to sit together in heavenly places, and to know that He is God and besides Him there is no other. There is none like Him: He is a consuming fire, consuming all other kingdoms, when we

are given to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. When we are made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, we are made to know that Christ is our salvation, and that there is salvation in no other — and without Him there is no hope.

May God bless each of you to continue in the Faith, and that He may bless the publishing of the *Signs*, to the end that His little children may be comforted.

A little brother in hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Lamar Pitts

ENJOYED THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Rt. 4, Box 682,
Bassett, Va. 24066

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see my subscription will be up with the next issue, so am sending check to renew one year and the balance to be used as you wish. I had thought to renew at the Association this week, but we were with Brother and Sister Barton and did not want them to have to wait on us. My companion was not able to go to the meeting on Friday, so she tried to rest up on Friday, and on Saturday she was ready to make the trip, and enjoyed it as well as I did. I was afraid on Friday we would not get to go at all, and I laid awake trying to pray that we could be able, and I feel the blessed Saviour answered my prayer once more.

Several of the Elders were blessed to tell my experience better than I could myself. The blessed hope found in the 24th and 25th verses of the 8th chapter of Romans, as well as other places, and 133rd Psalm, 1st verse, were in evidence all through the services Saturday and Sunday. I enjoyed it and felt better by hearing it, also my companion and all that I heard mention it, felt the same way about the service all the way through.

I wish I could find the answer to

where so many get the name of Reverend. I have found one place, the 9th verse of the 111th Psalm, and this pertains to God: "holy and reverend is his name."

. . . If you feel to, please pray for us poor sinners that the Lord will forgive us and lead us in the strait and narrow way, that we may follow Him closer day by day. Your brother in Christ I hope, but if one, I feel I am one of the least.

T. A. Perdue

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The 1973 session of the *Salisbury Association* will be held, the Lord willing, October 24th and 25th, with the Indiantown Church near Powellville, Maryland, on Route 354.

Anyone arriving Tuesday go to the home of William S. Adkins on Route 50, Mardella, or call 742-2198. Or call Elder Arthur Warren, Berlin 82-641-1826. All those coming Wednesday go directly to the meeting house on Route 354.

We invite all ministers and brethren of our faith and in order in their home associations, to be with us.

William S. Adkins, Church Clerk
Rt. 50,
Mardella, Md. 21837

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The ninety-seventh Annual Session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* is appointed to be held with the church at Pittman's Grove Meeting House, Johnston County, North Carolina, to commence on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1973, and continue through Sunday. Pittman's Grove Meeting House is located on highway 222 between Kenly and Fremont about two miles out of Kenly.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the North Johnston High School building, located on Highway 301 between Kenly, North Carolina, and Micro, North Carolina. It will be the same location as last year. Our invitation is cordially extended to all who are impressed to meet with us.

W. E. Turner

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held with the church at North

East, Onslow County, N. C. to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1973.

The church is located as follows: go south on 258 Highway to Jacksonville, turn left on 17 Highway about two miles, and turn right on Road 1406. The church is a few miles on left. Meeting on Saturday and Sunday will be held in White Oak High School near the church.

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

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Assn. Clerk
Rt. 4, Box 195,
Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To August 1, 1973)

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B. J. McLaughlin, Tex.....	11.00
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Danville, Virginia October, 1973

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ORDINATION CHARGE DELIVERED BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER TO ELDER DONALD E. SMITH

AT

BUSH ARBOR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

CASWELL COUNTY, N. C.

June 12, 1966

I feel very sensibly the solemnity of the occasion,—How to speak to our dear brother and to you whom he will serve.

There are two things in a minister's life that are necessary if he is to be a blessing to the Church of God. These two are Humility and Stability. Humility without stability in the life of a minister, is of little benefit to the church of God. Likewise stability without humility proves of little worth to those to whom he preaches. The man who preaches to the people of God is

wonderfully blessed, if he is endowed with the spirit of both humility and stability.

It is indeed a solemn matter to stand before dying men and women, to preach the gospel of the Son of God. According to the Scriptures no man has ever taken this honor unto himself as a matter of choice, as a vocation of life. This is clearly presented in relation to the priesthood of Aaron, as a type of the gospel ministry. "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

A minister of God is an ambassador from heaven. There have been many ambassadors sent from one country to another, to bear tidings and represent their own government, but there has never been one like the ambassador sent to preach the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ: He is called, qualified and sent by God himself.

The titles of a minister of the gospel in the scriptures are listed under the names of Pastors, Bishops or Elders. Either of these are scriptural titles of the gospel minister. Many in our land today use the title of "Reverend". This word is not the scriptural title of a gospel minister. It is found only one time in the scriptures in Psalm 111:9, "Holy and reverend is His name," having reference to God alone. No man has a right to use this title.

As an Ambassador, this is a treasure in an earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men. Last fall while speaking at the Black Creek Association, I looked at this dear brother and felt he had a wonderful part in the matter, though I had not been blessed to hear him at that time. I count it a great blessing and a pleasure to stand before you, my dear Brother, to charge you to preach the Word,—and that Word is the living God: the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.

You will have obstacles. At times you will be brought very low before the

Lord, and question your call to the ministry. Much wrestling of soul will be your lot, — not that you do not desire to preach the gospel, but with your own infirmities, and your inability to preach as you would. The scripture declares that if a man desires the office of a Bishop, he desires a good work. And I tell you this afternoon that those who are called will have a desire to preach the gospel. The wresting and rebellion comes from the feeling of inability to preach the gospel. The desire for this work lies deeply in the soul: to lift high the name of Jesus among His people; and I say to you my dear Brother Donald, I humbly hope you will never have a desire to please men, for the very moment you desire to please men, you cease to be the servant of God. If you stand up before men with a man-pleasing spirit, or to please any certain person in the congregation, you then cease at that time the manifestation of the servant of the Lord. The same thing is true if you desire to displease man.

A minister is the overseer of the flock of God. He is not a servant of the church, as it is sometimes presented, but a servant of God to the church. That is the way the Scripture presents the matter. He is accountable to his church for his conduct as a member, and unto God in his ministry.

Elder P. G. Lester said many years ago, that a church could not tell a minister what to preach, but the church could tell him what he could not preach to them.

The apostle exhorts the ministers to take heed to all the flock of God over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, to feed the flock of God which is among you: not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind.

And Paul's direction to the church of God was to remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God. Someone will ask the question, "What is meant by the expression, having the rule over you?" It falls upon the shoulders of a

minister to see that the word of God is carried out in the order of the house of God. The end of their conversation is, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever. When you find a minister who is preaching Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever, you will find one preaching the gospel.

I will now speak to those of you whom our brother will serve: Hold up his hands. He needs your prayers, and will need your support in many ways the world will never know about.

My brother, the devil will be on hand to harass you in your pilgrimage. May God keep you humble. The devil will flee from an humble person, as he has no place there. When God gives us humility among ourselves, we are as little children, at His feet. When we are left to ourselves, we are proud and continually battle with the flesh.

To those to whom he will preach: it is your duty to hold up his hands. Many times he will be called to funerals — he will have to drop his work whatever it is. It is the duty of those who call for him, to see that he does not go at his own expense. Brethren I am speaking plainly. I believe the God of all grace can and will inspire the hearts of his people to do these things unto those who are called. His hands should not be tied in his going forth to preach the gospel. This duty rests upon the shoulders of the church.

The charge is to preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. May God bless you with that requirement of His word: to have a good name among them that are outside the fold, as well as those within.

You will have enemies round about you seeking your entrapment, if you preach the unadulterated Word of God. But, by the grace of God, may you stand boldly upon the watch-walls of Zion and preach a sovereign God to the people of God. And may God bless you, my dear brother, to that end.

(Taken from a tape recording)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ADOPTION

BROTHER BEEBE:—If it is not asking too much, I would like very much to have you give your views in full on the subject of adoption.

Your truly,

PRESLEY NAY,

Adoption, literally, is to take the child of one family into the family of another, and bestow on him all the privileges of a son. Adoption, in a gospel sense, is not applicable to that which is born of God, for that which is born of God is a son by birth, and needs no adoption to make it a son or an heir.

That which is to be adopted is called a *purchased possession*; it is redeemed from the tribes and kindreds of the earth; it was under the law, involved in guilt, captive, sold under sin, born of the flesh, a child of Adam, and by nature a child of wrath. The subjects of adoption are chosen, elected and redeemed from every tribe of mankind, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to that adoption they are and were predestinated, according to the good pleasure of God. The new birth is not the adoption; for that life which is brought forth in the new birth, is that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; it is not taken from any other family, for it was with the Father, and was manifest in unbroken vital relationship with God from everlasting. It is no more an adopted child than Christ is; for the body and head must be in the same relation to God. But God's people, in their relation to the earthly Adam, did belong to another family, and that they might receive the adoption of children, they required to be redeemed from among men; redeemed from under the law which, as children of the flesh or of the earthly Adam, they had transgressed, that they might receive the

adoption of children.

When God's chosen people are born of the Spirit, that Spirit or eternal life which is born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, is the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father; and by it the purchased or redeemed possession are sealed unto the day of redemption, or unto the day when their redemption shall be fully and finally consummated in the resurrection wherein God shall, by that Spirit, quicken their mortal bodies, and change them from the condition of vile bodies, and fashion them according to his (Christ's) glorious body. The spirit of adoption is born (not adopted) of God, and the saints receive it when they are born again. The apostle says to the Gentile believers, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." —Eph. 2:13, 14.

This redemption is complete, so far as the ransom or liquidation of all demands of law and justice are considered; but redemption secures the deliverance of the captives into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The redemption effected by Christ not only contemplated the release of the redeemed captives from condemnation and wrath, but they are redeemed to God, and must be presented to God without spot or blemish, in spiritual, immortal bodies, fully conformed to the image of their risen and glorified Redeemer. The purchased possession, as we have already said, have, in their new birth, received the spirit of adoption, which is the earnest, the certain pledge of their future inheritance; but the adoption secured is yet to be realized; but not until these corruptibles shall have put on incorruption, and these mortals shall have put on immortality. Then will the purchased possession receive their adoption, and re-

ceive their inheritance which is reserved in heaven for all such as are begotten to this lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

The scriptures assure us that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." — 1 John 3:2. The new man, that is born of God, is now and always was a son of God in Christ, who is his life; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, when we shall put on immortality, in the adoption to which we are predestinated; for that is in the future. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and cannot inherit the kingdom; for neither by birth or adoption doth it stand in the relation of sons or heirs of God, only as they are sealed to that sonship; for if they did, they could and would now inherit that kingdom; but being predestinated of God to that adoption, they shall be delivered from all that is of the earth earthly, and in their adoption bear the image of the heavenly. Now our flesh and blood are corruptible and mortal, but in the adoption, *this* mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. Paul says, For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if our flesh were born of immortal seed it could not die; or if by adoption our flesh were already adopted as heirs of God, it could not die: it is not yet put into that immortal state, but it is sealed to that adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Is it possible that any christian can believe that his fleshly nature is now led by the Spirit of God? How very different was the case of Paul, whose flesh constantly warred against his spirit, and caused him to feel wretched in a body of death. But he looked for a deliverance in the adoption which he hoped for,

and for which he patiently waited. "For," said he, "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit (of adoption which we have received) itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children: and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The sonship of the new man, which is born of God, is already manifest by the witness above named; but the manifestation of the sons of God in the creature, which is now waiting for manifestation by adoption, is yet to come. "For the creature was made subject to vanity: not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself shall be (is not yet, but shall be) delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have (by the new birth) the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, *to wit*, the redemption of our body."—Rom. 8:14-23. If there is a passage in the holy scriptures that speaks of the adoption to which the chosen and redeemed people of God are predestinated as being already accomplished, we have failed to find it; and if such a passage could be found, we would be unable to explain how Paul and all the saints on earth could groan within themselves, waiting for something that had already taken place.

We may fail to make this subject clear to others, but to us, the apostle's argument and illustration is remarkably lucid and conclusive. The adoption he

explains to be the redemption of our body, by which the creature shall be delivered, and we also who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, *shall be* delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. If our earthly nature is not now corruptible, how can it be mortal and subject to death? If they are born of the Spirit, and are spirit, how can they groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption? What is to be adopted, if that in us which is born of the flesh is already a child of God by a spiritual birth? What change are we, who groan in this mortal tabernacle, looking and waiting for, if our flesh and blood are already born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever? Can that die, or ever see corruption, which is born of incorruptible seed? If so, what assurance can we have of an immortal state beyond the grave?

We hold that by that Spirit which we receive from God in our new birth, our mortal bodies which were born of the flesh, which sinned in Adam, and were redeemed by Christ, are sealed unto the day of redemption, *to wit*, the adoption or redemption of our body. And that Spirit by which we are sealed is the spirit of promise; and on that spirit of promise our faith rests in hope of a glorious resurrection and a blessed immortality beyond the grave. It is not that new man, or eternal life which is and always was immortal, that is to be changed from corruption to incorruption, or from mortal to immortal, or from natural to spiritual in the resurrection; but it is this vile body. This corruptible which was born of corruptible seed, and not that which is born again of incorruptible seed, that is to put on incorruption and immortality in the resurrection. It is that body which is sown in corruption that shall be raised in incorruption, and that body which is sown a mortal body that shall be raised an immortal body. That which is born of God, of incorruptible and immortal seed, cannot be "sown a natural

body, and raised a spiritual body," or sown in dishonor, or in corruption; for it is of an incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. It is not sown in death, for it cannot die nor is it that which shall be raised from the dead, as it cannot be dead, for it is eternal life, and it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead; and if that Spirit be in us, by it we are sealed to the day of redemption, and he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit of which we are so sealed, and which dwelleth in us from the hour of our spiritual birth.

Brother Nay desired us to give our views *in full* on this vitally important subject; but if we should write volumes, we do not know that we could make our views or our faith on the subject any more clear. We claim no infallibility, nor do we wish any brother to accept of our views any further than they find themselves sustained by the scriptures of truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1875)

OBITUARIES

ELDER DURWOOD BRADLEY

Elder Durwood H. Bradley was born May 17, 1889 in Drew Co., Arkansas, and passed away June 13, 1973 at his home in Lubbock, Texas, at the age of eighty-four years. He moved to Lubbock from Fort Worth, Texas, in 1925. He was married to Evelyn Richter June 28, 1941, in Clovis, New Mexico. He was baptized by Elder C. M. Haygood at Earth, Texas, September 10, 1961, and ordained into the full work of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ August 22, 1964.

To begin to write this obituary of Elder Bradley is a very difficult task. His belief was so deeply seated in an all-wise God that one would never doubt that his faith and hope had given him something beautiful to meditate upon, and in his later days it (if possible) became stronger. He would often phone fellow yokefellows in the ministry and his brethren from his sick-bed, and talk of his wonderful Maker, and only his frail, natural, body weakness would force him to hang up the phone and rest, but even then his wife said that he would smile and say, "What a wonderful

God to give me these precious people to visit with."

His church attendance was continued even when his condition would keep most at home. But with the help of his beloved and faithful wife, he attended and worshipped as only a child of God could or would; rejoicing every moment with his eyes which sometimes sparkled with joy and sometimes would fill with tears when he heard the words from the minister's mouth, telling about the great love of God, and His saving grace toward His saints. He never tired, in a spiritual way, of hearing of the plan, or sometimes he called it a great blueprint, of salvation which a God Who cannot lie promised and set forth in the holy writ.

Elder Bradley was blessed with a goodly income in natural things, and was there at his church's associations to see that everything was done that he could help with. But above all, he had a wonderful income of spiritual things which came from God's bank, and the fullness thereof, which He gives to all believers, and yet the balance is never lowered one iota. When he preached, it was in complete humbleness, and he knew where his gift came from, and made sure that all who heard him never doubted his belief of same. I have never heard this man say anything bad about anyone, even though he had no use for the doctrine of works or limited predestination advocates. He said that God looks at the inner man — we look at the outer man.

O the beauty of a preacher who preaches the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, without a man-offending or a man-afearing spirit, and prays forgiveness of his own sins as well as the sins of others — Elder Bradley was such a preacher.

The church in which his funeral was held was selected by him before he became bed-fast; also the songs were chosen by him. His wife carried out his wishes as he had outlined them. The attendance at the church was overflowing, which showed the respect of his neighbors, friends, and business associates. His funeral was conducted by the writer, who, along with others, will miss him so much, but who knows he must be sitting at the right hand of God if fruits are any evidence of the called according to His purpose. He ran a good race and fought a good fight, and we thank God for His letting us have him for a little season. We feel that our lives were greatly benefitted by his presence, and we rejoice at having known him and sat with him and worshipped with him. May we praise God unendingly for His kindness. Elder Bradley's spirit has gone back to God who gave it, and his body to dust from whence it came.

This is written by request of his faithful and dear wife who was his ever-present companion,

not only in health but in sickness — she said he had been sick for twenty-four years. She, too, is to be commended. May the God of all blessings and love comfort her and be her strength in her hour of suffering and need, and her light in her hour of darkness.

W. A. Winfrey

(To the above I would add that Elder Bradley requested a short time before he died that I send him some tapes of sermons by our brethren; which I did. He called twice and we had long conversations in which he expressed his love for the doctrine contained in the sermons, and the doctrine advocated in the *Signs of the Times*.

It was with sadness that we learned of his passing when Mrs. Bradley called and said that he had passed away. I felt a christian love for him, and had desired that I might meet him, and converse further concerning the things we both loved so well. But it was not to be, and he is now passed from his long affliction, and is at rest.—J.D.W.)

ELDER PETE C. TURNER

Elder Pete C. Turner of Bassett, Va., was born April 4, 1887, to J. W. Turner and Susan Anne Adams Turner. He died August 6, 1973, in the Martinsville General Hospital. His funeral was conducted at his home church by J. R. Hollandsworth, Elder C. E. Turner and Elder Leonard Brammer, Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. August 8, 1973. Elder Turner was married to Lula Spencer January 24, 1909. Father of 9 children, 5 boys and 4 girls. He united with the Riverview Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1925. He was liberated to preach in December 1926, and ordained in the early thirties. Elder Turner was pastor of Jacks Creek in Patrick Co. and assistant pastor of River Side Church for a while.

Elder Turner was noted for his hospitality and kindness to all that he had any dealing with. There was a large congregation present for his funeral. Elder Turner was a firm believer that all of our salvation for time and eternity is of the Lord, and Jesus Christ being the foundation and the chief corner stone as well as the Head of the church.

Elder Turner will be greatly missed at home and at the church. By reason of his afflictions he was made willing to go home. Elder Turner told me that there was nothing better for him in this world, but he was expecting, or that he felt there was rest for him in the world above, and I have no doubt about his destiny, I feel that his troubles are over forever.

Many other good things could be said about Elder Turner, but it would be nothing new to the ones that knew him.

Written by his pastor J. R. Hollandsworth.

J. R. Hollandsworth

MARY ANN SMITH

Mary Ann Smith, who resided in Hawkins, Texas passed away April 15, 1973 at Mineola General Hospital, at the age of almost 92 years. She was born June 25, 1881 in Sulphur Springs, Texas, She was a long time member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church. Surviving are 2 sons: William A. Smith of Tyler, Texas and O. C. Smith of Quitman, Texas; also 2 daughters: Mrs. Hugh Minshew of Hawkins, Texas and Mrs. L. D. Gibbons of Dallas. Also surviving are 8 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, her pastor, in the chapel of Malcolm Stone Funeral Home, Gadewater, Texas. Interment was beside her husband's body in Perrin Cemetery.

We wish to append a *Note of Appreciation* which was presented to Sister Annie Smith just after her 91st birthday by order of the church in regular conference July 1, 1972, which read in part: "You have been brought to death's door, SISTER SMITH, but your soul's *hand of faith* reached forth and touched the *HEM of the Garment of Jesus*. You were made whole. May we say to you as Jesus said to the woman, 'Thy faith hath made thee whole'. Your smiles, kind words, gracious deeds, devotion, and faithfulness to attend church meetings, have made you to be dear and precious to us. Sister Annie, the Lord has so inspired us with your gracious living that we know that riches, honor, and worldly power is *not* that which will bring us happiness. Your submission to God's will and your contentment with your lot inspires us to press on toward the mark for the prize . . . We thank God for you. We value your love, fellowship, and communion more than gold or silver" . . . (34 affixed their signatures to the above note.)

God grant us to be reconciled to His will, is our prayer.

This done by order of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, Hawkins, Texas.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

JOHN WILLIAM FAULK

Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Hawkins, Texas, wishes to bow in humble submission to God, from whom we received the gift of Brother Faulk's life, to walk with us as a devoted and faithful member for many years;

in taking him from our midst to his eternal home. Brother Faulk was born in Upshur County, Texas, March 6, 1889, passed away March 30, 1973 at the age of 84 years and 24 days. He was survived by one son, Loyd Faulk, Ft. Worth; one brother, Phillip Faulk, Marshall, Texas and two sisters: Mrs. J. D. Smith of Pittsburg, Texas and Mrs. Otis Bauman of Gilmer. Other survivors include one grandchild and many other relatives and friends. He resided in Gilmer at the time of his death.

His funeral was conducted at Paran Church where he was a member. He was buried beside the body of his wife in Smith Cemetery, adjacent to Paran Church property. Elder E. J. Lambert, his pastor, officiating at the funeral services with many people in attendance. He was a brother of the late Hubert Travis Faulk who also was a member of Paran Church, as well as Houston H. Faulk who preceded him. His funeral was the tenth anniversary of the death of another brother, Ezra. The Faulks were believers and defenders of the truth, honest in their convictions and dealings, devoted to their families and friends, loved by the church and highly respected as good citizens in the community. Their wise counsel, good advice, and devotion will linger in the memories of Paran Church for years to come. The Church does not attempt to praise them, but rather to praise the HEAD of the Church, JESUS CHRIST, for them.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor

DEACON W. VERNEST COBB

1909—1972

The *dash* between the above dates represent the life-span allotted by our Lord to Vernest in this world. He ordained that Vernest become the son of Deacon R. H. and Ella Wilson Cobb March 27, 1909. God joined together in love-union Vernest and Novell Jones which was ratified by marriage ceremony Sept. 30, 1930. He was born again of the Holy Ghost. After some time under the bondage of the law Vernest was joined in love-union, spiritually, to Jesus Christ which was ratified by baptism on September 9, and entered into covenant relationship with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Winnsboro, Texas. The brethren unanimously received him, ratifying their belief that the Lord had added him to the church. He was chosen by the church as deacon and was ordained to this work on Sept. 12, 1965. He was devotedly engaged in the upkeep of the meeting house and grounds and the general welfare of the members and pastor of Hopewell Church. He died Sept. 22, 1972 having lived over 63 years. He was, "A devout man, one that feared God with all his

house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:2)

Among the survivors are: his widow, Novell; his sister, Annie Mae McElyea. Both are members of Hopewell Church. His funeral was conducted Sept. 24th and his mortal body was buried in Hopewell Cemetery to await the final victory.

His funeral was conducted by his former and latter pastors, Elders E. J. Lambert and W. W. Taylor. The writer used Acts 10:1-4 as especially being applicable to Deacon W. V. Cobb, in tribute of respect at his funeral. The words of an angel to Cornelius were emphasized: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a MEMORIAL before God." (See Acts 10:4) Much of his time was devoted to reading the Bible, discussing the Scriptures, prayer and meditation, and striving for peace among brethren. We thank God for having known him! You will find inscribed on his tombstone words which he especially marked in his Bible: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Humbly submitted,

E. J. Lambert

MRS ANNIE MAE McELYEA

Mrs. Annie Mae McElyea of Rt. 4, Winnsboro, Texas, was born July 4, 1905 in Wood County Texas, to Deacon R. H. and Ella Wilson Cobb. She was married to C. C. McElyea April 2, 1927, who preceded her in death Dec. 22, 1962. Sister Annie Mae died suddenly at her home in Pleasant Grove Community May 21, 1973. Her life span was over 67 years. She became a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church of Christ in September, 1961. She is survived by two sons: Bobby Jean McElyea of Garland, Texas and Billy Pat McElyea of Houston; and five grandchildren, and other relatives and friends. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Joe L. Hamrick and the writer in McCrary-Edwards-Cain Funeral Chapel, Winnsboro. Burial was in Hopewell Cemetery beside the body of her husband.

It is with a sad heart that the writer records the death of the last one of the children of the late Deacon Robert Cobb. This family was blessed by God to wield a great influence in the community of Hopewell Church. Sister Annie Mae was of the old school of thought that the position of *Housewife* is the greatest position a woman could hold. She was happy devoting her full time in being a good wife to her husband and a good mother to her children. She was happiest in her late years when her children would come and go with her to Hopewell. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by grace through the merits of Jesus Christ, faithful to attend church meetings, and fervent in her love for

the brethren.

May God reconcile us to His will and make us content with our lot in this matter,—though we miss her fellowship and devotion so very greatly.

Humbly submitted,
Elder E. J. Lambert

SISTER BERTA RAY PORTERFIELD
and
CLAUDE A. PORTERFIELD

The McCray Primitive Baptist Church has sustained a great loss due to the passing of Sister Berta Ray Porterfield and Claude A. Porterfield. They departed this life August 24, 1972.

Sister Porterfield was born October 24, 1899 and had been a member of McCray Church since 1941. Mr. Porterfield was born January 14, 1899 and had attended this church since childhood, his father Brother Andrew G. Porterfield being a deacon for many years.

In their lives they were so closely knitted together and in their death they were not divided.

Their faithfulness and their support to their church was done in humbleness and meekness.

May these children feel that their loss is their mother and father's eternal gain. The obituary that you are about to read has been written by a grandson of the deceased, William L. Durham.

Elder Wallis A. Smith

On the warm summer evening of the twenty-fourth day of August, 1972 two of our number met their deaths suddenly and sweetly as they treaded their way down a familiar road to a house on a distant hill which they called "home." The two were one in life and one in death. They had shared almost all of their lives together and so they shared death at a place on the road in a community which meant all the world to them. They did not die on strange ground or in a faraway place, but in a place they each loved dearly and a place to which they had devoted almost all of their life. They lived a full and beautiful life together sharing the heartaches and sorrows along with the heartwarming spender of life. They created and nurtured a handsome family of children instilling in each one's heart that quality of humble grace and human compassion with which their cups ran over throughout their life.

They lived each day by a rigid creed of hard back-bending work and unyielding allegiance and faithfulness to their God. They lived a quiet, clean docile way which with each passing year echoed more loudly throughout McCray from that house on the hill as a ringing testimonial to their way of life. They indeed knew

the peace of having fulfilled their destinies according to God's grand plan. Not once were they ever known to have anything but unyielding respect and love for each other. They seemed to thrive on their love for each other and were sustained by their mutual love and respect for their loved ones and their closeness to God.

Their faithful concern for all with whom they came into contact was awe-inspiring. They seemed to gain an exhilarating sense of pleasure from "doing" for those whom they loved.

They each lived some seventy two years upon this earth and saw the world around them change completely several times over — but still they remained themselves to everyone who knew them — never trying to be anything or anybody but just themselves. As a result of their love for each other a family of great proportions came into being to surround them always with little children over and over again. Each new little child was made to feel that he was the "first" and that there was no other in the world quite like him in their eyes. Each child, grandchild and great grandchild always felt that they were "number one" with them. They were indeed.

There is much sadness and emptiness now that they are gone. They are sorely missed by all who shared their lives on this good Earth. But as time passes the peace and understanding which so prevailed in their two lives slowly fills that empty void and many wonderfully thrilling memories flood into mind and heart to bring tears of joy to the eye — joy in the fact that they lived such a full great life together and joy in their bitter sweet death together as one in love and one in the arms of their beloved God forever and ever.

May God grant that just a *little* of them live on in us forever.

William L. Durham

The service was held at McCray Primitive Baptist Church on August 26, 1972 and they were buried in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

HANNAH D. BRITTINGHAM

In as much as it pleased God to take from our midst our dear and beloved sister Hannah D. Brittingham, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God. Sister Brittingham was born on July 27, 1878, and was taken away from these mortal shores on May 19, 1973. She was the daughter of the late Thomas and Julia Hearne.

Sister Brittingham was married on December 6, 1899, to Minos Smiley Brittingham who departed this life in 1943. To this union were born three children who survive; Reese A.

Brittingham and Irma L. Messick of near Delmar, Delaware. Also a daughter of Mrs. Doris H. Simon of Dearborn, Mich. There are also nine grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren who survive.

Sister Brittingham had attended the meetings of the Old School Baptist all her life and late in her life here asked for a home in the Little Creek Church and was baptized by the writer on May 11, 1968. She was a very dear Sister and attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. She seemed to enjoy so very much when we would visit her, and the writer remembers so very well when she would say "I'm glad to see you." Words like that will linger in the minds of those who knew her and loved her so dearly.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Marvel Short Funeral Home in Delmar, Delaware, and her body was laid to rest in the Line United Methodist Cemetery on the Line road a few miles from Delmar, May it please the Lord to reconcile all the family and the many who knew and loved our dear Sister so well, to feel that our loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

SISTER RHODA KELLEY

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite Mercy, called our beloved Sister Rhoda Kelley from our midst April 2, 1973. She was born to the late Joe and Zellie Griffin December 28, 1889, in Alabama.

She was united in marriage to Mack Kelley November 8, 1913, at Lawn, Texas. To this union one daughter was born. She united with Pilgrim Rest Church in September, 1921, where her membership remained until her death. She was surely a firm believer in salvation by grace through our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and was truly a very faithful and dedicated member of her church, attending regularly as long as her health permitted her to do so.

Fond memories flood my soul as I reminisce years gone by, of the tender loving care shown us while visiting in her home many, many times. To know her was to love her. If we know anything, surely we believe she was ready and waiting for the Master to call her from this low ground of sin and sorrow. We humbly believe our loss to be her eternal gain, and she is now sweetly resting in Him.

Services were conducted by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Dewey Cemetery, Lawn, Texas, to await the second coming of Christ.

Submitted by order of Pilgrim Rest Church.

C. M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1973

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A THANKFUL SPIRIT

One Autumn day while standing beneath an aged Sycamore tree near the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Hopewell, N. J., the sun was warm across my shoulders; it brightened the crisp brown leaves now gathering close about the John Hart monument; and the wide spreading branches framed a view for me to see drifting fair weather clouds in an open stretch of sky.

A peaceful spirit has long lived beneath these spreading boughs where, now with each passing breeze, the little heaps of gathered leaves stir a precious incense of praise on the Autumn air, as if to pay tribute to a few faithful trustees, who through their concerning effort to care for this place, with an established trust fund, are fulfilling a true American spirit to hold on to the only privately cared for historic house of worship of our forefathers, and their burial place in this area.

Another endeavor of credible interest, which the Meeting House is fortunate to have close by, is the Hopewell House Square. With such an improvement joining the burial ground, there is a protective atmosphere surrounding this cherished landmark in the Valley. Such a development is an encouraging sign of a better community; a sign of brothers living their ideals to help brighten the American way of life with a newness

of beauty and strength that will broaden each tomorrow with a zeal of finer living.

The warmth of the mid-day sunshine has given way to a November haze spreading over the Valley as the shadows lengthen; the stray Sycamore leaves have fallen asleep beside the monument; but the spark of a thankful spirit will continue to burn in the smothering haze, like a precious incense lingering into the twilight hour of prayer.

Mary L. Hellngs

Conclusion of the excerpts from the Tygart's Valley Association circular letter of 1894 by John P. Thompson.

And so according to the prediction of all God's prophets for Moses, or even from the patriarchs and fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who by faith saw his day, the law of Moses and all the prophets from Samuel down to Malachi testified of Him and his coming; and the inspired Apostle Paul says in speaking to his Galatian brethren who were by nature Gentiles and owed no allegiance to the law of Moses, but were under the law of sin and death and by nature children of wrath, even as others, He said: "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." So you see they were even then children according to the election of grace. But when the fullness of time was come God sent forth His Son into the world made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and because ye are sons God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." Even that did not

make them sons, because they were sons from everlasting life: they had been from the time they were quickened and made alive by the Spirit of Christ. Matthew, one of the inspired evangelists, says the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream saying: "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." No conditions about it; if they will, or if they will do so and so, He will save them: no contingencies, no buts: He shall.

Brethren has He done it? has He accomplished the great work? Did He tell the truth when on the cross with his last expiring breath, He cried out, "It is finished"? Did he make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness for all his elect people? Is the record true or shall we cavil and say it was finished so far as Jesus was concerned in the salvation of His people, but it depends on certain contingencies and conditions, that men and women have to repent, believe and obey, as well as to accept the offered grace? O my soul, come not thou into the secret chambers of their rebellion, but bow meekly at the feet of Jesus and humbly receive the testimony of the Son when He declares, "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 that sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." And again, "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." (Luke 10:22) Then again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." And again in John 15: "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own,

but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; if they have persecuted me they will also persecute you, if they have kept my sayings they will keep yours also."

Brethren, can we not receive the testimony of the Son? Not until the Spirit shall take of the things of his and show them unto us. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God, and if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together. What, then, shall we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? The richest gift heaven has to bestow was bestowed on his beloved bride, the Lamb's wife. Jesus who died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; who was delivered for our offenses and rose again for our justification. Thus the whole redeemed family, the whole election of grace, for whom He shed his precious blood on the cross; not one more nor one less, not one of which will be left behind, but stand in their glorious head free from sin and condemnation. Glorious state, made known to the heirs of promise when God reveals his Son in them, the hope of glory; when they are enabled to believe according to the working of God's mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in that heavenly place, far above all principalities and power and might and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, the elect members which compose his body, which is the fullness of him which filleth all in all.

The inspired Apostle in the 15th chapter of first Corinthians, which is as it were a summary of all Christian hope of eternal life and a glorious im-

mortality beyond the grave, says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In regard to the all who die in Adam there are but two positions possible. First, that all the human family die in Him; and, second, that all the saints of God die in Him. So far as the fact of dying in Adam is concerned the first proposition is true—all the human family die in Him and if the first be true then the second is necessarily true, for the saints are a part of the family of Adam, and what is true of the whole is true of every part of the whole. Now to arrive at the truth of what is taught here it remains only to determine which of these positions is embraced in the text. The Apostle has under consideration here the resurrection of the just and their final deliverance from corruption and death. He is treating of the resurrection of the saints in their order. He modifies his expression, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," in the next sentence by saying, "Every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Here he stops short. Not a word is said about any except Christ and them that are his. This clearly sets a limit to the word "all", as all that are Christ's die in Adam, so all that are Christ's shall be made alive in Him. But suppose "all" does mean all the human family, which is true as a fact, but not necessarily true from this text. This argues nothing for the Arminian or Universalists, as there are none made alive in Christ but them that are His. As in Adam all them that are in Adam die, even so in Christ shall all who are in Him be made alive. Even then, if the first "all" does mean the whole human family there is nothing in the wording of the text which teaches that the same "all" who die in Adam are made alive in Christ. This must be proven, if it can be, from some other source.

The death of the saints in Adam is their inheritance from him. "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; so death passed upon all

men for all have sinned." The dissolution of this mortality is only the consummation of that death which has already passed upon us. We are not simply under the sentence of death awaiting the execution, but death itself has already passed upon us in reality. There is no power of will, not moral reform, no religious conjuring, no medical skill that can deliver us from death. Death seems to be a necessity both in nature and grace; not that God was under necessity to so arrange, but that it seemed good in His sight to have it so. Is it a mere interloper that God would not have here? Is it not a provision of His own will for carrying out his own design in creation? Death is a necessity in the vegetable kingdom, "For except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12: 24) This is a specific statement setting forth the principle of reproduction in the vegetable world; everything that lives is an evidence that something died. The Apostle in treating on the resurrection of the dead brought to his argument this universal fact in nature, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The Saviour in speaking of his own death and the glory that should follow, used the same fact in an illustration in the words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Death precedes quickening in the vegetable kingdom and is essential to it. The same mysterious principle in a deeper and more hidden manner extends into the animal kingdom and even reaches the kingdom of grace.

The Saviour opened the door and gave a glimpse of this mysterious chamber when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." He applied the universal principle of reproduction in the vegetable kingdom to himself; He here gives us to understand that the process of reproduction exemplified in plant life, was in some way wrapped up in Him, and the principle of his

death and our redemption by his blood, is in some way illustrated by the death and quickening of a grain of wheat. Now this same saying may with propriety and truthfulness be transferred to Adam, for he is the figure of Christ. Except Adam had died he would have abided alone and the world never would have been peopled through him. Adam begat no children until death passed upon him the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." This is strange indeed, but what is not strange when properly thought upon, its being strange is no evidence against its truthfulness; truth is always stronger than fiction, sure enough; The process cannot be explained, the reason cannot be given, yet it is true. Death plays too stupendous a part in the affairs of this world, both in the physical and moral spheres, and shines too brightly in the everlasting covenant, to be a mere interloper in God's universe. Faith looks upon it as a provision of infinite wisdom, a gracious providence ordained by the Creator to fulfill his own eternal purpose, both in creation and grace. The whole process of Christian experience is a struggle between life and death, sin and holiness, corruption and incorruption, and the whole summing up of Christian hope is that we shall one day be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The "all" referred to here are clearly they that are Christ's: The whole election of Grace including all those whom the inspired Paul speaks of in the 11th chapter of Hebrews from righteous Able down to the coming of Christ, of whom the world was not worthy, and these all having obtained a good report through faith, died not having receive the promise. God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect. The resurrection of the saints, as here brought to view, is in Christ; this resurrection is but the triumphant consummation of something long gone before: it is the harvest of grace sown

in Christ before the foundation of the world; it is the design for far off events to which the whole creation moves. Death in Adam, life in Christ, is the fundamental idea of the New Testament scriptures, the golden text of the gospel of grace, the master key to all Christian experience. In treating upon the same theme the same inspired writer has recorded, "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Men are made righteous in Christ upon exactly the same conditions upon which they were made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. Adam's sin and disobedience reached us by virtue of our vital relationship to him, upon no other condition could we possibly have been made sinners by his disobedience, if we had not been in him, virtually in him, of the same life with him, then his disobedience would not, could not have reached us at all; upon exactly the same condition the obedience of Jesus reaches his people and makes them righteous. When the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, he took upon himself the seed of Abraham, the election of grace; they were made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. In his incarnation, by virtue of the grace and life that were given them in him according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love, He was the Ark of God's covenant, and when he struggled with temptation, when he suffered for their sins, when he died upon the cross, when he descended into hell, they were safely housed in him and brought safely through it all, they paid tithes to him, became dead to the law by his body, reconciled to God by him, and shall be saved from wrath as one with him, by virtue of this one-ness of life, this vital relationship to him, his perfect obedience, his suffering of death and triumphant resurrection all are accounted unto them, and reaches them most effectually; and shall make them all right-

eous.

As to the certainty of the saints being made alive in Christ at the last day there can be no reason to doubt, their being made alive is just as certain as their death in Adam; who can question the certainty of death? Is it not this certainty that strikes terror to the heart of all living? Are there any conditions between death and us upon which death can be bought or stayed? There is no way of escape. According to the inspired record of eternal truth there is no reason to doubt the certainty of life in Christ, inasmuch as we have born the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: the one is just as certain as the other, Jesus himself said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all he has given me I should lose nothing but raise it up at the last day." It is not the will of the heavenly Father that any of these little ones who fall asleep in Christ shall perish, all our sins have been put away by him and He has redeemed us unto God by his blood, by the one offering he has perfected us forever, we are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is our life shall appear we shall appear with him in glory. He hath loved us with an everlasting love, He hath chosen us unto salvation, He hath appointed us unto glory, He hath ordained us into eternal life, He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son. He hath laid down his life for us, we are reconciled to God by his blood, we are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God our destiny is indissolubly linked with the destiny of Jesus. How can this incomprehensible work of grace fail? Faith embraces it all and rests in this finished work of our Redeemer, and looks forward with joy and gladness to the consummation of it all. The resurrection of the dead is the crowning result of the work of Christ and God's purpose of salvation; then shall be

brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: death will be swallowed up in victory." (Hosea 13: and First Corinthians 15)

How great the grace, how rich the inheritance, how ineffable the glory of His inheritance in the saints, how close the union, what an eternal mystery is revealed, Christ in us the hope of glory, redeemed from all iniquity by his precious blood which cleanseth us from all sin: Well might Moses when enabled by faith to behold Christ and his church the spiritual Israel of which natural Israel under him was the chosen type, exclaim, "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee: O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Now, dear brethren, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us be patient and hope to the end, for the time is at hand, let us walk worthy of our high calling with all lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love. There is one body and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not, it doth not appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (I John) O, that the good Lord, if it be his will, may visit his people with the Spirit of grace and supplication, all that bitterness may be removed from among all the children of His kingdom, that love which is the fulfilling of the law of Christ and from which flows the peace, joy, communion and fellowship of the saints; and may good works adorn the

house of God that we all may speak the same things and be comforted together. Peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ — grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

“FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD”

ST. JOHN 3:16

Dear Editors and Readers of the *Signs* :

While in the hospital in Seattle, and later while recuperating from Lymphedema of left leg which renders me inactive physically, I have had considerable time to read and meditate on several Scriptures, as well as to wonder why this physical affliction was visited upon me, etc. If it is the Lord's will, I shall write my thoughts on the words of Jesus in St. John 3:16 — “For God so loved THE WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

As to some of the thoughts that ran thru my mind after the heavy surgery for removal of the Cancer-Tumor July 2nd, I felt sure this affliction was for a purpose and according to the will of the Lord, and realized that He could afflict, and likewise He could heal and I was soon to feel His assurance that I would recover. There was never a feeling of resentment over this affliction, and, as time passed, I was given to look upon it as being purposed by the Lord for reasons known only to Him; and that what he purposes to come upon one of His little ones (and I hope I'm one of them) is for their good, and I feel that time will bring such to pass, moreso than that which has already been experienced. After much deep thought I was made to feel that I should be glad and rejoice that it His will that I was thus afflicted, and not unlike Jesus (if I may be so bold as to feel thusly) when He spoke words of thanks in St. Luke 10:21 — “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit,

and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT”. How consoling it is to be of a thankful mind, feeling that what seems good in the sight of the Lord, we must be thankful for rather than to feel He has worked against us, as-it-were.

Now to THE WORLD that Jesus spoke of. The unregenerate multitudes of the past and present who know not the mind of Christ, have seized upon these words as positive proof that God loved the whole world of humankind from beginning to end, and have gone out to bring all mankind to Christ and will keep on so doing until time ceases. They are the “WISE AND THE PRUDENT” referred to. Philpot in a sermon July 6, 1841, on this very Scripture, and particularly as to the WISE, said — “It is God's glory to pour contempt upon human wisdom, and to bring it to naught, to take the wise in their own craftiness, to lay low in the dust all that man idolizes, etc”. The WISE undoubtedly were those of the past, the present and in time yet to come, WHO ARE RELIGIOUSLY WISE, and not worldly wise. The PRUDENT, says Philpot, “Does not like any sort of profession which in any way interferes with his worldly prospects, a character somewhat different from the WISE.” etc.

As I am given to see it, THE WORLD which Jesus referred to, was that SPIRITUAL WORLD, separate and distinct from the NATURAL WORLD, which the All-wise God foerknew and foresaw way back there when it was His purpose and pleasure to bring both these worlds into being in His infinite mind; and He wrote all the names of those in THE SPIRITUAL WORLD in the Lamb's Book Of Life, which He told St. John of in Revelation 3:5. Those of the other world, over which the Beast, and the Dragon which gave power to the Beast rules, are the multitudes told of in Revelation 13:8 — “. . . WHOSE

NAMES ARE NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAMB SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD." While it is not stated that those names NOT written the Lamb's Book Of Life, were written in another Book, it makes no difference, for the mind of the All-wise God, is sufficient to contain them from first to last.

Further, as to this SPIRITUAL WORLD, we find that some could question it's existence by reading St. John 5:19 — "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Jesus was telling His disciples they were not of the world, —this *time world*, therefore they belonged in another world, which could not be any other but this SPIRITUAL WORLD. And His saying, "I have chosen you out of the world," to me, means it was the fulfillment of God's first election, and He, Jesus, was merely bringing them out from amongst those of the NATURAL WORLD where they were temporarily sojourning until God's appointed time came when Jesus would manifest Himself to them. Notice that He said, — "YE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD" and it means that they were never in it but were in that SPIRITUAL WORLD into which God placed them before writing their names in the Lamb's Book Of Life. We find in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that Paul wrote "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" etc. The Scriptures have never established that God had any intention or desire toward reconciling the world of all mankind to Himself, but only those He chose before the foundation of this time world was laid. Let us turn to 2 Corinthians 5:18, the verse just preceding the one quoted where Paul wrote:—"And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." To reconcile means "To restore to favor."

It does not seem to be expedient to write at length on this text Scripture, for all those taught of the Lord, and not

by man, who diligently search the Scriptures, find that many, very many, clearly show Jesus did not infer that His Father God loved the whole world of mankind, for He would not have prayed as He did as recorded in 17th Chapter of St. John. Read it carefully again, please.

A bit more about the WISE, religiously so, and their present day frantic efforts, sparing neither time nor money. Let us look at their "Key 73" cooperative venture launched late last year with some 150 denominations participating. Their "kick-off" publicity last December carried nationally in the press, said it was "The biggest cooperative venture in modern times TO TRY to strengthen the commitment of this generation to Christ." There was to be broadcasting specials, continent-wide distribution of Scripture, youth celebrations, touring companies of christian artists, etc, etc. Hence the film production of "JESUS CHRIST, THE SUPERSTAR" being shown in theatres and I believe on television. Millions will see this vain, and I say putrid attempt to portray our Lord Jesus, thru the natural acting of puny, depraved mankind. Postors in many places (stores) depict Christ in a business suit, tapered hair and trimmed beard and the slogan, "Jesus: The Man with a Plan." Also the use of Auto Bumper Stickers, reading "Read the Bible: It'll scare the H-ll out of you"; and another one,— "Honk if you know Jesus." More such activities could be told of, but this is enough. No truer words could have been written than those of one of the world's great religious leaders last June, tho he did not realize he and his son's great movement fell in the category, or within the scope he had in mind. I agree, wholeheartedly with him. He wrote, "Every bit of God's perfection man's hand ever touched, it would seem, he has besmirched, spoiled and polluted". How true, How True! Do not the things just cited show the awful pollution of God's Holy Word and the awful besmirching of His Holy Son's Spiritual character and

work? Shall we not say (pray) "Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do"?

Concluding, will say that on September 7, a few days ahead, I'll pass into my 78th year of life and it is my hope that I will be blessed to continue on for some years, to spend considerable time amongst the Lord's people, if it is His will. His people, His Church, are those I love and find great pleasure in being amongst for they are ONE GLORIOUS BODY, as the inspired writer of the following verses places them .

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH OF GOD

"Would you the Church of God survey,—
It's beauty, strength and harmony?
Then Christ Emanuel see;
Where all perfections in Him meet,
There is the Church of God complete
The sum of all is He.

Christ is the precious cornerstone
Which all His Church is built upon,
Nor can it ever fall.
The prophets and apostles, too,
Other foundations never knew
Than Jesus, Lord of all.

'Ere Angels fell, or time had birth
Or God to being spake the earth;
In Christ the head, the sants were chose,
ONE GLORIOUS BODY TO COMPOSE."

In hope of eternal life thru the Grace
and Mercy of God, tho a most unworthy
being.

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"NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH"

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"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21: 1, 2.)

The first heaven and the first earth, which John said had passed away, evi-

dently was the legal or Jewish heaven, the old Jerusalem, and all that was earthy which pertained to their works and manner of worship, sacrifices and offerings, etc., under or according to the ceremonial law of Moses' worship. This all passed away, being completely abolished, destroyed, burned up in the destruction of the old Jerusalem. The old covenant being abolished by Jesus, who brought in a new heaven and a new earth, with a new law, new covenant ordered in all things and sure, spiritually speaking, wherein dwelleth righteousness, Christ and his people; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. This sea, evidently has reference to the "molten sea made for the Jewish temple." (See, 1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Kings 16:17; 25:13-16; 2 Chr. 4:2, 4, 29, and 6, 15; Jer. 27:19.) It contained two thousand baths, according to the scripture, and it rested upon twelve molten oxens, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. (1 Kings 7:25, 26.) This evidently is the sea John had reference to being no more, which evidently was destroyed with the complete destruction of every thing pertaining to the Jewish temple and all legal, but earthy works of the old Jerusalem and their ceremonial law worship.

Therefore, John saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Thus, John gave a more full description of the new heaven which he by divine revelation saw, verifying the fact that this holy city, new Jerusalem's origin, as the all and in all of his people was from God, and descended from God out of heaven; whose builder and maker is God, in Christ Jesus; and was according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began; and whose kingdom is an

everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Peter speaking of the passing away and the total destruction of the first heaven and the first earth, said, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief (not to his children) in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervant heat, the earth also and the WORKS THAT ARE THEREIN, shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3:10) "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13) Wherein dwelleth Chirst, who is the Lord our righteousenss, the righteousness of his saints. Paul, also speaking of this new heaven, the new Jerusalem and city of the living God, says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor to blackness and darkness, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." (Heb. 12: 18, 19.) "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12: 22, 23, 24.)

We wish to notice, and trust the reader will do the same, that Peter said, "Nevertheless, we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness." John said, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth," and also, John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Paul said, "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." (Peter 3: 13; Rev. 21:

1, 2; Heb. 12: 22.)

Jesus, in taking away the old, made all things new: new heaven, new Jerusalem, new covenant, new and living way, new creation — created in Christ Jesus. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, and behold all things have become new; he himself, spiritually speaking, has become new; even his sins are new to him; and especially, grace, mercy, love and truth. These sing a new song, they praise a new born King. They are therefore no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praise of him who hath called them out of darkness, unto his marvellous light.

Dearly beloved, the apostle adds, "We beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, (to the world) that ye abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the gentiles, (unbelievers) that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, that beholding your chaste conversation, coupled with fear, that they may be ashamed, that falsly accuse you, in the day of visitation." (see I Peter:2)

While the destruction of the old Jerusalem and the old world, are things in the far past, yet things that were written of aforetime, were written for our learning and admonition, just as it was declared by Jesus unto the apostles and by the prophets before them. Malachi, before the coming of Christ, prophesied, of the awful destruction of the old Jerusalem and of the wicked; saying, "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven: and all the proud,

yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch; But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings: and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. 4:1, 2) Jesus in giving instruction and warning to his disciples of the coming destruction of the old Jerusalem, said, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:34, 35; Mark 13:30, 31; Luke 21:32, 33) Jesus, to me, was speaking of the same heaven and earth passing away, that John in Rev. 21:1, and in Peter 3:10, was speaking of; else, what other heaven and earth could it be? It has been said that the generation, (Matt. 24:34), that Jesus was speaking of, was the generation of Jesus Christ; well, no doubt there were some of his people that were to remain until the destruction of old Jerusalem: but please, when will the generation of Jesus Christ pass away? Jesus, to me was speaking of that present generation, some of them then present, standing there, including some of his disciples, would not pass from this life before the fulfilment of his instruction and warning concerning the destruction of that Jerusalem. The canon of the New Testament, no doubt was finished before the destruction of Jerusalem, and some of the apostles were living at that time, otherwise Jesus' instruction and warning of it would have been of no avail, with the exception for them to warn other saints and the churches, which they most faithfully did. Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14) Jesus had reference to the end of the ceremonial law dispensation. For indeed, the apostles did preach the gospel to all nations, and I think finished writing the New Testament, before the

destruction of the old Jerusalem and all of its ceremonial law worship; As they did of the Acts of the apostles, in the book of Acts.

But, now back to the new heaven and the new Jerusalem: and this we will do, if the Lord permit. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for even in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, and I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isaiah 65:17, 18, 19) (Don't let the above saying of crying or weeping trouble the already troubled child of Grace, for it is speaking directly of the spiritual joys of new Jerusalem; they indeed come to it with weeping, but also with everlasting joy upon their head: they joy in their spiritual head, Christ, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.) The angel, Jesus, said to John, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal: And had a wall great and high, and twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels. . . . On the east three gates; on the south three gates; on the north three gates; on the west three gates. . . . And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring

their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither worketh abomination, or a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Rev. 21:9-13 and 21-27) David said, "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined," and, "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

We are to understand that the book of Revelation is practically all written in figurative language. I have quoted these selective verses of Chapter 21, which directly speaks of the new heaven, the new Jerusalem, Zion, the city of the living God; and it is only by faith of divine revelation that we can even get a glimpse of these glorious mysteries, the mysteries of the kingdom of God; and as Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom." After the new birth, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, we grow in grace and knowledge of the spiritual truth of the gospel; but it is to be remembered, we can only see in part and know in part in this life; we see as through a glass darkly; receive as it were a glimpse, a little here and a little there.

It would be very lengthy, if we were able to comment on the verses quoted above, but would like to notice just a little of the revealed truth in a few of the verses. We are to notice that the glory of God and the Lamb is the light of the city; that it has no need of the sun or moon to light it; the midday sun would be no good to the poor child of grace in giving any light to them of that spiritual kingdom; but God the Father and the Lamb are the light and the temple of that great city of God — and we must worship in that TEMPLE — Father and the Son, the light and the temple. And they that are saved, shall walk in the light of it; and the kings

of the earth, new earth, (kings and priest unto God) do bring their glory and honour unto it; and the gates of it shall not be shut by day, for there shall be no night there. The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gates was of one pearl; and at the gates twelve angels; and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

I think the twelve angels, are the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and the twelve pearls, all being of one pearl, represent the Lamb; and his gifts to the apostles, who guard the entrance of the gates. Man may get into the local church without a legal passport, but never will any get into the city of God, without the true fruits of the spirit of Christ: for He is the way, the truth and the life, and the door of the sheep; and it is by him they enter into the sheepfold. The apostles in all their writings demanded to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and their gifts, which were of God, set the commandments in their writings, and they are thereby upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of (spiritual) Israel. The walls of the city are great and exceedingly high, so that none can go over, nor under, nor around it; it must be faced; or run from it.

I realize these are very poor and unfinished comments, but I am tired, my mind has become dull, and likely my writing any further at present would be without edification, if indeed any of it has been. We should read the apostle's writing to see if it bears witness with our experience, and if we have a glimpse of the true light of that spiritual city and kingdom of the living and true God. And remember, we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things not seen are eternal. It is the true Spirit of Christ that gives life, light and liberty to the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; each one being a mansion

in their Father's house.

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

OUR SPIRITUAL JOSEPH

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

The child Joseph was a son by special providence rather than according to the free course of ordinary generation. His birth removed the reproach of his mother, and was a guarantee of life to her, for she was barren, and said to her beloved Jacob, "Give me children or else I die." The figure is thus that the birth of Jesus was by special providence. The church was barren, (1) His birth forever removed our reproach, and (2) brought unto us the blessings of the Covenant of everlasting life — a tremendous double at the Lord's hand for poor sinners.

Joseph was born about the time of the end of Jacob's service to Laban for Rachel, which was fourteen years; however, Jacob served yet another seven, making the length of time our Lord was about His Father's business.

We have no account of Joseph until he was seventeen. This also points to Jesus who at a time began to be about His Father's business, of which little is said, and little is known until He entered His revealed ministry at the age of thirty.

Joseph possessed inherent virtues which rendered him superior to any of his brethren. There seems to have been nothing in him of an evil tendency, but, to the contrary, he possessed a character so simple and honest and pure, that he could not allow evil doings of himself, nor could he keep the evil doings of his brethren from his father. It seems that his father held him in special regard above any of his brethren.

No doubt Israel saw in him evidence of a special destiny, a child to the hour born, a son for a purpose given. It is said that Israel loved Joseph more than all his children because he was the son

of his old age; but this must have been secondary, because Benjamin was younger than Joseph, and was left motherless in his father's hand. However Jacob (Israel) loved Joseph supremely, and made him a coat of many colors, or pieces; and for his being thus loved, his brethren hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him.

It is said of the enemies of Jesus that they hated him without cause; and so Joseph's brethren hated him. Joseph was a dreamer of dreams and told them to his brethren, for which they hated him the more. Their hatred became intense — even so was Jesus hated by his brethren.

In Joseph's dreams the future was revealed, and so salvation is according to the predestination and sovereignty of God; yet humility and worship are revealed. The world today despises dreams and specially those who dream dreams: and fulfillment of Joseph's dreams would be prevented if possible.

Joseph's brethren hated him for the reason the world hates Jesus, because "We will not have this man Christ Jesus to reign over us."

Men do not object to dreamers of the flesh, but that God should cause men to dream, and thus reveal the future, they are not ready to admit. Joseph's brethren saw nothing in him to indicate that they should bow down to him. Besides it was in their nature to hate as much as it was in Joseph to dream, showing that it is as much impossible for men to love as it is for the wicked to have withheld from Him the violence of their wicked hands. So, the wicked shall do wickedly, and the righteous shall hold on his way. Without both neither would signify anything.

Joseph, the Old Testament shadow of Jesus Christ, reminds of the parable where men employed to keep the vineyard, slew the servants of the householder: and when he sent his son, they said, "This is the heir, come let us kill him." The Father of all our mercies sent his Son unto His brethren; and while we were yet enemies, Christ died

for the ungodly.

So, in the aggregate or total, the noble part played by Joseph was no more necessary than the part his brethren played in the fulfillment of the predestination of God in the furtherance of good to His people. This is best understood by those who can see that Joseph's dreams did not make him an Hebrew, and his brethren's evil deeds *did not* make them Egyptians — for Jacob and his sons were vessels of mercy, and the single qualification of a vessel of mercy is to receive out of the fulness of Jesus Christ.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

The following is copied from the January 1, 1859, issue of the *Signs*:

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

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

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah, — the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—I John v. 8.
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistable, and, in all

cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gilbert Beebe

The above have ever been the leading sentiments on which the *Signs of the Times* was founded; and they have been reiterated during the years as being the unchanging principles held by all the editors of the paper.

We have thought much of the grace and purpose of God that has enabled the *Signs* to continue all through the years on these principles. We know that it is the Lord who reveals the truth of these principles to His people, causing them to love these things dearly, having the witness within that they are Scriptural truths. They know, of course, that these things do not seem right to unregenerated people, for they oppose, often quite vigorously, the thought that all things

are of God, and according to His will and purpose.

The only way anyone is given to believe and rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour, is to be taught of Him. And being taught of Him to know the truth, is full evidence of being chosen in Christ before the world began; for otherwise there is no quickening and no revelation — no knowledge that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to his laws, for these can only be discerned spiritually. To be born and taught of the Spirit is therefore necessary.

The principles held by the *Signs* cannot be disputed when placed side by side with the scriptures: With the scriptures they must stand or fall, for there is no other criteria. With the scriptures all doctrine must agree, or be counted false.

It should be well known, of course, that, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," according to Proverbs 14:12.

It is our fervant prayer that the *Signs of the Times* may continue on and on, according to the will of God, that the editors and writers who come after us, may be blessed of the Lord to be as careful as we have tried to be, not to allow anything to be carried in the *Signs* that would be in any way contrary to the scriptures; of which we believe the above principles to be fully in accord. It is the endeavor of the editor to screen any expressions which are sometimes inadvertently used by writers or speakers which were not intended, and which do not express the thoughts intended.

We would urge our brethren to write for publication when they have a mind to, for the readers of the *Signs* look forward to reading the experiences of the brethren and sisters, and their comments on portions of the Word of God. Our work is easier when we have plenty of copy on hand.

In the best of bonds.
J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 20:22

They said unto him, we are able. (See also Ex. 19:8).

Indeed and in truth they did not know what they asked. Israel did not know what they were saying when they said that they would do the things in the law, because later they had Moses to go up and receive the law, saying to the contrary of what they earlier had agreed to; one time they could do all of it, the next time they could not hear it and live. What poor frail worms of the dust we are. How unable we are to do what we say we will do; or if we do have to do what we say, we find out that indeed we did not weigh the matter carefully when we made our agreement.

When we first are drawn to the cross and its dying victim; when we first see the kingdom of heaven; when we are first brought into the lovely fellowship of the saints, we do not know our weakness, we do not know how cruel bearing the cross can be, we do not know that we are still a traveler with unclean lips and that we dwell in the midst of a people that are that way. Being in our early love, and having been made free from sin and the consequences of it, we are likely to think of it all as being an easy road with compatible companions, and we would think nothing of taking His cross as our cross, His drink as our drink, His baptism as our baptism. How sad the day was when clouds covered the horizon, when that which we counted as a joy becomes a burden that we are *not able* to bear, and yet must bear it; when we are brought face to face with the cup of sorrow, knowing that it must be drained and yet realizing that we are *not able* to do so; when we are brought into the fellowship of His sufferings, being made comformable unto His death, being buried in a baptism that only a King could endure and survive, we find that, even though we said that we could pass through it, we find that we are *not able* to pass through it alone.

Our petition becomes the cry of the feeble, of the poor, of one whose strength has become as water poured out upon the ground, as one whose sinews have shrunk (Gen. 32:32), as one whose groanings can not be uttered. We find that we are *not able* to suffer without complaining. When the sun is shining we are strong predestinarians, being glib of tongue in talking about that God sends all trouble out of love for us, but let the sun go into eclipse and then you listen at the complaint. In the last nearly fifty years I have met many, many lovely people, strong in the faith, well grounded and settled in the deep things of God, but I have crossed the path of these same people when they were laboring in darkness and low on a sick bed, the body wracked in pain, and they they cry out, "Why has He dealt thus with me? What is it that I have done that He has laid me low?" Ah, how my mind picks up this sad refrain, for it is mine. I feel it so sadly that I am *not able* to suffer with Him without complaining at my lot, and measuring my wisdom with His.

I am *not able*, when misunderstood, without wanting to button hole my fellow associates that I might explain and thus remove any danger of being ostracised. If I *was able*, I would be able to keep all fingers of scorn from being pointed at me; if I *was able* to use good simple language to those that know but little in the letter of things, and language filled with beautiful similes and metaphors clothed in rhetorical sublimity to the learned, then I *would be able* to be understood at all times; but I am *not able* to do this because I have my own vocabulary and I am not at home when I try to conform to yours, thus I am often misunderstood, and misunderstanding has caused more sorrow than any other condition that we come into. I do not want to be misunderstood and thus I am *not able* to bear it without wanting to give my opinion anew (Job 32:10,17), so that the misunderstanding will pass away.

While I am *not able* to bear any por-

tion of suffering without complaining and explaining, I do hope that my case has some resemblance of the prophet Jeremiah's lamentations. So often my cry is, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore?" Ah, yes, I complain, and my spirit is overwhelmed in me (Psalm 77); I lament with Jeremiah. I abhor my desire for ease in Zion; I am ashamed of my weak trust. I flee when no man pursues. Ah, yes, I build a strong case for myself and hold with bitter complaint the dealings of God with me. I get myself washed in snow water, and down he plunges me into the ditch again (Job 9); I make a good argument, like Job did, about my complaints, I get a good case built to justify my complaints and my explanation of how things came to be as they are, and then, wonders of wonders, the Lord reverses my complaint and my explanations and comes with great power and glory into my stricken soul, as He did with both Job and Jeremiah. (Job 19 and 23; Lam. 3) Thus with Job and David and Jeremiah I am *not able* to refrain from explanation so that I escape the chastening rod, but when He brings me to the state of reconciliation that comes with the mind of Christ in me, I *am able* to endure for His dear sake.

It is the saddest hour when I feel forsaken and alone. I am *not able* to bear an isolated condition. Ah, how sad when I walk alone, and how gladsome is my outlook and my countenance when He walks with me: for you see two are so much better than one. (Eccl. 4) As the shadows lengthen I am daily in communion with David, I beg and plead that I not be forsaken as my strength fails, as the years build up around me (Psa. 71:9), and how my heart is enlarged, and how pleasant my lines become, as I am assured that He will never leave me nor forsake me. (2 Cor. 6:11; Psa. 16:6; Heb. 13:5) Ah, I am exalted on eagle's wings as I am reminded of His mercy and His care, and I am *not*

able to refrain my soul from taking flight into the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, that even though His children forsake His law, and walk not in His judgments, and break His statutes, and keep not His commandments; and even though He visits them with the rod and with stripes, nevertheless His loving kindness and His faithfulness will not be removed, nor fail. (Psalm 89)

But then I am amazed that while He has not forsaken me, that the least trifle comes up and I forget and forsake some feeble little lamb of the fold. He never leaves, never forsakes; His love and patience and kindness continues in winter and in summer; He is never too busy, never away, never slumbering, never indifferent, always hearing my feeble cry for relief. He remembered under the burden of Calvary. He remembered when He cried, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." He remembered His sorrowing brethren the first thing when He arose from the grave, but I am *not able* to watch one hour: I forsake the assembling of the saints for a trifling pleasure of Egypt; I forsake some sick room because it is so hot; I refrain from going to the relief of some poor tempted, begging soul because I am not feeling up to par.

I am *not able* to wait on Him to bring to pass His vengeance in those that would destroy His kingdom and the peace and fellowship of those that compose its inhabitants. I get impatient, and in a hurry; I want to see (and with shamefacedness say) that He gets revenge for my fancied wrongs, and I seek for ways in which I can play along with the molder instead of being the clay. I am *not able* to sit at His feet and leave it all to Him. I want to have something to say, as did impetuous Peter, about how the kingdom and its subjects perform. (John 21:22) However, He *is able* to subdue all things unto Himself, including this poor sinner, and my lisping tongue would harp melodies unto Him that He has not left the tethering of

my tongue unto me that am *unable* to do it (Jas. 3:8); that He has not left me to cure my own impediment of speech, which we all were *unable* to do. (Mark 7:32,37) We were *unable* to call Him Father and Saviour because of blindness and the ravages of death on our every faculty, but He has cured us of the ravages of the disease wherein we *are able* through His amazing grace to drink of His cup (not hanging on the tree where justice would demand that we hang) with Him in His own kingdom, enduring with the Head the suffering left behind for the body. (Col. 1:24) How precious it is that He hanged on the tree where we were *not able* to hang, and drink the cup to the last drop in suffering for sin, which we were *not able* to drink and live; and then extends His cup to us and with us in the kingdom of heaven, drinking and communing together for His sake.

Thus, dearly beloved in the Lord, seeing that we are possessed with two natures that are so contrary one to the other, that we *can not* do as we would; seeing that we, if children of God, have the will to do good but have not found how, and are *not able* to perform that which is good, may it be the Lord's good pleasure to work mightily in us by His Holy Spirit whereby we *are able* to perform every good word and work to the praise and honor and glory of His grace.

In the midst of my *lack of ability* I would beg the Lord that He give me the *ability* to be agreeable with those that are disagreeable; to concede that there may be truth in what others say; to never say a word in my defence when I am misunderstood; to keep calm and quiet when under fire; to forgive before being asked to; to give me the ability not to pay any attention to unkind remarks or written slurs; to not seek enthronement at the expense of dethronement of others; to not engage in needless arguments that might cause estrangement; to not be conformed to the world; but, by grace, to be transformed into an acceptable minister of better

things; to resist the devil; to flee from temptation; to get enjoyment and sweetness out of bitterness, light in darkness, riches out of poverty; to set forth Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the way, the truth, the life; to finally die in peace with God and just men, and to live with Him in glory.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

Brother Beebe: — I am well pleased with the *Signs of the Times*, and I am not willing to give them up. You may consider me a lifetime subscriber, or so long as I can get the means to pay for them, and they continue to contain the truth of the gospel. Brother Beebe, I wish you would write a discourse on the last chapter of Luke, and twenty-sixth verse: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

A. R. Dorris
Webster Co., Kentucky
Aug. 1, 1862

REPLY

Saints and angels may well be amazed at the idea of the blessed Christ of God appearing in the character of a sufferer, and it is not surprising that the two disciples with whom he was conversing when he uttered the words above written, recoiled at the thought that wicked men had been permitted to crucify their Lord and Master. Like all others of the disciples they could only understand the profound mystery, so far as it was opened by revelation to their comprehension. They knew that they had loved him dearly, that they had trusted in him as the Messiah that was to come, and they verily believed that he was the long looked for Deliverer that was to redeem Israel: but how much he was to suffer in the accomplishment of that work, they did not realize. They had witnessed his arrest, his trial, his conviction on false testimony, they had probably followed him, perhaps afar off, to the place of execution. Saw his writhing agony on the cross, heard his bitter groans, and heard him cry,

My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me? Ah! well they knew that he was crucified, dead and buried: but that he was indeed risen again from the dead, they did not know. True, they had been astonished at a report of some women who were early at the sepulchre, who averred that he had risen. But how could they rejoice in a risen Jesus, until as such he manifested himself to them? So it still continues to be with the disciples of Jesus down to the present day, for now we know only in part, we see only as through a glass darkened: but the blessed prospect looms up before us, that as soon as that which is in part shall be done away, we shall see even as we are seen, and know even as we are known. But our brother desires us to discourse on the text. "O fools, and slow in heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We do not understand the Redeemer to call his disciples fools by way of reproach, or as implying impatience with their infirmities, but to chide their dependency, and dispel their doubtings. A fool is simply a person who is destitute of understanding, and this was their case on that occasion: for if they had comprehended the matter, if they had known that thus it behoved him to suffer and to rise again from the dead on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to Jews and Gentiles, and that this dreadful suffering was now accomplished, that sin and death and hell, were vanquished, that the church of God was now redeemed from all iniquity, that now his mediatorial glory was about to break forth in heavenly radiance, instead of desponding they would have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And slow of heart to believe. The apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." That is, in regard to spiritual things. Carnal, or nominal professors of religion may believe their respective creeds, with their

heads, with their carnal minds, and with their natural powers, as evidence is presented, and they may be quick to believe, for they are under no restraint. We see them eager to drink in delusion that suits their carnal lust and hurriedly they embrace the doctrine of men, because they love it, and because it requires no grace, no teaching of the Holy Spirit to instruct them. But the children of God can only lay hold of the evidences on which their belief in Christ is predicated, by faith; and their faith is not of themselves, it is the gift of God. And it is the work of the Spirit of truth to present the evidences of eternal things to their faith, and they are such fools they can only believe and understand what they are taught of God by his Spirit: for they have not a particle of wit or wisdom only what is treasured up for them in him who of God is made unto them wisdom, for in him is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They feel and confess that they are slow to believe all that the prophets have written. They were not without confidence in the prophets of the Lord, and undoubtedly believed some of the things which the prophets had written, but they were slow or tardy in believing *all*.

We do not suppose the two disciples disbelieved or doubted what the prophets had written in predicting the coming of One who should redeem Israel, for they referred to that promise, as one bound to their hearts. And although they might confidently believe many things thus written in the Old Testament, their understanding of the scriptures was so limited, that they were slow to believe it all. But what the prophets have written is one undivided and unbroken testimony, beautiful and glorious in its harmony and identity. Hence Jesus fully understanding their deficiency, applied the proper and only corrective. He began at Moses, that is, with the five books of Moses, with which the Old Testament begins, and beginning also with all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures

the things concerning himself. So we perceive, fools, though these dear disciples were, as also all his disciples still are, (for if any man would know anything he must first become a fool, that he may be wise,) yet they lacked no wisdom or knowledge that Jesus did not possess. When we consider the amount of instruction contained in the discourse of Jesus, embracing all that Moses and the prophets had written, concerning himself, together with all that was contained in the other scriptures, on the same subject, all comprised in his discourse to them, is it any wonder that their hearts were inflamed, and burned within them, while he talked with them by the way, and opened to them the scriptures?

These scriptures had not only predicted his advent to the world, but they had also testified beforehand his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. The prophets themselves did not understand all the glory of their prophecy. There were some things sealed up from their understanding, as Peter says they sought diligently what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

We come now to the appeal which Christ made to the disciples.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things? On no such grounds as could justify Pilate in passing the sentence of death upon him, for he had acknowledged that he found no cause of death in him, nor ought he to have suffered in any sense that could justify the Jews and Romans to conspire against him. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners. He had done no injury to any man, but to the contrary, he had healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, he had fed the hungry, and ministered comfort to the afflicted: he had raised the dead, and cast out devils. Was there anything in this to justify their malice? He had invaded no rights claimed by earthly mon-

archs or potentates, he had paid tribute and custom according to their laws, and taught his disciples to imitate his example. Then why ought he to suffer these things? His enemies watched him diligently, and constantly lay in wait to find some cause of complaint that they might accuse him, but all in vain, for it cost them large money to suborn witnesses to testify falsely against him, that they might procure his arrest, and sentence for his death.

But although he was holy, innocent and pure, though there was no guile found in his mouth, although the Eternal Father from the skies had proclaimed that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, still we are, from Christ's own words, assured that there was a necessity for him to suffer these things, for in the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter he said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." As it was written thus in the scriptures, and the scriptures containing the important record were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is very evident that the grounds on which it behoved Christ to suffer were to be found in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that his being finally delivered up to these sufferings was in fulfillment of what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done.

By a careful comparison of what was written aforetime, with the testimony of the New Testament, and the record of the fulfillment of what was written, we learn that the necessity of Christ's sufferings were indispensable for the redemption and salvation of his people. In pursuance of the purpose and grace of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, Christ was set up, or given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Such was the relationship be-

tween Christ, in his mediatorial Headship over his body, the church, that all demands of the law and justice of God upon the church, were assumed by him, and it was upon this, and on no other ground that we can conceive of that it behoved him to suffer these things. That people whom the Father gave him, in their earthly nature, have all sinned, and were all by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him. Thus we perceive that the astonishing display of mercy and grace in the redemption of his people, proceeded from the great love wherewith God had loved them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world: and that love was so great, so strong, and so immutable, that our apostacy in Adam, and our being dead in sins, did not change or abate it. For God hath commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died. Truly, this love is stronger than death.

But in contemplating the unavoidable necessity of Christ's sufferings, we must take into consideration the principles of law and justice which were involved, for in this lies much of the mystery of our salvation, how God could be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. No mortal wisdom could suggest a plan that would secure the salvation of sinners, without infringing the justice of God. The law would not admit of the substitution of an innocent sufferer for the transgressions of the guilty, unless there were some just and righteous ground of responsibility involved on the part of the sufferer. Husbands are, in law, responsible for the debts contracted by their wives, parents or children, &c., but in criminal cases these relations will not hold the innocent responsible. There must then be found a relationship still more near.

We know of no law that will exempt the *head* from responsibility for the *acts*

of the body, or members of the body. On this principle then, we conclude the law could justly look to Christ as Head and Surety for his body, the church. And certain it is that, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer, is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation: for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors: and he bear the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The foregoing testimony from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah illustrates the subject better than volumes of uninspired comments, showing upon what principle it was just for the dear Redeemer to suffer, the just for the un-

just, that he might bring us to God. As a Shepherd he laid down his life for his sheep. For as they were his sheep before they had transgressed, justice demanded the ransom at his hands. He so stood related to, and identified with his flock, that all their sins were laid on him, and he was numbered with the transgressors. And the extent of his atonement is forever settled. "For the transgression of my people (saith God) was he stricken." And by his stripes we are healed. The ground then on which he "ought to suffer," was not that we as transgressors had any claim on him for any thing good or bad, that we had done, or intended to do, but it was as these scriptures clearly show, by the grace of God, and not the will or works of men, that he tasted death for God's people. Himself bearing our sins in his own body. Thus it *behoved* or became Christ to suffer. "For 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." Heb. 2. 10. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."—Heb. 10. 14. His sufferings were indispensable, not only for bringing many sons unto glory, but also to prepare his entrance into the glory that was to follow. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

We presume the glory into which Christ was to enter, was the glory of his mediatorial triumph over death, hell and sin, in the perfect redemption of his people, the organization of his kingdom, the ascension to his throne in Zion, and that revenue of praise which must redound to his great name to everlasting. It is true he had a glory with the Father, before the world began, and as we understand, the glory of eternal deity was his in common with the Father, from everlasting, but his endurance of sufferings were not required to precede his possession of that glory. John says, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of

grace and truth." And the saints of every age have a revelation of this, when God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. For he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

The glory of which he speaks in our text, we conclude must be that of which he spake in his address to the Father.—John 17; 22-24. A glory the Father gave him, and which he has given to his people. It must, we think, refer especially to his Mediatorial glory, and that particularly which he has secured by the accomplishment of all the work which the Father gave him to do. The glorious triumph of the Son of God over all enemies, his deathless victory over all opposing powers, was to be followed by his resurrection from the dead, his ascension up on high, his leading captivity captive, and the reception of his kingdom, his coronation, and his throne, will all be comprised in that glory which he was to enter. Before the organization of his kingdom in her gospel beauty, the subjects required to be redeemed from their captivity, and their redemption could only be effected by his sufferings, hence we are told that he for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

Thus in the majesty on high he has entered the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. While the things which he had to suffer intervened between him and the consummation of his glory, he was found in fashion as a man, took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and became obedient, even unto death. But the joy was then before him, and he passed through the deeps of deep waters, without faltering, and, like Jacob, when serving Laban for Rachel, the anticipated bride made the years of servitude seem as but a few days. So the blessed Savior anticipated the glory that

was to follow his sufferings. High seated now upon his imperial throne, his people are not only redeemed from the curse of domination of the law, and the lawful captives thus delivered, the Spirit of immortality is sent down in his name to quicken and call all the trophies of his triumph, and his people are made willing in the day of his power. Vested now with all the power of heaven and earth, he gives repentance unto Israel and remission of sins. Repentance and remission are now preached in his name, and his arm is made bare for salvation, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him and his work before him. He gathers now his sheep with his arm, and carries them in his bosom, and they shall all know experimentally, when he opens the eyes of their understanding what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to his mighty power.

In view of all this, ye trembling saints, as ye wade through the bitter waters of affliction, consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your mind. He has laid up in heaven for you a crown of unfading glory, and you are called to know the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be conformed to his death. Look steadfastly then to the mark of the prize of your high calling, and press on. Your suffering days will soon be ended, your sighing and sorrowing soon shall cease, and God will wipe away all your tears. If it behooved Christ to suffer first, and then to enter his glory, shall we complain of the sufferings of the present time, when so well we know that our light afflictions which are but for a moment, do work for us far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!

"His way was much harder and rougher than thine,
Did Christ your Lord suffer, and wilt thou repine!"

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe September 1, 1862.)

OBITUARIES

ANNIE L. HELMS

Sister Annie Law Dyer Helms was born in Franklin County, Virginia, June 30, 1884, and departed this life June 22, 1973, in the 88th year of her age. She was the daughter of Deacon Tilman Law and Alice Akers Law.

Sister Helms united with the church July 22, 1950, and was a member of Rocky Mount Church. She was twice married, first to Elder George Dyer with whom she lived happily for many years until he died. She was again married to Elder J. P. Helms and shared with him his sorrows and joys, cares and comforts until he died.

As for her husbands, we say without fear of successful contradiction that the conduct of each but revealed the character of each, and through them the will of God is done in the furtherance of good to His people and the destruction of their enemies.

How sweet is the savor of the anointing that makes precious in our hearts the memory of Sister Annie. How enduring the substance of such virtue as was reflected in her life and character! How divinely glorious the grace of our God which made her thus, as by the grace of God she was truly what she was.

While she desired to live, she was not afraid to die, knowing in whom she believed and Jesus in Whom she trusted all through the years of her pilgrimage. When her time came, then without a struggle she passed into that blessed sleep which the Lord gives to His beloved as gently, calmly and sweetly as a little child upon its mother's breast. How solemn the silence, how awe inspiring the scene, how triumphant the transition, how serenely beautiful the ending of such a life, how gracious the ripening up of such a character, the gathering in of such a mother in Israel.

The life of this sterling, faithful woman was so indicative of divine ordination that much more might be said truly in her memory, but we must commend her to the vigilant watch care, the unfailing preservation and keeping of Him who raiseth the dead and the sorely bereaved who are left behind to the consideration of the Lord who gave and the Lord who hath taken away.

After divine services by Elder Cecil Turner and Elder J. L. Bocaack, her remains were buried in the well kept yard at Basham Church.

She now rests in Christ even as while she lived on earth she was saved by grace.

Submitted, in sadness, by two among many that loved her dearly,

Cora & Nathan Hunt

ALEINE B. BROWN

At the May Quarterly meeting of the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church, I was ap-

pointed to write the obituary of Sister Aleine B. Brown.

She was born October 29, 1895 and passed away April 29, 1973. Surviving are her husband Thomas Lester Brown, three sons, Alan Lester, and Thomas Preston of Wilmington, N. C., and Joseph Duncan of Hampton, Va. Also five grand children, and six great grand children.

Sister Aleine and Brother Lester joined the Church at Wilmington together in February 1922 and were Baptised by Elder Christopher Hooks. She was a strong and faithful believer in the Sovereign Grace of God. All of us loved her deeply but know that she is at rest and peace with our heavenly Father who always knows what is best.

Graveside services were held in Oakdale Cemetery by Elder Wayne Mitchell on May 1st 1973, with a host of brethren, relatives and friends attending.

Written in love, and with a feeling of humbleness, by her sister in law.

Aline B. Grant

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By the grace of God, I will attempt to write a Resolution of Respect of our dear Sister Mary Madra.

Sister Madra joined our church the first Sunday in June, 1969. She was blessed to be a faithful member until her death June 10, 1973. She was born September 18, 1901, and lived on this earth seventy-one years.

To know Sister Madra was to love her, as she always carried a smile, and was forever praising her God. She was a great believer in Salvation by Grace, and a great supporter of our church. Even on her death bed she was concerned over the welfare of the church. We all loved Sister Madra, but we realized it was God's will to call her.

THEREFORE, We Resolve: First, we the Church feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Second, we send our sincere sympathy to her husband and family. Third, that three copies of this be made: one for the *Signs of the Times*, for publication, one be sent to the family, and one for our Church records.

This done by order of Conference at our July, 1973, meeting.

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

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

By the request of Tarboro Church I will attempt to write a few words of respect for our dear Sister Martha "Pat" Andrews.

Sister Andrews was born in 1902 and died

August 4th, 1973, making her stay on earth 71 years.

To know Sister Pat was to love her. She was blessed to come into our church on July 6, 1968. She loved her church and was blessed to be a faithful member as long as she was able to come. She will always be remembered for her beautiful singing. Sleep on Pat, we feel you are at rest. We know you had your trials, but you did your best.

We resolve that three copies of this resolution be made: one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to be sent to the family, and one to be placed in our church records.

We, the Church of Tarboro, send our sincere sympathy to her family, and feel our loss is her eternal gain.

This done by order of conference at our August meeting.

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

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER CLAUDE S. OAKLEY

Death means to separate, but not from the love of God. When a precious one is called from our midst, many hearts are saddened, yet, we mourn not as those who have no hope, for our hope reaches beyond the silent tomb.

Brother Oakley was not weak in that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit. He was a quiet man, of few words, though they were fittingly spoken. His God-given knowledge of the Blessed Truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour, was most inspiring.

He was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, July 13, 1898, and departed this world of trial and troubles on July 6, 1973. He spent his allotted time of almost 75 years within a few miles of the Church at Bush Arbor where he united in September 1951 and attended faithfully as long as his health permitted.

Our Brother was twice married, first to Sister Roberts Page Oakley. This union was blessed with four lovely children: three daughters, Mrs. Frances Heath, Hampton, Virginia, Mrs. Betty Lou Page, Route No. 2, Elon College, N.C., Sister Margaret Burton, Burlington, N.C. and one son, Mr. James Oakley of Sutherland, Virginia.

After the death of his first wife in June, 1959, he was later married to Sister Ruth Blaylock Clayton Oakley. This union was brief due to her death in 1962. Though he was lonely, our Brother was submissive to God's Holy Will, and was most appreciative of the love and tender care of his children.

Brother Oakley's funeral was conducted by his Pastor Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elder Donald Smith, at Bush Arbor, the place

he loved and spent many hours of labor helping to maintain.

He was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a huge mound of beautiful flowers, a symbol of love and esteem.

We believe he is now resting from his labors and waiting the coming of his Lord to be brought forth and changed like unto his own glorious body and be satisfied forever.

May the Love of God abide with this bereaved family and comfort them, along with the many Brethren and friends who are saddened.

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by Bush Arbor Church, and read and approved in their conference meeting September 8, 1973.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

DEACON CALLIE ELWOOD STALLINGS

On October 23, 1884, Callie E. Stallings was born to Meedy A. and Ellie Proctor Stallings. Married Minnie Spicer on January 3, 1906 and celebrated with her sixty-three anniversaries. He was called from this earthly home on June 18, 1973 making his stay in this world 88 years, 7 months, and 26 days.

Brother and Sister Stallings were blessed with six children, four of who were left to mourn his passing. Three daughters, Mrs. Ellie Barnes, and Mrs. Rosa P. Landen of Rocky Mount, N.C. and Sister Myrtle Pridgen of Sharpsburg, N.C.; one son, Richard Stallings of Alexandria, Va.; twelve grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren. Two other daughters who preceded him in death were Miss Lillie Pearl Stallings and Mrs. Minnie V. Bone.

Brother Stallings united with the church at Pleasant Hill, near Rocky Mount, N.C., on August 27, 1927, was ordained deacon on August 26, 1951 by Elders A. B. Denson, J. B. Roberts, and J. C. Smith, and served the church faithfully as long as his health permitted. He always had the interest of the church at heart — ready to serve wherever and whenever duty called him. The brethren were very dear to him and he was often expressing the love he felt for them.

Brother Stallings was found filling his seat at Pleasant Hill unless providentially hindered, and it was a distinct pleasure of his to visit the sister churches of our correspondence.

His funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N.C. by his beloved pastor, Elder Henry C. Jones assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest by the body of his companion in Pineview Cemetery to await the final calling.

We at Pleasant Hill miss him and expect to continue to miss him, but we feel he is at rest and our loss is his eternal gain that he would

not wish to exchange.

Written at the request of conference July 21, 1973, by one who loved him.

J. Carroll Williams

Read and received in conference August 25, 1973. Agreed that a copy be placed on the church records, one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be sent to the family.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

WILLIAM MAC MERCER

Oak Grove Church in our regular conference meeting requested me to write a Memorial to our dearly beloved Clerk and Brother in Christ, William Mac Mercer, for publication in the *Signs*.

Brother Mac's earthly life began October 7, 1903, and it pleased God to take him from our midst August 10, 1973, at the home of his brother, Elder Hilton Mercer, Jonesboro, La.

Brother Mac, as all who knew him called him, lived in the home of Elder Hilton Mercer and family, who loved him dearly, as did we all who knew him. He was very humble and faithful to the end. He was devoted to his church and a lover of the truth. He was always humble and a peace-maker, and we will all miss him very much. He was a wonderful gift to our church, but God has an appointed time for all things: "A time to be born, and a time to die." And it was the will of Almighty God to take him from this weary world. It is our loss but his gain, and for God's glory.

We bow our heads in humble prayer that God will strengthen his loved ones, and reconcile them to the will of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Brother Mac's body rested at Edmond's Funeral Home in Jonesboro until 1:30 p.m. August 12, 1973, then was removed to the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Chestnut, La., where funeral services were conducted by Elder Wellman Maise and Elder David Godwin, who both spoke comfortably to the family.

Brother Mac was survived by two brothers, Elder Hilton Mercer (one of our pastors) and Homer Mercer, West Monroe, La.; four sisters, Mrs. Maggie Brown, Quitman, La., Mrs. Artie Burnett, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Mrs. Devie Narred, Jonesboro, and Mrs. Ethel Byrie, Beaumont, Texas and a number of nieces and nephews and a host of friends. He was laid to rest in the Springfield Cemetery near Jonesboro beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the second coming of our Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Written by request of Oak Grove Church by

Mrs. Kate Mathews

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 141

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1973

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
12/73
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"I KNOW, OH LORD, THAT THY JUDGMENTS ARE RIGHT AND THAT THOU, IN FAITHFULNESS HAST AFFLICTED ME". PSALMS 119:75

The question has often been asked, even by Christians at times, "Why are the Lord's people afflicted? Why do they have to suffer? There was a time many years ago when I asked it too. I believe the answer is found in the verse quoted above and unless I am totally deceived, the Lord spoke to me this morning just before dawn through this precious verse. So many, many times in the past years, He has spoken to me and comforted my troubled heart through some portion of His holy, inspired Word. How true and meaningful are Paul's words that the Scriptures were written for our learning "that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures ye might have hope." I firmly believe the word "hope" here signifies assurance, expectation, anticipation. What basis would we have for hope, had we no assurance upon which to rest it?

I have never said very much about my experience of long ago because, although it is lovely to hear and read about how the Lord brought His people to Him, it is fully as lovely to hear how He KEEPS them, how He leads them and instructs them along the way, how He shows them His guiding hand and

protecting care in even the most minute details of their life. It is just as sweet to experience His KEEPING power as His SAVING power.

As I have stated before, I have never been given much to doubting, but certainly this is no credit to me and the Lord does know I do not say it in a boastful spirit. It simply has not been, so far, the Lord's way of leading me and every case is individual, according to His wisdom and our need. But I believe I have suffered just as much through long, dreary periods of spiritual emptiness, periods when I am unable to pray, when I get little, if anything, from the precious Word of God; periods when there is no joy, no heartfelt praise although I long for it; periods when I can witness with Solomon: "By night, on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth; I sought Him, but I found Him not." I have been in such a state for several months now, a most miserable state! So many, many times, especially in the past few weeks, I have cried, almost in desperation, Lord, speak to me, I beg Thee, speak even one word to my sore heart; but there seemed to be no answer. Recently, two of my brethren whom I love so dearly, have been going through a tragic, heartbreaking experience and my heart has bled for them. Many have been my cries to the Lord in their behalf. This morning before getting up, as I agonized for them and for my own pitiful condition, suddenly the words came to me with great conviction "THOU, IN FAITHFULNESS, HAST AFFLICTED ME". That was the word I needed and almost immediately I was made to rejoice and to praise Him for counting me worthy of affliction at His hand. The tears flowed as they can

flow only where for so long there have been no tears. Only those who have gone through these experiences can truly understand.

After the flood has passed, I began to analyze the text: how it is that **IN FAITHFULNESS** He afflicts us, and my mind was led to the subject of God's predestination. Unbelievers would think it strange, even scoff at the thought that God, instead of blessing us with what they consider good things, would **IN FAITHFULNESS** afflict us, but I believe these afflictions to be a part of the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose concerning us and it is not in anger, but in love that He afflicts those whom through eternity He purposed to save.

I believe the Scriptures teach that the purpose of God in predestination is two-fold: first, predestinating us "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of His will." In other words, by redemption through the death and resurrection of Christ, we are made to be God's very own children, both legally and by the relationship of blood. Second, that these adopted children should be "conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." In this light, we must ask ourselves the very potent question, **HOW** and in **WHAT PROCESS** are we to be conformed to the image of Christ? The answer has to be **THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION** and **THE MIGHTY WORKING OF GOD'S POWER**. Some, perhaps many, may disagree with me, but I firmly believe that a part of the conforming is taking place right here in this world **THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION**. A part of it awaits the consummation of our adoption, to wit: the redemption of the body. We could not be to the image of our suffering Saviour even in the slightest degree conformed did we not know something of "the fellowship of His suffering"; we could never know even a little of the awful weight of the sin He bore did we not know something of "the exceeding sin-

fulness of sin;" we could never know even a little of the agony He suffered on Calvary in being forsaken of His Father did we not know the awful desolation of having, at times, His blessed face and the sweet comfort of His presence hidden from us for a while. Earlier in this chapter the Psalmist declared, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word., The Lord had been **FAITHFUL** in afflicting him. It is in the fiery furnace that our dross is consumed, our gold refined. Throughout the Scriptures we find instances where the Lord afflicted His people because of "His great love wherewith He loved them." When we are blest to see His hand in afflicting us, we recognize it as corrective, not punitive; and I cannot believe there is any bitterness or rebellion in the hearts of God's own children when He afflicts us, when we are afflicted, we "cry unto the Lord in our distress **AND HE HEARS US.**" When so blest, we are drawn closer to Him and love Him more, and experience by experience, we are, in some small measure, being conformed to His image. Thus it is that **IN FAITHFULNESS** to us and in **FAITHFULNESS** to His purpose in predestination, it is good that He afflicts us. Paul so beautifully stated **MOST GLADLY, THEREFORE, WILL I RATHER GLORY IN MY INFIRMITIES.**" Why? "**THAT THE POWER OF CHRIST MAY REST UPON ME,**" This, then, is the answer, and I believe it is the testimony of every heaven-born child, yet because our flesh is so weak, we have to wait on the Lord each time before we are able to glory in **OUR** infirmities.

In conclusion, my prayer is that the Lord will continue to afflict me and all His people, and as we look up to Him for deliverance, may we behold the face, not of our judge, but the face of our dear Redeemer, our Saviour and our Lord.

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THE TWO BIRTHS AND WHAT THEY ACCOMPLISH

Nicodemus came to Jesus acknowledging Him as a teacher come from God. His faith was founded upon the miracles he had seen Jesus perform. Jesus tells him emphatically that faith in Him as a worker of miracles, is not sufficient. What he needs is justifying faith, a saving grace wrought in the soul by God: a radical change of heart, a creative act of God, a birth from above. Without this a man cannot see the kingdom of God, nor enter into the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh." We were born of the flesh when we entered this world. By this birth we are sinful and corrupt. Each of us is obliged to say with David, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

In the flesh there dwells no good thing. The motions of the flesh are for self, not for God. The nature of the workings of the flesh are for evil, not for righteousness; the affections of the flesh are for the things of the earth, not for the things of heaven; the purposes of the flesh are to realize temporal, not eternal values. The flesh is enmity against God. It always was, is now, and forever will be opposed to Him and His ways. There is no way to improve it. What it is now, it always will be, only in intensified degree.

"That which is born of the spirit is spirit." We must have a new life. It is to no avail that we put forth effort to change the fleshly nature. We must have a new nature, with new affections, new principles, new purposes. Those that are in the flesh cannot please God. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Birth is the beginning of life, and we must have a heavenly life coming from God. We must become another being in order even to be able to see or understand the nature of the kingdom of heaven.

The second birth is not wrought by our own will, nor by any power or wisdom we have. It is a birth, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God." By His blessed Spirit, God works in us this mysterious new creation, and sets us going on the way that leads to eternal happiness with Him. "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The flesh, being enmity against God, is not subject to His laws, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7). Paul tells us that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

God before the world was, wrote our names in the Lamb's Book of Life, and because of his great love for us, gave His only begotten Son to die for us, as the ransom price, that we might be the beneficiary of eternal life. Therefore, we are constrained with Paul, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Elder J. A. Tew

IS THERE NOT A CAUSE?

Why are so many people leaving the farm today and going to the city?

There may not be a famine in the whole land, but no doubt there is one in the house of the one that is hunting a place wherein he and his household may eat bread. Can this distress be working good? We weak creatures of course can not see far enough in the future to know what will be the outcome. It looks bad to us, nevertheless, we cannot dispute that all things work together for good to them that love God,

to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Some three thousand years ago a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah, named Elimelech, his wife, Naomi, and two sons were forced to leave their land and go down into the land of Moab. Let us see if this hard travel down there for food worked good. While there the two sons found themselves wives, this making six in the family. As it comes to all men, Elimelech and sons, Mahlon and Chilion, died leaving the three women alone.

Naomi, no doubt going through with so much trouble, began to think of home, and learning there was plenty of food there she told her two daughters-in-law she must leave them and go home. Both of the girls at first thought they must go, but Naomi said, "I have no more sons for you, and according to nature I am alone in this world, go return to your people." It pleased Orpah to do so, kissing her mother-in-law, she returned to her people. This is the case today with some after a big revival. The road is just too long and tiresome and they return to their people. "Let them all be confused and turn back that hate Zion" (Psa. 129:5).

Ruth clave to Naomi and said, "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." If Orpah knew there was a God she did not mention it. You can plainly see there is a difference between her and Ruth. Is there not a cause?

Naomi, seeing Ruth had faith and was steadfastly mindful to go, left off speaking to her. When they arrived at their journey's end it was the beginning of barley harvest there. No doubt there is a beginning of barley harvest with every child of God when they get to their journey's end. Was there a cause for Ruth coming here?

In this land was a near kinsman of Elimelech's by the name of Boaz, a very wealthy man who was of the tribe of

Judah. Let us see about Ruth's faith. She said to Naomi, Let me now go into the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. What caused her to have faith to say, I shall find grace? Do you suppose it could be this: Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things?

Ruth humbly asked Boaz to let her glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. Are not God's little ones doing this today? I believe they are contented to get a few handfuls that fall of purpose today, just as was she. It can be seen already that she has found grace, for Boaz asked her not to go to another field, but stay fast by his maidens. Was it love at first sight? David said, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." I believe there was some jealousy in Boaz. It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you (Gal. 4:18). The lord of the harvest has commanded that the young men not touch the damsel (The gates of hell shall not prevail against thee), but that she should have drink when she became thirsty. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

Never have I found in the Bible a more beautiful picture of Christ and His bride, than Naomi, Boaz and Ruth. Just watch Naomi all along. Is she not a figure of the church under the legal dispensation? Her husband is dead and she never has another husband. But Ruth's husband, being dead, she finds favor in the sight of Boaz, which represents the church under the care of Christ in the grace dispensation. Is not the church under the law dispensation, the mother-in-law of the bride of today. The law is our schoolmaster (to bring us) to Christ. Isn't this what Naomi was for

Ruth? It seems that Ruth dwelt with her mother-in-law till the end of the barley harvest. So did the church.

Boaz, knowing how faithful Ruth had been to her mother-in-law, and in leaving her people to live with people she had not known, said unto her, "The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust." How comforting this was to the mourning damsel.

At mealtime Boaz bade her come hither and eat of the bread and dip her morsel into the vinegar. Here is the receiving of all things, the good and the bad, from the same hand. Just think what she ate. It was not dough which she had to cook, as it was already cooked ready to be eaten. Have you ever had eat half cooked bread? My experience is that I had to spit it out, because it is not satisfying to eat half cooked meals. But what satisfaction it is when you are permitted to dine at the table of the Lord, when the meal is already prepared before you are seated at the table. Although she was sitting in the midst of the reapers, it was Boaz himself that handed her the parched corn. She ate and was sufficed, and thus it is true with every child of God when they sit at the spiritual table and hear and receive the unsearchable riches of their Redeemer proclaimed.

When Ruth returned home and the two had eaten, Naomi tells Ruth that Boaz is going to separate the grain from the chaff, and instructs her what to do. She does not halt between two opinions, wondering what to do, but goes straight way and does what her mother-in-law has told her to do. We find her at the feet of Boaz just as Mary was found at the feet of Jesus. Where is the church found? She is found at the feet of her husband. It was at the midnight hour when Boaz found her humbled and ready to be at his feet. It was the turning point; it was at the ending of the law reign and the beginning of the gospel day, the reign of grace. The light has shined even though it is mid-

night's dark, and it has come with light giving in her poor heart. "The light shined in darkness, and darkness did not comprehend." I am sure that nature's darkness was all around them, but she is not a child of darkness anymore, but a child of light, for she understood what Boaz is saying to her. Who art thou? I am Ruth thine handmaid. She continued asking and He continued answering. She realized her nakedness and she realized his role as the coverer of it. "Spread thy skirt over me for thou art a near kinsman." I believe that every child of God, when the light shines in their heart, desires the robe of righteousness be cast around them to cover their nakedness, their shame. We hear it said to Jerusalem, "Now when I passed by thee and looked upon thee behold thy time was the time of love and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness, yea, I swear unto thee and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." (Ezek. 16:8) Is this not the case with the character we have under consideration?

Let us notice Boaz does not send Ruth away with empty hands, but gives her six measures of barley. With this she goes back to her mother-in-law; there must have been a great change in her, for Naomi asked, "Who art thou my daughter?" She bade the damsel sit still until thou know how the matter will fall, for the man will not be at rest until he has finished the thing **THIS DAY**. Poor Rachel had to wait until her time came, but Jacob loved her so much he did not rest until the last thing was done in order for her to be his bride. When Christ was here on earth He did not stop until all was fulfilled for His bride.

Boaz told the nearer kinsman that Naomi was going to sell their brother's land and asked him if he would redeem it. The kinsman first told him that he would, but Boaz soon put him to the test, when he told him, In the day he bought the land of Naomi he would have to take Ruth to raise the name of

the dead upon his inheritance. He immediately said, "No, I can not redeem it for myself lest I mar mine inheritance." Do you know any one today that feels like he would mar his inheritance by going to the true church? The nearer kinsman must have been like these characters, to wit, Now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children, and lo, we bring into bondage our sons and daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already, neither is it in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards. (Neh, 5:5) He seemed to be willing to take Naomi and the land, but he stopped when Ruth was presented. We all know a lot of people now that will not mar their pride by going to the gospel church. This was the excuse he had for not redeeming Ruth. Is there not a cause?

He was not the one to redeem her, There is not any doubt but that he had the price of dogs, but he had not the price for the Pearl in the field. At least we well know the pearl meant nothing to him, so he was willing to give Boaz the right to redeem her, and confirmed it in the presence of the law by pulling off his shoe and giving it to Boaz, which was the custom in those days. These are spiritual things and the carnal mind would not discern the worth of the pearl. Boaz, being blessed of God, was a very wealthy and wise man. He had the price, and now the right, to purchase the field and the pearl in it, as he has fulfilled all requirements.

He has already given her six measures of barley. Now he is going to give her the seventh by taking her to wife and giving her a home as a place of rest from all her labor, just as the Good Samaritan did for the man that fell among thieves and robbers. No doubt she steps forth as a bride adorned for her husband, and can say, He carried me to the banquetting house and his banner over me was love. Those that feel they have been carried to the ban-

quetting house under the banner of love can know how the heart of this damsel rejoiced in this hour,

Oh, that I could praise my King,
To satisfy my mind;
Some of his glories I could sing,
But yea, I am too blind.

Here is the woman John saw appear in heaven clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Isn't it a wonder that the Moabitish damsel appeared in the house of Boaz in the time of law worship? Did she just happen to get there? Was there not a cause? We well know that she could say with David, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Who did this for her? It was the one that hath saved us, and called us 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 began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. I believe the pure gospel was made known to Ruth in these measures of barley Boaz gave her. We find there was a son born to them whose name was Obed (Obed begat Jesse, Jesse begat David and down to Christ). Boaz being of the tribe of Judah, we can see that this prophecy is true, to wit, There shall come a star out of Jacob and shall smite the corners (or princes) of Moab and destroy the children of Sheth. (Num. 24:17) Did Boaz smite the corners of Moab? It seems to me that he did when he got the choicest flower of their land.

Although the neighbor women knew that Ruth had borne the child, yet it seems that they thought it belonged to Naomi, which, in one sense did, for as the church under the legal dispensation was of a barren age, it could not be left without an heir. So far as some can see today, every one belongs all the time to the law, though they be born in this

gospel day. No doubt Naomi took the child and embraced it, for salvation had come to her house. Why was Ruth brought by her mother-in-law to the land of Judah, and why did Boaz take her to wife? Is there not a cause? It was that the purpose of God according to election night stand, would be my answer. There was a purpose in Pharaoh's doing what he did, and the Lord said that He raised him up for that purpose that His name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Now let us look at the numbers in the family. There were six of the law family in the land of Moab (six working days). Boaz completed the seven working ones, which brought to Ruth the rest or Sabbath. What does Mahlon, Boaz, and the other kinsman, together with Moab, represent? Mahlon was the law Ruth was serving. After he was dead to her (without her consent), Boaz represents the spiritual husband under the gospel dispensation. The kinsman is the natural, worldly one who would greedily take the right of inheritance, but he could not do it because it belonged to Boaz (Christ).

We find in Psalms 108:9 that Moab is the Lord's wash pot. We know the natural use of a wash pot. It holds the uncleanness when the garments are seethed in it. The last place that Israel dwelt before going into Canaan was in Moab's land. While they were there some of them got so wicked that the Lord commanded that they be put to death. This being done, the uncleanness, in a figure, was left in the land of Moab. Then we find that only Naomi and Ruth (the church) were permitted to leave Moab's land and enter into Canaan. The other members of the family, or that which was natural, were left in the land of Moab, which served as God's wash pot. Orpah did not die. She was left there alive, and is still living today, but can not live in the house with Ruth.

If there is one crumb in this that would feed a child of God, it is God's work, but fearing that it is only my work and imagination, I fear for it to

go unto the judgment of God's children, who are to try the spirits as to whether they are of God.

If I have an experience of grace that has awakened me to God's truth this is the way it came. It is a great consolation to me, whatever it is.

Your little sister,
(Mrs.) Maggie Lee (Davis) Hayes,
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ROMANS 8:28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

We pray that God will bless us to meditate upon these beautiful riches and to rightly divide the word of truth. Who are those that love God? We read, "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19) The wicked do not love God, but they love this world and have pleasure in unrighteousness.

God's people love him because he first loved them. (See 1 John 4:19) We can see that this love shall be returned to God. He has loved his people with an everlasting love. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3) "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9:13)

In short, those that love God are the chosen, the elect, the Church of God, the body of Christ, etc. The writer said that "all things work together for good to them that love God." These all things mean a lot. It did not say some things, or just the good things, etc. It did not say that these all things were good or pleasant to the children of God. These evil things are grievous, are they not? Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10) These trials and afflictions are hurtful to the flesh, but they all work together for good to the Children of God. "Now no chastening for the

present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) It is written, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10) The silver must be burned when it is tried in the furnace, but this is necessary in order for the dross to be separated from the silver. This is a type of God's people who are tried in the furnace of afflictions. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of afflictions." (Isaiah 48:10) It is hurtful to have this pride burned, is it not? This mystery of it is that this pride keeps coming back. Do you not mourn over your sins, shortcomings, faults, etc. and do you yearn for a closer walk with God? "For the good that I would, I do not: But the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. 7:19,24)

By reading the experiences and travels of other saints in the Scriptures, we find and see that all events worked together for the good to them; and for all the saints in the years to come. Paul said that he was given as a pattern to them that should hereafter believe. (1 Tim. 1:16) Therefore the life of Paul worked together not only for his personal good, but it also worked together for the good of the Brethren in his age, and for the good of those in the ages to come.

It was wrong to persecute the Christians and to have them put in prison. Saul even held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen to death, consenting to his death.

Paul was an educated man, and he was familiar with all the details of the law. He was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. We understand that he could speak many languages. So, man taught him these languages, law of Moses, etc. But, man could not teach Paul the doctrine of Jesus Christ. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of men, neither

was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) God is not changeable, so he still teaches his people by revelation today, as he taught Paul during those days.

We will not go into detail concerning Paul's conversation, but we notice that the Christians were fearful of Paul, because they knew that he had letters of authority to have them put in prisons. God told Ananias: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15) I am glad that Paul's experience is left on record in the Scriptures, because it shows that God taught him by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Now, let us not look for the same experience as Paul: we experience the same things, but in a different manner and different way.

If we understood the truth and rejoice in it, it is not because we got old enough to understand it, or got intelligent enough to understand it, etc. The wisdom of God cannot be found out by man by all of his research, efforts, learning, etc. "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!" (Rom. 11:33) The wisdom of God is foolishness with the world: It is hidden from the world. If this wisdom had been revealed to them they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. (1 Cor. 2:7-8)

God makes his people wise, or in other words, he gives them wisdom. "But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30) This wisdom is hidden from the wise of this world, and revealed unto babes. (Matt. 11:25) This wisdom is revealed to the children of God.

The brethren during Paul's age rejoiced that he preached the faith which once he destroyed. (Gal. 1:23) This caused them to glorify God! This gave the Christians comfort and encouragement. They needed the grace of God,

because many were put in prisons, tortured, beheaded, put in lion's dens, burned at stakes, etc. This God was with them; and he is the same God today. "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6)

God gave Paul special wisdom to write these deep things. Peter said: "As our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15-16)

Peter's denial of Jesus was wrong, and it grieved him at his heart, and he went and wept bitterly. We do not find any evidence in the Scriptures that Peter or any other saint tried to hide their weakness, faults, sins, etc. behind the predestination of God. Yet, this worked together for Peter's good and it is also good for all who read and understand the Scriptures.

Peter had to be taught the important lesson that he was not his own keeper, and he could not keep himself by his own strength. He told Jesus: "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee, likewise also said all the disciples." (Matt. 26:35) We know that the word "if" can change a lot. In fact, history would be changed if so and so had not happened. If Peter said, "Jesus, I will not forsake you if you will just give me grace to go with you," etc., then the account of Peter's experience would be different. Peter did not say this. He was putting "I" in the matter. So he had to be tried some more. Jesus said: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31-32) When Peter was sifted, all he thought about was his own self, and therefore denied Jesus.

After Peter was converted from this

error of thinking that he could keep himself, he was blessed to write this important truth. "Who are kept by the power of God—" (I Peter 1:5) The power of God is the only thing that can keep us. Again, the denial of Jesus was grievous to Peter, but it has worked together for the good of God's people.

David was a man after God's own heart, yet we wonder as we read of the wickedness he committed. Someone with just a head knowledge of this doctrine may try to excuse his sins, wickedness, etc. and say that his shortcomings are not as bad as some of the saints. This reminds me of this Scripture: "They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." (Hosea 4:8) Do we not hear the same during this day? Someone might say, "I am not a member, and look at what Brother or Sister So and So does. Why, they are just hypocrites, etc." If we have an evil eye and search for faults, we would not have any trouble finding it, because flesh is flesh; and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is good to watch over others for good and not for evil. We all have faults, but we do not have the same type of faults. Who am I to make light of one who is weak in a point that I am strong? After all, I may be weak in a point that he is strong.

As we consider the life of David, all the events did work together for his good, and also for the children of God. He said, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray: But now I have kept thy word." (Psalm 119:67) This is applicable to the experiences of all of God's people. We may go astray even in our thoughts. We go astray when we tend to worship some idol, instead of worshipping God. We may make idolatry of the things of this world, our natural jobs, our children, our husbands, wives, etc. We make idolatry of anything that we tend to worship. So, idols do not always mean some natural image that people fall down and worship. "Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own

fingers have made." (Isaiah 2:8) We tend to worship idolatry when we worship the "great things" we can do. In that sense, we are worshipping ourselves. We call your attention to the parable between the publican and the Pharisee. The Pharisee was actually bragging that he was not as other men. So he was placing himself above others.

It touches us as we read of how David prayed in the 51st chapter of Psalms. We read that he pleaded for God to keep his feet from falling. He certainly desired a closer walk with God. "—lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:2)

All of the evil things that Job suffered worked together for his good. The Scriptures speak of the patience of Job. His possessions were taken from him, his children suffered death, he was stricken from his head to his feet with boils, and his dear companion turned against him, and said: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die." (Job 2:9) Once when he was mighty low, Job said: "My breath is strange to my wife—" (Job 19:17) Even though he was sorely perplexed, yet he was not in despair. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair." (2 Cor. 4:8) In the midst of all his troubles, Job was given the faith to say; "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job 19:25) Even though he was given the patience, yet we do detect that Job resorted to pity, and especially when he wished that he had not even been born. (Job 3:3) Let us not go into that, but consider the fact that God blessed Job with patience, and that Job did not curse God for all this evil that was brought upon him.

When we are feeling low, let us consider the afflictions of Job, and praise God for the patience that was given Job, and pray that God will give us this patience. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shad-

ow of turning." (James 1:17)

All of the events, both good and evil, worked together for the good of Joseph. His brethren in the flesh were jealous of him, and some desired to kill him. They sold him as a slave to some Ishmaelites. Potiphar's wife told a grave *untruth* and had Joseph cast into prison. We wonder how Joseph felt during the years he was in prison. He had not done anything to deserve being there. He may have felt that the Lord had turned against him.

To be brief, we know that the time came later that Joseph was placed as governor of the land; (second in command to Pharaoh.) As we explain Joseph's experience, we know that all events were necessary in the chain of predestination. They all linked together. God told Abraham many years before: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." (Genesis 15:13) Therefore, we can see it was necessary for Joseph to be raised up second in command to Pharaoh. During the seven years of famine, Jacob and his brethren came to live in Egypt. It was after Joseph and Pharaoh died that the children of Israel suffered bondage by the Egyptians.

Let us keep in mind that all of the events in Joseph's life worked together for his good and also for God's people. The deliverance from the bondage was a special joy and consolation to the children of Israel. Therefore we can see that all the bondage during these 400 years worked together for the good of God's people. This was a wonderful deliverance that has been preached in the pulpits for many years. The power of God was shown in this deliverance! "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them." (Psalm 44:3)

The children of Israel did not do any-

thing to aid or assist in their deliverance. Rather they were commanded to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. God caused the waters of the Red Sea to part, and the children of Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry land. The Egyptians followed them, but God caused the chariot wheels to drive heavy. (Exodus 14:23-25) After Israel got on the other side, God caused the waters to come back together and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them were destroyed. (Exodus 14:17-28)

As we think of this wonderful deliverance, we think of the deliverance from death to life, from the power of darkness unto the kingdom of His dear Son, etc. Time and space would not permit us to branch out unto this beautiful field, but let us keep in mind that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Let us briefly consider the three Hebrew children when they were cast into the burning fiery furnace. They were given the faith and courage not to bow and worship the image that the king had set up. They were given the courage that Peter was not given. If Peter had been given the grace that these three were given, then Peter would not have denied Jesus. These three were willing to die rather than fall down and worship this golden image. Let us keep in mind these two points: (1) The three Hebrew children did not know *if* God would deliver them, and (2) God was able to deliver them from this furnace. "*If it be so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. *But if not*, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Daniel 3:17-18)

These three were given courage to die for the Lord rather than worship a false God. This Scripture gives us courage to know that God delivered these three! This same God rules today and forever more. These three were cast into the burning fiery furnace, but they were not

alone. God was with them! "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the son of God." (Daniel 3:25)

God is with you even if you are lifted up or cast down low. He is with you in heavy trials, even though you cannot feel his presence. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:9) One is lifted up when he ascends into heaven. One is brought very low into darkness when he makes his bed in hell. This gives us courage and comfort to know that God is able to deliver us from daily trials, and those in the future. There is nothing too hard for God. "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 kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2)

We know that many other incidents could be mentioned, as this text covers a large territory, but let us close with a short account of Jesus. Jesus was a poor man, and he went about doing good, yet he was despised for no cause: they hated him without cause. It was for envy that the chief priests had Jesus brought before Pilate, and demanded to have him crucified. Jesus suffered at the hands of the soldiers, and he suffered greatly as he hung upon the cross. The wrath of God the Father was poured out upon Jesus. It was necessary that Jesus die in the room and stead of his people. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Peter 2:24)

All of this suffering worked together for the good of all of God's people. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chas-

tisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) "He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:2)

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

DESIRES RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

2232 Memorial Ave., S.W.,
Roanoke, Va. 24015

Dear Signs of the Times:

The *Signs* has been coming to me since 1933, and has become as "someone" I would miss very much if I did not receive it. I first thought I would only notify you of my change of address as enclosed in this letter, but, while trying to get my work done, scriptures kept coming to mind and I wanted to talk with someone: seemingly it meant to try to write some about these thoughts. To get these expressions composed into readable sense, is too much for me. So why do I try?

Words like these, which I do not find in the scripture at the moment, "The Lord cometh in all His glory," have been with me so much of late: and almost it seems a hand reaches forth bidding me to come. Where? But mainly, "In all His glory" is the most impressive. In the first chapter of Job, 22nd verse, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly," and I being so foolish, fear I might charge Him or someone foolishly. I would not do that knowingly nor unknowingly.

So very much I do not understand rightly, and it is so necessary to have that right understanding. In Luke 24:33 the last part, "... and while He opened to us the scriptures." and the 45th verse, "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures." Wonderful indeed! We read, we listen, and what do we understand? We need to receive teaching "as" a little child. Do we feel to be little children? I am little it is true.

The 4th chapter of Matthew, especially the 6th and 7th verses is worthy of everyone's attention, because in the 7th verse a great lesson is given — one that walked in the very teaching of His own answer to the quoting of scripture, as the tempter quoted. The answer gives me so much comfort and relief, because He answered with the Spirit that knoweth His own Father. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Jesus with all power could do all things, but chose to abide in the work he had to do; and we are to follow Him in humbleness. His humility in all his walk and teaching, was to minister unto, not to be ministered to.

When I was a small child, Papa at night by a bright fireplace read the Bible aloud to us children, while Mama listened. The red letters were fearful things to me, for she said they were the words of the Lord. My oldest brother, Chester, would show me the pictures in the Bible of those who were stoned, and of those who would cry for the rocks and hills to cover or hide them from the wrath to come. None was ever scorned as Jesus was, nor suffered as He did. Yet, loving His people, gave, or as Chester said, laid down his life for them, and never opened his mouth to reply against such scorn. I wanted to "follow" this Jesus. To this day, I wonder do I know him aright? I often feel to be so in the dark.

In Psalm 89:7 is that which is worthy of much thought among all of us: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." That reverence toward Him is something we want to always give unto Him. It praises Him.

I want to mention a dream or vision, because I do not know whether I was asleep. In July, 1971, a car ran into the back of the car I was a passenger in, sitting on the back seat. Our car was a total loss. I was in a state of some shock for some time. When I arrived home I went to bed trying to relax and rest. I heard a voice in distress, grief,

sorrow, and suffering, saying, "My God! My God!" So clear was this that I turned over and tried to get up, only to see a light so bright it seemed to penetrate the great darkness below it. I must say that it was the darkest dark that I ever beheld. Two men, one older than the other and both white headed, stood with bowed heads in the light but standing in the darkness. They seemed to understand the cry of distress; and it so impressed me. As if in answer to that cry, a voice said, "My son! My son!" and these two men lifted their heads in great joy, and the older one's face shown with such understanding and knowledge of it all, it so embraced them.

To this day I marvel at the glory of that light, and their understanding of it — their evident knowledge of a perfect work. I saw nothing to worship in them, but that which they understood was so above anyone on earth, it was that which is in heaven — or so it appeared to me. I stand so far away from that which is perfect, yet I am allowed to view that which is of perfection, and feel sure is in the face of our Saviour Jesus.

Please cast the mantle of charity over me: as I said, I am unable to write as I would like.

Humbly
Catherine A. Houchins

THEY ENJOY READING THE SIGNS

1962 McAttcheon
Shreveport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

When you have space will you please publish the obituary of Brother Mac Mercer in the *Signs*.

We all enjoy reading the *Signs* at our church, and it is comforting to us. May God keep you sending out the paper as you have for many years.

I was given one of the *Signs of the Times* dated in 1927, and it was the same comforting reading that is sent out today. I cannot tell that there is any change except the faded pages and back

cover from many years of reading.

\$12.00 was left over after flowers contribution, so it was requested that it go to the *Signs* Indigent Fund, and I am sending it.

May God keep you all sending out the paper as from years back.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Kate Mathews

EXPERIENCE

1473 Kefauver,
Roanoke, Va. 24014

Dear Brethren:

I hope my experience is worthy to be printed in the *Signs*. I feel that the Lord shed his light in my heart in 1948.

I had begun to ponder over my sins, and to wonder if the Lord would forgive me. I asked my mother about it, and she said, Surely He would. One night Sister Daisy Akers was here and she was talking with my Mother about the lost going to Hell. I was thinking about that, so I went into another room and begged God for mercy. When I came out I was just as miserable as when I went in. I tried to quit sinning, but the more I tried the deeper in sin I went. At night I could not sleep — I was afraid to turn the light out at night, afraid I would perish before morning.

I went on this way for a long time, and then one day I read in the Bible that the unpardonable sin would never be forgiven. I was sure that I had, or someday would commit it, and I was more miserable than ever.

This went on several years. They held the Association in Roanoke in 1964 and I went, and I believe the Lord removed my burden of guilt. I joined the church at Weatherford August 24, 1964, and was baptized the same day by my Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by my brother, Linwood J. Dove, as I have been in a wheel chair all my life. I have sinned many times since, but the burden I carried has never returned.

A sister I hope,
Iris Dove

Rt. 4, Box 320,
Lenoir City, Tenn. 37771

BLACK CREEK UNION

Dear Elder Wood:

Greetings to one and all who have a part in publishing the *Signs of the Times*. It is a wonderful magazine to have to read. There are such good messages from so many able ministers, who are called of God. It fills our souls to sit down and read every one of them.

Thank the Lord for men who know the truth and are not afraid to preach or write it. The deeper they get in the Word of God, the more I love it.

It is time to renew my subscription, so here is a check for two more years. May God bless and keep us, is my prayer.

A sister in Christ I hope,
Mrs. Ben Fields

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Pittman's Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1973.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29515

END OF ANOTHER VOLUME

With this issue of the *Signs*, we bring to a close another volume, and acknowledge the goodness of the Lord in sustaining the paper these one hundred and forty-one years. We believe all has been to His praise in maintaining the faith once delivered to the saints; and at the same time comforting to His people scattered as strangers in a strange land.

The future of the *Signs*, like the past, is in safe hands, for the Lord is yet mindful of his people, and will provide all their need.

We would praise the Lord first of all for his sustaining grace in the publication of the *Signs*, and for his gift of brethren and friends who faithfully supported it during the past years.

As blessed of the Lord we hope to continue sending the paper to you each month. — EDITORS

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

Hassell's Church Histories are now available from the *Signs of the Times* office, Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia, Zip number 24541. This is the new printing. The price is \$6.85.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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NOTE FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

We expect to publish the CHURCH NOTICES as usual in the January issue. Some changes have been sent to us during the year, but there are other changes in names of Pastors, discontinued meetings, etc. which we are aware should be made, but we cannot make them without receiving word from Clerks or other brethren.

If you have a change of any kind which should be made, we must receive it not later than December 10, 1973, and it must be mailed to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110.

This is urgent, so take care of it as soon as you read this notice. — Editor

EDITORIAL

THE RESURRECTION OF
THE DEAD

FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST
CORINTHIANS

In writing on this important subject, I know that God must guide my pen if I present to you that which is to the glory of God, and the edification of his people. I hope to be able to present scriptural proof in support of whatever I write; yet I know there will be many mysteries not understood until we cross the river of death, and are brought to the full fruition of our hope.

There was a period of several years when the writer was confused about the subject of the Resurrection, and was fearful of preaching on the subject, because many things pertaining to the subject were very unclear.

While reading in the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, the fourteenth verse, which reads as follows, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." I humbly hope God settled my mind in many ways concerning this important subject. Since that day I have held a more charitable attitude toward those who do not see as I do. I have thanked God many times for the comfort He brought to my poor troubled heart when this verse was brought to light.

It appears that every scripture in the New Testament can be united in some way with the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians.

I would like, the Lord willing, to take up the subject in the following way:

1st. The gospel preached unto the Corinthians, here set forth, had already been preached unto them.

2nd. Proof of Christ's resurrection.

3rd. Our hope of being raised from the dead tied to the resurrection of Christ.

4th. By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

5th. Christ the first fruits.

6th. Christ shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet.

7th. The difference in our bodies in death, and when raised from the grave.

8th. We shall not all sleep: the mystery of how quickly a change takes place.

9th. The victory.

In the beginning of this chapter Paul says, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." Showing that whatever the apostle has reference to in the word "Moreover" is an extension of the same truth that had already been set forth unto them. Also they had received and accepted it. It is here made clear that no new doctrine is to be set forth. Paul makes it very clear that the blessed truth set forth here had been received by him — how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: Here are traced out three things, that He died, that He was buried, and that He rose again: attaching the same importance to each.

As further proof of his resurrection, we are told that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. After that he was seen of James: then all the Apostles. At last of all he was seen of Paul also. What abundant proof of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave.

These are not the only proofs of the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave. In John 20:20, "He showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." In Luke 24:39, Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet." What a wonderful way for our Lord here, not just to tell his disciples to behold his hands and his feet, but in some wonderful way to make bare to them his precious hands and feet; which had been pierced for them.

My dear readers has our dear Saviour

in some special way, ever shown you his hands that were nailed to the cross for you? and his feet? those hands that were often weary, that were carried so willingly to meet those who would nail them to the cross. Does it appear that you were graven in the palms of these hands: that every movement to Calvary, was but another manifestation of his great love for you? No doubt, these disciples as they were shown the hands and feet of Jesus, could join with the poet, and say:

"All hail, my risen Lord
Triumphant Saviour now,
Sin, death, and hell, with one accord
Before thy footstool bow.
One day amidst the place
Where my dear God hath been,
Is sweeter than ten thousand days
Of pleasurable sin."

All the hope of the people of God of all ages, is tied to the resurrection of the body of Jesus: that body that God prepared him; the body that carried all the sins of the church of God in it; the body that was raised for our justification, to free us from God's holy wrath. If the grave could have held our Lord's body, which was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, then all our preaching would be in vain, our faith in vain, and we would be false witnesses of God yet in our sins; and they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. Thank God that He showed them his hands, his side, and his feet: and ate fish in their presence, and told his disciples to handle him, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." Paul here likens the resurrected body of Christ to the first fruits of the crop. In Leviticus 23:10-11, the children of Israel are commanded to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord as a promise of a crop to follow. Even so, when the body of our Lord was raised from the grave, as the firstfruits of his people, it was a pro-

mise that the crop, or all those represented in him, will be raised in like manner.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." In comparing our body with the body of Jesus, let us remember that the body of Jesus saw no corruption, but our body will return to dust; yet this does not change the fact that Jesus was the firstfruits. In Psalm 16:10, in reference to Jesus we read, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell (Christ's agony on the cross) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

It is no wonder that our Lord said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," when Martha was grieving over the death of her brother Lazarus. Jesus said unto her, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, (here is where spiritual life is given) and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?" The first verse affirms that though a man is dead in sin, yet through believing in Jesus, he lives spiritually. The second affirmation is that those who have been made alive spiritually, shall never die, but fall asleep in Christ. Paul mentions that if Christ be not raised from the dead, then they who are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

Sleep is referred to as embracing three conditions in the scriptures. Death is referred to as a sleep when Lazarus was raised from the dead, after being dead four days. The body can be referred to as asleep when it lies in the grave destitute of life. When news was brought to Jesus of Lazarus' death, he said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples told Jesus that if Lazarus was sleeping, he was doing well. "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." On another occasion Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, approached Jesus, informing him that his daughter was dead, but if Jesus

would come he could raise her from the dead. When Jesus approached the place where the damsel lay, and saw the weeping of the people, He said unto them, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

Another condition of sleep: In the eleventh chapter of first Corinthians we read, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, (inert, careless, and indifferent)." So we find a Bible record of three conditions of sleep: As the dead body of the saints sleeping in the dust as described in Daniel 12:2, an unconscious state of slumber as Jairus' daughter; and a careless, or indifferent state among God's people.

Death for a believer is described in various ways in the scripture. In 1st Thessalonians 4:13,14 we read, "But I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In 1st Corinthians 15th chapter, those described as sleeping in Jesus, are said to perish, if Christ be not risen.

Paul speaks in Philippians 1:23, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ: which is far better." Peter describes the same thing in 2 Peter 1:14, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

(From time to time the theory has been advanced that the souls of the Lord's people, sleep in the grave after death. These have been referred to as "soul-sleepers." In the days of John Gill, those holding this idea were called Cata-Baptists. I have never found this doctrine in any Article of Faith of Primitive Baptists that I have read.)

In 1 Thessalonians 4:14, we read that those who sleep in Christ will God bring with him when he comes for his people; and in the 15th verse, "For this

we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."

I now move on to the description of the wonderful change that will take place with the people of God in the resurrection.

In 1st Corinthians 14:35, we read, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In verses 36, 37 and 38, we read, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The expression, "Thou fool" shows that the subject of the resurrection of the body, is no new question. The Apostle likens the resurrection to the sowing of grain, and that every seed brings forth of its kind. We cannot sow corn and expect wheat. When we sow a grain of wheat, and it springs out of the earth, we would not recognize it as the seed we sowed, but God giveth to every seed his own body. It is the same grain, but its form has been changed; and God giveth to it its own body.

In 1 Peter 1:23, we read, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This change is further described as being sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption: sown in dishonor, raised in glory. It is sown in weakness and raised in power: It is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body. Here the difference is shown between the body sown, and the body raised. The Apostle plainly tells us there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. According to God's word, the body sown will not be raised and changed into a spiritual body, but is raised a spiritual body. None of us have ever seen a spiritual body; but that is the kind of body God will raise in the resurrection. No where do we find that they will be raised, and changed.

In our earthly pilgrimage here, we are of the earth earthy. We bear the image of the first man, who was earthy; but believers are promised that, as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. What a wonderful anticipation and longing for poor sinners: To bear the image of Jesus. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see Him as he is." "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." God has revealed these things to his people, spiritual men.

"Now this I say, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The apostle uses the word Brethren three times in this chapter, showing the close unity and relationship he holds with them: as his relationship in Christ. He uses it in the first verse, "Moreover, brethren." In the last verse his expression is, "Therefore my beloved brethren", showing that because of the things set forth in this chapter, the relationship is so strong in his heart that he says, "Beloved brethren." This close tie is presented in the 50th verse, showing that flesh and blood does not inherit the kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. We might look at this from two angles: First, that none enter the kingdom because of any earthly tie or nationality.

Second, the fact that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God is further expounded in the scriptures: neither does corruption inherit in corruption. Five times in the Word we find the expression, "Flesh and blood." (Matthew 16:17; 1st Cor. 15:50; Gal. 1:16; Ephesians 6:12, and Hebrews 2:4) All except Hebrews 2:4 refer to our mortal life, or natural life, or body, and the wisdom or knowledge we have of

earthly things. This is continued by the expression, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." The definition of the words Corruptible and Corruption refers to decay, decomposition and putrefaction. In 2 Corinthians 5:2-4 we read, "For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

If we should attempt to show that the expression, Sown a mortal, raised in immortality; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body, as being separate bodies, then we must discard the expression, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. When we further inquire as to how we will be, we must abide in the expression of Jesus while conversing with the Sadducees in Mark 12:24,25, "And Jesus answering said unto them, do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven." It is true that Moses and Elias, when they appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, were known by them, yet it was a revelation, as neither Peter, James or John had ever seen either of them, yet they did actually appear to them.

In bringing this article to a close, I would offer this brief summary of the things contained in it.

1st. Whatever Paul set forth to the Corinthians, was a doctrine already preached to them.

2nd. All the hope of believers being raised from the dead to immortality and endless joy, is tied to the resurrection of Jesus.

3rd. The resurrection of Jesus' body, as the first fruits of them that slept, was an assurance that their bodies would also be raised from the dead as the crop that was to follow in like manner: His resurrection.

4th. That the bodies of the people of God would not be raised and changed, nor raised a mortal or corrupt body, but would be sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body; sown in corruption: raised in incorruption.

5th. That there will be a future resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, as recorded in John 5:28,29, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

I have dwelt mostly in this article on the resurrection of God's people, with no desire to evade the truth, that all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth: the wicked to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; yet our deep concern is in enjoying those things that God has prepared for them that love Him. Paul warned the brethren of those who would preach that the resurrection is past already, as taught by Hymeneus and Philletus in 2 Timothy 2:18.

Cast the mantle of charity over this article, and may God bless it to someone.

D. V. Spangler

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

New Vernon, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1846.

"BROTHER BEEBE: There are three or four designing men in Middle Tennessee, who have created considerable excitement on the subject of a non-resurrection. They have charged the Richland Association with denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

"I have been a member of this association for the last eighteen years, and I know that it believes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a general judgment. It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood, and contends for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all his saints, spiritual, in his likeness, as John says.—1 John iii. 2. I send you a copy of faith in all the leading principles of the gospel, as they present an abstract of our principles.

GEORGE R. HOGE."

It has been and still is our desire, so far as possible, to avoid unprofitable agitation of subjects which in our judgment have a strong tendency to excite discussion than to edify, comfort and instruct the people of God. And although we consider the resurrection of the dead inferior in importance to no part of the gospel of God our Savior, we have feared that the manner in which some brethren have seemed disposed to discuss it, is calculated to gender strife and discord, rather than to result in peace of Zion and the glory of God.

The letter of Elder Hoge which will be found above, states that the Richland Association of Tennessee has been misrepresented on the subject, and asks the privilege of explaining the real sentiments of that association. He has also sent us a copy of the minutes of the association, containing an "abstract" of their doctrinal sentiments, in which they say, item 10: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and general judgment." This expression undefined, we presume would be satisfactory; but as brother Hoge adds, "She denies the resurrection of the flesh and blood," we conclude that the most of our readers will consider such denial as equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether, and a justification of those who have so charged that association. We will not attempt to define what is intended by their profession of faith in the resurrection, nor of their repudia-

tion of its application to flesh and blood; or what our brethren of Richland believe will be raised up at the last day; whether soul, body or spirit. If they only intend to say that all the relationship between the saints and Adam, or human nature, ceases with the death of these mortal bodies, and that the resurrection shall bring them forth as a production of the quickening Spirit of God, in the same manner that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we see no cause for controversy; for such we presume to be the general view held by Old School Baptists on the subject. But if such be their intention, we think they have not been sufficiently clear in defining their position.

By the reference made to 1 John iii. 2, we are inclined to believe our brethren hold with us that the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ is an exemplification of the manner and nature of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints. In his resurrection he became the first fruits of them that slept, consequently the certain pledge that all his people shall in like manner be raised up in that hour in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

Many idle and vain speculations have been resorted to by multitudes at sundry times, in attempting a philosophical solution of the resurrection of the dead, but all philosophy must forever fail when applied to the things of the Spirit of God; as we Old School Baptists hold the things of the Spirit to be known only by revelation, not by science; rules therefore which will apply to natural things cannot apply to spiritual things. To us it seems quite inexpedient to say that flesh and blood will not arise, as many would be led from the expression to suppose that the identity of the bodies of the saints in the resurrection was denied; which must be equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether.

For if the bodies of the saints are raised from the dead at all, there must necessarily be a preservation of identity; and if the bodies of the saints are not to be raised up, what is to be raised? Not the soul, or spiritual man, for that cannot die, cannot be committed to the grave; and in the resurrection, all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life eternal, or of damnation. There can be no two ways of understanding Romans viii. 11. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. The term mortal cannot apply to our spiritual life, as that is in no sense mortal, nor can it apply to any other part of us than that which came under the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Some have said that flesh and blood shall not arise, but flesh and bones shall arise; and this view they have attempted to sustain, first, because it is written that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." — 1 Corinthians xv. 50; and second, because that Jesus had shed all his blood when he was crucified, and it is supposed that his risen body contained no blood. These two, we presume, are the strongest arguments used by the advocates of the theory. But let us examine them. Does Paul say that flesh and blood shall not be raised up? or that they shall not after the resurrection inherit the kingdom of God? By no means. Let us be remembered Paul speaks in the present tense, cannot; and for the same reason that corruption cannot inherit corruption. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, and our flesh and blood in their present state, and relation to Adam, and to the law, are corrupt, depraved, diseased, mortal and natural. But in the text our brother has referred to, (1 John iii. 2,) we are assured that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him, &c.; and

Paul in the text quoted, (Rom. viii. 11,) has told us how: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies." If then we can know how Christ's body, in which he suffered death, was raised up, we shall also know how our mortal bodies shall arise. And of his resurrection we can trace a few very important particulars. And first, we observe, though he was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened in the spirit. When put to death in the flesh, we understand that his relation to the law, which he assumed by being made of a woman, was finished. He died as the Son of man; as the Son of David; as the issue of Judah; being put to death in the flesh; but he was quickened by the Spirit, or begotten from the dead, so that in his resurrection his body arose from the dead as the immediate production of the Spirit, and was thus declared to be the Son of God with power. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is applied to the resurrection of his body from the dead, and not to his birth of the Virgin Mary. So to be like him, the same quickening Spirit that now dwells in the saints, by which they were regenerated, and which raised from the dead the crucified body of Jesus, shall also, that is, in like manner, quicken our mortal bodies. In which quickening the saints shall arise, so far as relates to the bodies, in a new relationship. As in the resurrection of Christ his risen body stood no longer related to the fleshly stock of Abraham, Judah or David, so in the resurrection, the saints shall be released from all relationship to those who are now their kindred after the flesh; not to be known in the resurrection as Gentiles or Jews, as male or female, as married or as given in marriage, as parents or as children, but simply as the sons of God. The notion of some that parents are waiting now in heaven to embrace their children, husbands, wives, &c., is altogether unwarranted by the faith and testimony of the gospel. The immediate relationship which we stand into each other here belongs only to our time

state; but all that relationship must be dissolved. We shall be begotten from the dead immediately by the Spirit, as independently of our present carnal relationship as though we had never sustained such relation to Adam. In the resurrection of Christ the identity of the body was preserved. "I am he that was dead, and am alive," &c. That Jesus whom John saw in his risen and glorified body was the same that had been dead. The identity must have been preserved to fulfill the scriptures. His flesh should not see corruption; and what he had given as a sign of his Messiahship. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; the sign also of the prophet Jonah must have failed if the same body which suffered on the cross had not arisen from the dead. His Godhead did not die, nor could his soul cease to exist. His Mediatorial Headship of his church could not expire. But it was that wherein he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, &c., and that which died arose from the dead. So when the saints are called hence their spiritual life which they received in regeneration does not die; their quickened souls do not die; but their bodies, even their mortal bodies, die; and those same bodies shall arise in like manner as the identical body of our Lord Jesus Christ which had been crucified did arise, bearing the prints of the nails and the place of the spear. A further definition of the identity to us seems superfluous. To talk of the particles of the flesh, the composition of the bones, to philosophize upon the subject, is as extravagant as to attempt to harmonize natural philosophy with any other part of divine revelation. We admit that all the blood was drained from the veins of the body of Jesus; but that is no evidence that his risen body contained no blood; for the fact is quite as apparent that all the life of Jesus was taken from his body, and who will argue that his risen body contained no life. Such vain speculations serve only to gender strife and contention, and to divert the mind from a

spiritual to a carnal train of thinking.

While thus we contend that the identity of the bodies of the saints shall be preserved, even as we have proved that the identity of Christ's body was preserved, we also hold, and firmly believe, that the change which the apostle speaks of in 1 Cor. XV. shall also be gloriously realized by all the saints. The body in its present state is mortal, or subject to disease and death, but it shall be perfectly freed in the resurrection from mortality; this will be a glorious change, but this is not all; the body in its time state is weak, it is sown in weakness, but it shall be raised in power. Now it is corrupt, but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. It is now in a state of dishonor, but it shall be robed in immortal honor; it is now a natural, earthly, Adamic body; but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual, heavenly body, standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam. That law which remands our bodies to the dust has dominion over our mortal bodies so long as they remain this side of the resurrection of the dead, but when they shall be raised up from their graves they shall be free from the power and dominion of that law. For the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have much more to say upon the interesting subject when opportunity shall serve. We have offered the above remarks, not to provoke controversy, but because there are, as we have strong reasons to fear, many dear brethren whom we love in the Lord, who seem to indulge a sort of speculating spirit on the subject; we desire not to kill or wound them, but if possible to admonish them in the spirit of the gospel.

With regard to those passages on which brother Hoge has desired our views, we will, so far as ability is given us, attend to his request soon.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 1, 1846)

OBITUARIES

DEACON SAMUEL
ARNETT SLAUGHTER

Deacon Samuel Arnett Slaughter of Danville, Va. died March 9, 1973. He was born in Pittsylvania County, Va. May 9, 1895, a son of the late John and Annie Haley Slaughter. He married the former Elise Davis, who survives.

He leaves two sons, Paul and Posey Slaughter of Danville; three daughters, Mrs. Naomi Clark, Danville; Mrs. Marion Mitchell, Norfolk, and Nora Winn of Danville; two sisters, Mrs. Hollis Lumpkins of Danville, and Mrs. Mary Winn of Danville; sixteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Brother Slaughter joined Mt. Ararat Church in July, 1931 and was ordained a Deacon June 23, 1946. He was blessed to fill this office well. His love for the church was great. He was indeed loved by this church and by all who knew him. We have heard him say many times, "I know that all the church will go to heaven, but will I be in that number?" And many times we have heard him tell of his hope of being in that number that will be raised to everlasting life.

We believe Brother Slaughter is now resting in peace, waiting the time of the resurrection to be carried home to glory.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder Wallace Smith.

Read and adopted by the church in conference September 15, 1973.

Written at the request of the church at Mount Ararat.

Elder H. W. Wray

BROTHER MORMAN H. PICKREL

In sadness I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Brother and Deacon, Morman H. Pickrel, who was born February 1, 1903 and died August 22, 1973, making his stay on earth seventy years.

He joined Springfield Church June 11, 1939, and was ordained deacon October 7, 1967. He was faithful to the Church and performed his duties well. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, having no confidence in the flesh and believing the Lord has fixed all things.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife Sister Della Pickrel, six daughters: Mrs. Alease Creasy, Chatham, Va.; Mrs. Rebecca Turner, Gretna, Va.; Mrs. Margaret Mayhew, Gretna; Mrs. Jean Ware, Providence, N. C.; Mrs. Joyce Brumfield, Gretna; and Mrs. Libby Dale Hedrick, Richmond, Va. Also two brothers and six sisters, and seventeen grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by

Elder Denver Simpson. His body was laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Written by

L. R. Willis

JOHN H. SIMPSON

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing the obituary of John H. Simpson, and a few of the facts I have gotten from his wife, Margaret. He was born to John Wesley Simpson and the former Martha Susan Key, in Surrey, Mo. and died September 13, 1973. He was married to Margaurite Callar July 4, 1916, and they joined the Primitive Baptist Church the same year. They reared six sons and six daughters, two of whom are deceased.

Humbly,
Mildred Simpson, Church Clerk.

The followig was taken from a newspaper account:

"John H. Simpson, 86, of 1306 S. 18th Avenue, Yakima, Wash., died Thursday in a Yakima nursing home. Mr. Simpson was born in Surry, Mo., and had farmed in the Sunnyside area.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Marguerite Simpson of Yakima; six daughters: Mrs. Vera Pingel of Canby, Calif.; Mrs. Rosie Herrman of Grandview; Mrs. Martha Cole of Portland; Mrs. Mary Ellen Smith of Bellingham; Mrs. Verna Coleman of Richland and Mrs. Naomi Lindsey of Buckley; and four sons: Dennie of Outlook; Ervin of Ravensdale, Vernon of Yakima and Leonard of Sumner."

SISTER ELIZA LEWIS VANTREASE

According to the appointed time our Heavenly Father called Sister Eliza Lewis Vantrease to her heavenly home on April 5, 1973. She had spent more than 91 years in this tabernacle of clay, and was blessed early in life to desire and be led to find a home with brothers and sisters of a "peculiar faith" that was like her own. She became a member of the Old Rector Primitive Baptist Church, Hamilton County, Illinois in 1898. She was a loyal and faithful member until she became the last surviving member. In 1956 she brought her membership to the Old Salem Primitive Baptist Church in Benton, Illinois — whose members now mourn her passing.

Sister Vantrease was the widow of George E. Vantrease. They had three sons and one daughter. Surviving are one son, Wm. E. Vantrease; seven grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and ten great great grandchild-

dren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders Wayman Chapell and H. R. Prince. At the request of the family a notice is written and submitted to the *Signs of the Times*.

Wayman G. Chapell, Mod.
Wm. E. Vantrease, Clerk
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk.

IN MEMORY OF

SISTER BESSIE BELL JEFFERSON

By request from the Members of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write the obituary of Sister Bessie Jefferson, as we all called her at Church.

Sister Bessie was born in Pitt County on May 31, 1888, to the late Bennett William Bell and Fannie Harris Bell.

It was in the year of 1907 that she was married to Joseph E. Jefferson in Pitt County on the twenty-seventh day of February near Fountain. She was married in the presence of her Mother and Father, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett William Bell by Elder A. M. Crisp, who was Pastor of Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church at that time.

It was in the month of June, 1925 that the Lord called Sister Bessie to the Church at Otter's Creek to ask for a home. She was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp along with two other members, Sister Anlize Spain and Brother Ed Smith.

Elder A. M. Crisp also preached her Father's funeral. Sister Bessie lost her husband, Joseph E. Jefferson. He was taken from her the month of November, 1930. They were only married for twenty-three years, but I feel that the Good Lord blessed Sister Bessie. She was a Widow for forty-three years. They had born unto them nine fine children, five boys and four girls, whom she loved so dearly, and they loved her. She had thirty Grandchildren and forty-two Great Grandchildren. Sister Bessie had it rough, but she had the faith to believe in a God who would take care of her. She had three sons to go to the Army back in World War II. She had one son who was held a German prisoner for two or three years, but she had a prayer in her heart, the kind that God always answers.

It was on the eleventh day of May, 1973 when God called Sister Bessie home. I feel that she heard that voice that says, "Come Dear Children, Your Father calls, come Home." I would like to say to all her family who was so dear to her, to grieve not over Mother. She fought a good fight and the battle is over. Deep down in my heart, I feel that she is at rest in the bosom of her Heavenly Father. May we all feel that our loss is her Eternal

gain. Her funeral service was held at Otter's Creek Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Fountain beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the resurrection Morning.

Resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the Family, one put in Church Records, one to the *Zions Landmark* and one to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of the Church in Conference the first Saturday in June, 1973.

Written by a brother who loved her, I hope,
Joe B. Coker
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

EVA GILLIAM MATKINS

We bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly father, who has called from our midst a dear sister in Christ, Sister Eva Gilliam Matkins. She was born November 27, 1884, and passed from this life, December 19, 1972, making her stay here on earth 88 years, 22 days.

Sister Matkins was the daughter of the late Professor John Wesley Gilliam and Mary Jane Leath Gilliam. She was the wife of the late Robert Lee Matkins who preceded her in death 26 years. Unto this union were born five children, John Lee Matkins, Mrs. E. Floyd Brooks, Mrs. Leon Gilliam, Mrs. Merritt Hudson and Mrs. Pauline Smith.

Young in life Sister Matkins united with Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church and was baptised by the late Elder F. L. Oakley in the year 1905, and was a faithful and loyal member as much as health permitted, being at the time of her death a member of the church 67 years.

Sister Matkins spent her last years in the home of her daughter, Sister Bessie Gilliam who was blessed with patience and tender loving care, to administer everything earthly hands could do for her comfort in this life.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith at Gilliam's Church, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery underneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May those that mourn be comforted by the Grace of Almighty God.

It is our custom to send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy be given to the family and by request a copy to be sent to *The Zions Landmark*.

By order of Gilliam Primitive Baptist Church,

Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freeman Somers, Clerk