

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., JANUARY 1983

No. 1

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year—\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder James F. Poole, Editor

P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801
Phone (301) 742-6406

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555
Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115
Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

8902 Cherry Tree Lane
Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

VOLUME 4 EDITORIALS OF GILBERT BEEBE NOW READY

This new book of editorial writings of Elder Beebe, taken from the old *Signs of the Times*, are now available. Most have never been seen in this century.

The book is made of the finest natural paper, with easy to read, new type-set containing 512 pages and is a matching book to Volume 3, published by us last year. The cover is a lovely "D" grade library buckram cloth with silk screen finish, and extremely sturdy. We have spared no cost in making this book quality throughout.

All believers in free grace should have both this and Volume 3, as they contain the writings of one of the most gifted ministers who ever lived.

When ordering please specify Volume 4. We must assume you want this volume unless you specify Volume 3.

Our cost to produce this book was up over 10% of Volume 3. In addition, we added 32 extra pages, yet we will still sell this volume at the same price as the previous one.

Price \$16.00 plus \$2.00 for mailing

(Maryland residents add 5% sales tax)

SEND ORDERS TO:

Signs of the Times, Inc.

P.O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

NOTE: This book will make an excellent and lasting gift to shut-ins, the sick, etc., and will certainly be of more lasting value than many other gifts, as flowers, or perishable items.

Volume 3 is also still available at \$16.00 plus \$2.00 for mailing.

FOREKNOWLEDGE

"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate;" "and whom he did predestinate them he also glorified", etc. (Rom. 8:29, 30)

This word "foreknowledge" is one of the deepest and most mysterious words throughout the whole of the Scriptures. The miser Tomline, the Arminian bishop, who passed his life in raking money together and in persecuting Calvinists, and who therefore was an idolator through love of money, and is a beloved head of the Arminian enemies of God, mistook this passage, "Whom he did foreknow", etc. The treasonable Arminians make this passage to show that God is the servant and man the master. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret!" "For their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. 32:31) They say God foreknew who would be so good as to accept of Christ, and therefore predestinated them; and if that is not high treason, I do not know what is. For it denies Christ to be the "Alpha", the beginning and first cause, effectively, discriminatingly, sovereignly, and finally, of the elect getting to heaven. Thus Tomline and the Arminians "wrest Jesus' sceptre from his hand"; stamp in the dust his Godhead as being the sovereign, discriminating, and effectual cause of his people's salvation; and bring the cobwebs of freewill in man to be the most ornamental elegance and efficiency in the edifice of salvation! Thus, I do not mind who it is, neither do the elect of God, for both they and I are certain of it, that no Arminian, *professedly as such*, can be saved. There may be much Arminianism cleaving to a quickened man; but all Arminianism will fly away some day, like the morning clouds before the substantial power of the glorious orb of day. So will all Arminianism cleaving to the elect finally be melted away sometime or other before ever they get into the proper daylight of God; for "God is light". For

"now it is high time to awake out of sleep; the night is far spent, the day is at hand."

Let us then see what this "foreknowledge" of God is; (blessed be His name!) "For whom he foreknew them he also predestinated", etc. And if there is one point more than another in all Scripture which shows the needs be for the Spirit in experience to open Scripture, this is the point.

This word "knowledge" refers to the everlasting love of God towards his people. "O the depth of the riches of the knowledge of God!" "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." "The Lord knoweth the righteous"; but "thorns and snares are in the way of the froward". And who are the froward but the advocates of free will and licentiousness? Free will is the swelling lungs of an unregenerate man; "for perverse things are in his vitals". And what so perverse a thing as free will? "For the race is not to the swift." "Therefore a froward heart shall depart from me", says an elect man through God's grace. Therefore, Tomline's and the Arminian's "foreknowledge" shall depart from me. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart"; for he that speaketh the truth (*supernaturally*) from his heart, and in whose eyes a vile person (that speaketh Arminian lies) is condemned, even he shall abide in God's tabernacle, and dwell in his holy hill of supernatural knowledge; "he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not."

Foreknowledge, then, is explained by this, as well as many and many another passage of Scripture; "If any man love God, the same is known of him." (I Cor. 8:3)

The eternal union of Christ and the elect is a doctrine everywhere manifest in Scripture to the illuminated eye; "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." "Thy Maker is thine Husband". (Isa. 54:5) "Thou shalt call me Ishi, (my Husband) and shalt call me no more

Baali (my Lord)". (Hos. 2:16) "Thy land shall be married". (Isa. 62:4) "I will betroth thee unto me, and thou shalt know the Lord. I will betroth thee unto me for ever. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, saith the Lord." (Hos. 2:16, 19, 20, etc.) "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30)

Men are greatly deceived in religion. They think thus that there is no mystery in religion; whereas, true religion is the very mystery of God. "The mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (Rev. 10:7) "It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom." (Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10) For my part, I bless God that it was early in my religion laid on my mind to pray; to pray in reading the Scriptures; to pray in everything; for I became gradually persuaded that there was a secret, a mystery, "a deep couching beneath"; something hidden; something the non-elect were never to know; something hidden from the eyes of all naturally living; something "sealed"; something running underground, as it were, in religion. And O the deeps! for who hath known the mind of the Lord? "Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun (of righteousness); because, though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther, though a (supernaturally) wise man think to know it, yet shall not he be able to find it," (Eccl. 8:17) by thinking merely, reading, hearing, or speculation. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Ignorance, then, is a thing greatly complained of for a long time by the manifested elect of God. They see the bare knowledge of the letter of Scripture is of no use by itself. Thus, they set out thence hunting after the Incarnate Word; "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "In my flesh I shall see God", said Job. O the glories of

the incarnation of Christ in the heart! "We are members of his flesh, of his body, and of his bones." "All my bones (supernaturally) shall say, Who is like unto thee?" "If any man eateth not the flesh of Christ, and drinketh not his blood, he hath no life in him." Thus, true religion is something "more than notion."

But this I will be bound to say, that "the heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge". (Prov. 15:14) Heart-felt fear and understanding through the new birth in true religion, in hating evil, in hating pride and arrogancy, and "the evil way and the froward mouth", are the beginning and progress of infinite results. To depart from evil is understanding, and therefore Solomon says, "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge", of which the everlasting foreknowledge of God was the everlasting spring from all eternity! "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate", etc. Solomon declares (as I have twice quoted) that "the heart of him (mark that, not the head) that hath understanding, (and not merely talketh of it) seeketh knowledge." The deeps of this subject I believe neither I nor any man can perfectly fathom. This knowledge is neither more nor less than felt union. As it is written, "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "And they that were *ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut*". Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened thereto. The "wedding garment", the "marriage supper", and indissoluble union are the crowning points with those who have divine understanding in the heart. "With all thy getting, get understanding." Through wisdom is a house builded; and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge (mark that) shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches." (Prov. 24:3, 4) Knowledge, then, is the antitype

of God's foreknowledge. The Lord knoweth the righteous. That foundation standeth sure, for there is a seal upon it, even the seal of spiritual wedlock; "I am married unto you, saith the Lord." (Jer. 3:14) "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come higher, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife; and he carried me away in the spirit." "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, *These* are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 19:21)

I adduce these passages to show that the God-Man, "having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." The final consummation of love is marriage. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Hence the severe threatenings of God in holy Scripture against fornicators, as desecrating the ordinance of marriage! Hence the solemnity and sacredness of marriage! Hence its typical and mystic tie! Hence how all whoremongers and adulterers are thundered at with God's highest reprehension! "Without are dogs, whoremongers", etc. Love, verily, is perfected in marriage, and not till then. "Marriage is *honourable*", and the breach of it is branded with God's execration. All false religion is called whoredom throughout the whole of the Bible; as all true religion is figured throughout the whole of Scripture as a marriage, as I have stated at length.

I trust that I have for years been brought into a sense of this unutterable relationship with God, who is my fear and my dread. The religion that fear through regeneration begins union-love will complete. "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-

chamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the Bridegroom with them they cannot fast." Soothed, solaced, and overjoyed, I have for years known my adorable, sin-hating Saviour in this glorious character, as in the new creation the Husband of my soul. "But I would have you know that the Head (spiritually) of every man (In the regeneration) is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." (I Cor. 11:3) O surprising mystery! O "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter!" (2 Cor. 12:4) Those who are joined in earthly matrimony are "one flesh". (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5) Those who are joined in spiritual matrimony, under the authority of God in the regeneration, are "one spirit". (I Cor. 6:17) The Last Adam is ever called the Bridegroom of the church spiritually, as the first Adam was the husband of Eve. O stupendous mysteries! Here is where the religion of the mere letter of Scripture breaks down and is distanced. Here is where the chief priests (those bitter enemies of the true Christ) of all denominations, with the elders, scribes, pharisees, lawyers, and sadducees of a natural Christianity are lost to the true apprehension of Christ. Here it is that the princes of this world's wisdom in the letter fail. Here it is that "hidden wisdom" is a barrier against all but the elect. Here it is that God has put bars and bolts to hinder the sea of head-knowledge from rushing into the internal kingdom of heaven in the soul. Here are the springs of vital knowledge; "milk and honey" come "under the tongue" of the soul that has these springs; "My springs are in God." Here is the well of water springing up unto endless life. Here is the engrafted word. Here is the vital sap springing from the engrafture. Here is the Tree of Life and the branches, verdant, bending with fruit, and, as it were, "clapping their hands for joy"; for all the trees of this field of foreknowledge shall clap their

hands for joy. O blessed relationship! O divine glee ensuing therefrom! "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "I never knew you", is the answer of the divine Judge to all non-elect strangers. But the dignity and glory of this subject cannot be exhausted in a few pages; I shall therefore, God willing, treat of it in another paper; and shall only add, that foreknowledge on God's part issues in regeneration and vital union, to the elect body of Christ, the church. Hence the "partaking of the divine nature". And never dying streams of never dying bliss soothe, assuage, lull, and becalm with eternal quietude and rest the church, the bride of Christ; refreshed thus by foreknowledge in predestination and by vital knowledge, in felt love, from that river (or rather ocean) of love, the streams whereof make glad the city of the living God.

Abingdon

I. K.

The Gospel Standard, 1841

Fairfax County, VA.

Jan. 22, 1851

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 1

Brother Beebe:—I have for some years thought of giving a relation of my experience through the Signs, as a testimony to the condescension of our God and Savior, who as our Great High Priest, *can and does have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way*; but have been hitherto deterred by various considerations. But having been called on to do it, both by sister Izor and brother Conklin, I will now undertake it, if brother Beebe will grant me room in the *Signs* for it; (and it will occupy several numbers); though it is with fears that I commence it, that it may not be kindly received by many; and may not be useful perhaps to but few. I admit with brother Barton that all who we believe are christians cannot give a circumstantial detail of all the way in which the Lord has led them to

the hope of the gospel; but where they can give such detail, I like to hear it, and therefore wish now to give it.

I think for myself that our brother Hall's relation would have been still more interesting had he related *those somethings before and after he obtained mercy* which he speaks of. There is nothing in God's teaching nor in his revelation that is not worthy of our special notice. I have thought that those which some would call *little circumstances*, in which God's hand is manifested, appear more lovely than the more important exercises, as illustrative of the great, condescension, compassion and faithfulness of him with whom we have to do. As I am giving my thoughts, I will further say that I *think* our object in writing out our experience ought not to be simply to declare ourselves to be believers, but to show in our individual experience God's sovereignly various ways of leading his children to the knowledge of the same truths.

As an introduction to my religious experience I wish to give a sketch of my early life, both as in some measure accounting for the extreme ignorance and stupidity concerning everything spiritual which my experience will show me to have possessed, and also as showing God's special providential watch over me in my vile untoward course in nature. Hence I shall probably be as much too tedious as brother Hall was too brief.

I was born in Walpole, New Hampshire, was one of three children my mother had. My mother died when I was eight years old. My sister died before my mother, and my brother was borned up with the house in which he lived a year or two after. My father, who had been for several years riding as sheriff and had thereby become involved, was about this time broken up as to property, and shortly after broke up housekeeping. From that early period in life, though my father lived several years after, I never knew the

comforts of a parent's home, nor the solace of a brother or sister's society. I had no near relatives on my father's side, and none that I knew; but on my mother's side I had several, but circumstances about the above time caused me to become estranged from them. My father procured a kind and comfortable home for me, where I enjoyed all the advantages of a common school education, usual for boys in New England to have.

I continued in this family until I was nearly fifteen, when I went as an apprentice to a trade, to an unmarried gentleman, and who therefore boarded out his hands, and who had two shops, one in my native village, and the other sixty miles from there in Vermont: at each of which I was occasionally.

Thus excepting in shop hours I was thrown loose to my passions in villages, where gambling, drunkenness, and every species of fashionable vice was prevalent.

When about twelve a gentleman of the family in which I lived, who owned a right in a public library in the village, granted me the use of his right to draw and read what books I pleased. My attention in this way was soon turned to novels and romances, pretty much to the exclusion of other reading until I was upwards of twenty, when a circumstance occurred which so disgusted me with novel reading that from that time I declared off from them. Thus instead of acquiring useful knowledge during my youth, I was filling my mind with romance. In addition to this, when I was a child, Winchester the Universalist, came into that region and disciplined to his faith the settled minister of the town. Hence I was brought up under that kind of preaching, and early imbibed the idea of universal salvation, and of the propriety of professors of religion participating in the amusements of the world such as dancing, card playing, etc., from being accustomed to seeing those things

among them.

Before going to a trade I had occasionally on Sundays to read a chapter or two in the Bible to please the old lady with whom I lived; but from that time I know not that I read a single chapter until I became religiously exercised. When I was nearly twenty, my boss changed his business, and gave me my time. I was now in more unpleasant circumstances than before, having no relations to visit, no home to retreat to for rest, when out of employment. I had no alternative, when one job was done, but to travel in pursuit of another. In this way the first year I was free, I traveled through most of the New England States and a part of New York; sometimes by stage, or by water, but more generally on foot, according as my funds were.

The second year I engaged for a year in Massachusetts to take charge of a shop. During the first year one circumstance occurred which I wish particularly to notice, and I wish to record my testimony to the kindness of a restraining providence; for I was truly a child of Providence; in that whilst others of my early associates who had parents to watch over them, fell over the gambling table, or the cup, or other vices, I, though possessing as strong passions and appetites as either of them, was restrained from dipping deeply into any of those vices, and was permitted throughout to enjoy a respectable standing in society. The particular circumstance referred to was this: In common with perhaps most Universalists, I was inclined to deistical notions, but feeling an inward consciousness that there was a hereafter, I at times felt some anxiety to know whether there was a reality in religion or not.

In the summer of 1805, being in Providence, R. I., I was one day in the front shop at work by myself, and I got to reflecting on this subject, and my mind being wrought up to considerable anxiety about it, I exclaimed to myself,

“If there is a reality in religion, O, that God would give me some test by which I might know it.” I said this, I think, more in a spirit of complaining than of supplication, but as soon as I had made the exclamation, with all the distinctness and force as if some one had spoken to me from above, these words fell upon my mind, “Read the Bible.” Though I was at the time, as I still am confident that this was supernatural, for I cannot account for the impression on any natural principles, being so different from the bent or any reflections of my mind, yet I felt no disposition to obey; my mind seemed to revolt at the idea of such a gloomy task as that of pondering over the Bible. Still however it had an effect, it silenced my infidelity, and led me to feel more of a respect for religion than I had been accustomed to. During the next year I was one day when by myself led to reflection on the difference between the Universalists and other religionists, and came to the conclusion that it was of no use to believe in universalism, for if the Universalists were correct, those who believed in a special salvation of individuals were equally as safe as they were, else the salvation would not be universal. On the other hand, if salvation was special and particular, and I was trusting in a general universal salvation, I should find myself deceived, I therefore gave it up. Still I had no idea of becoming religious.

At the end of this second year, finding myself a little before hand as to funds, I determined to commence the pursuit of what I had long wished for, an education. As the minister of the adjoining town kept a boarding school for young men, in the fall of 1806, I entered his school. I had not been there over six weeks, had barely revised my early studies of arithmetic, grammar, etc., before, through the recommendation of this gentleman, I was offered the public school in the village for the winter, which I accepted. As I concluded the only way for me, situated as I was, to

get along with my studies, would be to teach school and study in my spare hours, and as they did not in that county employ male teachers in the summer months, I determined when my school was out in the spring, to go into the State of New York and obtain a school. I accordingly started early in May, went to Albany, thence westwardly, but soon found I was too late in the season in starting, that the schools were taken up for the season. I, however, proceeded onward, until I got about thirty miles west of Utica. There through my inconsiderateness and the rascality of others, I got into a difficulty which was like to involve me in a serious loss, considering my situation. Being detained for a day or two, and being among strangers, I felt sensibly the need of divine interposition. In my straits I retired to the woods and implored God’s aid, and like other natural persons, I supposed I must promise something in return. I promised that in case he could deliver me, I would never again indulge in profane swearing. I had at one time been much addicted to it, but for two years before I had in some measure left it off, not on account of its sinfulness, but on account of its being disrespectful in good society. Still, when much excited I was liable to give way to it. But now I renounced it as a sinful act. And God to my full belief did interpose, friends appeared on my behalf, and as warm friends as I could have had, if I could have given the masonic sign or that of any secret society, and I was delivered. My purse which was getting rather low, being somewhat replenished by the transaction, I turned my course backward to Albany, thence to my native place, and after spending some days there and in other places, I went again into Massachusetts, and engaged in Northampton for a time at my trade.

From the above transaction I became more impressed with the sense of an overruling Providence, and the expression of Pope, “Whatsoever is, is

right," became a favorite one with me. Also from that event, I have been led to the conclusion that although in reference to salvation there is no approaching God, with acceptance but through faith in Christ, yet that in reference to providential dealing, unregenerate persons, being brought to feel their dependence on God for aid, may in their straits supplicate his throne and be heard. While at Northampton, and at work one day in August, 1807, in the shop by myself, I was reflecting on the providential dealings of God with me from a child up, having been a child of disappointments and sorrow, the enquiry arose in my mind, which I perhaps expressed, Why is it that God has thus persued me from my childhood with crosses and troubles? Immediately again, as at Providence two years before, as if spoken from above, these words struck my mind with force, "It is to teach you the vanity of earthly hopes and things, and to lead you to seek your happiness in God." My whole heart seemed now at once to acquiesce in it; and I cheerfully promised that from that time I would seek the knowledge of God and his ways and seek my happiness in him. As David says, Psa. 27:8, "When thou saidst unto me, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek," so verily I think at that time it was my case.

From the different effect produced by the two addresses to me; this at Northampton, and that two years before in Providence, both having alike the same appearance of being supernaturally spoken to me, and both so viewed by me at the times, I am constrained to believe that even when God speaks, there will not be heart obedience, unless the heart is first opened to receive the word, and unless regeneration has taken place, and spiritual life is imparted. As this life is love to God, then there will be obedience to his word and not before. Hence from the lasting effect

produced at that time upon me, leading me immediately to procure a Bible and to commence the study of it, as also to engage in religious exercises, and producing a desire after God which I trust still continues with me, I am led, from that time to date my regeneration, (if indeed I am regenerated.) As a further confirmation of this, as I was walking the street one evening by myself, a few weeks after, meditating on this subject and enquiring with some anxiety whether I should be able to hold out in my resolution, this word was applied with force to me, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I know not that I had ever read that text, though probably I had in my boyhood, but I received it as the word of God, and was comforted and strengthened by it. And I therefore concluded that God had then begun a work in me.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
TO SEPTEMBER, 1982

| | |
|--|--------|
| James G. Thompson, VA. | \$2.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. W. W. Stutts, TX. | 2.00 |
| D. E. Honeycutt, TX. | 7.00 |
| Luther Martin, VA. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. S. G. Harralson, KY. | 8.00 |
| Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Effie Terry, VA. | 7.00 |
| A. S. Blalock, N.C. | 4.00 |
| Mrs. L. T. Nichols, VA. | 1.00 |
| Elder J. T. Prescott, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Mildred Holland, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Shirley Debow, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. G. B. McAdams, MS. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. H. D. Underwood, VA. | 2.00 |
| Emmet Faucette, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY. | 18.00 |
| Mrs. A. V. Brown, In memory of Harry Vories, AZ. | 300.00 |
| Mrs. Edgar Adkins, MD. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Lee McGee, WA. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Gracie Skinner, KY. | 2.00 |

Elder D. V. Spangler, from the estate of
 Eulalah E. Cannady, VA. 348.74
 Mrs. Betty Tilghman, MD. 1.00
 Mr. & Mrs. Alonza Davis, VA. 7.00

My Dear Sister Maude (Truitt),

Grace, peace, and comfort be unto you in this trying time from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who performs all things according to the perfect counsel of His Father. As He gives utterance may we be blessed to pray for you, your health, and your spirit.

We enjoyed a most blessed meeting yesterday at Welsh Tract Church and the Lord was pleased to dwell in the midst of His people. Elder Poole spoke kindly of you as he relayed to us your condition. Brother Lackey spoke well and the Spirit used him to speak on prayer for the saints and utterances for the Lord's people, which is only possible when the Lord gives His people a heart to do so. He used the text in Ephesians 6, where we are admonished to stand firm in the Lord, which he properly balanced by showing our total weakness and inability to do such a thing but rather our total reliance on His strength, which is Jesus Christ.

He was followed by Elder C. C. Morris, who spake boldly and was also used by the Spirit to proclaim the word of the Lord. He was blessed to speak from Isaiah 59 and spoke clearly to my heart of the times of darkness which we experience from time to time as the Lord, as it were, hiding Himself from us and causing us to grope as if we were blind, not seeing the glory of His countenance nor the light of His smile. Elder Morris also dwelt on the blessed fact that when the Lord looked He saw no man to intercede and when He called there was none that could answer. He (the Lord) then marvelled as how in all of humanity, with its great men and vast numbers throughout all the ages, there was not one found that could help the Lord God Almighty save His precious

Son. How blessed to know that we could not help and that we cannot hinder the Holy One Of Israel from doing His will and good pleasure!

Elder Morris was once again called on to preach in the afternoon. He opened the text of the 89th Psalm beautifully and then he was followed by Elder Poole, who continued there, concentrating on the 15th - 17th verses. There is a people who hear the joyful sound and delight in it.

I was blessed greatly in the presence of the Lord's people, and we all missed you greatly. Marie, my wife, was not able to attend either, as she was at home attending to the needs of our new baby. She was born on Monday, September 16, and her name is Sarah Marie. As soon as pictures are available, I shall send you one. I look forward to communing again with you if the Lord so wills.

In love,
 Chet Dirkes

SERMON BY
 ELDER JIMMY HAMRICK

(From a Tape Recording)

I certainly enjoyed what has gone before in this place. God's people indeed are no longer strangers. They experience the same things to varying degrees. Perhaps outside of Christ, as far as tribulation is concerned, no man experienced any greater degree of tribulation than Job. The whole book of Job centers around the tribulation that was sent upon him of God, and his response to it, and the consideration of God in the end.

We find a wonderful testimony of Job at the beginning of the book, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil." We see clearly that Job was a man of God, taught of God. We see that he was a man of great substance; a very rich man. Blessed in all that he had

done, we see that he was a kind man, a loving man, a man who loved his family; who, at the beginning of this book, was offering sacrifices on behalf of his sons. He thought perhaps his sons had cursed God in their hearts. So here he was even making sacrifices to Jehovah God on behalf of his sons. It all seems to be in harmony. All seems to be bright, and no doubt Job, after experiencing all these many blessings at the hand of God, thought only more good was in store for him.

I don't believe he was prepared for what came upon him; and who is? Then we find all these calamities, as it were. There was a snowballing effect, because no sooner had one servant finished with bad news than another came behind with more bad news, and in the first three we find all his worldly substance taken away from him; all of his riches. And when the fourth bad news came we find that even his sons experienced death because of a great wind which smote the four corners of the building in which they were feasting. Here we find his response, and this is indeed a source of marvel to me every time I read it. Job's response shows once again that he was indeed a man of God.

"Then Job arose and rent his mantle, (This was an expression of grief in those days) and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." I believe that is the difference between God's people, or the household of faith, and the non-elect. When tribulations come upon God's people they are given to look unto God, and those who believe in the sovereign hand of God and realize where their tribulations come from, especially are brought to bow ever lower unto Him in adoration. And what does Job say? "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

It is wonderful that Job could see behind all the outward evidences that

were before him. It was the Sabeans that had reportedly come down and slain many of his servants with the sword, and then left but one to bring the bad news to Job. And it was a great wind that had smote the house, and in another instance it was lightening that came down from heaven and caused a fire that destroyed his sheep, but Job could see beyond all of this to his God. And he could say that the Lord hath taken this away. And "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

There would be those who would say that Job had charged God foolishly by saying that the Lord hath taken away, but he said it without charging God foolishly. And that was just phase one, as it were. Job was still healthy, and we find Satan let loose a little bit more on Job, and we find his very body smitten down. Satan said, "But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." So Job found himself covered with boils.

During this time it seems like the Lord was pleased not to bless Job with the feeling of His presence. And who can truly comfort us but God in our misery. Who can we turn to but God? And we find that after the boils came up, even his wife told him, "Curse God and die." She said, "That is the only honorable thing you can do. You've been good, you've been upright, and where did it get you? You feared God and eschewed evil, and where did it get you? Our family is gone. Our goods are gone. You are sick. The only thing left to do is to curse God and die." But he told her that she spoke as did the foolish women. "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Shall we not receive chastisement; judgment? And this is indeed what he received.

And then came three comforters, so called. No doubt these were three of the best friends that Job ever had, and they came to him and sat with him in silence for weeks, but once again the only comfort that we can truly receive is from

the hand of Almighty God and from His people. His people do indeed comfort one another, but the comfort that comes down from above they cannot give. That comfort is the comfort that they themselves had received. And apparently these three friends of Job's had not received comfort from the hand of Almighty God, otherwise they would have had something to comfort Job with. They told him that he had done something evil. "Surely you have done some great sin in order to bring upon you the judgment of God." But we find once again, as at the beginning, that Job was perfect, not sinless in the sense of being perfect, but was sincere and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil. He had the grace of God moving in him with force and with power. This trial was not because of some great sin which he had committed, for it was once again as at the beginning, that God Himself is the one who brought Satan's attention unto Job. God Himself was directing all of this.

It goes on, and the three comforters come in with their report, and Job comes back with his report. It seems like Job, after having set down in ashes and with these boils on his body from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet, and not receiving comfort from above concerning his situation, began to declare that he was righteous and all that he desired was to talk to God. If only he could see Him. If only he could declare his case to Him. He declared his innocence time, and time, and time again, and focused more and more on that instead of focusing on the fact that God knows what He is doing, and that He has a certain amount of tribulations layed up in store for each of His people, and these are tribulations set apart for them, and can thus be called "Sanctified tribulations." (And they are indeed for their good.) But he did not focus upon that.

We find next that there was another man who came, and he had been

listening to the conversations that had gone on. That was Elihu. He, in almost the similar office as John the Baptist (the forerunner of Christ) then declares the truth, and right after this we find God, Himself, speaking out of the whirlwind. Then we find Job repenting in sackcloth and ashes. All of God's people must come through tribulations; all of them! The way must be dark for all of them at times. That is a wonderful blessing when they are indeed given to realize that though they cannot commune with God at all times, though they cannot see His face, though they cannot feel His presence whenever they would like, yet they know that He lives. Even Job declared that. In the midst of all this he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That is a wonderful thing. We know however dark the clouds may appear, the sun is still back there. Job knew that his Redeemer lives. He knew that He was behind it all. He knew, too, that in time He would manifest Himself.

Job knew more than that, even. He knew about the resurrection of the dead; that these bodies, indeed, will be raised again, for he said, "With these eyes I will behold thee in that day." May we be given tribulations. I know that doesn't sound correct, but I believe God's people can indeed pray for tribulations. And whether or not they realize it, whenever we pray for patience we are praying for tribulations, for the scriptures declare that "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." God's people are strengthened by tribulations. Their faith is exercised by tribulations. And in another place it says something even more amazing, "Rejoice in tribulations." These old bodies get arthritis, and all sorts of disease and pain. Are we to murmur? Are we to feel sorry for ourselves? By God's grace we are to rejoice in such. It is only through His grace that we will ever rejoice in such. It is only through His

grace that we will see things by faith, and not be sight, and look beyond all the outward evidences to the God Himself who sits upon the throne and who rules and who rules as a Sovereign God, an Almighty God, and a Holy God. He indeed does know what is best for His people.

Ah, the power of God is a beautiful thing! The sovereignty of God is declared throughout the book of Job, and I trust we believe in the sovereignty of God. It is one thing to talk about the sovereignty of God, and it is another thing to feel it. I believe only those who have felt the sovereignty of God are qualified to speak concerning the same. We have thousands of people in this world who say they believe in the sovereignty of God. The Islamic nations believe in the almighty will of God, but it is a dead letter; it is fatalism and there is nothing more to it. They are not qualified to talk about the sovereignty of God. They have no desire to please God. It says concerning the power of God that "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." They are willing because it is the power of God that seizes them by their hearts and turns them. Those are the people who are ever ready to talk about the sovereignty of God, and those are the people who display the sovereignty of God in their lives, and who seek to do those things which are declared to be pleasing in His sight. They seek to do those things by faith, and they seek the grace of God in it all, realizing that everything coming out of themselves is but filthy rags in His sight, and only through Christ can they do anything pleasing and that these things do not account one iota for their salvation, but it is because of Him that they are saved. It is because of Him that the power of God has already seized them and turned them around and set them on the road of praise to God and to glorify His Name in all things whatsoever that happens to them, realizing that He indeed does know what is best.

A flower when it is crushed issues forth a sweet fragrance. I believe this is the case with God's people. In the midst of tribulation they turn unto the Lord. They cry unto Him. There are some things that when you squash them they stink. There are two peoples in this world. There are two responses to tribulation. I would to God that we may ever manifest the work of God upon our hearts and our souls in the midst of tribulation; that we may be given patience; that we may be given worship; that we may be given the word of praise to our Almighty God who knows what is best for us. No doubt, if we would have our carnal way, I don't think any of us would be here tonight. I don't think I would be here. We would have destroyed ourselves long ago. But the Lord brings His people in the way that He knows best, and it is through tribulations. There is no circumventing it, because tribulations are best for them; so they must enter therein time, and time, and time again, and they must even be falsely accused, for their Saviour was falsely accused. So may we be given to praise Almighty God because He knows what is best for us.

Elizabeth City, N.C.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Enclosed you will find a check for the *Signs* for two years, and the balance is to be used as you need it. I enjoy reading the *Signs* so much, although I can't see to read very long at the time, and I do want to keep it as long as I can. I have had it for so many years.

I don't get to go to church very often any more. I miss not being able to go and see all the dear people that I was so blessed years ago to see. I beg the Lord to keep me and make me contented with whatever I have to bear.

I do hope each of you dear ones are well, and the Lord will bless you all to keep the work up for years to come. If you could have a mind to pray, I ask for you to pray for me. I feel so unworthy of

all the blessings He has blessed me with all the days of my life.

If I am one of His dear children, (I sure hope I am) then I am the least of all. May God bless and keep the *Signs* going many more years.

Love to all in Christ Jesus,
Catherine Vass

EDITORIAL

SERMON BY ELDER D. V. SPANGLER

(Tape Recorded and Edited)

Last evening I read and commented from the 5th chapter of II Corinthians, and I will read that again this morning, as I have not expounded that scripture fully. We will begin reading in the 17th verse, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

It is a blessing that God has described the pathway of the sinner. We are told in the word of God that the spirit in the heart of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious will cause them to hear a voice behind them saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." Though we assent unto a truth, that which makes the word of God precious is the application of it to our heart. All the promises of God in the Bible would mean little to us if we hadn't had somewhere along the way these promises applied to us. When our Master said to His disciples, "I will be with you always, even to the end of the world," that promise is precious to all who have had that said to them in the inward man.

Paul, in using the expression, "Therefore" in the 17th verse, had reference to the things contained in the former verses in this 5th chapter of II Corinthians. "If any man be in Christ." He now describes the effect of it. Sometime ago I spoke in connection with the subject of a person being in

Christ, which is an endless subject. Paul, in the first chapter of Ephesians, said to the church, "He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Paul is not talking about the eternal vital union of Christ and His people before the world began in this scripture. He, in this scripture, was talking about the manifestation of that union that Christ had with His people before the world began. Christ is formed in their heart, "The hope of glory." I would never belittle the doctrine of hope religion, as some do. The scripture teaches that we have a hope in Christ, as Christ Himself formed in us, the hope of glory. So if a person ever has an inclination to speak lightly or belittle the doctrine of hope religion, you will just have to take Christ out of the picture. There are a lot of people who say, "I just don't believe in that kind of religion." I have no quarrel with them. But the precious thing that we want to keep in mind is that if you have a hope of heaven when you die, that hope is Christ formed in you, and it is the hope of glory. That's what Paul is talking about in this chapter. "If any man be in Christ."

If there is a manifestation in the life of a person that Christ has been formed in them, that is the hope of glory, and they are new creatures. Paul speaks of this as the new man. (The old man is the outer man.) He speaks of the effects of regeneration, and I want to emphasize that, though the world is full of conversions (so called) of people, it isn't full of regenerations of people. There is a difference in being converted and being regenerated. Conversion is substituted today by man, by saying that is all you need. Just change your opinion about a thing. Regeneration is the work in the heart, and the other is in the head. A man can be converted a lot of times, but he is only regenerated one time. You may have to be converted after you are born again. Jesus told

Peter "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." If it has been manifested that Christ has been formed in one's heart, (and there will be a manifestation of it, for the tree is known by the fruit it bears,) he is a new creature.

This "new creature" is then brought to understand something of the new covenant. One cannot really understand and get any comfort from what is called the new covenant in the Bible unless he knows something about being made a new creature in Christ. The new covenant which God said He would make with the house of Israel after the days of the law was, "I will write my laws in their heart." That's being made a new creature, isn't it? "I will write my laws in their heart." I used to think that read, "I will write my law in their heart," but it doesn't. What does it mean? I will write the law of Moses in their heart? No! I will write the laws of Christ in their heart; the general principles that brings truth into their hearts. The laws - "I will write my laws" - the laws are the new covenant, "in their heart." And no more shall a man teach his neighbor or his brother saying, "Know the Lord; for they all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest." That sets aside men teaching men to know Christ, doesn't it? I would feel right guilty this morning if I had started out here to make christians in the face of that scripture. God said that no more it is to be that men teach his neighbor; men teaching men to know God.

If any man be in Christ there will be a manifestation of it. There will be a manifestation of new life in that person where the work of grace has been wrought. One of the manifestations of the child when it is born into the world do you know one of the first things that happens to a baby when it is born? Most of the time a cry goes up. They begin to cry. And it isn't but a little while until they are hungry. They begin to hunger. These are some of the evidences that they are a new creature, (and they can be

classed as one). In the Book of Matthew it is recorded "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." And then they can adopt the sentiment of the hymn on page 179, as they are brought to know these things in their own heart;

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

O send thy spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart!
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.

From vanity turn off my eyes;
Let no corrupt design,
Nor covetous desires arise
Within this soul of mine."

Did you ever pray that God would turn your eyes from vanity? And then the next verse says

"Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear."

Read that hymn sometime. It's wonderful. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all his old views of God are passed away.

I can't have much hope in any person's profession of religion, regardless of who they are, if I don't find Christ in him. I must see Christ in him. The keynote of all their hope must be in the Person of Jesus. Regardless of what we may claim is the ground of our hope when we die, if Christ isn't in it, don't count on it too much. Discard it! The poet knew what I'm talking about when he said

"On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame....."

How true that is. You know, people can get emotional and trust the frame sometimes instead of the grace of God. Somebody can get up and tell you about their grandmother dying and touch your heart, but I want to be touched by the gospel of the Son of God. That's what I want to be touched with; not

sentimentality, not emotionalism! Oh, no! I want, and you want, to rest on something else, not anything attached to this world. "I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name."

Isn't that wonderful, that there is a place of rest for those who are brought into this new relationship; that they need rest? All of us in the kingdom of heaven, if we know the truth, find there are places and times that we need rest. Where will we find it? Can you find it in your zeal? Can you find it in your wisdom? Can you find it anywhere in yourself? If you can, you don't know the wonderful rest that comes to the people of God through our Saviour, who said, "Come unto me all ye." How many? "All ye that labor." The laboring is the evidence of life, isn't it? It is the evidence of the new creature in Christ. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Don't tell me that in the christian experience there aren't places of rest for the soul. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." That's how He describes Himself. "And you shall find rest for your soul." So with the newborn child. At times they need rest; regardless of their outward situation, they need rest. God has provided one place for it - in Christ. Well, somebody said, "Just how can I rest in Christ?" You rest in His blood. You rest in His righteousness. You rest in everything He has wrought for you. You are a new creature; old things have passed away.

There was a man on the Eastern Shore of Maryland years ago who carried the mail, and he was teaching Sunday School, trying to teach people to know God, and become the children of God. He was a leader in his church. One day that man began to tell them that salvation was of God. He began to tell them that all the salvation they had, God gave them, and that they had no part in producing it. They told him, "You're an Old School Baptist." He said,

"Who are they?" The man had never heard one of them preach. He said, "Who are they?" They said, "They are people who preach about what you are talking about. We don't need you any longer." Why? Because all things had become new with him when God gave him a view that all he needed was Christ. All things had become new with him when the time came that He showed him in his flesh there was not anything good, and he couldn't teach other people to know God. He just started teaching the true way, and they got rid of him. I was up there later on and met the man who carried the mail, and you know, I said to him, "Have you heard from the King, lately?" I wanted to get his reaction. "Have you heard from the King, lately?" And he said, "I hope I hear something every day from Him." He told me a dream he had. He said, "I dreamed I was by a stream, and I looked over and there were lots of sheep across that stream, and I wanted to get over and I couldn't find a place to pass. I kept looking, and looking, and there was a shepherd over there with that flock of sheep, and I wanted to move over to where they were." And he said, "Suddenly, I was there. I didn't find the passageway across by myself." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away." The former things are passed away in God's working with us, and God through the work of His Son does everything needful for the sinner, and his view of God is different when Christ is revealed in his heart. All things do become new.

Somebody would say in listening to me this morning, "Does everything become new with me? Tell me that I might have some evidence that everything is become new with me." You know, all people's experiences are different. Some are gradually brought to see Christ by faith. Some can't tell when the burden fell off their back. Some are lead one way, and some another, but in substance, the leading is the same way. And we are inquiring now, "Just what is

the ground of my hope that I have passed from death to life; have all things been made new with me?" Let's examine a few things the word of God says. John said, "By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren." Religion isn't social-ability. No, no, it is founded upon Christian love. And a man can love a man that maybe some way in nature he doesn't care too much for, but if he bears the mark of Christ he will love that man in his heart. He said, "By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren." And that love was so great that when Ananias heard about Paul, he said, "I'm afraid of him. I'm afraid of that man." And when he met him, he said, "Brother Saul." "Brother Saul." That's what the grace of God does for a man.

In the 89th Psalm it is recorded, "Blessed is the people that do know the joyful sound. They shall walk, Oh, Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day." One of the marks of a new creature is that they know the joyful sound. The gospel of Christ has a joyful sound. Oh, my friends, I mentioned last night when I first heard it, it seemed like something gradually going through my very being at the name of Christ. And I have searched everything else for heavens ways, and I haven't found it. All things pass away! Old things pass away, and all things become new. These all things - (I like that expression, don't you?) are of God. Every one of them are of God; not half of them, not 99% of them, but they are all of God.

Now let us move on. I don't want to take too much time with this. "And all things are of God." What does he mean? He means what he said. That the conviction, the conversion, the regeneration, and everything that is wrought in the sinner's heart is of God, because of Christ's work. "Who hath reconciled us to himself." It is an endless subject—the union of Christ with His people and God Himself. God was in Christ reconciling

the world unto Himself. That's the spiritual, heavenly world, those people. "Who have reconciled us to Himself by Christ Jesus." There is no sinner who has ever stood on the face of the earth who has ever had what is needful to reconcile himself to God. What is reconciliation? It is to remove whatever has separated. That's simple - bring them into union. We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. There has never been a substitute for that. If Jesus Christ in His death didn't reconcile us to God, we will never be reconciled in this life or in the one to come. "And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." What does he mean by that? He means absolutely what he said. God has given to the church the ministry of preaching the reconciliation between God and man by His Son. That's the one He reconciled. That's what He teaches. To wit, that God was in Christ. If you follow the pathway of our Saviour through Bethlehem, you will see God there. Christ said, "The Father worketh, and I work. I and the Father are one." This is reconciliation, that God was in Christ. He was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and what's more, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Not charging the sins of His people, but laying them on His Son, and then commits to us the ministry, the word of reconciliation.

How many of you, this morning, are glad there has been a reconciliation made between God and man, and that your hope is in that? And in that alone, and nothing else? And He has committed to us in the gospel, wherever it is preached, he has committed the word of reconciliation that the death of Christ paid all the debt for His people, and justified them with His blood, brought them to God.

Paul, as he entered Athens, preached God as sufficient, who made all things, and he said, "He's not far from any of us." "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." Now then, we are

ambassadors of Christ. A minister is an ambassador for Christ. "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." A minister is an ambassador from heaven. If I am preaching the gospel to you, I hold the highest office that ever a man held in this world. They bring a message from God to man, and we pray you in Christ's stead, as Paul said, be ye reconciled to go. What does he mean? A believer here has lots of trials the world knows nothing about. He examines the things that come to him in life, whether the hand of God is in it. He will ask during the hours of night, "Is this the hand of the Lord in my life?" Is this some trial that has come to me to bring me closer to God? I never fear trials, if they bring me closer to my Master. Do you know what I mean? In the nature of believers, they wrestle with themselves and with their imperfections in the flesh. That the world knows nothing about. Sometimes they are on bended knee because of indwelling sin, and their life isn't what they would have it.

Sometimes they find themselves under God's chastening hand. If God loves you, He is going to chasten you somewhere along the way. The Bible says that if you be without chastisement, of whom all are partakers, ye are bastards and not sons. I heard the doctrine preached that we can so live that God will not chastise us. That hasn't been my experience, my dear brethren. It hasn't been my lot. And yet it said, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chastens, and he scourgeth every son that he receives." Be ye reconciled to God, and when trouble comes, remember my friends, they are always for your good.

"Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer.
Trials bring us to His feet,
Lays us low and keeps us there.

Did I meet no trials here;
No chastisement by the way;
May I not by reason fear
I should be a castaway."

I remember many years ago, one night, I had a great burden. I had a burden I didn't know whether I could carry or not. I remember a spot I went to that night, and the hymn sweetly began to sink like rain into my heart, and that song was,

"If God is mine, then present things,
And things to come are mine;
Yea, Christ, his word, and spirit, too
And glory all divine.

If he is mine, let friends forsake,
Let wealth and honors flee:
Sure, he who giveth me himself,
Is more than these to me.

If he is mine, I'll boldly pass
Through death's tremendous vale;
He is a solid comfort, when
All other comforts fail."

I will never forget on that dark night that He showed me He is mine, and "I'll boldly pass through death's tremendous vale." I believe that. "He is a solid comfort, when all other comforts fail."

"Oh, tell me, Lord! that thou art mine;
What can I wish beside?
My soul shall at the fountain live,
When all the streams are dried."

"For he hath made him to be sin for us." It is hard for us to comprehend that wonderful truth, but it is truth. Not to be made a sinner for us, but to be made, in the eyes of God, sin for us, as our sins imputed and charged to Jesus Christ, in the eyes of God He was made to be sin for us. He was born of a woman, to redeem His people under the law. Paul said, "Sent he forth his son, made of a woman." And he was not a sinner, but a sinless, holy person, and yet He was made to be sin for us. God imputed or charged the sins of His people to His Son. Did He take them? Yes, He did. Yes, He did. How many? All of them! It wouldn't do you any good if He hadn't taken them all. One single sin will sink you into hell. You wouldn't need but one. How many? All of them! What did Peter say about it? "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross and put them away by the sacrifice of himself," and when he comes they will all be in that great assembly of the saints. I don't

know how it will be over there, and you don't either. But I've had a foretaste of it, and if it's like the foretaste I've had, it is indescribable. The few moments of praise to God and with all the work of Christ is all I need for heaven, and it would make a heaven below, the Redeemer to know.

I well remember the hymn being sung when I was baptized. They gathered at Dan River, on the bank of Dan River, and we sang that hymn,

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

And as I walked down into that water beside my dear natural father, on the bank the dear people were singing

"Now my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;
Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to him."

My dear brethren and sisters and kind friends, this morning, what few days I have I want to be devoted to my Master. May He bless you is my prayer.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

A WORD TO THE DRY BAPTISTS

In our recent travels we were introduced to many persons as "Dry Baptists;" and as we have found them to be quite numerous it has occurred to us that some notice should be taken of this hitherto neglected portion of our friends. But first, it may be proper for us to give a brief description of them. They are not called Baptists to signify that they baptize, as did John the Baptist, nor that they have themselves been baptized, as were John's disciples, or the primitive disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ; they are not therefore entitled to the name of Baptists in any scriptural

sense of the word; for practically they are not Baptists at all. Nevertheless by a sort of common consent the term, as qualified by the adjective dry, has been used to denote a peculiar description of persons who evince a strong attachment to the people of God, attend strictly on the public ministry of the word, seem to receive the testimony of truth with avidity, are always ready to defend the cause of truth, so far as words or arguments are concerned, can tell what is regarded by saints as a christian experience, and can be satisfied with nothing short of the children's bread, and yet manage so as to keep out of the water. In their walk and conversation, and in all respects except the ordinance of baptism and those privileges to which gospel baptism is a prerequisite, they are agreed in sentiment, sympathy and feelings with the Baptists. They are somewhat deficient in confidence in regard to their vital interest in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. They firmly believe that it is the privilege and duty of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to be "buried with him by baptism," and really feel that it would be a delightful privilege to them if they could only see their way clear; but alas! when they would do good, evil is present with them, and how to perform that which is good they find not; but they find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity; and from all that we can learn from them we are led to conclude that if they could be perfectly satisfied that this law of their members were slain, and that they should never be plagued any more with it, and that they were truly subjects of grace, and that they could do honor to a christian profession, they would gladly obey the command of Zion's King, and be baptized and unite with his church.

Having thus briefly described the characters to whom the appellation at the head of this article is given, and informed our readers that there are

many of them scattered all over our country, we will say something of the advantages and disadvantages of their rebellious course. They are not subjected to so much persecution and reproach for righteousness' sake as they would be if they were obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution; and, of course, as they are living in disobedience it is reasonable to conclude that they will escape at least some of the persecutions which the saints are subjected to. The faithful admonitions of the saints to church members, when they walk disorderly, are rather mortifying to the flesh; but all such mortification the "Dry Baptists" escape, as they are not under the watchcare of the church; and even the world will look very differently on their foibles if they make no public profession of religion. They will also be very likely to escape the charge of hypocrisy, and of having a name to live when they are dead. These are some of the advantages, if they may be called, which the "Dry Baptists" enjoy; but against these there may be some offset in the disadvantages of this rebellious course.

In contemplating the disadvantages we shall find that the way of the transgressor is hard; for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry. He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; and we conclude that God's children who have experienced the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, who have felt the bitterness of sin, the fiery indignation and wrath of the law, and the efficacy of the Savior's blood applied for the remission of sin--those who have felt the joys of salvation and the love of God shed abroad in their souls, do know from painful experience something about the stripes and chastisements which the faithful God inflicts on his children when they forsake his law and walk not in his commandments. They feel an uncom-

fortable consciousness that all is not right; something whispers to them that their course betrays a want of gratitude to God their Savior; and when they mingle with the children of God they manifest a shyness, as though they were intruding; yet their hearts seem to go out after the society of God's people. The language of their hearts is, "Entreat me not to go back;" but the language of their practice is, "Urge me not to go forward;" and so between a will to do and a want of confidence or energy to obey the commands of Christ, they tarry long in their disobedience. As their rebellion is in Scripture compared to the sin of witchcraft, it often brings them on a sort of "enchanted ground," where they spend their money for that which is not bread, and labor for that which satisfieth not, instead of hearkening diligently unto the authority of Christ, eating that which is good, and enjoying the sure mercies of David.--See Isa. 55:2, 3. What they are vainly laboring for they can never attain unto; for they seem determined to walk by sight, whereas God has ordained that his followers shall walk by faith. If they could see their way clear, that is, if their natural judgment could be convinced that there were no impediments in the way, that they would never meet with anything to cause them to regret it, they would at once ease their consciences by taking Christ's yoke on them.

What we have written above is about the "Dry Baptists;" our intention was to address a few words to them. And as we feel in duty bound to preach to sinners, we know of no class of sinners to whom we can address ourselves with more propriety than those described above. But how shall we address them? Shall we call them brethren? We hope they are born of God; but Jesus has said, "Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, he cannot be my disciple:" and, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We doubt the propriety of calling them brethren, so

long as they disown Sarah as their mother. We do not find it in our heart to call them reprobates, for we believe they are bought with a price, and will ultimately reign with Christ in immortal glory. Well, for want of a more appropriate name we will call them by the name by which they are frequently designated.

Ye "Dry Baptists," are you satisfied with the leeks and onions of Egypt? Are you willing to live and die in disobedience to him who has loved you and given himself for you? Have you ever reflected that Jesus your King has placed the ordinance of baptism as the very first command that is binding on heaven-born souls? This command being the very first enjoined, must be obeyed before you can obey any other. It is in baptism that the children of God take on them his yoke; and until they are yoked, they are not qualified to serve him. Nothing that you can do religiously, before you are baptized, can be in order, for in the order of his government that ordinance stands first; so long, therefore, as you neglect it, after having passed from death unto life, you are living in a state of open rebellion. May we not say to you as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Gen. 24:31. If you have passed from death unto life, you belong to the household of God, and the church has a claim on you; whatever gift or talent for usefulness you may possess, is the property of the church; why, then, will you persist in your wicked course, and rob the church of what belongs to her, and your own souls of the privileges which are prepared for you in the Zion of our God? And, above all, why will you transgress the law which your covenant God has written in your hearts, and rank yourselves with the enemies of the cross of Christ? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for

without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. 22:14, 15. Will you, can you, dare you, say that those who are without are your companions, your associates, your chosen company? Your practice says all this; let your practice, then, no longer belie the language of your hearts.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

New Vernon, N.Y.

October 15, 1847

A MYSTERY

There was a mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, "hid in God," a mystery which was revealed to none of the sons of God before the gospel age, a mystery of which Paul alone of all the apostles was made a minister. This dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, that whether he preached willingly or by constraint, still it had to be preached. Necessity was laid upon him, and there was a woe unto him if he preached it not. The whole work of salvation is a mystery, and no part of it can be understood with the natural mind. But there was a special feature of this great work of salvation which had been hidden until the gospel age, and this special feature of the work of grace was given to Paul to preach unto the Gentiles. It was for the Gentiles' sake that Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and while there were twelve apostles unto the Jews, we, the Gentiles, have Paul, who is the thirteenth apostle.

This mystery of which Paul was made a minister he tells us about in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Now, the church at Ephesus was a Gentile church and Paul was a Jew. The same truth which was revealed in Paul was also revealed in these Gentile brethren. These Gentiles knew nothing about Judaism, and were strangers to that covenant which God gave Israel by the

hand of Moses. This Mosaic covenant forbade the Jews to deal with the Gentiles. According to that covenant no Gentiles had any right to the feasts or the solemn assemblies of the Jews; they could not partake in the temple service, nor in any of the sacrifices or holy things. From all these the Gentiles were shut out. He did not have the oracles of God, he did not have the prophets, none of the types or shadows, was indeed barred from all the blessings and privileges of the Israelites. Consequently the Mosaic law constituted a barrier between Jew and Gentile, it was a "middle wall of partition" forbidding intercourse and fellowship between them. It was a handwriting of legal ordinances enjoined upon Israel for their obedience, carrying with it blessings for the observance and punishments for the breach. But none of these blessings or punishments could ever be the lot of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles were never under the Mosaic law. If Jesus, therefore, were made under the Mosaic law he would be the Savior of none but Jews, no Gentile could ever benefit by the shedding of Jesus' blood.

When the Scripture says that Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, it is not the Mosaic law which is meant, but the law under which Adam fell in condemnation, which fall embraced all the elect of God in Adam. This fall embraced both Jew and Gentile, for there was yet no difference between Jew and Gentile when Adam transgressed. The obedience of Jesus was not confined to the law of Moses, but his obedience was unto the law of God, of which law of God the law of Moses was but a faint shadow, portraying in the temporal blessings which fell to the lot of Israel the spiritual blessings which under the new covenant fall to the lot of spiritual Israel.

Indeed, literally, Jesus did not keep the Mosaic law at all. That law forbade

any work whatsoever on the sabbath day, and Jesus did pluck ears of corn on that day. That law said, Honor thy father and mother, and Jesus never did honor Mary as his mother nor Joseph as his father. That law said that any man calling himself equal with God was a blasphemer and was to be put to death, and Jesus did say, I and my Father are one. All these, and other acts which Jesus did, were looked upon as literal breaches of the law. But in the spirit Jesus did keep the law, and fulfilled to every jot and tittle its spiritual import; but he did far more, he obeyed the law and the will of God, so that his salvation is not confined to Jews, which it would have been had he obeyed merely the law of Moses, but reaches out and takes in both Jew and Gentile: all his people from the four winds of heaven and from the four corners of the earth, in every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue.

Thus we see that the Mosaic law comprised a "handwriting of ordinances" which was against the Gentiles, being contrary to them, because they were barred from the observance of it and from the blessings or privileges or punishments of it.

This Mosaic covenant made an enmity between Jew and Gentile. So when Jesus died it ended the old covenant. He took away the handwriting of ordinances, nailing them to his cross, thus abolishing the enmity. This expression, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity," and that other expression, "Having slain the enmity" by the cross, both found in the second chapter of Ephesians, do not refer at all to the enmity of the carnal mind and the mind of Christ, nor to the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit, but to the enmity between Jew and Gentile, which enmity arose from the makeup of the Mosaic covenant which excluded Gentiles from participating in it. This enmity, this old covenant, had to be abolished before Gentiles could come into the kingdom of God. This abolition

Jesus performed by the death of the cross.

Resulting from this death of Jesus comes the revelation of the mystery kept hid from the foundation of the world, and it is thus: the church, or body of Christ, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, are one in the kingdom of God. Having broken down the middle wall of partition Christ made of the twain one new man. The "twain" means two, and the two are Jew and the Gentile. Of these two he makes one new man, or one new body, the body of Christ. All are members of his flesh and of his bones, all fitly joined together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord, builded through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. The children of God are not destined to become perfect men and perfect women. No, never. The gospel holds forth no such promise, but we all shall, that is, all his people from among both Jews and Gentiles, shall ultimately come unto the one perfect man, and that one perfect man is the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ. We shall all become as we already are, molded into one body, the body of our Lord.

Paul says somewhere in writing to the church at Corinth, Ye are all one bread. No loaf of bread can by any possibility be resolved back into its original grains of wheat. Each grain and all the grains lose their separateness when in the loaf of bread. Just so, only infinitely more so, the body of Christ while composed of redeemed sinners of Adam's fallen race can never be resolved back again into the individual men and women whence it came. Now this is the mystery which Paul particularly refers to in his letter to the church at Ephesus: "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body (with the Jews), and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." This doctrine of the new man; that is, of the body of Christ, made of Jew and Gentile, a wholly new thing until the resurrection of Christ, that is the special dispensation which was

committed unto Paul to preach. It was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men, but it is now in the gospel age revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

In some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, to be sure, there is abundant evidence of the bringing of the Gentiles to the light of the truth. Especially is this true of the prophecies of Isaiah. But that One body, or one new man, was to be formed of the hosts of the redeemed from among both Jews and Gentiles that both were to be quickened together with Christ and to be raised up together with Christ, and both to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ; we say all this had been kept hid throughout all the ages heretofore to be revealed and made known in these last times, and was first made known in the ministry of Paul, the Gentiles' apostle, and was the special dispensation of the gospel committed unto him. This, the unity of the whole church of God in the one body of the new man, Christ Jesus, is the "unsearchable riches of Christ" which Paul says he was especially called to preach among the Gentiles. This oneness of Christ and his people, whosoever they may be in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Greek or barbarian, is the gist and kernel of the whole gospel matter. It is the fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, on which God feasts his children in his holy mount.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

Nov. 1, 1920

(We question if Paul was the 13th Apostle. Ed.)

OBITUARIES

CHRISTENA McFEETERS

Christena McFeters, daughter of John and Clara Fike Sweeney, was born February 21, 1893 in Kingman, Kansas and passed away August 14, 1982 in the Lester E. Cox Medical Center, Springfield, Missouri at the age of 89 years, 5 months, and 23 days.

She is survived by two sons, Owen and Lawrence McFeeters, both of Route #3, Seymour, Missouri; one daughter, Mrs. Martha Milford, also of Route #3, Seymour, Missouri; one sister, Mrs. Ola Bair of Agra, Oklahoma; 10 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Sister McFeeters was baptized into membership of the Pleasant Valley Church in Kingman, Kansas by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. She remained a loyal member and a true believer of Salvation by Grace and attended meetings regularly with her husband, Lewis McFeeters, who preceded her in death and until they moved to Seymour, Missouri where she lived with her son, Owen, until her death.

Sister McFeeters kept in touch with the church by correspondence and expressed her sorrow at not being able to attend her home church, but as her health was never the best and the distance well over 400 miles, she was kept isolated from her church affiliation, and no church of the same faith and order was found in her area in Missouri.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer who had known Sister McFeeters in the church at Kingman, Kansas in his youth, but who had never been privileged to preach in her hearing since she moved to Missouri while Elder Hardy was serving the church. However, in later years, they kept up a regular correspondence which was a source of comfort to both.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

ELDER JAMES WILLIAM JOHNSON

The Ebenezer Baptist Association of the Primitive faith and order feel so keenly the loss of its beloved brother, Elder James William Johnson, that we the messengers of the district meeting authorize the following obituary and tribute of respect recorded in the minutes of the Association.

It has pleased our God to take from this life our beloved Brother James W. Johnson on May 6, 1982, at the age of forty two. He was born July 11, 1939. On April 28, 1959, he united in marriage to Virginia Funderburke. To this union was born one daughter, Shellia Rebecca. His wife, daughter, Mother, Connie Johnson, sister, Rebecca Sexton, two nephews and a host of other relatives and friends survive to mourn his passing.

Elder Johnson united with the Ivey Creek Primitive Baptist Church on November 7, 1963. He was baptized by Elder E. D. Gofford the same day. He preached his first sermon at Ivey Creek Church on January 2, 1966. He was ordained to the work of the ministry on July 31, 1966. Elders E. J. Lambert, W. F. Beauford, Sam H. Dean, J. P. Morgan, and Warren King formed the presbytery.

Six churches called him as Pastor. God blessed Elder Johnson to feed them with wisdom and understanding as well as to faithfully lead them in

all paths of truth and righteousness until God called him to depart this natural life. Often when Elder Johnson held a funeral he would quote Revelation 14:13; "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, yea henceforth sayeth the Spirit, they do rest from their labors and their works do follow them." Now we believe he has entered into this rest.

Although we can never see this brother again in this world, we look hopefully to join him in heaven's court in glory there to sing praise to God in His Kingdom that shall never end.

The church at Ivey Creek request that a copy of this obituary be recorded in the church records, one sent to the local paper and one to the Association.

Written by Eleanor Dixon

SISTER IDA COX WILLIAMS

Sister Ida Cox Williams was born March 6, 1886, the daughter of Albert C. Cox and Sallie Williams Cox and was called away from earthly toils April 20, 1982, making her journey here nearly 96 years.

The church at Malmaison, Virginia received her into their fellowship in 1938. Her husband, Mr. Bernard Williams, came with her as long as he was able, after which she attended with her daughter, Mrs. Ruby Collie, until poor health prevented.

In the many years of confinement she was still faithful to support her church and their needs.

Graveside services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Ronald Crawford.

May His grace comfort each heart that mourns and give us faith to say, "Thy will be done."

Written by request,
Elder J. R. Williams

SISTER ALENE STEWART McDONALD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Alene S. McDonald. She passed from this life June 7, 1982. She was born December 16, 1908, which made her stay on earth 73 years. A native of Harnett County, she was the daughter of the late James A. and Ida Jackson Stewart.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Ida K. Godwin and one grandson, of Dunn, N.C. Graveside services were held at 3 P.M. on June 8, 1982 at the Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery by Preacher Brent Carpenter.

Sister Alene joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on June 30, 1973, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner. She was a believer in salvation by the grace of God and attended church services when her health permitted. The church feels the loss of this sister, but believe it is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort her loved

ones.

It was agreed that a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be placed on our church record.

Committee:

Brother James Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

His funeral was conducted by Elder Sam H. Dean, Elder Clyde Barton, and Elder Allen Bailey. He was laid to rest in Cool Springs Cemetery, to await the resurrection, when Jesus is coming to carry His children home.

Written in love,
Emmie L. Grayson

DEACON WALTER G. WRIGHT

Deacon Walter Greenland Wright of Cassville, Pa. died July 24, 1981. He was born October 11, 1902 in Bellwood, Pa., the son of William and Margery Greenland Wright.

He is survived by his wife, Gladys Wilson Wright, and three sons, Bernard of Calvin, Pa., W. Glen and Gene T. of Cassville, Pa. He is also survived by eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a sister, Mrs. Fred Corbin of Huntingdon, Pa.

Brother Wright was a member and Deacon of Trough Creek Valley Old School Baptist Church for thirty-one years and was a Trustee of the Trough Creek Valley Cemetery Association. He was very active in the civic affairs of his community.

Elder Alex McColl of Canada conducted the funeral at the McClain Funeral Home in Cassville. Brother Wright was interred in the Trough Creek Valley Cemetery.

WILLIAM HOLLIE SEXTON

Our beloved father and husband, William Hollie Sexton, passed away on June 5, 1982. Daddy was born November 4, 1903, in Crenshaw County, Alabama, to Idelle Reeves and Hubbert Lonzie Sexton. He married Eva Lucille Sexton on Feb. 20, 1927, who survives him. To this union was born two daughters, Sister Emmie L. Grayson, and Sister Margaret Herring; three sons, William Orden, Mitchell Van, and Willie Hue (who died at 21 months). He also leaves to mourn him 10 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren, 5 sisters and 1 brother.

Daddy united with Cool Springs Primitive Baptist Church in the Ebenezer Association, in September, 1930. He was baptized by the late Elder E. D. Gafford. A few years later he moved his membership to New Providence Church in Greenville, Alabama. On June 22, 1951, Daddy was ordained a deacon, an office for which he was well qualified and he faithfully carried out his duties. Daddy loved the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God. He loved to hear the gospel proclaimed and to sing the songs of Zion in praise to our great Redeemer's Name. He loved the fellowship of the dear Brethren, Sisters, and Friends.

BAMA POE UTLEY

I would like, if the Lord wills, to pen a few words concerning my Mother, Bama Poe Utley, who passed away December 20, 1978. She was born December 21, 1882. United in marriage to Elder W. R. Utley December 25, 1904, Papa preceded her in death 23 years later. To this union were born three sons, Theron, Lee and Howard Utley, all too preceded her in death, three daughters, Mrs. Ralph (Agnes) Hocutt, Mrs. Howard (Viva Dean) Poe, and Mrs. William (Christine) Ramsey.

Mama united with the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church at Liberty Hill, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, June 8, 1908 and was baptized by the late Elder J. S. Norris.

Mother united with the church several years before I was born, so all I have ever known was seeing her enjoying a salvation given her of that God who works and none can hinder.

I firmly believe she has entered into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, and being firmly persuaded of this, I can truthfully say to those who are left behind that our loss is her eternal gain. So let us not weep as those that have no hope, but rather let us rejoice in Christ Jesus through whom we too, shall in due time be brought forth more than conquerors if we, indeed be among those who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth.

Her love for the church and the doctrine of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist was one of her outstanding qualities and she never missed a meeting of her faith when she was able to attend. After her health was too poorly for her to attend, we had preaching services at her home. By precept and example, by humility, self sacrifice, by sublime patience in affliction and trouble, her life reflected the true christian.

She evidenced her faith by her works and leaves to those that knew her a legacy of precious memories.

Services were held by her pastor Elder A. H. Brock. Interment was made in Liberty Hill Cemetery beside her husband to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall be raised to life everlasting and she will ever be with the Lord.

She was my Mother and I hope a sister in the Lord.

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. Ralph Hocutt

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., FEBRUARY 1983

No. 2

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year—\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder James F. Poole, Editor

P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801
Phone (301) 742-6406

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555
Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115
Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

8902 Cherry Tree Lane
Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

**VOLUME 4
EDITORIALS
OF GILBERT BEEBE
NOW READY**

This new book of editorial writings of Elder Beebe, taken from the old *Signs of the Times*, is now available. Most have never been seen in this century.

The book is made of the finest natural paper, with easy to read, new type-set containing 512 pages and is a matching book to Volume 3, published by us last year. The cover is a lovely "D" grade library buckram cloth with silk screen finish, and extremely sturdy. We have spared no cost in making this book quality throughout.

All believers in free grace should have both this and Volume 3, as they contain the writings of one of the most gifted ministers who ever lived.

When ordering please specify Volume 4. We must assume you want this volume unless you specify Volume 3.

Our cost to produce this book was up over 10% of Volume 3. In addition, we added 32 extra pages, yet we will still sell this volume at the same price as the previous one.

Price \$16.00 plus \$2.00 for mailing

(Maryland residents add 5% sales tax)

SEND ORDERS TO:

Signs of the Times, Inc.

P.O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

NOTE: This book will make an excellent and lasting gift to shut-ins, the sick, etc., and will certainly be of more lasting value than many other gifts, as flowers, or perishable items.

Volume 3 is also still available at \$16.00 plus \$2.00 for mailing.

Chestertown, MD.

Dear Elder Williams:

Enclosed is my check for a two year subscription renewal to the *Signs of the Times* for me, and also a new subscription to be sent as indicated. Use the balance of the check as you see fit.

The *Signs of the Times* is such an important part of my reading and if I could wish for anything more for it, it would be for it to be larger. But I praise the Lord for it, as it is exactly. We who are faithful readers and followers of God's "precepts and commandments" love to hear and see the truth printed and preached - not diluted by the world in any way.

May the Lord continue to bless all the Editors and writers to continue faithful to the end.

Your Sister in Hope,
Ruth Lucht

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 2

Brother Beebe:--At the close of the first Number, I stated what I consider my first exercise after regeneration. Shortly after that exercise occurred, I went to Wilbraham where I had spent the preceding winter, but had not long been there before, by a special providential interposition as I consider it, an application was made to me to go into Otsego Co., New York and take charge of a school, from the fact that a friend rode upwards of forty miles to give me notice of the application, I unhesitatingly went on immediately, and engaged in the school for one quarter. This school being located in a new and rough settlement, I did not like the situation, but whilst there I was informed that Mr. Neal, the Presbyterian minister in Copperstown in that county, (since known as Dr. Neal of Philadelphia) who had charge of the Academy in that place, wished to employ a teacher in the English department. I called on him; he after examination, engaged me to come

on when my quarter in the other situation ended; and also engaged to give me instructions in the languages. There was but one circumstance in my experience during that quarter worth relating, and that perhaps, only as showing how I was led on not by man, but by an invisible teacher step by step, to renounce my early prejudices concerning religion. I had not as yet seen the error of my early impressions, that dancing was quite consistant with religion; and being one night in a company where dancing was introduced, I without hesitancy engaged in it. But one dance was enough for me, a sense of guilt and condemnation so seized my mind as to stop my sport, and I could not tell why; I then saw no evil in dancing.

I soon left the company, but the distress of mind followed me without being able to comprehend why. I awoke the next morning with my mind in the same situation. Before entering my school, I retired to enquire why it was so. My mind was soon opened to see that dancing was inconsistant with my promise to seek my happiness in God; for I was thereby seeking it in worldly amusements, besides the very idea of these amusements was to pass time lightly away, whereas I was under obligation and engagement to spend my time to the glory of God. I from that time cheerfully renounced worldly amusement.

From my first religious exercise I thought it important that I should, on the first opportunity, join some church, as a part of my religious service to God, and as calculated more to establish me in my resolution to seek God. When I became located in Copperstown I thought this opportunity was afforded me. There was, however, one difficulty in the way: the Presbyterians I had understood professed to believe in the doctrine of election, that I could not profess as my heart was bitter against it, so much so that as I was one night in

my room reading the 8th and 9th chapters of Romans, I was so incensed against those chapters because of their containing so fully the doctrine of election and predestination, that I actually thought of cutting them out of my Bible and casting them into the fire. Nothing but a sense of its being God's word prevented me.

This difficulty, however, was soon removed, for shortly after some persons were received into the church and I had an opportunity of hearing the church covenant to which they were to assent read, and found to my joy that election and predestination were not named in it. The next month I applied to the session, and was received into the church.

In the spring a young Presbyterian came to study with Mr. Neal with a view to the ministry, who was better indoctrinated in the Presbyterian faith than I was. As he boarded and roomed with me he soon found out my opposition to election, and set about reforming me from that error. By his reasoning from the Scriptures, and by reading certain writers on the subject to which he referred me, I was convinced that election was a Scriptural doctrine, and became a strenuous advocate for it, that is, as held generally by the Presbyterians in connection with general atonement, general offers, invitations, etc.

Having joined the Presbyterian Church in March, I think, 1808, I was strict in observing the sabbath, as I considered it, in reading a certain portion of the scriptures daily, in prayer, and in morality, was during that year a pretty strict formalist, and got along comfortably. Not that I thought I had attained a safe state, this was what I was labouring for, and I hoped that God had began the work in me, and therefore that I should be able to persevere and attain to a safe state before I died. This, as nigh and I can recollect, was about my views.

In the early part of 1809 I got hold of

Doddridge's, "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." I undertook to carry out his directions for progressing religion in my soul. I added more praying as well as occasional fastings to my tasks, and devoted Saturday nights to prayer and self examination, preparatory to the "Duties of the sanctuary," as they were called. The test whether a work of grace was begun in me was whether I loved God. I from this time became about as laborious a legalist as was to be found among the Presbyterians; so much so that my religious duties very much retarded my studies, although for a time I confined myself to six hours sleep, out of twenty four; until my constitution not being strong enough to bear that deprivation, was completely overcome by the want of sleep. As a part of the Doddridge discipline I kept a diary of my experience. In looking over it through this year, I find that I made frequent complaints of my want of zeal and devotion in my religious exercises, but very little of my corruptions, or the plague of my heart.

Mr. Neal, about the time I joined the church, persuaded me that it was my duty to turn my attention to the ministry. Although I had not before thought of that, yet on reflecting I assented to it, and ultimately I became so devoted to the idea that nothing else seemed worth living for. This was frequently brought to the test in 1809 and 10, by the various difficulties which interposed to my obtaining a suitable preparatory education. Amid these difficulties I could not think of turning my attention to anything else; and I really felt that life was of no value to me if I could not spend it in the ministry. I mention not this as an evidence of my call to the ministry, for whatever purpose God may have had in it, in reference to my after being called to the ministry, I consider it not in that light, but as showing the great zeal the natural mind may be wrought up to in

religion, and in reference to the ministry.

Mr. Neil, in view of the difficulties in the way of my obtaining a collegiate education, advised me not to aim at it, as the Western Presbytery of New York, at that time, would admit persons into the ministry without their having graduated. Following his advice, I soon turned from the Latin to the study of the Greek and other studies which he thought more useful. Though I thus conformed to Mr. Neil's direction, and notwithstanding my zeal for the ministry, I had no notion of entering it, without such qualifications as would give me a pretty fair standing in it.

Mr. Neil, having received a call to the Presbyterian Church in Albany, left Copperstown in Sept. of 1809. I therefore concluded as soon as the school closed in which I was then engaged, to leave that region also. Just before this the Theological School at Andover, Mass., had been established. I thought if I was in that region I might gain admittance to that School without going through college, and that the course of studies there would make up for any deficiency in my scientific studies. I accordingly left Copperstown early in October, went into Mass., and succeeded in getting the school in the village of Watertown, seven miles from Boston. Here I found myself in the midst of Unitarianism. The minister and people in Watertown were of the looser class, and I therefore had no religious society here. But there being an orthodox minister, so called, who preached in Newtown, four or five miles distant, I principally attended meeting there. In the latter part of the winter a young lady of Boston, a member of the First Baptist Church there, came out on a visit to the family where I boarded and spent several weeks. As we pretty much agreed on doctrinal points, I had a good deal of satisfaction in her society, and became quite attached to her. I mention this because I shall have occasion to refer to

her again. I, a short time before my engagement in the school was out, called on Dr. Griffin, one of the principal professors in Andover School, who then resided in Boston, to enquire as to the terms of admittance into the School. He informed me that their rules were to admit none but graduates into the school, and that they could not depart from them. This was a sore disappointment to my hopes of attaining to the ministry. But he kindly informed me that the Presbytery in New Jersey, from whence he was, had funds for assisting poor young men to obtain an education for the ministry, and he thought if I was there I might obtain assistance. My attention was next turned toward New Jersey.

I will here relate a rather singular exercise I had a little before this. It was the Lord's day, March 11th, and I had attended meeting at Newtown, but had felt very cold and dull. On returning to my boarding house, I concluded to retire to my room and spend a season in prayer. I had not been long thus engaged before there appeared before me two lights, and the suggestion was made to my mind that these were the Father and Son, and that they had manifested themselves thus to me as a token of God's love to me, and that he was going to make me happy. Immediately my passions were raised to an ecstasy of joy and love to God indescribable; I even imagined that my soul was leaving the body and was going to heaven. I thought I felt it rising up in me, and as being just ready to depart, and the delight I felt at the idea, and the praises I poured forth on account of it I cannot describe. After a while, I thought I felt my soul sinking down into my body, but I would have given the world for it not to return back and I have to go again into the world. From this the ecstasy subsided, and when I attempted to rise off my knees, I found myself so exhausted by the excitement that I could not do it, I had just to prostrate myself

on the floor and lie for some time before I recovered strength to get up. On reflecting on this, the idea arose that it might have been a delusion of Satan, but immediately the suggestion was made, "Satan cannot love," and that as I felt such love to God, it must have been from God. It was thus kindly overruled to be quite a support to me under the disappointments I shortly after had to meet. But I have long since known it to have been a delusion of Satan practiced upon me; for there was in it no view of the mediation and atonement of Christ, the only medium of a sinner's acceptance with God. Of this I was at that time ignorant. The love was nothing but a natural love arising from the imagination that God was going to make me happy. The lights arise from some natural cause, I have frequently seen them since, probably in consequence of the position my eyes were in toward the window. From having experienced this exercise and known its delusion, *I have no confidence in those relations we frequently hear of great lights, and great excitements of love to God where there is no view of Christ as the medium of acceptance with God.*

After closing my engagements at Watertown, I went to Newport, R.I., thence by water to New York, and from thence into New Jersey. At Morristown I engaged for a few weeks as an assistant in one of the academies there, when I obtained a school in Hanover, and had the opportunity of boarding with the Presbyterian minister of the place and of receiving some instruction from him in my studies.

On my way to Morristown I called upon the Presbyterian minister in Newark, New Jersey, to make some enquiries about schools. While there two or three other ministers called, and the mention was made of a new work on infant baptism by Dr. Porter. All united in speaking of it as a master piece on the subject. Immediately the idea suggested itself to me that I would purchase one

and send one to my Baptist friend in Boston, hoping it might convince her of her error on that subject. Not in reference to the mode of baptism, for I had been convinced from my study of Greek, and of Ecclesiastical History that immersion was the original and proper mode, and had felt sorry that it had been changed. But in reference to the subjects: for I was a strenuous advocate for the seal of the covenant, as baptism was considered, being put on infants. Whilst at Morristown, I procured one of those books, but concluded before sending it on, I would read it myself. I did so. I found Dr. Porter's position to be that the Abrahamic covenant was still in force under the gospel, that the children of believers under it, now stood in the same relation to their parents, as formerly the Israelitish children did to their parents; that only the seals of the covenant were changed, that baptism had been substituted in the place of circumcision, and the Lord's Supper in the place of the Passover. On reading this, the idea struck me that if this position was correct, that, as formerly every circumcised child had a right to eat of the passover, so now every baptized child must have a right to eat of the Lord's Supper. I could see no consistent way to avoid this conclusion. But the conclusion I was not willing to admit; for I believed there was an experimental change necessary to a person's being a proper subject for partaking of the Lord's Supper. I thought rather than submit to such an inconsistency, I would examine the Baptist ground. But again it occurred to me that if I should become a Baptist, all my hopes of obtaining assistance to prosecute my studies would be frustrated. In this dilemma, I soothed my conscience by solemnly promising the Lord that if my hopes of obtaining assistance to pursue my studies were cut off I would then examine the ground for believer's baptism. The book I laid aside, without sending it as before

designed.

In Hanover, I found myself in the enjoyment of what I esteemed religious privileges, such as I had not before enjoyed. There had been a revival there a year or two before, and a number of young persons had joined the church. Their zeal had not yet died away, so that they kept up frequent prayer meetings. I was soon introduced among them, and put forward to take a leading part in these meetings. But whilst this was the case on the one hand, I on the other was made to feel the corruptions of my nature, far more than I ever had before, causing me much to doubt whether there was any reality in my religion. In looking at some of the entries in my diary during this summer, I should think that they had been penned by a tempted, doubting believer, were it not for the legality so apparent in them. I speak in them about my inability to do anything, that God must do all for me by His grace, and of my entire dependance on Christ for acceptance, etc., and yet there is a rotten legal self doing spirit runs through the whole. My reading was of the more evangelical class of authors, as they are called, such as John Newton, and even Dr. Hawkers "Zion's Pilgrim" was a favorite book with me. I no doubt imbibed their mode of expression. I mention these things to show how the natural mind may be molded into a gospel mode of thinking and expression, whilst we are ignorant of our helplessness, though I was being taught that by being made to feel the power of my corruptions and ignorance of Christ. In reference to my corruptions, in order to get relief, I occasionally, on Saturdays when I had no school, retired to the woods and spent the day in fasting and prayer that God would relieve me from them. I would write solemn covenants that I would not indulge in any evil thought or propensity nor indulge in any trifling conversation, etc., and sign my name to them. I find two or three such in my

diary. I think I once or twice, in order to make it more solemn, drew blood from my finger and wrote on loose paper covenants on this kind. But all would not do; my corruptions still appeared to triumph. One night returning from school, borne down with a sense of my corruptions, I went into my room and threw myself upon my bed, and whilst there, drew the conclusion that all I had experienced was from Satan, that he had been working upon me to make a polished hypocrite of me. Immediately therefore, the charge was made against me; Now you have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost; for the Spirit of God has been at work with you, and you have now ascribed his work to Satan. I immediately sprang upon my feet and walked my room for some time in a complete despair, as I believe a living man is capable of. At length I was relieved by the thought, that if the work was Satan's I had committed no sin in charging it to him, if it was the work of the Holy Ghost, I could not commit the unpardonable sin, for he would CARRY IT ON UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST.

I went on in this way, attending zealously to the forms of religion both public and private, but thus harassed with corruptions, temptations of various kinds, and doubts, until in September I got hold of a work of Dr. Bellamy's entitled, "True Religion Deliniated." I determined at once to read it, and test myself carefully by it. This book commenced with a representation of God and of his attributes, and of the fitness that he should be loved and obeyed; and goes on to describe the requisitions of the law, that we should love God with all our heart, etc. I was one day sitting in my room reading this part, when I felt the enmity of my heart so rise against the requisition, that I went on in the flowing out of this enmity, to say to myself, IT IS UNJUST IN GOD TO REQUIRE THAT WE SHOULD THUS LOVE

HIM, THAT THERE IS NO FITNESS IN IT; THAT I CAN SEE NOTHING IN THE WORKS OF CREATION THAT SHOWS HIM WORTHY TO BE LOVED, YEA, SAID I, I CANNOT SEE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A GOD. As I uttered this last expression, I involuntarily raised my eyes toward the window, and a handsome red apple hanging on a tree near by, met them, and I so saw the wisdom and goodness of God manifested, in causing that apple to grow there, that at once all my atheism was knocked in the head, and with it, all my religion that I had been nourishing and building up for three years was prostrated in the dust. I had, I saw, all that time been worshipping an unknown God; had mocked God with a form of Godliness, whilst my heart retained such enmity to him as to deny his right to require me to love him, and even as to deny his existence. My past religious performances now appeared as in the sight of God, the most odious of all the sins I had ever committed.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

Olympia, Washington

Dear Editors,

I have just realized that my subscription to the dear *Signs* is about to expire, so the enclosed check is for a two year renewal; and do please accept the balance to help as you choose.

My husband and I were privileged to attend a portion of the August three-day meeting in the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Mossyrock, WA., at which Elder James Hollandsworth of Bassett, VA., was guest minister. It was such pure joy to once again experience the loving fellowship with those of like faith. Sister Hollandsworth, her sister and husband, and niece (the Turners) were guests, also. It is a real privilege to know that we "little ones" here in the far Northwest are so well remembered by periodic visits of loved ones from across

this continent. Elder Ben Preston ministers to the three little churches in this general area; and though they are located many miles apart, he is a faithful and wonderful shepherd to his little flock. It, therefore, is such a special blessing when the Lord sees fit to send guest ministers to meet with us. We have become especially endeared to all those who, in the past, have come so far to meet with us here.

I so enjoy the present day sermons in each *Signs*, as well as writings from the previous century. It is very interesting to note that the same sound doctrine has remained strong and undiluted over the years. In these perilous days, "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." (Ps. 91:4)

I am so poor at writing, but I felt I wanted to share what has been in my heart recently.

May God continue to bless you dear Editors who know and speak the truth.

In hope of grace,
Alma F. Coate

I PETER 2:1-8

I want to read to you this morning from the 2nd Chapter of First Peter beginning at the first verse. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which

the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." I've read eight verses of the scripture and there's one letter that impressed me while reading. You know, a stone is s-t-o-n-e, and stones s-t-o-n-e-s meaning more than one, are precious in His sight. I feel this is referring to the Lord's people; s-t-o-n-e-s, stones are living.

The third verse says, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Do you feel in your heart this morning that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious? And do you feel in your heart this morning that the Lord Jesus Christ has planted in your heart that love and fellowship toward your brethren and towards the whole household of faith and called you with a holy calling? If you believe that and if you have tasted that, my friends, so then it's addressed to you. You are one of those stones that the Lord Jesus Christ came to save. It says, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." That's talking to you and to you. I have a hope in my breast that it's referring to me. I feel this morning the glorious doctrine of God our Saviour is something precious, glorious and wonderful.

And it says in the 9th verse, "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 has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." That's wonderful reading, isn't it? They are not my words, but they are the words of the Holy Writ.

"Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." We have the feeling many times in our lives of obtaining something. In my life many years ago,

(thirty-odd years ago,) I didn't feel like I had ever obtained the love of God and the fellowship, and what it means among His people. But I feel when this was made known to us it brought something. It brought peace and joy, and it brought fellowship among our brethren and our sisters and friends. I think so much about the glorious doctrine of God our Saviour and what it means to us. If the doctrine of God our Saviour doesn't mean anything to you, you don't have anything. I feel like all of us in this room this morning, if not deceived, have tasted something along life's way that caused us to think more and more as we go down life's way.

It says in the last verse of this Chapter, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." I feel like all of us have gone astray at times. Have you ever felt in your heart that you had gone astray? Do you feel in your heart that you've gone astray and partook of things that didn't pertain to the way of salvation and the way of truth and love? I feel like, my friends, that we have tasted something. This morning I partook of a piece of candy out of a dish and it tasted sweet to my tongue. Very seldom do I eat a piece of candy. But my friends, that's a natural thing, and I hope by the grace of Almighty God, when these spiritual things come to us we taste of them and we feel them and show forth the praise of God. When the spirit of God is manifested in our souls, it does something for us. And I love this verse of scripture; (I've never read this chapter, as I know anything about, in public, but that matters not about that)-"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the.....Bishop." What is the Bishop of our soul? That's talking to the household of faith, it matters not where you are or who you are, it's talking to you, not to the world at large. No. But to the world of believers, that's who this scriptures is addressed to; the

world of believers.

And it also says in the 23rd verse, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." When God Almighty judges, He judges, and the scripture says He knows the very intents of our hearts. I feel sometimes to say to you—and I feel it's your experience—that the Lord tends my heart. Sometimes I get a little off the track, I think evil things. But when it (my heart) returns to the Bishop of my soul, that love and fellowship of the Spirit is something sweet that won't turn loose and let me go because this glorious doctrine of God our Saviour does something for us. It brings us low at times.

Here in this chapter it says Christ is the living stone. Yes, He's the living stone. The other stones refer to His people; those for whom He went to the tree of the cross and died and suffered for. He forgave us all our sins and all our iniquities and washed us in His blood. It calls us right here in this book "God's own people." God's own people! I love these expressions in the King James Bible. I feel like they mean much to us.

It tells us in the second verse, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word." My friends, when we first tasted of the Lord and Him being gracious to us, we were like a newborn babe. I certainly was. The time I heard the gospel of God our Saviour preached from old Elder Wyatt's lips I feel like I left the meeting house that evening a newborn babe. I tasted something which I had never tasted before and I feel like it was the sincere word of life everlasting: something sure.

The word of God goes out to His people. You know what the word of God is, my friends, and it's sharper than any two-edge sword. It cuts, sometimes it hews, it hews this old body sometimes, and it slices here and it slices there, but I

tell you, my friends, it's good for us to be hewn down a little bit. Yes, it is. And I feel like there is no man or woman on the face of the earth who hasn't gone astray at times, but above all this, when God Almighty calls one and manifests His love in his heart it is something that is pure and that is why this thing won't let us go, because God Almighty has implanted it in our hearts and causes us to think more and more each day that is allotted to us in this life, on this royal priesthood. It says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation."

A lot of folks say you have to go to heaven before you can be holy; a lot of folks will tell you you've got to be holy here before you can go to heaven; and a lot of folks will tell you it's after this life you will be holy, but you know what the scripture says about "holy?" It says, "Be ye holy as I am holy." That's talking about the inner man; it's not talking about this old outer man. My friends, this outer man is perishing day by day. There's nothing good or holy in this body except the inner man. The outer man is only a vessel of the inner man.

My friends, if you have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious in this life, there's something in your heart as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is. You may not believe it like I do, my friends, but there's something in my heart as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is, because God Almighty created it there. I didn't do anything to bring it about, or cause God Almighty to speak to my soul and make me to think more and more upon His goodness and His mercy. God Almighty gave me this hope as a free gift. And what God Almighty gives in this life is holy and righteous and it is building up to His kingdom. I feel that very keenly today. I don't want to stress the point that this body you see standing before you this morning is holy. No. No, I haven't said that. But I have said if the Lord Jesus Christ is born in you the

hope of glory, that which is born of God is as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is.

You know, my friends, I love to think on the Lord Jesus Christ and what He's done for His people. He's the only perfect man that's ever walked the face of this earth and that's the way I want to put it. I feel like if He's revealed something in your heart this morning, it's something that is pure, and white as snow, and washed in His blood. You know when John spoke of coming out of great tribulation, he was speaking of us being washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb. It didn't say anything about John washing us. But the Lord Jesus Christ has washed our robes white as snow in His blood and that is the reason why they came up out of great tribulation, having their robes already washed white as snow in the blood of the Lamb.

I was called to a funeral last week for a man that I worked with for years. I read the 50th Psalm. It tells about the cattle upon a thousand hills. As I began to speak at the funeral, I felt like I saw Jesus standing on the hill where the multitude gathered and the Lord Jesus Christ ministered unto them.

And I feel like this morning, as we come as ministers, we can't minister as the Lord Jesus Christ did, but I'll tell you, my friends, what we say and what we do, if it's from heaven, it's of the truth. And you know, my friends, no truth is a lie and a lie is no truth. If God Almighty gives us a mind this morning to preach Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and uphold all His righteousness in this life, it will be the truth.

I thought to myself while speaking at that funeral—I had only seen two of the people who were there, and the chapel was full—Oh, if I could speak something in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and cause these people to think more and more about salvation and more and more about the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friends, I feel like this morning you

know what religion is based on, it's not based on a thing in the world but love and truth. That's all it is based on. If you have the love of Christ in your heart this morning, you are a chosen generation; you are a royal priesthood; you are a holy nation. Oh, my friends, don't be ashamed of the word "holy" in this life, if you put it in the right perspective. This body is not holy but if the Lord Jesus Christ has revealed something in your heart it's something that's pure and He just gives us enough to carry us on through this life. Oh, do you think the Lord Jesus Christ would feed you something that is not pure? I don't believe it; I don't believe a word of it, because what God has cleansed no man can defile because He cleansed them and made them white as snow in His blood.

I may be a little scattering in this thing but I want to talk about something that's solid and sure as the Stone, and the chosen of God, and precious. These stones refer to you and your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord God shall call, and I tell you, my friends, the Lord Jesus is calling some in this life.

I heard it said one time that the God of heaven was dead and folks were just going out and getting their fill of sin. I feel like Old Baptists are going to be a witness in this world one day, they're going to be a witness to God as long as time is. What is the truth? The truth is going to set us free this Book says, and that's what we are looking forward to.

It says many things in this Book: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." I feel like I'm a stranger and pilgrim in this life, don't you? Many times I do; I feel like I'm a stranger among my kindred at times; I think I'm a stranger and pilgrim around my fellow-worker. And sometimes I feel like I'm embraced in this thing. I know what I believe because God Almighty gave it to me.

The Bible says, "As free, and not

using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." Are you doing that this morning? Ask yourself this morning, are you honoring all men, loving the brotherhood, fearing God, and honoring the king? I ask myself many questions. I ask myself questions every day I live, am I doing thus and so right? Am I walking as I should walk? Am I setting an example as I should set before God's people? Am I looking to Jesus for all sustenance in this life and the life to come? Have you ever asked yourself that question?

If you have this hope in your breast, that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again and that the spirit and the body will reunite, you have a precious hope. It is an anchor to the soul, something that is sure and steadfast. You know, I love the anchors. I have never seen many ships in my life; I've seen one or two beside the water, and I am made to think of the anchor of the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ, this Stone, is a precious stone. "Chosen of God, and precious." This thing is a chosen thing. The Lord Jesus Christ was chosen of the Father. He was chosen to come to this world and to live thirty and three years and return to the Father. And I feel this same witness is with us. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is a testimony to this thing in this life. If you don't have a testimony in this life, a witness within this life, within that inner man, I'm going to say I doubt anything will be hereafter. But I feel that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will have tasted something in this life. I would like to put it just like this: I'm glad it's on record that religion is an individual matter. I can't go for you and you can't go for me, and I'm glad it's like that because God Almighty made it so. Religion is an individual thing, and the baptism of water is not going to save you because

this Book teaches that just as plain as anything can. It's a command that you be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in this liquid grave. It's a command that you do that. The baptism of water is not putting away the filth of the flesh but is an answer of a good conscious. I love that word "good."

I love many things that are recorded in this Book. This 9th verse is so precious to a believer. "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 marvellous light." There's a calling to this thing, it's a holy calling, not of our works but according to the Lord Jesus Christ's plan and purpose. When the Lord and the Father in heaven call somebody it's not as you and I would call them. My friends, the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't have to do anything like that. It's already prepared of the Father and He's making intercession for the saints according to the Father's will. I believe this thing wholeheartedly. Do you believe it? Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is making intercession for His saints according to the Father's will? The Father didn't make but one will. It's wonderful, it's glorious, and wonderful to think on these things.

I thought of a verse of scripture in John, "There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." I feel like this shining light of God our Saviour is something wonderful; and it's glorious to think of Him who came to save us and call with a holy calling, not of our works, but according to the Lord Jesus Christ.

What I've said is what I've said.

I thank you for your attention.

Transcribed from a tape of a sermon by
Elder Denver L. Simpson, Pastor
Richmond Primitive Baptist Church
November 1, 1981
(Slightly condensed for publication)

Indian Harbour Beach, FL.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription and my Mother's for another year.

I have been subscribing to the *Signs* for several years now, and I find it is still such enjoyable reading. The articles are consistently good and I look forward to receiving it every month.

May God bless you all to continue in this effort.

Sincerely,
Vera N. Potter

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
TO OCTOBER 1982

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Eld. David N. Bailey, W.V. | \$7.00 |
| R. M. Burnette, N.C. | 5.00 |
| Elder Richard Campbell, TN. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Luther Procter, N.C. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Gilbert L. Coate, WA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Annie M. Adams, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Clyde Rhoades, TX. | 1.00 |
| Miss Hixie Guest, AR. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Minnie Garner, AR. | 2.00 |
| Charles Houchins, VA. | 2.00 |
| James L. Howell, AL. | 12.00 |
| Frank T. Simpkins, VA. | 7.00 |
| Elder G. W. Jones, LA. | 2.00 |
| Tommy C. Wall, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Ida E. Palmer, FL. | 3.00 |
| D. W. Collins, AL. | 2.00 |
| Eld. James F. Poole, MD. | 7.00 |
| C. W. Carroll, MS. | 1.00 |
| B. E. Monroe, TN. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Rachel Hudson, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Woodrow Blankenship, VA. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Jane Carroll, AR. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Mamie P. Aldridge, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Eld. Noel F. Conner, VA. | 25.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Mrs. Florence A. Gibson, GA. | 7.00 |
| Leslie Sladky, N.C. | 18.00 |
| Mrs. Vera Potter, FL. | 6.00 |
| Mrs. G. G. Fralin, VA. | 7.00 |
| I. J. Otts, AL. | 3.00 |
| Shelby Stratton, MS. | 3.00 |
| Eld. & Mrs. W. D. Griffin, AL. | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA. | 1.00 |
| Lee Gooch, N.C. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Lucht, MD. | 24.00 |
| Ralph C. Lucas, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Gordon McGuire, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Edith Norman, LA. | 2.00 |

The following article is a reprint from "The Primitive Baptist Library Quarterly." We feel that the readers of the *Signs* will find this interesting.

THE FORT PARKER MASSACRE

Following is a brief account of a tragic bit of history that should not be forgotten. We hope to see a more detailed history published later, God willing.

Daniel Parker was born in Culpepper County, Virginia, April, 1781. He professed a hope in Christ and received into the fellowship of Nail Creek Church, Franklin County, Georgia, and was soon set apart to the ministry. He moved to Illinois and became a "charter" member of believers called Pilgrim Church. It was this body, with members of the Parker family, who were to suffer in an Indian Massacre.

While Texas was still the Republic of Mexico, Daniel Parker went there to establish a Baptist Church; this was not permitted by the (Catholic) Mexican Government. He did obtain permission from Stephen Austin to bring his church (Pilgrim) from Illinois. Daniel Parker led this church, with a colony of twenty-five wagons through Louisiana into Texas. After several meetings in the home of Elder Parker the colony built a fort called Fort Parker, consisting of log cabins. The fort stood on a hill overlooking the fertile valley of Navasota River.

The families were peacefully engaged in their farm work, when, on the 18th day of May, 1836, while the men were in

their fields, there appeared on the hill some five hundred Comanche and Kiowa Indians. The frightened children flew to their mothers; the men on guard seized their guns, but the tricky Indians raised a white flag as a token of peace and friendship. Ben Parker (son of Daniel Parker) went out to see what the Indians wanted. They professed to be very friendly and asked him to show them a good camping place next to the spring, and for a beef as they were very hungry. Ben fearing to offend them promised what they wanted. Returning to the Fort, he told the trembling women what the Indians said, but added, "I fear they intend to fight, but by kindness I will try to dissuade them from fighting." His brother Silas and all the women begged him not to go out to them again, but he went, and immediately the bloody monsters surrounded and murdered him. Then with horrid yells and death dealing clubs, axes and tomahawks, they rushed upon the fort, and battered down the doors. Then began one of the bloodiest tragedies known even in Texas Indian warfare.

Silas Parker was murdered trying to rescue his sister, Mrs. Palmer. She made a desperate effort but was knocked down with a hoe and captured. Sam Frost and his son were killed while heroically defending the women and children inside the fort. Old Grandmother Parker was stabbed and left dead. Elder John Parker (aged 79), his wife and Mrs. Kellogg were making their escape but were overtaken and brutally murdered, scalped and horribly mutilated.

Thus, in one short hour the happy colony was deluged in blood and filled with desolation and mourning. Elder John Parker, Silas Parker, Samuel M. Frost and his son were killed; Mrs. John Parker, Grandma Parker and Mrs. Duty, were dangerously wounded; Mrs. Rachel Plummer, daughter of James Parker, her two year old son, James, Mrs. Elizabeth Kellogg, and Cynthia Ann Parker, age eight, were all taken

into captivity as prizes to be redeemed later, by loving and sorrowing friends. After murdering Silas Parker, some Indians overtook his wife, fleeing with her four children, compelled the terror-stricken mother to lift her daughter Cynthia Ann and her son John, upon horseback behind two mounted Indians. The Indians on foot drove the mother and her two children back into the fort, but they were rescued by the men who rushed from the fields as soon as they had heard the screams of the women and children. The remaining terror-stricken men, women and children, seeing their homes in possession of the bloody Indian murderers, escaped to the dense timber of the Navasota bottoms.

When night came Abraham Anglin and Faulkinberry, started back to see if they could give any succor to the wounded and determine the extend of the ruins of their colony. The only living being they could see was old Grandma Parker, whom the Indians had speared and stripped and left for dead on the ground. She had crawled to a deserted cabin and concealed herself. They carried her to a place of concealment until they could return from the Fort. On reaching the Fort no living human sound could be heard. The dogs were barking furiously; the cattle were lowing, the horses neighing and the hogs squeeling, making a hideous sound.

The next morning, Bater, Anglin and Falkenberry went back to the Fort to get some provisions and look after the dead. On reaching the Fort they found five or six horses, and some venison, bacon and honey, but fearing another attack from the Indians still lurking in the thickets they left without burying the dead. They concealed themselves in the thick timbers in the Navasota bottom until they could set out for Fort Houston ninety miles away, near the present town of Palestine. We give the description of the mournful description of the journey in the language of James

W. Parker, who says, "We were truly a forlorn set, many of us barefoot and bareheaded, with a relentless foe on one hand, and on the other a trackless and uninhabited wilderness infested with reptiles and wild beasts, entirely destitute of food and no means of procuring it. Added to this the agonizing grief of the death and capture of our dear relatives and expectation of meeting at any moment a like fate. Utter despair almost seized us. I took one of my children on my shoulders and led the other, the other men followed my example. Our mournful party consisting of eighteen persons, left for Fort Houston.

"Our journey lay through thick tangled briars and underbrush. My wife was in bad health, Mrs. Frost was in deep distress for the loss of her husband and son, all were bitterly mourning for the loss of loved ones, and being barefoot, except my wife and Mrs. Frost, our progress was very slow. Many of the children had nothing on but their shirts, suffering from the briars tearing their little legs and feet were beyond human endurance. We traveled until about 3 o'clock in the morning, when the women and children became worn out with hunger and fatigue. We lay down on the grass and slept 'til daylight. When we resumed our perilous journey the briars tore the legs until we could be tracked by the blood that flowed from the wounds.

"At dark of the second day after leaving the Fort the children and especially the women who were nursing infants began to suffer intensely from hunger, but had not a morsel of food. But providentially a polecat came near us. I immediately pursued him and caught him just as he jumped into the river. The only way I could kill it was by holding it under the water until it drowned. We soon had it cooked and equally divided between the women and children, each share being small indeed. ...On the fifth day I found that the women and children were so exhausted it would be impossible for them to travel farther.

After holding a consultation it was agreed that I should hurry on to Fort Houston for aid. Leaving Mr. DeWight in charge, early next morning I started for Fort Houston, which I reached in the afternoon. I have often looked back and wondered how I was able to accomplish this extraordinary feat. I had not eaten a mouthful for six days, having always given my share of the polecats and terrapins to the women and children; yet I walked thirty-five miles in about eight hours. The thought of the suffering women and children I had left behind inspired me with strength and perseverance and above all, God in His bountiful providence upheld me in that trying hour.

"The first person I met on reaching Fort Houston was the generous and brave Captain Carter. He soon had five horses saddled and other means of conveyance; he had Jeremiah Courtney go with us to meet our little band of starving, bleeding women and children. We met them just at dark, and placing them on the horses, we reached Captain Carter's home about midnight...

"After so many years I look back over that scene of suffering and inexpressible horror, yet with devout thanksgiving and praises to God for His merciful support and protection...The Indians who had taken Mrs. Kellogg sold her to the Kaskaschias and Delawares, who after six months sold her to General Sam Houston for \$150.00, and he conveyed her immediately to her sorrowing relatives. Mrs. Plummer remained a captive about eighteen months, and we find the following extract from her diary:

'In July and a portion of August we were in some very high mountains on which the snow remained for the greater part of the year, and I suffered more than ever in my life. It was very seldom I had any covering over my feet and but little clothing for my body. I had a certain number of Buffalo skins to dress and the horses to mind at night. My feet

would often be frostbitten. In October I gave birth to my second baby; but it was impossible for me to secure suitable nourishment for myself and infant. I had been with them six months and would often beseech my mistress to advise me what to do to save my child, but she turned a deaf ear to my supplications. My child was six months old when my master, thinking it interfered with my work determined to put it out of the way. One cold morning five or six Indians came to where I was suckling my baby. As soon as they came I felt sick at heart; my fears more aroused for the safety of my child. My whole frame convulsed with sudden dread. My fears were not ill-founded. One of the Indians caught hold of my child by the throat and strangled it until by all appearance it was dead. I exerted my feeble strength to save my child, but the other Indians held me fast. The Indian who had strangled my child then threw it up into the air repeatedly and let it fall to the frozen ground until life seemed to be extinct. I had been weeping incessantly while they were murdering my child; but now my grief was so great the fountain of tears dried up as I gazed on the blue cheek of my darling. I discovered some symptoms of returning life. I hoped that if it could be resuscitated they would allow me to keep it. I washed the blood from its face and after a time it began to breathe; but a more heart-rending scene ensued. As soon as the Indians ascertained that the child was alive they tied a rope around its neck and threw it into a bunch of prickly pears and then pulled it back and forth until its tender flesh was literally torn from its body. One of the Indians who was mounted on a horse then tied the end of the rope to his saddle and galloped around in a circle until my little innocent child was not only dead but torn to pieces. One of them untied the rope and threw the remains of my child into my lap. I took a butcher knife and dug a hole in the earth and buried my child after performing

the last rites for my dear baby. I sat down and gazed with a feeling of relief on the little grave I had made for it in the wilderness; and I could say with David, 'you cannot come to me, but I can go to you.' Then, and even now, as I recall the dreadful scene, I rejoice that my baby passed from the sorrowing and suffering of this world. I shall hear its dying cries no more; and relying on the righteousness of Christ, I feel that my child is with kinder spirits in the world of joy.

'After the death of my child I was given to be the servant to a very cruel squaw, who treated me in a most brutal manner. My other son had been carried off by another party to the far West. I supposed my father and husband were killed at the massacre of Fort Parker. Death seemed to me but a sweet relief. Life was a burden and driven to desperation I resolved no longer to endure the cruel treatment of the intolerable old squaw. One day she and I were some distance from, but in sight of the camp, she attempted to beat me with a club. I wrenched the club from her hand and knocked her down. The Indians who had witnessed the proceeding from the camp came running up and shouting at the top of their voices. I expected to be killed immediately, but they patted me on my shoulder crying 'Bueno, Bueno good, well done.' I now fared much better and soon became a great favorite and known as the Fighting Squaw."

Mrs. Plummer was afterward ransomed through the assistance of some Mexican Santa Fe traders by a noble hearted American, Mr. Donahue. She was then made a member of the benefactor's family and later brought back to her people in Texas. Her son James was ransomed six years after her death in 1839. Cynthia Ann Parker and her brother were held by separate bands. After a long search, sums of money were offered for the lost children. In 1840 Colonel Len Williams and Mr. Stout, and Indian guide, when they fell

in with Pohonka's band of Comanches, and Cynthia Ann was with this tribe; Colonel Williams proposed to redeem her, but the Comanches replied that all the gold of the white man could not ransom her. Her brother John Parker married an Indian maiden and settled on a cattle ranch in the West.

The Pilgrim Church was the first Primitive Baptist Church to settle in what later became the Lone Star State of Texas. This must be recounted in the life of Daniel Parker.

September 16, 1982

To the Writers of the *Signs of the Times*,

I have read and re-read the issues of the *Signs of the Times*, and enjoyed them very much. I just finished reading the August and September issues and have been given a mind to write, as you give God all the praise, leaving man out of the picture.

I have been down in the valley for some time, and I felt to be forsaken of the Lord. My husband passed away a few months ago, and then almost immediately after my son, his wife, and daughter, and her boyfriend were in a car wreck. A teenager ran into them, and it left my son paralyzed from the shoulders down. He was completely helpless.

My son lived fifteen months and passed away in 1981. He had many friends to visit him and prayer was made for him. One fellow asked him if he would accept Christ as his personal Saviour. His answer was, "I don't know if He will accept me." I told them, "It's not sacrifice or justice we need, but mercy."

Some time after that a patient in my son's room said to us, "You should have heard James singing last night." I asked him what he was singing, and he said, "Amazing Grace." That helped my feelings a lot. He had told one of the Primitive Baptist ministers he wanted him to preach his funeral.

I was at a funeral some years ago, and heard it told that this preacher had asked the man if he would accept Christ as his personal Saviour. He said he would, and that preacher said if he had not gone and talked with that man he would have gone to hell. It is very plain that he wanted the honour for what he had done, not what Christ had done when dying on the cross for sinners, and had finished the work His Father sent him to do. (What a difference.) Isaiah 42:8 says, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Also Jude 17-19, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

The doctrine Primitive Baptist contend for is the faith once delivered to the saints, honouring our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gives God all the praise. Christ went to John to be baptized of him. John forbade Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and cometh thou to me; and Jesus answered saying unto him, suffer it to be so now for it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

The Apostle Paul is a God called minister. In I Timothy 1:12 it is recorded, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." The Apostle Paul was a chosen vessel from his mother's womb. He had not been to a college or theological school to learn how to preach.

II Timothy 1:7-9, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not

thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." God suffers these things to be so, and they are so.

After giving up my husband and son I had a nervous breakdown, feeling the Lord had forsaken me. I was not able to keep my house or to stay alone. My son took me to his home in Aiken, S.C., and I spent seven months with him. I was so upset. I couldn't eat, thinking I would not be able to stay in my house anymore or to attend my home church and go to other meetings. In January of 1982 I had gained some strength, both naturally and spiritually, feeling the presence of the Lord with me, hearing from God's called ministers at our meetings, and reading through the *Signs*.

In 1939 the song came to me, "How firm a foundation." I read all the words then and was strengthened some, but after experiencing all these things more fully, the song sounds much sweeter to me now. And again, thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. If I could have felt this in 1981, I would have shouted instead of shedding tears.

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

Yours in the faith of God's elect,
Mattie Underwood

Kenly, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing money for the *Signs* for one more year. My eyes are failing me, so I can't see to read very well.

I have Leukemia and cannot go to church very often, as I stay so weak. I

sure do look forward to getting the *Signs*. I enjoy reading it so much. It tells my experience so much of the time.

I want to wish you Editors of the *Signs* the best, and may God bless you to keep it going out all across our land. Please remember me in your prayers.

Mrs. Lessie Davis

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VITAL UNITY

"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."-Genesis ii.23.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"-Luke xxiv. 26.

Having been requested to write upon the subject embraced in the above Scripture, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may give us. The subject is vast, sublime and of the greatest importance to the Lord's children, though many of his children have failed to see clearly this vital relationship between Christ and his people, so wonderfully set forth in the Scripture at the head of this article. That lack of sight, however, does not make them less the children of God, nor does it make this point of doctrine less God's eternal truth. The truth of God is an endless chain, so to speak, taking in every point of doctrine, order and practice. Anything, therefore, outside of this chain cannot be connected thereto, nor can anything of the chain be taken from it. It is just as the Lord made it, and will stand as made.

Adam was created and made according to God's purpose and plan, regardless of desire, willingness or objection upon his part. He was "the figure of him that was to come"-Christ. It is perfectly understood that Adam in his creation and formation knew nothing of Christ, hence it was not by choice upon his part that he was the figure of Christ. It should be

remembered that the definite article (the) is used in that record of him; not a figure, as one of many, but "the figure." "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God created he him; male and female created he them," "and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

There has been much discussion with reference as to the image of God in which man was created and made, but ~~there~~ seems no room for debate on that subject, as the Scriptures just quoted declare plainly that the union between Adam and Eve was the likeness of God, and in that union, or unity, was Adam, male and female, the likeness of Him that was to come. In their creation they were one, and their name one - "Adam." In formation they were one, male and female, or, in other words, Eve was in Adam; hence one life, making separation between them impossible, either in life or death. Eve being in Adam when the law was given, received that law and was as much accountable to the law as was Adam. When she, therefore, ate of the forbidden fruit she transgressed the law. The unity between Adam and Eve, his wife, was so complete that her sin was his sin, and had not Adam partaken of the fruit personally he would have been responsible for her sin and one with her in the transgression. The union between Adam and his posterity was such that his sin was their sin, or, in other words, when he transgressed all his children transgressed in him and all were under the same curse. Adam and Eve were one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in receiving the law, one in transgression and one in death, hence the figure of Him that was to come. God, the eternal Spirit, had chosen in Christ his people, or bride, before the world began, unto salvation, that they should live with him in glory, rather than in Eden. The choice of God of his people in Christ, thus giving them to Christ in union, to be his bride, made them one. In

order that the world be peopled and the choice of God be manifested, the creation of Adam and Eve was necessary. In order that those ordained unto eternal life be saved and become manifestly the sons and daughters of God, sin must enter the world and death by sin. Hence the law was given, temptation came, the law was transgressed and in consequence the bride, or God's chosen people in Christ, were condemned and the children of wrath, by nature, even as others.

These things are all links in that endless chain mentioned already. The unity of Christ and the church (bride) as between Adam and Eve, was so complete, inseparable, that her sin was his sin, though he personally sinned not, and was responsible to the law for her debt. This we have shown in "the figure," that had Adam not partaken of the fruit himself, he would have been responsible for the sin of Eve. The law demanded perfect satisfaction for the transgression. That satisfaction meant perfect obedience to the law, even unto death. Adam transgressed and brought death to his race, or children; Christ was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross, and brought life and immortality to the chosen of God. He was made of a woman and made under the law of sin and death, to redeem them that were under the same law. In the coming of Christ the love of God was made manifest, yes, love to sinners, not because they were sinners, but because he loved them in Christ before the world began, and his love changed not when they were dead in trespasses and sins. Inasmuch as the children of God were sinners, the law demanded the life of Christ, the husband. Paul, in speaking of the unity of Christ and the church, calls attention to the union of husband and wife, the two being one, then adds, This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the church. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. At the appointed time of the Father

Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him, and that will was that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore because of the unity of Christ and the church, and in obedience to the law, Jesus died upon the cross, paid the debt his bride owed to both law and justice with his own life, or blood, was buried and arose for their justification, and presented them without spot, blemish, wrinkle or any such thing to God the Father. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was his obligation as the husband of the church, it was the Father's purpose, plan and will. Inasmuch therefore as it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the whole church must answer his question and say, Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and to enter into his glory. The church is the glory of Christ, and in the midst of her he sings praises to God for the gift and for the purpose he purposed in himself before the world was, that through his blood she should be holy and without blame before the Father in love. These glorious matters of redemption were not revealed to Moses, the Israelites and their children, but were secret things known to God in that age of the world. They had the law, and legal things were revealed that they should do all the works of that law, but the redeemed bride has the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was because the old covenant did not have and reveal gospel things that the disciples were fools and slow of heart to believe what the Scriptures declared, in prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The term "fools" means without understanding. After saying these things to them, Jesus began with Moses and opened the Scriptures, which had been hid from the beginning, to their understanding. In this he made darkness light, crooked things straight and rough places smooth.

Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways. How good it is to see the life-standing of the Lord's people in Christ, while in Adam they die.

Elder H. C. Ker

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

The Elders and messengers of the First Regular Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Kansas, unto the churches composing her body, greeting and christian salutation.

Beloved Brethren:—In presenting this, our annual Circular Letter, we hope we do it in the fear and love of Israel's God, whom we presume to worship. We can feel within us no inclination to depart from our former custom or doctrine, which we have practiced and preached ever since our organization as an Association, to wit, the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, of eternal union of Christ and his people, of election, of salvation by grace, and all other principles of Bible doctrine, as have been promulgated by Old School Baptists throughout all ages.

As a starting point we will refer to the language of the apostle Paul in the first chapter of his letter to the church which is at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."—Eph. i. 3-5. The doctrine afore mentioned is all set forth in this Scripture, and is clearly borne out by other and corroborating expressions of prophets and apostles, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Let us notice briefly each expression of the apostle herein set forth. He breaks forth with an

expression of praise and gratitude to God for the blessings he hath so freely bestowed on us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In addressing the Corinthian brethren he speaks of him as "The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,"—2 Cor. i. 3, and again bursts forth with, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. 1. 3. The apostle Peter in speaking of his abundant mercy is also filled with the same spirit of praise, and uses the same words to express his feelings: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 3. These apostles are voicing the feelings of every heaven-born child when led to meditate upon the blessings and the unspeakable mercies of our God, and in effect are speaking as the psalmist when he said, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."—Psalms cxxvi. 3. The mode of the apostle in treating upon this point is conspicuous in the fact that he is telling the brethren, not what he has done for the Lord, but what the Lord has done for us: "Blessed us with all spiritual blessings." This means that there is not one blessing overlooked or omitted which God the Father saw was for the good of his people whom he loves. All blessings, all things, he says are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The blessings of life and salvation, the blessing of liberty to speak forth his praise, of preaching his everlasting gospel, the privilege of worshipping him under our vine and fig tree. These are not all, but they are some of the blessings with which God's people are blessed. The "all" may be briefly comprehended in the word of Jesus, when he said, "All thou gavest me," for he is our all.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." The word "according" no doubt signifies, "in accord." All of God's works are in sweet accord. All things must

work in perfect accord in order to fulfill God's eternal purpose. There can be no jar, no discord, no miscarriage in the purpose of God, else it forever disproves his claim to omniscience and omnipotence. How unseemly it would be if one of God's works should be out of harmony with his other works. The salvation and calling of his people are in accord with, or according to, his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are "the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. His works in this present day are the fulfillment of, or according to, his eternal purpose. Hence the "all spiritual blessings" of which the apostle speaks are in accord with God's eternal choice, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. God blessed his people with spiritual blessings because they are a spiritual people. It would be out of harmony with infinite wisdom to say a natural man is blessed with spiritual blessings. "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."—2 Cor. i. 14. They, the spiritual people, are in union with their spiritual head, Christ. In him and of him, and as a spiritual house are built upon him, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter ii. 5) Time cannot record the choosing of this people. They were chosen before time began. Eternal union and eternal election are in evidence here, and are in accord with God's eternal purpose. It is indisputable that if there be any union between Christ and his people it must be an eternal union or a time union. If it be a time union, it began in time and must also end with time. If it

be an eternal union, it originated in eternity and it will endure throughout eternity.

“Chosen us.” The field is too great to dwell in full upon the election of God in the limits of a Circular Letter, but from this apostolic phrase it is evident that God has chosen his people, and that in so doing he acted independent of any human means or instrumentalities, as has been said before, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. This is the elect. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”—1 Peter i. 2. “Sanctified;” that is, set apart by the Spirit. This alone is sufficient proof that the choosing of this people is alone through the wisdom and mercy of God. The obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ has effected the salvation of all his elect, for he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The sprinkling of his blood upon them is a token of their ultimate safety. “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are.”—Exodus xii. 13. The destroying angel can never enter where the blood of Jesus is in evidence.

“That we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Wonder of wonders, that we, a sinful race, should be accounted holy and without blame! We are not so vain as to suppose this is because we are better by nature than others, but contrariwise, we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy (here is the secret, brethren, God’s mercy,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). The washing of water by the word has made his elect clean, that he might present them unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. (Eph. v. 27.) “Come now, and let us

reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”—Isaiah i. 18. It is alone through the efficacy of his shed blood that his people are accounted holy and without blame before him in love. In this light the apostle addresses some as “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”—Heb. iii. 1. Why should they not be accounted holy and without blame, since Christ, the anti-typical scapegoat, has borne their sins quite away, and declared he would remember them against his people no more forever? O the wondrous display of love! “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”—John xv. 13.

“Predestinated us unto the adoption of children.” In this expression is the indisputable evidence of God’s predestination, setting forth in a word his foreknowledge and almighty power. All things were predestinated, because all things are foreknown of him, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will. It is not given to finite man to know the workings of infinite wisdom, only as

“His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke
Fulfills some deep design.”

Each day brings its own developments. Thus “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”—Psalms xix. 2. To predestinate is to predetermine or prearrange any time or event. Adoption is the process of making one an heir that is not born into the family. One that is a natural heir requires no adoption, and indeed the law would recognize no effort on the part of a father adopting his own child. “They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”—Rom. ix. 8. The fleshly man then being not a child of

God, is not an heir to his kingdom. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Briefly stated then, this adoption applies to the bodies of the saints of God. They are born of the flesh and are flesh. They can be made heirs only by adoption. The consummation of this event is predestinated. It is fixed for some future time, and we are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. It is then when our vile body shall be redeemed from the grave, and it will be redeemed. As well might we expect the wheels of time to turn backward as to presume that God's predestination can be thwarted. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Then this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must 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? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 52-57.)

L. L. Schenck, Moderator
Mary Ellison, Clerk
Oct. 1920

OBITUARIES

SISTER HATTIE WOOD DENNING

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Hattie Denning.

Sister Denning was born August 12, 1892, departed from this life July 10, 1982, which made her almost ninety years of age. Survivors are a daughter, Mrs. Rosalie Stephenson; two sons, Charles Denning and Jerry Denning; two step-daughters, Mrs. Anna Ennis, and Mrs. Ruth Burton; eight grandchildren; three great grandchildren; fourteen step-grandchildren, and twenty step great grandchildren.

This sister had been in declining health for several years. She leaves a host of relatives and

friends to mourn her departure. Her funeral was held Monday, July 12, 1982, at Rose Funeral Chapel, Benson, N.C., with her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, officiating. Her body was laid to rest in Dennings' Family Cemetery.

Sister Denning joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church on the 1st Sunday in June 1933; on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in September 1956, she was received into Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith. She was appointed clerk of Liberty Church on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in November, 1956. She filled this place very well as active clerk until March 1968. She was inactive clerk until her passing. She filled her place at church as long as health permitted. She was supportive and helped as she felt it was her reasonable service. She was a firm believer in the salvation by the grace of God and had faith as once delivered unto the saints of God.

We of Liberty Church extend to the family our deepest heart felt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the faith and hope their Mother had.

We agree a copy to be put on our Church record; one to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee:
Brother James Young
Sister Dorothy Barefoot

ELDER MAON JONES

The sovereign God of all graces has called home another faithful servant.

On the 27th of August 1982, Elder Maon Jones passed into eternal bliss to be with his Savior forever.

"There is a land,
a golden strand,
Where saints and angels,
robed in white,
Are singing praise,
thru' endless days.
In shining worlds,
of pure delight."

Elder Maon Jasper Jones was born the 7th of June 1910 in Wayne County, Iowa, the son of Elder Newton Jasper and Clara Adams Jones. Brother Jones was of Welsh and American Indian ancestry, both of which he was very proud.

On the 16th of June 1945 Brother Jones married the former Miss Marie Hart.

Although Brother Jones was raised in a Primitive Baptist home, after he reached manhood he went to sample some of the world's religions. After years of wandering he offered himself to the Chicago Primitive Baptist Church on 10th of June 1956. Shortly after his baptism he began to

exercise in the ministry. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry on the 26th of May 1966. Brother Jones faithfully served his home church as moderator since 1963.

On the 30th of April 1975 Brother Jones organized the Primitive Baptist Library in his home at 107 Elm Lane, Streamwood, Illinois. Under his direction, the Primitive Baptist Library has been meeting the reading needs of all Primitive Baptists all over the world.

Elder Jones was survived by his widow, Marie Hart Jones, and three daughters, Mrs. Barbara Jones Choquette, Mrs. Linda Jones Perkins, and Mrs. Clara Jones Lay. Brother Jones also has two sisters still living; Mrs. Ruby Davis and Mrs. Naomi Wahl.

Our loss is his gain. Tho' the earth mourns, the heavens rejoice.

Prepared at the request of the congregation and members of the Chicago Primitive Baptist Church.

by Sister Arlene Holtet
Brother Alvie L. Davidson

"HE HATH DONE ALL THINGS WELL"

Sister Effie Jane Greer went to meeting at Paynes Creek June 6, 1982, helped with the hymns, appeared in better health than for some time, enjoyed the preaching and when the lunch that had been brought was spread, ate well. Shortly thereafter she was seized with what appeared to be a severe Asthma attack, within minutes the life that was lent to Mr. and Sister Blanche Greer, December 21, 1912, a few miles from Paynes Creek Church, was called home while in the midst of those that the Lord had blessed her to love.

Early in life, alone after Sister Greer, her mother, was put in a hospital, Sister Effie took up a life of servitude by staying in homes with the feeble, afflicted and aged.

In March 1933 she united to County Line by experience, and was baptized April 1933, by Elder J. G. L. Hash. All her 49 years with County Line she attended regularly and having no place to call her home, she treasured her meeting place her home. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace alone. Sister Effie sang well, and delighted to sing the hymns of Zion, often leading the hymns at meetings in church and in the homes where we met. Her health started failing for a time and was in the hospital this Spring.

When unemployed or ill she would stay with her brother, Mr. B. G. Greer in Roanoke or her sister, Mrs. Sadie Wright, Floyd, Co. Also, a brother, Mr. Jesse Greer, and step mother, Sister Loula N. Greer, with nieces and nephews, survive.

Memorial services were held June 8, 1982 at Woods Funeral Chapel Floyd, by Elder J. L. Agee

and myself, with remarks also at the Cannady Cemetery, Floyd Co., where her tabernacle that fell asleep in Jesus was laid to rest in hope of a glorious resurrection.

We have missed and will continue to miss our precious Sister at County Line but believe our loss is her great gain.

Noel F. Conner

SISTER LIDDIE TART

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Liddie Tart.

Sister Tart was born April 29, 1896; her parents were Brother Lamb Byrd and Sister Sarah Honeycutt Byrd. She was the widow of Robert Lester Tart. She departed this life August 12, 1982, in Charles Parrish Nursing Center in Dunn.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Victor E. Tart; two sons, Paul E., and William H; seventeen grandchildren; twenty-eight great grandchildren; and three great great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin, and Preacher Thomas Melvin, on August 15, 1982, at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in Bethsaida Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Sister Tart joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church on confession of faith Saturday before the 1st Sunday in August 1916. On July 22, 1955, she was one of several who joined an arm of Mingo Church, became as Liberty Church, where she remained a faithful member until her death. She loved to attend the meetings and be with her beloved brethren, sisters and friends, as long as health permitted. She stood for the faith, and supported the church. She praised God from Whom all blessings flow.

We believe our loss is her eternal gain. May God bless and comfort her family whom she loved dearly.

It is agreed to send a copy to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy for our church records.

Committee:
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James Young

SISTER DEAN GOODWIN

We the members of Cedar Island Primitive Church bow in humble submission to the will of God, who called from our midst Sister Flora Dean Goodwin on Sunday, September 12, 1982, at the home.

Sister Dean was born February 15, 1897, on Cedar Island, Carteret County, N.C., making her stay on earth 85 years, 5 months, and 12 days. She

was married to John H. Goodwin, April 11, 1923. To this union were born 4 children, one of which died in infancy.

Surviving are Hazel Goodwin, of the home, Grace Styron, of Atlantic, N.C., and Alton, of the home, along with her husband, John H. Goodwin. Four grandchildren and five great grandchildren also survive.

Sister Dean united with the Church on Cedar Island in April, 1971, and was baptized by Elder Dewey Humphrey in July, 1971. She always attended her meetings as long as her health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted at the Cedar Island Church by her Pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott. Burial was in the Goodwin family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to "Zion's Landmark" and *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be recorded on the church book.

Done by order of the Church November 7, 1982.

Written by her son, Alton Goodwin, Clerk
Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor

WALTER JOHNSON

Walter Irvin Johnson, born in Franklin County, Virginia, February 22, 1888, departed from this world, November 7, 1981. Age 93 years, 9 months and 15 days. He was married to Cora Ann Powell, November 16, 1909. To this union was born seven sons and two daughters. He was preceded in death by his wife Cora Ann Powell Johnson, and one son, William Paul Johnson. Surviving are six sons, Claud, Hughs, Harry, Troy, Tom, and Clyde. Two daughters, Mary Boone and Mrs. Posie Elsie J. Poindexter, all of Virginia, 27 grand children, and 37 great grand children, 3 great great grand children, one sister Mary J. Perdue.

He was united with Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, September 3, 1961 and faithfully attended until health prevented.

Funeral was conducted at Arrington Bussey Chapel in Rocky Mount, Va. by his pastor James R. Hollandsworth, and by his grandson Mr. James W. Johnson. Burial in Franklin Memorial Park. Our loss was his eternal gain.

Brother Johnson was greatly afflicted, with both legs amputated. He was often heard praying to his maker and I believe that he was made ready to be offered. I believe that his spirit is asleep in Jesus until the resurrection day.

Written by request of the family
J. R. Hollandsworth

SISTER VALLIE CRISMON

After much thought and prayer I will attempt to

write a few words on the death of our dear sister, Vallie Crismon, who passed from this world on March 16, 1982. We the members and friends of Monticello Primitive Baptist Church do humbly submit to our Father's will in this, as in all matters.

Sister Vallie who was a devoted member and true believer in the Old School doctrine joined the church at Monticello in July, 1929 and served as our clerk from May, 1949 until December, 1975 when her health failed her, and then served as Honorary Clerk until her death. Her husband, Bro. Scott Crismon preceded her in death in January of last year. Brother and Sister Crismon were unable to attend church regularly their last years here on earth due to poor health, but were faithful members, showing their love for their Church and they are sadly missed by all who loved them and most especially by their children: Pauline, Eleanor, Frances, Elmo, Thomas and Dwight. We pray the Lord will be with them in the hour of need as they mourn their loss.

Sister Crismon was laid to rest at Lakeview Memorial Park. The service was conducted by Elders David Spangler and Paul Lambe.

Humbly submitted by,
Shirley Donovan, Clerk

SISTER ANNIE JOHNSON

We, the church at Hickory Grove deeply feel the loss of our dear friend, Sister Annie Johnson. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst June 8, 1982. She was very faithful to fill her seat at Hickory Grove, and also visited the Sister Churches as long as her eye sight permitted her to drive, and at other times when she could get to go with others. We miss her very much and know that the Sister Churches miss her also.

Sister Annie was born March 9, 1901 and was the daughter of Elder Perry Johnson, who was also a former teacher and Amanda Lee Johnson. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Verna Graham, several nieces and nephews.

She united with the church at Hickory Grove October 1945.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder W. D. Godwin and was held at the Minshew Funeral Home Chapel which was carried out very nicely by the directors.

She was laid to rest in the Rose Lawn Cemetery in Benson under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the day of the resurrection call.

Therefore, we the church at Hickory Grove resolve that three copies of this resolution be made, one for the church records, one for the family and one to be published in the Signs of the Times.

Committee
Sister Kathleen McLamb, Clerk
Sister Cleon Barefoot

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., MARCH 1983

No. 3

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year—\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Va. 24541

Elder James F. Poole, Editor

P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801

Phone (301) 742-6406

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

8902 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 3

Brother Beebe:-I closed my last number with an account of the blasting of all my former hopes, by a discovery of the awful enmity of my heart to God. But distressed as I was, I did not at that time sink into despair. A glimmering hope arose in my mind that as the Lord had been pleased to show me my true situation, he perhaps intended to appear for my deliverance. I felt to praise him that he had not suffered me to continue longer in my ignorance, and that he had suffered me still to have a being on the earth. He left me to go on bowed down as a very wretch upon earth, for upwards of two weeks, when on Saturday night October 13, 1810, I concluded I would once more retire to my room, and examine myself to see if there was any evidence of God's having begun a good work in me, any evidence of my having any love to God.

As I entered my room I knelt down and tried to pray. I could not, my mind seemed entirely shut up. I arose, took my Bible and turned to certain passages and tried to read and reflect on them. I could not. I was unable to trace any reflection, to connect two ideas. My mind seemed a perfect blank. I again kneeled down and tried to pray with no better success; again arose and opened my Bible. It was the same, almost frantic with distress, I again kneeled, and finding myself no more able to pray than before, the suggestion was made to me, "You now see that there is no hope for you; God has evidently given you up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind. I felt it was true, all hope

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

vanished, I sprang to my feet and walked the room, I judged for fifteen or twenty minutes in absolute despair, when at length without thinking what I was doing, I turned to the table, took up my Bible, and as I took it up, it opened in my hands to the 99th Psalm, and the 5th verse met my eyes, "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool, for he is holy." With this a sense of the sovereign majesty and holiness of God filled my mind, I felt to praise and exalt him; felt a deep reverence for his majesty and greatness; felt the fitness that myself and all creatures should be at his disposal, that we were as nothing before him; that it was his sovereign right to save whom he pleased, and leave to perish whom he pleased. There was no excitement of feelings, no thoughts about my individual salvation; but there was a sense of my nothingness before him, and a submitting of myself into his hands to do with me as he pleased. My mind was principally occupied with a view of the exalted character, and of the universal and rightful sovereignty of God over all things.

I slept but little that night, as it was the happiest night I ever have experienced, and probably the happiest season I shall experience in time. Hence I have sometimes taken occasion to say that the happiest moments of a christian's life are those in which God is the most exalted in his view, and he most humbled in the dust before him.

The next morning I concluded that the experience of the past night was an evidence of God's love to me, and that he would save me. I was therefore quite comfortable in mind, and remained so until the Wednesday following. I concluded in the evening after school to go to Morristown. I had before, through a friend, applied to the Presbyterian minister of Morristown to lay my case before the Presbytery then about to set, and to see what encouragement they could give me of assistance in

prosecuting my studies, and expected, by going that evening, to receive an answer. On arriving at my friends, I learned that there was no encouragement for me, that the Presbytery had then under their charge more young men than they had funds to support, and that there were other applications before mine.

Although this was a death blow to my hopes in reference to the ministry, yet being in company with Presbyterian friends with whom I had formed an intimacy, the evening passed pleasantly off. Upon retiring to bed, when I got into my room my disappointment rushed upon my mind with such force that the heavens over my head appeared as brass, and the earth under my feet as iron. I said to myself-I can see nothing to hope for either in heaven or on earth. I stood in this forlorn state of mind but a minute or two, when these feelings subsided, I went to bed and slept.

The next morning I arose and started early in order to get back to my school in season. On my way back, I got to reflecting on my sad disappointment, when this question was pressed upon my mind. What will you do now with the promise you made the Lord last spring to examine the Baptist ground in case certain circumstances occurred? I immediately saw that the very circumstance on which I had predicated my promise had now occurred, that all hopes were now gone of obtaining an education for the ministry, I concluded at once to fulfill my promise.

I went on to my school and in the short recess for play in the forenoon, the examination I was about to undertake being on my mind, I concluded that I would muster up my principal arguments for infant baptism, preparatory to the examination so that if I was convinced against infant baptism, it should be fairly done. I thought over one which had been a favorite argument with me, viz., that the

Jews as a people were remarkably tenacious of the religious privileges they enjoyed under the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant; that among these privileges was that of bringing their children under the blessing of that covenant by circumcision. Hence that if this privilege had been abrogated under the gospel, we should have heard of their finding fault therewith. My thoughts had no sooner passed over this argument than the troubles which had been occasioned in the churches of Galatia by Judaizing teachers relative to circumcision, and Paul's argument on that subject, as also what had occurred in the church at Antioch, and the decision of the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem on the same subject, all rushed at once upon my mind. And I saw that all this arose from the Jews partiality to the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant, and hence their contending for circumcision; and also that if baptism had come in the room of circumcision, as a seal of that covenant, how easy it would have been for the apostle to have satisfied the minds of the Jews by stating that fact, thus showing the baptized Gentile stood exactly on the same ground as though he had been circumcised; the form of the seal only having been changed from circumcision to baptism, a milder form, but of the same effect. But neither Paul nor the Apostles at Jerusalem, I saw, had hinted at any such idea. Indeed upon the ground of baptism having come in the room of circumcision, there could have been no possible excuse for the Jewish disciples still to contend for circumcision, seeing he whom they received as the Messiah had instituted the change. Of course not only was my argument prostrated, but the whole foundation on which infant baptism in my estimation stood, and on which it alone can be made to stand, was demolished at once, and my mind was prepared to go and receive what the New Testament said on the subject of

baptism as a gospel institution, disentangled from the Abrahamic covenant. I accordingly as soon as I was out of school commenced in good earnest reading the various passages in the New Testament in which reference was made to baptism, they were all new to me. Texts which I had formerly thought favored infant baptism now appeared decidedly against it. Many texts now appeared so clearly to point out believers as the only proper subjects of baptism, that I wondered whether the Baptists had ever seen those texts as I then viewed them, for I thought if they had, they would have been able to have convinced the whole world on that subject. For the sake of satisfying my curiosity, I sent into New York and procured a work on baptism, but found the Baptists had had the same views of those texts I then had, and had contended for those views. Not only this, but I wrote off my views and exercises on this subject, and showed them to some of my Presbyterian friends, but instead of convincing them on the subject, I found it was like casting pearls before swine. They had no heart to receive those views; but turned to rend me, by representing that I was turning Baptist in order the more easily to get into the ministry. Whereas my anxiety to get into the ministry was what had kept me for the last five months from examining this subject.

I here learned an important lesson, that the prejudices of education may so blind our minds against the light even on so plain an external ordinance as is baptism, that we cannot see the truth, only as the Lord is pleased to open our eyes to see. Having my mind somewhat exercised with the subject of baptism, I went on tolerably comfortable in mind until near the last of the month, when one night being in company with several Presbyterian friends, the subject of christian experience was introduced and one gentleman took occasion to remark that true christian experience

must embrace in it faith in Christ, and therefore a revelation of Christ crucified as the way of acceptance with God. I at once fully consented to the truth of this remark, but I was as fully satisfied that it was something I had never experienced; hence all my hope of being a christian was again taken from me.

For two days I stood in my own view as a condemned and hopeless wretch. On the 31st of October at night I concluded that I would go up into my room and once more try to pray. As I was going up the stairs, this question arose in my mind; what are you going to pray for; there is no possible hope of your ever being saved? I stopped for a moment or two, when this thought arose in my mind; I can pray that if God is pleased to send me to hell, instead of blaspheming his name, I may be permitted to praise his justice in sending me there. I then went on with the intention of putting up this petition. As I went into my room and knelt down, at first there came over me a drawing back of feeling, a want of an entire cordial acknowledgement of the justice of God in sending me to hell, but this soon gave way and I felt cordially to acknowledge his justice in my final condemnation, and to put up the petition that I might through eternity praise his justice in sending me to hell. Immediately upon this, as I was there on my knees, the account of Abraham's offering of his son, Isaac, as in Gen. 22, was brought to my view. Isaac, as bound and laid upon the altar, appeared as representing the case of the heirs of promise, and as fully representing my then case as bound by the law and doomed by its condemnatory sentence to death. As Abraham knew nothing but to inflict the death blow, so the law knew nothing but to inflict the curse upon the sinner. My attention was then turned to Abraham's arm, being arrested by the angel's call to him, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns being taken by him and sacrificed in the place of

Isaac. This ram appeared to represent Christ as involved in the demands of the law, in the power of his Godhead, by virtue of his headship and union with his people, and therefore as made to suffer the penalty of the law in their stead.

My views then were not as distinct on all these points as I have here given them; but the substitution of Christ in the place of the condemned sinner was fully presented to view. And the atonement of Christ appeared so full and so exactly adapted to my helpless, guilty, and condemned case that surely, I said to myself as I viewed it, God must have had me in view when he made this rich provision in his Son. I was therefore enabled confidently to rely on his atonement for pardon, and to plead it for my acceptance with God, and the sense of condemnation was gone.

I was, of course, filled with gratitude and praise for this wonderful display of God's love and grace to a wretch like me, but still this happiness was not like that I experienced on the night of the 13th. That was something peculiar; self was in a great measure lost sight of, and God in his glorious character and sovereignty occupied my view. Now I felt a deep sense of my own vileness. I do not know whether it is common or not. Few, at any rate, speak of this exercise in relating their deliverance. But for myself, I had never before felt such meltings of heart on account of sin, nor had seen sin to be so vile as now; - not as contrasted with the demands of the law, but as contrasted with the goodness and mercy of God.

I pled that the Lord would henceforth rule over me and in me, and that he would take me out of the world, rather than leave me ever again to sin against such goodness. It is true I have been accustomed from all I had read and also heard to consider Isaac as a type of Christ, but the view given at this time was so clear, and came with such power that I unhesitatingly received it as the

truth of God. And I afterwards found that the Scriptures represent Isaac as the figure of those born after the Spirit, and of the children of promise. (Ga. 4:28, 29.)

Strange as it may appear, I did not once think of this being the new birth, or of being born into gospel liberty through faith now given me in Christ. I had no idea of what christian experience, or the new birth, was other than that God must implant his love in the heart, and that be carried out in our exercises and obedience. I had never heard experience preached. I had read of some persons having extraordinary exercises, but I had been led, particularly by the ministry, to think that if any had these exercises, it was not prudent to speak of them, as it would tend to discourage others who had not had such exercises. I viewed each of the exercises above related as they severally occurred, as manifestations of God's special favor to me, but I did not feel free to speak of them, not only on account of its being as above remarked, not prudent, but I also felt it would be presuming in me to tell of having such exercises. Yet from the facts that from the time I had the discovery of the enmity of my heart on, I had felt myself helpless and laying at the mercy of God; and that but two days before this last exercise, I had been led to consider a revelation of Christ and faith in his atonement an essential part of Christian experience; and further that from this time I could never bring back that legal bondage and those terrors I had felt before, though I often tried hard for it. I cannot satisfactorily account for my great stupidity in having no adequate idea of the import and place of these exercises in christian experience, only that my eyes were holden, as were the eyes of the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus.

Having a comfortable hope now of acceptance with God, I felt desirous of being baptized. I knew there was an Old Baptist meetinghouse in Morristown,

and had been told there were a people who occasionally met there for worship. After some enquiry, I found where two of the members lived, a man and his wife. I went one evening to see them, and informed them of my situation and wish to be baptized. They informed me that they had no preacher at that time, but that Elder Parkinson of New York had promised to visit them, and that if word could be got to him, he no doubt would come out and baptize me. I offered, with their approbation, to go and invite him out. Knowing that my Boston friend was at that time in New York on a visit, I in a few days after, went and through her got an introduction to Elder Parkinson, who after questioning me somewhat on my exercises, gave me an appointment for Morristown.

On my return I gave those members information of the appointment; a church meeting was called for that time. I went before the church, and was examined, for I did not relate any of the particular points of my experience excepting that on baptism, so ignorant was I of their special importance to evidence my being born of God, but still after Elder Parkinson had questioned me pretty closely as to my reliance on Christ, etc., I was received and baptized at Morristown the same day, Saturday, December 22, 1810. But instead of going on my way rejoicing, while at the water, a heavy dark cloud came over my mind, which with the exception of occasionally some little break and manifestation of divine favor, lasted me about fourteen months.

S. Trott

(To be continued)

Greenville, Alabama

Dear Elder Williams,

I am sending you my Daddy's obituary. Would you please print it in the *Signs* for me.

My Daddy was really extra special to me. There was a bond between us, this

being the church. We both loved the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. We could talk for hours about the God we loved and the things concerning the church. We have travelled many miles together in visiting different churches and associations. I have indeed lost a dear friend as well as a wonderful, loving father.

May the Lord bless you Editors and please remember my family at the Throne of Grace.

In Bonds of Love,
Emmie L. Grayson

BISHOPS - DEACONS

At the request of a dear brother and fellow soldier in the Lord, I am attempting to write concerning the delicate subject of Bishops, Deacons, and their functions in the House of God (The Church of God, the pillar and ground of the Truth). As I attempt to comply with this request, I do so with much fear and holy apprehension because I desire neither to add or to subtract, or modify those things that the Divine Logos has given us pertaining to this important subject. At the same time, and in many cases, it seems to me that the passage of time, together with other things, has carved out certain practices and customs that are not becoming to the word of God. Things that must be cast in the mold of humanistic, man-made traditions that will not measure up to nor correlate with the plumbline of God's divine truth. So to those who differ with us, I hope you will do so with as much magnanimity as possible and in the same spirit of fear and apprehension in which I have written this.

To begin with, in those nostalgic days of the past when the Church of the First-born was still in its infancy, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul..." and "...great grace was upon them all," to the extend that, "They had all things

common..." and in having all things common, there wasn't anyone among them that said ought of the things which he possessed was his own, "...for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet. And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Acts 2:45; Acts 4:32-35.

But then, with such a multitude of believers, both men and women being added to the Lord (Acts 5:14), a problem arose in the daily DIAKONIA, translated ministration, which literally means SERVICE.

Now the problem was the Grecians (i.e., the Greek speaking Jews, or those people of the dispersion better known as Hellenistic) murmured against the native Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily service.

What then was the daily ministration or service? The daily service primarily involved two things:

1. A daily provision of necessities including bread and meat which was provided from the common fund to all of those who had need. Acts 2:43-46.

2. The daily services of ministering the word, together with prayer in the temple and in every house whereby they, the apostles, ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Acts 5:42. Furthermore, in determining the daily ministration, it should be noted that these two services are the only things mentioned by way of daily occurrences in the whole context of Acts, Chapter Six. Therefore, the term daily ministration simply means the daily teaching and preaching of Jesus Christ together with a daily service of necessities according as every man had need.

The phrase, "it is not reason," in verse two is an expression which means this is no cause or is not right that we, the Twelve, should leave (give up) the Word of God, and DIA-KON-EIN, or serve tables, Acts 6:2. Here the verb DIA-

KON-EIN, means to serve. These things reveal the high priority, and the great importance which the apostles placed upon their continuing service of the word compared to their continued serving of tables. It is also evident that the murmuring of neglect brought by the Grecians against the native Hebrews was not so much of, if any, a negligence in the service of the word, but rather in the serving of their tables, Acts 4:35. It is of further evidence that even though the apostles gave first priority to their continued preaching of the word, at the same time, they were not insensitive to the complaints of the Grecians and the plight of their widows. They, humanly speaking, acted in a very responsible and affirmative way which pleased the whole multitude, Acts 6:5. They said, "Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you seven men...whom we may appoint over this business," Acts 6:3. Here the word business denotes exclusively the serving of tables and attending their carnal needs. The ministry of the word, to my knowledge, is never used in the scriptures with any connotation of business attached to it. The twelve said, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the DIA-KON-IA, or ministry, of the word." Acts 6:4. This is the same rendering as in verse 1. With this change about to take place, the apostles were to relinquish, in a measure, the business part of the daily ministrations; namely, that of serving the tables. At the same time they were to retain to themselves that part of the daily ministrations that appertained to prayer and to the service of the word, called also DIA-KON-IA of the word. In my judgment, these things teach invariably that in those days of great grace, the apostles, themselves, were the chief instruments in providing the multitude with both spiritual and natural sustenances. They provided spiritual sustenance by preaching the word and in prayer and natural sustenance by distributing to the

necessities of the saints.

"But with the number of the disciples multiplying in Jerusalem greatly," Acts 6:7, the function of keeping up both sides of the daily service was becoming too great and too much for the apostles to continue to do them by themselves. Therefore, the apostles needed assistance (someone to assist them) in whatever capacity needed. These assistants to have certain and specific duties assigned to them, with their chief function being that of DIAKONEIN, or to serve the tables.

The installation of the first seven men in their official capacity as servants to assist the apostles and attend to the tables was done on a bilateral basis. The multitude chose and set them before the apostles, and the apostles appointed them by laying on of their hands, Acts 6:3, 5, 6. Thus, they were fully commissioned to function as authorized DIAKONOIS, or servants, assistants, attendants, or deacons (Phil. 1:1, and 1st Tim. 3:8) to DIAKONEIN, or to serve the tables, Acts 6:2.

There are those who contend that the word Deacons - DIAKONOIS is nowhere to be found in Acts, Chapter Six, and according to the common version, this is correct. Again, a careful study of the Greek text reveals that the word DIAKONOIS is most certainly inferentially present in this text based upon the following considerations:

1. *DIAKONIA* translated *ministration* in Acts 6:1, and the same word translated *ministry* in Acts 6:4 means *SERVICE*, is therefore a thing and a common noun.

2. *DIAKONOIS - DIAKONOUS* translated *deacons* in Phil. 1:1; 1st Tim. 3:8, and other places, has for its basic meaning the word, *SERVANTS*, and can mean only a person(s).

3. *DIAKONEIN* translated *to serve* in Acts 6:2 means just that, *TO SERVE*, and is an infinitive or a form of a verb modifying a noun. In this case, whether absent or present in the text, it must

modify the noun "*SERVANTS - DIAKONOIS*". These facts are self evident. The infinitive "to serve - *DIAKONEIN*" in the phrase, "And to serve tables" must modify the noun Deacons, Servants. Therefore, it must be a person because a place or thing could not possibly SERVE the tables. Therefore, the infinitive to serve infers the noun *DIAKONOIS - SERVANTS*, translated DEACONS in Phil. 1:1 and 1st Tim. 3:8. The very nature of the word serve implies servant, or someone to serve. This is apparent everywhere in the Greek text and we should not be misled into thinking the word Deacon is not inferentially present in Acts, Chapter Six. A truth taught by inference is just as much truth as truth taught by direct expression, sometimes more difficult to prove, but nonetheless the truth.

Another thing that we should not be misdirected in is to suppose those first seven Deacons chosen and appointed were confined to just putting bread and meat on the tables. While this was their primary function, it is quite obvious that in the performance of their work, incidents arose which required their attention, things that they attended to in a most miraculous immediate fashion. Stephen, the first Deacon chosen, "...did great wonders and miracles among the people" Acts 6:8. And when those disputers arose against him, he silenced the gainsayers and stopped the mouths of the adversaries. "...They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" Acts 6:10. This man, Stephen, became the central figure in one of the greatest house to house saint hunts and persecution ever levelled against the church. It was greatly intensified by a man whose name was Saul, who afterwards was made a preacher of the same faith he had sought to destroy. This persecution terminated in two great notable events. The first event was the death of Stephen, that great

defender of the faith, the first deacon chosen by the church and appointed by the twelve. Acts 7:58-60. The second event was the giving of life to that great offender of the faith and chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus. First Tim. 1:15. After the death of Stephen, through the unbelief and ignorance of Saul, 1st Tim. 1:13, the persecution intensified to the point where they were all scattered abroad except the apostles. Acts 8:1.

Then Philip, the second *DIAKONOIS* or servant chosen, went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. Acts 8:5. Believers were baptised and many were miraculously healed. Acts 8:6, 7, 12. Then the angel of the Lord sent him unto the desert of Gaza where he preached Jesus unto a eunuch and, subsequent to the eunuch's confession, he baptised him. Acts 8:26-38. Then the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing, Acts 8:39, no doubt saying, 'I am no longer a dry tree'. Isaiah 56:3. but Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea. Acts 8:40.

At first glance, these facts may seem startling and somewhat removed from the present day order and arrangement of things until one might be tempted to even deny the sixth chapter of Acts as having anything to do with deacons. But if we do that, we are left without a single guideline as to what the function of the deacon is. For while we know their qualification, 1st Tim. 3:8-10, and they were officials in the early church, Phil. 1:1, without Acts 6 the church has no way of knowing what their official function was.

But now, consider, at the present time when a church chooses a man to serve as deacon, the Elders appoint him to assist them in serving tables, attending to business, and in other things. But what if this servant, in the performance of his service, aspires through the aspiration of the Spirit to the higher office of overseer and feeder? What do we do?

Why, of course, we afford him the privilege and opportunity for a time, even an intermediate time, to function in the DIA-KON-IA, service of the word. This allows the church the opportunity to ascertain whether or not the aspirant has the necessary requirement to oversee and feed the House of God. If not, then he remains a deacon. If he does, then the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer to feed the church, and the church should act accordingly. Acts 20:28.

Elder R. H. Hale
(To be continued)

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
TO NOVEMBER, 1982

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| J. E. Mosley, AL. | \$3.00 |
| Dolphus Hail, FL. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Lula Sloan, N.C. | 3.00 |
| E. R. Graves, AL. | 5.00 |
| Jerry P. Cockman, N.C. | 18.00 |
| W. T. Warren, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Joe Sanders, TX. | 2.00 |
| Elder J. C. Townley, AR. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. W. J. Thompson, VA. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Homer Pettis, LA. | 3.00 |
| Miss Lucile Pearce, TX. | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Garnett Lacey, VA. | 1.00 |
| Vance Duncan, VA. | 2.00 |
| Elder Paul Poyner, KY. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Hattie H. Radford, VA. | 1.00 |
| Frank L. Martin, VA. | 1.00 |
| W. E. Cummings, VA. | 2.00 |

EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Founder and Editor of the Signs of the Times)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each
(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

These large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and

is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volumes 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly even 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support.
Send orders to:

Signs of the Times, Inc.
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

(See back page of this issue for other books available.)

302-A E. Lawson St.
Hahira, Ga. 31632
Oct. 7, 1982

Dear Brethren,

Having just received the current number of the *Signs*, I notice that my subscription was due in August. Enclosed please find payment for another year and please accept my apologies for my carelessness.

I wish to express thanks to the readers of the *Signs* who were kind enough to comment on the questions I raised in a letter some time ago. The remarks were very helpful, and the knowledge that others had devoted thought to the same subject was very encouraging to me. I have especially enjoyed the reprint of Elder Trott's inquiry into the duty of the unregenerate to believe, etc.

From time to time I see mention in the paper of the doctrine of "conditional

time salvation", and one sister, if I recall correctly, expressed an interest to know what that teaching consists of. My first thought on reading that was "Happy the soul who has never heard of it." However, since I have sat under the preaching of it many times and have read quite a few of its leading advocates, I feel I might have an interesting vantage point: an inside view, so to speak.

Briefly, the conditionalist doctrine denies the absolute predestination of all things and says that between regeneration and death the child of God may enjoy or lose a "time salvation," conditioned on his "obedience". Time Salvation they hold to consist of pleasurable, felt communion with God, and "obedience" generally amounts to joining the church, being baptized, attending regularly (contributing generously?), and avoiding gross sin. This is a sketch which I think captures the chief points of the system although it varies widely from preacher to preacher and place to place. It should be said to their credit that most of them firmly advocate unconditional election, final perseverance, and the predestination of the saints to glory, though not the predestination of all events. Thus, their preaching, along with some notable errors, does contain significant truths. Also, in areas where there is no local body of "Absoluters" to contend with, they tend not to harp on the two salvations all the time and do some excellent preaching.

I am sure that I have already said any number of things which many "Conditionalists" would hotly dispute. If any of them read this, I can only beg their patience and candid consideration, for I am only trying to describe not what every one of them believes, but what all of them averaged together tend to believe.

There are several other errors which are not perhaps the direct consequence of the conditional doctrine but are

sometimes found in connection with it. Many of these beliefs are strongly condemned by the conditionalists themselves, but tend to crop up among them in any case. Most of these result from the extremely loose way in which conditionalists interpret the scriptures. Any reference to salvation, for instance, must be pigeon-holed as either "time" or "eternal" salvation. Thus, when Jonah said "salvation is of the Lord," he meant eternal salvation in heaven. However, when Luke tells us, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," he meant saved here in time only. Once a person becomes used to treating the scriptures like a ball of wax in this manner, he eventually reaches the point where there are very few outrages in the field of biblical interpretation he is unwilling to commit. A dear soul a few days ago informed me that the many mansions of John 14 were here on earth because Jesus said "I go to prepare a place for you that where I am there ye may be also." She concluded that the "may be" made our occupancy of the mansions conditional and that therefore they had to refer to the church here on earth, not heaven itself. The word predestination is similarly handled, some claiming that since it says "destination" it only refers to where we're going, not what happens along the way as we're getting there. To any of you who may be about to throw the paper in the fire, let me assure you that I have not made up one syllable of this, but that these two ideas have been seriously presented to me within the last six months by persons to whom I could introduce you in the very flesh.

At any rate, tendencies like this, coupled with the tendency that exists among nearly all Old Baptist groups to excessively "spiritualize" the scriptures, have resulted in near chaos in some places. One idea that has become prevalent in many areas is that the Bible contains little or no reference to the non-elect or to the natural man.

The result of this is that you hear preachers trying to populate heaven with some of the most unlikely characters, such as Judas and King Saul. After all, they weren't reprobates, just disobedient children of God who missed their "time salvation", but nonetheless went straight from the noose and the swords point to the bosom of Abraham. The ultimate fruit of this particular opinion is the denial of hell, the resurrection, and the loss of any soul, all of which heresies I have either personally encountered or heard reports of in the southern part of Georgia alone. To bring home the sadness of this situation, I will relate a personal experience. I once sat, as a visitor only, in a meetinghouse which had behind the pulpit a portrait of Elder Prior Lewis, a faithful old soldier of the cross during pioneer days who had planted that church in the 1840's, I believe. Under his now mercifully sightless gaze stood and preached men who I know from their own frank testimony deny the bodily resurrection of the dead and apparently the last judgement also. Thus we see that one error often paves the way for another until we see brought to pass Paul's warning: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Having described the disease and what it can lead to, it remains to show its cause and what the great physician is hopefully doing to cure it. This, like all other heresy, stems from "not knowing the scriptures or the power of God." Since it would be impossible for one of us to ordain all that comes to pass without being involved in sin, weak persons tend to suppose that it would also be impossible for God to be involved in all things and yet be without sin. This is simply to err in supposing him to be one of ourselves, or at least like us. While it is true that the scriptures use the word predestinate in connection with persons, such passages as Eph. 1:11, with its reference to "the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel

of his own will," should make plain to anyone who can understand English that the overruling and controlling power of God extends to everything. How else could "all things work together for good to them that love God?" (Rom. 8:28). Some fear lest they make God the author of evil, but, leaving scripture, reason alone would show us that God, being almighty, must be involved in all things that come to pass. For example, if I foresee a crime or an accident, and have the power to prevent it, and yet do not, am I not therefore responsible for it after a fashion? God foreknows all things and has all power. Therefore, simple reason must refer back to him all things that happen. Even the heathen, with their concept of fate, dimly grasped that all events were disposed of by unseen forces. It would seem therefore that it takes a modern Christian to know less about the ways of God than either a pagan or a philosopher. So much for the silly notion that if we will only deny absolute predestination, we can still leave God his power and foreknowledge and yet excuse him from sin. The very idea of our "excusing" him, when all our hope hangs upon His acquiting us for the sake of his son! In this connection ponder Is. 63:17.

As for the concept of obedience and enjoyments, no one would deny that when we obey God we derive benefit from it, and when we disobey we are chastened. However, what the conditionalist tends to lose sight of, is that good works are themselves the gifts of God and blessings from his hand. We are accepted both now and later in heaven on the basis of Christ's merits alone and all our obedience and our suffering will neither merit nor atone for one blessing or one sin. All comes from the grace of God and the working of his power, both here and yonder. Phil. 2:12-13, with Eph. 2:10 ought to convince anyone where all our good works come from. And further, it should be borne in mind that "good works" is only a

courtesy title when applied to our best and most spiritual performances, for our fallen nature so infects our very best performance that even with God's gracious working in us, our works are only accepted because we are accepted in the beloved. In short, I fear that conditionalism is in some respects guilty of losing sight of one of the foundational principles of our faith: Justification by imputed righteousness alone. The believer is not just entitled to heaven later because of the righteousness of Christ, but rather, right now God accepts him, on that basis and without works. I concede that exhortation has its place, but an exhortation which gives the impression that we have some native power to please God is calculated to lift up the proud and crush the humble, whereas the true gospel does exactly the opposite. I also concede that good works have their place, but do we not often find that those who accomplish most lean most on God and have the least confidence in the flesh? So much for the causes of conditionalism among the Old Baptists.

I belong to what is known as the "Peace" faction of the Union Association of South Georgia. Our only sister association is the San Pedro Association of north Florida (not to be confused with the "original" San Pedro in the same area). As is obvious, the Baptists in these parts are as quarrelsome and fragmented as they are everywhere else. The conditionalist doctrine was introduced down here by a group of anxious meddling young preachers in the 1890's. Since most of the "big guns" got infected with it right away, the old faith in an absolute God has mostly survived among "Bush" preachers and in the private opinions of the members. Whatever their official pronouncements, I have noticed that most of the people in this group of churches recognize God's hand in most things and feel their utter dependence upon him. I think that conditionalism

clouded their minds but never really penetrated their hearts.

In the last several years several hopeful signs have appeared in our body. Many of our younger members are much stronger on predestination than some of the older ones, and many of the older members, if not most of them, are much more receptive than formerly. I showed Elder David Bartley's excellent piece on Time Salvation (in the July, 1979 Signs) to one of our hottest two salvation preachers recently, and he not only agreed with most of it but also has altered the tone of his preaching on that subject. In general, I think it is recognized by all our people that blessings in this life are the fruit of grace as much as anything in the world to come, and also that God's superintendence is firmly established over all persons and events. This might seem insignificant to many readers of the Signs, but it represents a tremendous improvement over what went before.

What would really finally cure the malady of conditionalism would be a great outpouring of the Spirit, leading all God's people deeper in the secret of his covenant and showing them the greatness and breadth of his power and grace. Before such a sight as this, conditionalism, indifference, fractionalism, and every other evil that besets the Old Baptists would be swept away like cobwebs before a hurricane. Let us try to pray that God would pour out upon us the spirit of grace and supplications for this.

I did not intend when I started to get so wound up on this subject. I have not really dealt with it at all, although many would be ready to say that I have said far too much about it already. I don't think that anyone has written a work solely on this subject, but I very much wish that an able, dispassionate writer could be led into a full investigation of the nature, origins and progress of this particular set of ideas.

Brethren, pray for us that the truth

might have a free course among us and all the Israel of God.

Your servant in hope,
John Crowley

P.S.

Sometime ago, I talked with an Elder affiliated with the majority of the churches in this area, but not connected with myself in the church. I asked him how the conditional doctrine fared in other churches with which he was familiar and I am not. His exact reply was: "About half the preachers preach a conditional time salvation and the other half have got enough sense to know there ain't no such thing." Perhaps things are looking up.

EDITORIAL

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. 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 mine hand upon the little ones." (Zechariah 13:6-7.)

Zechariah is a book with many figures and types in it. The language here, however, is very plain. There is very little question that this is a prophesy of the redemptive work of Jesus our Lord. You can see in verse 6 that someone asks the question, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" And it gives the answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Then in verse 7 another voice is heard to speak to a sword, instructing the sword to awake. The sword is to awake against his shepherd, "Against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." There is no question as to who is speaking here because it says, "Saith the Lord of hosts." And then the direct command, "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Then the results of

this, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

In the 6th verse our Saviour is speaking, "These wounds are the wounds that I received in the house of my friends." Whoever asked the question regarding the wounds could see there were wounds in His hands. They were not there before Jesus was nailed to the tree, so this must be a question asked after His resurrection. After His resurrection we know that He instructed Thomas to reach forth his hand, and he was enabled to see with his own eyes that Jesus had been pierced by nails in His hands and feet and a spear had entered into His side.

These were wounds that he received, not from His enemies, but He was wounded in the house of His friends. We understand His friends to be His family, His church, His people. It is for them that He came to receive the wounds.

"What are these wounds?" A wound is something that we generally feel will heal and repair, and He answers, "I was wounded in the house of my friends." Bear that in mind as you look at the 7th verse. That which afflicted Him in the house of His friends was called a wound. His hands were wounded, as were His feet, and His side, and upon His head a crown of thorns was pressed down upon it and that was certainly wounded, as well. Then a command is issued, unlike any that you would expect to hear. The command is to the sword, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." Note this well. The Lord of Hosts speaks to a sword, instructing it to awake! We have just read that He was wounded in the house of His friends. You would think that if God's ways were as our ways, that He would instruct the sword to smite those who wounded His well Beloved Son. We might well have called upon the sword this way; "Awake O sword, and smite those vicious people. Cut them off." That would not harmonize with the language, however, of Daniel, where he prophesied that the

Messiah must be cut off, but not for Himself. "Awake, O sword against my shepherd;" not for the shepherd, or in His defense, but against Him. And, "Against the man that is my fellow."

Look at the word "fellow" and think of it in our common usage. Do we not often speak about the fellowship in the church being love and sweet communion? Probably the most correct interpretation of the word "fellow" would be *mine equal*. Equal! "Against the man that is mine equal, saith the Lord." "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." "Smite the shepherd."

There is no question about the summons here. God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call forth the slumbering sword to awaken. The word "awake" there leads us to feel that until this time the sword had no authority to act upon the man which was God's fellow, or against His shepherd. Until the appointed time, God did not summons the sword. But when He does, the expression is used very forcefully, "Awake!" The sleeping sword is now brought forth, and brandished for the purpose of smiting the shepherd. Many people have had hard feelings in reading the New Testament when they see the cruel way in which Judas betrayed the Saviour - seeing the evil mob with hatred as they came out to Him at night in the garden; the despicable manner in which Caiaphas, the High Priest, treated our Lord; and then reading of Herod and his soldiers abusing Him. Pontius Pilate, in his pompous hypocrisy, washes his hands and tells them, "I'm innocent." Then observe the Roman soldiers as they drive the nails in Him, fastening Him to the tree. There must be hard thoughts about what wicked and evil people they were. We know that if the grace of God has not touched our hearts, we are equally as evil as they were, but we would pull the sword as quickly as Peter did, and prepare for war.

You will recall that night the mob

came, and the first thing Peter could think of was the sword. To Peter's way of thinking, they could not do this. He drew the sword and cut off the ear of one there in the crowd, and as the Lord restored the man's ear, He told Peter to put up the sword. Peter knew little about the vengeance of God, but he would soon learn. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." There is more contained in that verse of scripture than just a message to us that God will take care of our enemies. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." God will take care of the debts, and resolve them as it please Him. Our Lord was nailed to the tree, true enough; the wicked hands of the Romans and the mob literally nailed Him, and by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God these men with wicked hands did this. But our Lord in prophesy says that He was wounded in the house of His friends. Now look at that carefully. We don't see in the text where His friends did it, but that's where He says He was wounded. He had come from the world of glory and was abiding in their house, and they fearfully abandoned Him and He was wounded.

Will you notice that when our Lord was nailed to the tree there was nothing in the scripture that says that he cried out. There was no agonizing sighs, or groans, rather as the Prophet Isaiah says, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." These were nothing more than wounds that He was receiving in the house of his friends. Our Lord opened not His mouth. You will go back, however, to the night before in the garden, and when the sword was about to be awakened over Him, He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We perceive that this was not nearly so much the physical sufferings that our Lord was preparing to endure, but the soul suffering. It was not the nails and the sword or the spear that our Lord was dreading, for all men must die

in some fashion, but rather it was the sword of God's justice. That is what this sword was - "Awake Oh sword," the sword of God's holy, perfect, pure, and everlasting justice was now about to be brought into action. Who could summons it? Pilate couldn't do it! Herod couldn't! Only God could summons the sword. The sword has been asleep.

We learn from this that it was a lively, and a living sword, however. For as the scripture says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." May we tell you here that Jesus Christ fell into the hands of the living God. He fell there for His friends. If He would, by grace, show us what a narrow escape we have had, we would be happier in soul than before such knowledge. The appointed time had come. There had always been the sword. This was not something new that was gotten up by God. The sword had always been whetted and prepared. It was not rusty. It was not dulled through the ages. The sword was plenty sharp and fully prepared. It was a holy sword, and it belonged to God, and God summonsed it. "Awake, Oh sword."

We see the sword the first time in the Bible when God drove man out of the garden. He put there a flaming sword. What did He put it there for? "To keep the way of the tree of life." The flaming sword was first seen in the garden; was set there by appointment, and would remain there until such time as God would call it forth, and all His holy vengeance fulfill the certain promise that He made to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die." The sentence would be executed. We see the sword also in the end of the Word of God, the book of Revelation. The last time the sword is mentioned is when the beast and the false prophet were thrown into the lake of fire. "And the reminent was slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth, and all fowls were filled with their flesh." That's the last

execution of the enemies of God, and they are executed by the sword; by the sword that proceeded out of the mouth of the mighty Conqueror, Jesus Christ, who rides upon the white horse in absolute conquest and victory and universal government.

It was halfway between the first mention of the sword of God in the book of Genesis and the sword of God in the book of Revelation, almost to the day, (three thousand years between the two) that David in these words (prophetic of our Lord hanging on the tree) cries out and says, "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog." (Psa. 22:20) You will observe that in verse 16 of this same chapter he has just said, "For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they have pierced my hands and my feet." Our Lord did not ask to be delivered from the piercing of His hands and His feet, but He did say, "Deliver my soul from the sword." Similar language to this is what our Lord meant when He said to the Father in prayer, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The cup which our Saviour was about to drink was the cup of God's indignation and wrath.

Symbolically, He was not to take an actual cup. Neither was He actually about to be run through with a literal sword. This is descriptive language, or figurative speech. The cup that He drank from and the sword that He sought to be delivered from was one and the same - the execution of God's everlasting judgment upon sinners. We can rest assured of this; when God said, "Awake, Oh sword," it would certainly come into play. "Awake, Oh sword against my shepherd." Is this not what the Lord said in this same Psalm 22, just quoted from, when He cried, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me." (Vs. 1) The Father was now against the Shepherd. Isn't it a tale of marvel and wonder that God would use such language, "Against my shepherd." The

23rd Psalm, those beautiful and lovely words of David, says, "The Lord is my shepherd." And yet God the Father said that He was His shepherd, too. God looks at Him in ownership, "He is my shepherd." He is the shepherd that I have sent, the everlasting and good shepherd; the shepherd of the sheep. But isn't it an amazing thing to see that the one who was sent to be shepherd was wounded in the house of His friends, of which David was a part? And He was struck with the sword of the judgment of His Father, though both parties had called Him, "My shepherd," and afflicted Him. He was afflicted because of His friends who had sinned, and He was afflicted because of His Father who could countenance no sin. (He came to bear up all our sins.)

"Against my shepherd." No language in the world is like this, "Against my shepherd." God would turn His back upon Him and summons His justice, and His judgment, and His holiness, and compel it to smite Him.

"And against the man." It is a wonder of wonders that continually in the prophecies and the fulfillment of the same we see Jesus as a Man. It was imperative that He be a Man. If all the angels in heaven had been smitten by the sword, it wouldn't redeem a sinner. If all the sinners who are considered "the house of his friends" were smitten, it would do them no good. But a man - a man - must come and die as a man.

Much has been said about that, and we will not go into that point, but observe that he twice said, "Against my shepherd, and against the man." There is one thing of great importance to see, "Against the man that is my fellow;" "The man that is my equal." You cannot even begin to see the truth of salvation by grace unless you can see that Jesus was the *equal* of God. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for He was equal with God. (Phil. 2:6) We see in the very beginning of creation where the scripture says, "All things were made by

him and without him was not anything made that was made." We see that in the construction of the first man, Adam, he was equal with the Father, "His fellow." "Let us make man after *our* image." Not in *my* image, but "Let us," "After *our*."

He was equal with God in power. (Matt. 28:18) "All power is given unto me both in heaven and in earth." He was equal to God in will. "Not my will, but thine be done." "This is the father's will; of all that he has given me, I have lost nothing." He was equal with God in fulness, for the scriptures says, "He is the fulness of God." (Col. 2:9) He was equal to God in glory; equal to God in His sovereignty; equal to God in all things. The equality of existence between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost could not be denied. One in all things, and yet separate and distinct in personality.

God the Father from everlasting had purposed that His everlasting Son would have a bride, but before that bride could come to the home in heaven and there reside, before she could be presented in her royal robes, she had to be purified and washed, (as she had fallen in Adam) and God the Son came for that purpose to this earth, *as a man*. God the Holy Ghost, equal as the third person of the Truine God, instructs and teaches, and vitalizes and gives life to all of those that God has chosen from everlasting. It is no wonder, no slip of the pen, then that the Father says, "And against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Then the next verse, in language that can only be God's, "Smite the shepherd." Do you remember when Moses took the rod and smote the rock, and smote it the second time, and in so doing, he forfeited his right to enter into the Land of Canaan? Moses, being a figure of the Law, had done all he could do against the rock, which was Christ. (I Cor. 10:4) And now he had no more work to do, and Joshua must lead them into the Land of Promise, not Moses, the

figure of the Law. Do you see then that the rock must be smitten? "Smite the shepherd."

How serious a blow is this that He must be smitten with? It is not possible for us to contrive in our minds an understanding of the depths of God's justice and judgment, but if you can perceive such language that is contained in the New Testament, such as "Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" "Where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever;" "Cast alive into the lake of fire," and etc., you can get some little glimpse of the judgment that awaits all of those outside of Christ when this world shall be no more. All of those that shall be in Christ; all of those who have been called by the election of grace; all of those that make up His household, whose house He was wounded in, all of those who are His friends will escape that awful judgment. But upon what basis will they escape it? Consider this. When a sinner offends God, he has offended an eternal being. He couldn't in billions and billions of years in repentance and remorse and sufferings do so long enough to satisfy God's judgment. In an instant we sin against an infinite being. God will hold that against a sinner just as long as God exists unless there is some satisfaction rendered. How long do you think God will punish the wicked? By His word, it says everlasting punishment awaits them. These shall go away into everlasting punishment, in the lake of fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. Forever, and forever, and forever, they will be punished.

His elect, however, get off free! We say, *they get off free!* On what basis? On the basis that another received the fatal blow from this sword. Rather than God saying, "Smite the wicked; smite the friends; smite the elect," He says, "Smite the shepherd!" "Smite the Shepherd!" When our Lord hung on the tree we don't hear of Him grieving, nor mourning, over the bodily afflictions.

Oh, what a grief and affliction it must have been that the everlasting sword of God's vengeance pierced Him thru.

When God's judgment in the form of this sword pierced our Lord and entered into His soul, it was an equal for the everlasting punishment due us. Every sin, every evil thought, every transgression, every crime that you and all the family of God have ever been guilty of, all together He had assumed as His own when the sword pierced Him. When He died there at the hands of wicked men, and in the house of His fellows; when He died an everlasting death; (if we may use the expression) when the sword of God's judgment pierced Him, God was punishing all of us *in* Him.

Let us ask you this. If this is so, if what we write this day, if what we think you believe is the truth, then is there anything that needs to be added to the wondrous plan of God's salvation? Would God raise the sword and say, "Smite the shepherd" and then come back to you at a later time and say there was a sin or two that you must account for and render payment? No, my dear readers. We set before you with boldness that Jesus paid the *whole* debt. The sword of justice fell upon Him and no one else. As the Shepherd of the sheep He solely was responsible for them. When all the vengeance of God fell, it fell upon Him, and not a one of His sheep ever received even a glancing blow of the sword of God's justice. It all was His and none of it was ours. "Smite the shepherd."

The language which follows has been greatly misunderstood. "And the sheep shall be scattered." Probably the initial fulfillment of that was when the sheep (His disciples) were scattered the night our Saviour was taken in the garden. Our Lord so quoted from this text in Matthew and Mark. However, there was another sense in which they were scattered. They were scattered to be regathered again. Up until this time the sheep were bound together under the

curse. The sword of justice had just as much claim against them as the rest of the world because they were sinners equal with all the rest of the human race. There was no difference between them and the non-elect as regarded justice. When the stroke of justice fell upon Jesus, when the Shepherd was smitten, then the sheep were freed, and released, and were no longer bound up. Consequently, they being scattered over the world, then the amazing language follows, "And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Oh, the glory of it all is that the whole thing was planned in the everlasting councils of God's love that He would smite the Shepherd, release the sheep, and then gather each one of them. And His language is so tender, "I will turn my hand again towards the little ones." All the little sheep, wherever they might be, all of those who were embraced in the everlasting council and covenant of God will be gathered up, one by one. God will turn His hand towards them. *He will not send someone else after them.* He will not send someone out to tell them, "You have an invitation, if you come now, you can be received in this great number which will make up heaven's host." Oh, no, a thousand times no! "And I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

Brethren, where did your salvation really begin? Oh, you say, it begins with the new birth. Not at all. Or you say, It begins when Christ died upon the cross. Not at all! You will have to go back to when God, in His eternal council, proposed to send the sword into the soul of Jesus. It was all planned. It was all prepared. There was not a detail left out. There were no contingencies. There was no possibility that things could run afoul somehow.

When Jesus came into the world, the scriptures already had Him declared as the Lamb slain - the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. For whom then would He die? Would He die for

Himself? No! He was innocent. He died as the Shepherd, and He died as the man who was God's fellow. He died that the sheep might be released. He died that the sheep might be scattered. He died that the same sheep that would be scattered might be also gathered by God when He would turn His hand again toward the little ones. What an encouragement that ought to be to the elect family today. We need not worry, nor fear and fret about the welfare of those we love who do not seem to be in the grace and the love of God, who manifest no characteristics of a christian, for we know for a certainty that if they are one of His, if God has chosen them, if God has purposed to redeem them, before they leave this world *He will* turn His hand to them. He will gather His little ones - every one of them.

Would it be possible to believe that when this world is finished, when heaven is housed with God's family, there could be one missing, and someone inquire, "Where is that one?" Could that little sheep go to hell? Sooner God Himself could lie than one of His sheep not be gathered into the fold. "I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

When Jesus went up to the tree of the cross, God had already appointed Him to suffer, to bleed, and die in the place of all the sheep that would be scattered. Oh, the wounds, no doubt, were terrible. Those things that He was afflicted with at the hands of His friends, must have grieved Him sorely, and hurt Him physically. The agony would have been intense. But they were nothing, nothing, compared to the sword that would smite Him. Can you see the difference between the wounds and the smiting? Oh, the sword of justice pierced Him clean through. It didn't stop with His hands, His feet, and His side. It consumed his whole soul. Jesus suffered the everlasting and eternal agony that every one of the little sheep should have suffered there. And in a few hours time He suffered sufficiently that the eternal

God His Father could be satisfied. "Smite the shepherd." "Smite the shepherd."

No, brethren, don't let anyone tell you that we nailed Jesus to the cross. It was for our sins He was nailed, true enough, but it was by God's eternal council and foreknowledge. The instruments were there that were supposed to be there. The sheep were set free. Our sins were certainly accounted to Him, but it was in order that He might carry our sins away, and all the burdens and griefs. And any human being who ever had eyes to see, spiritually, could read this in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and could not possibly believe that the sheep had ever suffered a thing in order to bring about their eternal redemption. It has all been worked out.

Do you see the message here? Jesus suffered as a man. He suffered as the shepherd. He suffered from the wounds, but He suffered the utmost agony of the sword. Consider one further thing. The criminal being put to death may grieve over dying and agonize in dying, but if there is an ounce of honesty, he must admit that he has it coming. Jesus, however, was wounded as an innocent man, and as a perfect shepherd. and the sword of God's justice pierced Him through, not because He had done anything wrong, but because He had done everything right. Do you see that? It wasn't for anything wrong that Jesus had done, but it was because of all the right He had done. He was the only one who ever existed to qualify to receive the stroke of God's justice and survive it, because even God's justice could not require more than equity.

The only way the sword could smite Jesus was for Him to be a man. It had no claim against Him as God. And the only way it could have a claim against Him as a man was as a sinful man. And since He had no sins of His own, He assumed our place and substituted Himself for us, and then the sword of justice could be drawn. So all the while that Jesus

walked upon this earth as the godly perfect example, as the Son of God, as the Son of Joseph, the carpenter's Son, the sword had no claim. But just as soon a Christ ascended the cross; as soon as the nails were put into His hands; as soon as the nails pierced His feet, it was then that He assumed our place. And then the sword could be summonsed. Then God's justice had a claim upon Him. It had no claim before that time because He was innocent, He was holy, He was harmless, He was undefiled. But now that He hangs upon the tree, the scripture says, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree." And while He hangs upon the tree He is hanging there in our place, and the sword of justice falls.

To what extent does it fall? To the full extent of all the sins that were there on the tree. And when was that sin satisfied? When it had brought from Him all the sufferings due to us it must release Him because it then no longer had any claim upon Him. Because He was the God/Man, He could agonize and at the same time rejoice. And this is what the Apostle Paul meant when in the Book of Hebrews, he said, "He endured the cross, despised the shame." Previous to that it was said, "For the joy set before him." "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the father." The sword can no longer call for His blood. The sword could no longer smite Him as soon as He paid our debt. He then must be released. Then He fully and freely died, a complete and full, and absolute sacrifice, yielding up His own life to the Father by saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And He died! Since death no longer had any power either, death must release Him. After three days and three nights He came forth, the mighty Conqueror.

The sword is put away, and shall never be used except by Him who has conquered by the sword. And now His

enemies shall die of the sword, but the little ones will have the hand of God turned to them. We, therefore, cannot believe in creature effort, or human endeavor. For someone to tell us there is something we can do to assure our position in heaven is the same as saying that Jesus died in vain. To say that we must "accept," "believe," "receive," "work," or do anything else that we might dwell everlastingly in heaven is an insult to God's justice, and Christ's blood, as well. May we be blessed to see the glory of all this.

Elder James F. Poole

To the beloved brethren in Jesus Christ,

I desire to tell the truth and to rightly divide the word of truth. I know that of myself I can do nothing, but I can do all things thru Christ the Lord. May he give me every thought as I attempt to write to you, his beloved children, that his name may be glorified and you edified and comforted.

I am black, vile, filthy, vulgar, corrupt and putrifying sores from the top of my head to the soles of my feet, and anything else you might add along this line. This is truth. I know it to be truth; yet there was a time when I would have vigorously denied it. At that time I felt to be as good as the best and better than the rest: a devout christian, attending church, Sunday School and prayer meetings faithfully; and doing my very best to draw or entice others into the church or accept Christ as their personal Savior. I had gone before the church professing to accept Christ as my Savior, when as yet I had not been made to know that I was even in need of being saved. Yet from that very day, even before I got home, I was given doubts about what I had done, and to some extent realized I had done nothing toward my own salvation. Notwithstanding that, I worked zealously for several years. Then abruptly I left that church and never returned to it. Then at

God's appointed time many years later I was made to see just how great a sinner I am. Paul had nothing on me. This came on slowly, not abruptly, but it had its effects. I began to look for ways to justify myself, but found none. I read the Bible, but it did nothing for me but condemn. I sought help in several churches, but found none. During much of that time I had visited Old Primitive Baptist churches with my wife and her parents for about twenty five years, yet I knew nothing of what they preached or believed. But then I began to want to go among them, not because of someone else, but because there was something drawing me that I could not understand. Then the time arrived when I heard a sermon that I at least partially understood and rejoiced in. More time passed, but my burden of sin had not been removed when I was made to beg God to give me a home among these lovely people. My prayer was answered two months later when I went before the people I believe are numbered among the saints of God. Oh, what a glorious time that was for me! I was accepted, and at the same time this great black cloud of sin rolled away. I had a wonderful foretaste of heaven.

I do not know why I have written of my own experience above except to show that I believe salvation is by grace alone and not by the works of the creature. I do not say that I know that I am included in this great salvation, but I believe I have been given a hope in Christ. At least there was a change in me that I was not seeking. Something had been done for me that I could not do for myself. But even if I am not included, I know that salvation is of the Lord, and there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12, Jonah 2:9). It is not even in man that walketh to direct his own steps. His heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:19). There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not. (Ecc. 7:20). There

are many scriptures to prove that all men are sinners - but who believes he is a sinner? Only those who have been taught of God. Man cannot make you believe this, though he preaches it every day, for this is the work of the Holy Ghost upon the heart.

If you have been convicted in heart of your sins and your experience is anything like unto mine, you turned to the law and tried to justify yourself by the works of the law. But, alas, you find only condemnation and no mercy there, and are finally brought to the point where you cry with the poor publican, Lord have mercy on me, a sinner. It was the work of Christ that brought you here. He worked upon your consciousness of guilt and proved to you what by nature you are, and that you have nothing with which to pay the debt. You were made to see hell as your final destination, and justly so. Without this conviction you would feel no need for repentance or the work of grace upon your heart, but the goodness of God leads you to repentance, and repentance turns you from your own works to the wonderful works of Jesus Christ. You were given a hope that he had shed his precious blood for you, and love is shed into your heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you.

Hope alone is not enough. We must have faith; for faith is the substance of the things we hope for, the evidence we have of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1). Without faith it is impossible to please him: and he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Heb. 11:6). Belief, or faith, implies trust and confidence, and I have been told many times that all I need do is have faith, or believe; but I have found that I can do nothing without him. Then how am I to believe? The scriptures plainly tell us: it is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he has sent. (John 6:25). We are saved by the grace of God thru faith; and that not of

ourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8-9). I have boasted many times that I knew the Lord, had accepted him, and that I knew heaven would be my final home. But O how wrong I was! The light that was in me was darkness and how great was that darkness!

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding. (Prov. 9:10). Once we have been given a view of Christ as our Savior and given faith to trust in him, fear will follow as surely as day follows night. This fear is not a slavish fear as one would fear the devil, but a filial fear. This is a fear that is full of love and devotion, but there are many more people today who fear Satan than God. I hope that you and I can say as David, But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. (Ps. 5:7).

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, (Acts 15:18), and his works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Heb. 4:3). God is the eternal being. With him there is no time: a thousand years is as one day and one day as a thousand years. Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, a sacrifice unto God for his people, yet this was only made manifest unto man in time, as were all his works. Christ finished all the works which the Father sent him to do. (John 17:4). He died upon the cross in agony and shame that sinners such as you and I might live. If we are what we hope to be, we are the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Until recently I believed that the good works we were ordained to walk in are only the works that God has wrought in us to do, for he worketh in us to will and

to do of his good pleasure. Yet this gave me no comfort, for I could see nothing good that I had ever done. I could see the good work in others, but not in myself. But praise his holy name, I was finally given to see this scripture in a new light. Perhaps it was already obvious to you, but it had to be shown unto me that the good works we were ordained to walk in are the works of Jesus Christ. (Amen! Editor.) The works that any child of grace may perform are but manifestations of the works of the Holy Spirit within him. Like Paul I can say 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. (Rom. 7:8). Man's natural propensities are continually evil and will never change, for 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. (I Cor. 2:14). In order for a man to receive the things of the Spirit he must be born again. He must be born of the water and the Spirit: for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Paul truly believed he was doing good works when in effect he was persecuting Christ: and when in the flesh we do the same. But Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus changed that and he was made to say, Lord what wilt thou have me to do? And Jesus replied, Arise, and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou MUST do. Perhaps not so dramatically, but each child of grace is given this same command, and will obey it. Paul felt to be the least of the apostles because he had persecuted the church of Christ, but said, By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (I Cor. 15:11). And again he said, Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which

worketh in me mightily. (Col. 1:20).

James tells us that faith without works is dead, therefore we must work if we have a living faith. In the 25th chapter of Matthew we find a good description of the works of the righteous and what they know of these works. Jesus said, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: etc. And they said, Lord, when did we do these things unto you? Is this not your experience?

I will close with this truth: man is not blessed for his works, but to work and in his works and in the works of Jesus Christ the blessed Savior.

May God ever bless us to walk in good works. Please remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace. If you believe me to be in error in any part that is written here, approach me in love and not in contention and show me the errors. It will not break my bones, but will be like a good oil poured on my head.

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203

Dear Brother Poole,

I am sending you this notice of the passing of my beloved companion of almost fifty years. Will you please publish same in the *Signs*.

My dear sister (in the flesh) expressed a desire to write this memorial to him. I feel truly thankful to her. She is a gifted writer. She spoke so fittingly of his travels here after God so wonderfully revealed this precious truth to him.

Words will never be able to express the loneliness I feel since God called him home to be with Him. I have been comforted by that blessed assurance that his Saviour had a wise purpose in releasing him from this wearisome journey to that fair city where he is now resting in the everlasting arms of his blessed Redeemer whom he loved.

Blessed thought! Leon spoke so often of the total depravity of mortal man and the rich and reigning grace of almighty God; this God who rules the universe, who is all wise, all powerful, immutable. He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, and none can stay His hand or say, Why doest Thou.

I shall always be thankful to God that both Leon and I believe this blessed truth!

My dear companion lived quietly and unpretentiously here. He didn't covet the beggerly treasures of this world, but rather looked far beyond this terrestrial realm, to that celestial city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God - to that inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for the saints in all ages who look for and love His appearing.

Oh, what fervent love, what rapture we feel when, by an eye of faith, we are given a glimpse of heaven and Divine things. No tongue will ever be able to express it. It has to be felt.

If it could be in accord with God's will I, too, long to depart this rugged pathway and be at home with my blessed Saviour to ever sing praises to His glorious Name throughout all eternity.

I do hope both you and Sister Poole are getting along alright. Please extend our love to her. Come to see us when you are in this area.

May God bless your labor of love in getting the dear old *Signs* to His humble poor who enjoy reading it so much.

Please remember us in your petitions.

With love,
Janie P. Trent

(See obituary in this issue.)

Bavon, VA. 23013

Dear Elder Williams,

Enclosed please find money order for another years of the *Signs of the Times*.

How thankful I am the Lord has put it in the hearts of all who give so willingly of their time not only to write, but also to hear from loved ones in other sections who have been spiritually blessed to share their experience with others.

Love to all, and God's blessings on everyone.

Mrs. James Mason

Madisonville, KY. 42431

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for my renewal for one year to the *Signs of the Times*. Use the remainder as you see fit.

I have been a subscriber since 1948 and have never failed to receive my paper each month on time. Thanks so much for all your work and kindness in getting the good paper out.

I enjoy the paper so much and look forward to it coming. I read it over and over. The truth never gets old. I enjoy the Editorials and all the good writing.

Thank you for the work you put into this good paper. I need your prayers.

Mrs. S. G. Harralson

LEONARD L. TRENT, JR.

The spirit of our dear brother in Christ has gone from the land of the dying to the land of the living. Brother Leonard L. Trent, Jr. was born December 25, 1907 and passed from this life July 18, 1982 while a patient at Cone Memorial Hospital, Greensboro, NC. He is survived by his dear wife Sister Janie P. Trent, and two daughters: Mrs. Jean T. Williams of Reidsville, NC and Mrs. Jane T. Fagan of Charlotte, NC. He is also survived by five grandchildren.

Brother Trent was a very dedicated reader of the scriptures, and we all were amazed at his perception of the written word. His deep understanding of these precious truths brought with it his unshakable belief in the total sovereignty of the God whom he loved.

Some twenty-five years ago, for the first time, he was given to hear with a "hearing ear" a gospel sermon from the scripture, "I will fasten Him as a Nail in a sure place." The great assurance he was given permeated his whole being and was as "the rushing of a mighty wind" which enabled him to

"rejoice with joy unspeakable!" Following this experience he expressed a desire to be numbered with the Lord's people. He and his dear wife were received into the fellowship of Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church on the second Sunday in March, 1972.

When his health became poor, he longed to be taken from this strife-filled existence. The Lord granted his request by taking him to the peaceful climes of eternity.

A beautiful graveside service was held in Reidlawn Cemetery, Reidsville, NC where his body was entombed. His pastor, Elder Spangler, spoke very feelingly from the scripture that Bro. Trent had first feasted on, Isa. 22:23. Elder W. J. Berry also spoke of the confidence he had in Bro. Trent's hope, which of course was a comfort to the family. We miss him, O so much, but we cannot grieve as those who have no hope.

I feel to conclude this letter memorial with the words of the poet:

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
Amids't the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

Written by one who loved him as a brother in Christ.

Mamie P. Aldridge

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

- 1 copy - \$5.00 plus \$1.00 for mailing
 - 5 copies - \$20.00 plus \$3.00 for mailing
 - 10 copies - \$30.00 plus \$4.00 for mailing
- (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hard-bound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:

Signs of the Times, Inc.

P.O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 28101

"THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD"

We also have a limited number of Elder David Bartley's excellent book "The Priesthood of the Son of God". While supplies last, we will sell them for \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing. (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax.)

Send orders to:

Signs of the Times, Inc.

P.O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

SPECIAL NOTICE

Elder Durwood B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N.C. has been invited to join the staff of the *Signs of the Times, Inc.* as an Associate Editor. He has accepted the invitation. Elder Stokes is well known throughout the Eastern States among the Old School Baptists, and also in Canada.

His name will appear on the cover beginning with the next issue.

Also, Elder J. T. Prescott has accepted the invitation to join the Board of Trustees, and we look forward to serving with each.

Elder D. V. Spangler
President
Board of Trustees

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., APRIL 1983

No. 4

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year - \$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spanger, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder James F. Poole, Editor

P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801
Phone (301) 742-6406

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555
Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115
Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court, Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

8902 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 4

Brother Beebe:-It is not that I take any pleasure in aggravating the feelings of those brethren who are so tired of seeing my name in the *Signs*, and of my *long pieces*, as they call them, that I thus protract this relation of my experience, but it is that I think the relation would be deficient without extending it to my deliverance from under that cloud I spoke of in my last. Perhaps, however, some may think I am under it yet.

I will go back and relate one exercise which I passed over previous to my being baptized. After the arrangement had been made for a church meeting and for my coming before the church, as I was sitting in my room one night reflecting on the subject, all at once the view rushed upon my mind of the host of learned, and as I thought, pious men, and of Doctors of Divinity which were on the side of the Paedo Baptists, together with the Reformers; and the thought that I, an ignorant youth, should turn from them, and in effect, pronounce them all in error, was overwhelming; and I was nearly ready to form the conclusion to draw back from what I had undertaken when this expression of Paul's came with power to my relief, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal. 1:16. My mind was again calmed. Paul, when God was pleased to reveal his Son in him and to call him to preach him, had to leave all whom he had esteemed as the learned Doctors of the law and the most religious of the Jews. Immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood, but alone obeyed God. So I felt that in this case it

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

was my duty to do so, also. I learned a lesson then which I have not yet forgotten, viz: that whenever the Scriptures have been opened up to my view, so that my mind has been convinced of the truth of any subject as taught in the Scriptures, I have felt constrained to advance and advocate it, without *conferring with flesh and blood*, whoever might oppose. In no instance have I, in reference to the great leading points I have discussed through the *Signs*, been led to being forward a sentiment that is a *newer thing* than was believers' baptism to me. And in no instance have I, in advocating any of those sentiments, had to depart from a greater host of esteemed standard writers than in leaving the ranks of infant baptism. I might go further on this point in reference to Scriptural authority, but I will forbear.

To pursue my experience under that dark cloud, it was soon accompanied with an awful war of the elements within me. I recollect having said in writing to a friend shortly after my baptism that I had thought the summer before I had a full view of my corruptions, but that I then only saw the surface of them, but now, like the billows of the ocean, they came foaming up from a unfathomable depth. Soon therefore did I most seriously regret that I had ever been baptized, for I was most sure that my corruptions would overcome me, and I should bring reproach upon the Baptist Church and cause; which I now believed was the cause of Christ. My first plan to avoid the insufferable evil was to put an end to my existence. But I reflected that if it should be discovered that I had killed myself, the reproach would be equally as bad upon the cause as in the other case. I, therefore, set my mind to work to devise a plan how I could do it, and not have it discovered. When, however, I had the plan arranged so that I thought it would answer, I was suddenly reminded of the rightful sovereignty of God over his creatures, as I had

seen it in October before, and felt that if it was his pleasure to make use of me as a rod to chastise and humble his people by leaving me to fall under my corruptions, I ought to submit to his sovereignty in this, as well as in other things. This drove the thoughts of suicide from my mind for a time.

Still my corruptions raged and the thoughts of falling and bringing reproach upon the cause, I dreaded. My next resort to save the cause was to have my name crossed off from the church book. Accordingly, one night after school, though there was a deep snow on the ground, I walked eight miles to the brother's on whom I had first called, to get them to have my name taken off the book. In the course of the evening after I got there, having occasion to turn to a Concordance, I opened it, and this part of the text, 1 Kings 8:23 met my eye, "Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart." Surely, thought I, this is my case, for I do know the plague of my own heart. And if such characters, I thought, were included in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple, then they must be included in Christ's intercession. I was relieved for the time, and went back to my school the next morning concluding to let my name remain on the church book.

As the Presbyterians had charged me with joining the Baptists in order more easily to get into the ministry, I had concluded that I would not think of engaging in the ministry for a year or two at least. But it was now suggested to me that it was wrong to take that resolution from fear of the reproaches of the Presbyterians, and that God was leaving me to suffer these trials in consequence of it. I now concluded that I would go to the church and mention the case to them, and if they saw fit to give me an opportunity to exercise my gift, I would do it. They very readily consented, having indeed anticipated it. A special meeting of the church was appointed to give me a hearing. No sooner was this

done that it was worse with me than before. It was bad enough I thought to impose myself upon the church as a member and I was going to impose myself upon them with all my corruptions as a preacher.

I went back again in a few days to see some of the members, and get the appointment recalled, but was persuaded out of it. On March 17, 1811, I went before the church and tried to speak from a text; was almost entirely shut up, and but very little, and when I retired for the brethren to consult, I concluded the matter was now decided, that they would not encourage me any further; but they otherwise decided, and made another appointment for me, and I consented to it. I was again distressed because I had done so; but having more liberty the next time, I consented to another appointment.

I thus went on having appointments made for me, and in the meantime harrassed so with my corruptions and doubts whether it was possible I could be a subject of grace, and repeatedly concluded when the pending appointment was filled I would consent to no more. On June 17th the church licensed me as a preacher. Why the church was satisfied to license me, I can account for only on the ground of their being so accustomed to hearing Presbyterian preaching, for mine was of that same formal kind.

My being licensed made my case no better; it was no relief from the strong workings of my corruptions, and therefore not from my darkness, nor from my doubts, but as to the propriety of my attempting to preach, and of my being a child of God. It is true I had a hope which I could not renounce, that I was a subject of grace, but instead of being unwilling to part with it for the world-as many say- I often felt that if it was any thing tangible, I would tear it from my breast, and cast it from me with a determination no more to indulge in it until I experienced a new work. I,

however, went on trying to preach from time to time; could not muster resolution to give it up, though often determined to do it.

In the fall some of the brethren made arrangements with Elder Parkinson for me to go and spend three or four months with him; that I might have access to his library. And in view of his instructing me in Hebrew, of which I wished to obtain a knowledge, I consented to the arrangement. But again this was a fresh source of distress to me, so much so that I one day retired to the woods to spend the day in seeking direction of God, both as to the ministry, and as to going into New York. Wilst thus waiting upon God I had a text given me which gave me considerable encouragement in reference to the ministry; and in reference to going to Elder Parkinson's. This text was given me and applied with some power, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Acts 6:6. I accordingly went, but I carried the cloud and my depravity with me.

I had not been there long before, if I had had the means at command, I would have taken the stage and gone where I would not be known or heard of by any who had known me as a professor of religion, and where I could therefore pass as a non-professor. But adequate means were wanting, and I had to remain. I thought at times it was impossible such a wretch as I could be a subject of grace, and concluded the longer I lived I was but aggravating my final condemnation the more by my pretensions of preaching and to religion, and repeatedly prayed God to cut me off at once, let what would be my final portion, rather than leave me longer to deceive his people, and expose his cause to reproach by that probability of my being overcome by my corruptions.

Elder Parkinson occasionally required me to preach for him on Lordsday mornings, as I was also frequently called on to go to other places

and preach. But being under the cloud as well as far from being satisfied that I was called to preach, my preaching was, of course, dull and formal. I thought that my preaching in Elder Parkinson's church was not very acceptable, as taking his place. I inferred from it that the brethren did not think me called to preach. His custom was, when he wished me to preach on Lord's day, to give me notice on Saturday morning that I might study a discourse. Such was his practice, and I had borrowed the same from him. This practice I continued to some extent for several years after; that is, when I had opportunity, and could find texts beforehand. I finally was led to drop the practice for these reasons. 1st., I frequently could not obtain a text from which to preach in time for study, often not till I got to the place of preaching. 2nd. I found by experience that the Lord could give me at the time as clear views of a text as he could beforehand. And 3dly, I found that when it was his pleasure to give at the time clear views of the subject, I enjoyed the preaching more myself, and therefore felt more animation in speaking than when I had studied the subject beforehand.

I once at the commencement of my speaking in public, tried carrying notes with me into the pulpit, but I found myself so embarrassed with them that I never tried it afterwards. In consequence of the opinion I had formed as above mentioned of the reception of my preaching, I began to desire that Elder Parkinson would not ask me any more to preach for him.

One Saturday morning, my mind being much oppressed with doubts, I hesitated somewhat about going into the study, lest he should tell me I must preach the next morning; and when I went in I thought I earnestly desired he would not. On going in, he observed to me that as he had been absent considerably of late (which had been the case) he would preach all day on the

morrow, to prevent the complaints of brethren. Although this was just what I had wished, the moment he said it, the suggestion arose in my mind, now Elder Parkinson, as well as the brethren, believes I am not called to preach and that I am a base hypocrite. This created a storm in my breast indescribable, and I could hardly contain myself. But I sat down to my table and tried to compose my mind to study. It was of no use. I shoved my books from me, and at once concluded I would go over onto Long Island where I knew there then were retired places, within convenient distance, and spend the day in supplicating God in mercy to direct me to what was duty. As I took my hat to go, I had the precaution to take my knife out of my pocket, and leave it on the table, least if I did not obtain relief, I might be tempted to commit suicide. As I went out of the study door, the thought occurred to me that I would go into my lodging room and pray to the Lord to go with me and direct me. Whilst there thus engaged, my mind became somewhat composed, and the idea was suggested to me that I had better go back into the study and read a certain pamphlet which had been laid on Elder Parkinson's table a few days before. I went back and took up the book. It was the experience of a person in England written by himself in a letter to William Huntington, and was by him thus published. As I read it, I saw the path in which the Lord had led me delineated step by step. Like myself, this man had been a professor for some years previous to his being brought into gospel liberty, and had been a zealous legalist; had had his foundation suddenly all knocked from under him, as mine was, and afterwards, Christ had been revealed to him as the substitute of the sinner, and the end of the law for righteousness. As he described these exercises as a being killed by the law, and a being born again, born into gospel liberty, I was led to understand such to have been the

nature of the exercises I passed through during the months of September and October of 1810, as before described, that then is was, I was slain by the law, and then that I became a believer in Christ, and was born of God.

The cloud that I had been so long under now in some measure broke; and I enjoyed a comfortable hope of being a *new creature*. From this I was led to see what a galling yoke of bondage the law and legal religion was; and how lovely and glorious was gospel liberty and gospel grace as contrasted with legal service. Still the cloud was not altogether dissipated; the doubts as to my call to the ministry were as great as ever. At length in hopes that the Lord would decide the point for me, I pleaded with him, that if he had not designed me for the ministry, I might not be called on to preach for four weeks, and I solemnly promised that if this should be the case, I would not again attempt it. I passed over that week, the next Lordsday, and most of the week after, without being called on to preach, excepting at one night meeting where the preacher expected, disappointed, and that I set down for nothing. I began therefore to conclude that the Lord was about now to decide the case for me. I felt somewhat composed waiting the result, and satisfied to abide by whatever the Lord should decide in the case, whether to preach, or to give it up.

On the Friday night of this second week, at the hour of retiring, Elder Parkinson started to go to bed, and I immediately followed. I had to pass his room door in going to my room. He opened his door and went partly into his room, and as I was passing his door, he turned back, and said to me in a very decided tone, "Brother Trott, you must preach on Lordsday morning, and you may prepare yourself for it as soon as you please." I have never been able to devise any reason he could have had for giving me that early notice, and for speaking in that abrupt manner. But if a

clap of thunder had burst over my head, it would not have astonished me more. As soon as I could think, I turned to beg of him to recall it, and let me pass without preaching, and lo, he had retired into his room, and shut his door upon me. I then immediately went into my room and threw myself upon my knees or perhaps prostrate on the floor, to intreat of the Lord to interpose and decide the case for me. Whilst there, my mind received the impression that it was my duty to go forward and preach; a text was impressed on my mind from which to preach on Lordsday morning, and so clearly opened up to my view, that there was no need of further study to prepare me for preaching from it. This was on the 8th of Feb. 1812.

S. Trott

(To Be Continued)

WORDS OF ADVICE FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Elder Poole,

I'm enclosing a check for Volume 4 of the Editorials. I hope the people are taking advantage of the opportunity to collect these Beebe editorials. It is easy to neglect ordering, even though the firm intention and desire is to have them. Keep reminding us!

Florence W. Gibson

(We appreciate the advice and are glad to do so. Editor.)

BISHOPS - DEACONS (Continued from last Month)

In my view, Acts Chapter Six is not strange language to these things considering the common fund and the daily serving of tables seems to have ceased during the great persecution. The general havoc of the church, the invasion of privacy, the committal to prison, and the scattering abroad except the apostles (Acts 8:1, 3) made it all but

impossible to continue according to the original order of things. Now they which were scattered abroad, Acts 11:19, (this includes six of the first seven deacons with others) went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8:4 Whether these preachers were spiritually aspiring or desiring the office of a Bishop is a question not easily answered. 1st. Tim. 3:1. One thing for sure, they were doing a good work, and there is no better way to make full proof of a man's ministry than doing the work of an evangelist. 2nd Tim. 4:5; Acts 21:8.

These were the intermediate days or the time span between Acts 6:7 and Acts 9:31. Let us look at the following references within the time span:

1. Scattered abroad except the *apostles* (Acts 8:1)

2. *Apostles* which were at Jerusalem (Acts 8:14)

3. And brought him to the *apostles* (Acts 9:27)

4. Sent by the *brethren* to Tarsus (Acts 9:30)

Then the end came to this period of great persecutions culminating in, "Then had the churches rest...and were edified...walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied," - Acts 9:31. Up to this point in time, based upon the foregoing references it doesn't appear the church at Jerusalem had ordained Elders, except of course, the apostles who were from the beginning Apostolic Bishops - Acts 1:20. In Acts 11:1 it was still apostles and brethren, and no mention made of elders. But then, when Agabus came from Jerusalem to Antioch and signified by the Spirit the coming of the great dearth, the disciples determined to send relief unto the brethren in Judah, which they did, and sent it to the *PRES-BUTEROUS, ELDERS* by the hands of Barnabas and Saul - Acts 11:30. This is the first mention made of Elders in the church at Jerusalem. But look again at the references made hereafter.

1. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:2)

2. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:4)

3. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:6)

4. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:22)

5. Apostles and Elders (Acts 15:23)

6. Apostles and Elders (Acts 16:4)

7. James and Elders (Acts 21:18)

In all of this a pattern emerges which reveals the following: In the beginning the twelve served the Church as Apostles, Bishops, and Deacons - Acts 1:2, 6, 20; Acts 4:35. The office of apostolast bishop and deacon did not continue beyond the death of the apostles...the office of bishop and deacon did. The best estimate seems to be deacons were chosen and appointed some five to seven years, more or less, before Elders were ordained. These deacons not only served tables but also assisted the apostles in preaching Jesus.

Six deacons with an undetermined number of others went everywhere preaching the word - Acts 8:4. Apparently the first Elders ordained in Jerusalem were from among these six deacons and the undetermined number of other preachers. The Bishops, after the death of the apostles, succeeded them in the stewardship and care of the church - 1st Cor. 4:1 ,2; Titus 1:7, in oversight and overseeing as pastors or feeders - 1st Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28, as shepherds to lead in counterdistinction to the Chief Shepherd - 1st Peter 5:4, as rulers to rule over; governing the church of God - Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1st Thess. 5:12; 1st Tim. 5:17, not as lords but ensamples to the flock giving themselves continually to prayer and ministry of the word - 1st Peter 5:3; Acts 6:4.

As stewards of God, chiefs of the mysteries, and watchers of souls, they must give account of their stewardship to God as to how they have ruled, managed, governed, and superintended the spiritual affairs and holy behavior in the house of God, with the "Elders who rule well being counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" - 1st Tim. 5:17. From this some have

supposed two distinct rulers ... one who rules and governs only ... the other rules and governs together with preaching, labouring in the word and doctrine. In my judgment I see no validity for ruling Elders distinct from preaching Elders. For while one may excel in governing the affairs of the church and the other excel in preaching and teaching the word; nevertheless, both are made by the Holy Spirit overseers to feed the Church of God - Acts 20:28. Both are to feed ... taking the oversight - 1st Peter 5:2. I know of no example where the Holy Spirit made one to oversee and not to feed, and conversely to feed and not to oversee. As to honour, he who rules well is to have double but the preference is given to him who not only rules well but excels in preaching and teaching or labours in the word and doctrine.

The deacons, after the death of the apostles, succeeded as assistants to the Elders to serve tables, attend to business, to run errands, and to serve in whatever capacity he is capable. Of course the service of the deacon is not independent of the Elder's oversight and overseeing. He is under the watch care of the Bishop as is every other member and ought to recognize his subordinate position to him at all times. Likewise, the Bishop should be aware of his subordinate position to Christ ... that Christ is the Bishop of souls including his own; thereby forsaking his self-willism of will worship.

As previously stated, the first deacons chosen in the early church were appointed to assist in serving tables, attending to business, etc. and those deacons had the capability of preaching the word. However, "apt to teach" is not a part of the qualification of the deacon - 1st Tim. 3:8-13, and in my judgment is not a mandatory requirement. A deacon who does not possess the gift of teaching, preaching, exhorting, etc., but does a good work in assisting, attending, and serving, as the scriptures have said, will purchase to himself a good degree and

great boldness in the faith - 1st Tim. 3:13. While at the same time, a deacon who is a good servant and does possess the gift to teach and exhort may be a blessed utility to the furtherance of the gospel, the Church of Christ, and especially to the Bishops, and should be recognized as such and utilized by the Elders as much as possible.

There is in the New Testament order of Bishops and Deacons a stark similarity to the Old Testament order of Priests and Levites. The Levites were the descendants of Levi through three sons, Gershon, Kohath and Merari - Numbers 3:12-17. Kohath, the son of Levi, was the father of Amram and the sons of Amram - Moses and Aaron - 1st Chron. 6:1-3. God chose the house of Aaron to minister unto Him in the Priest's office - Exodus 28:1, and then gave the descendants of Gershon and Merari charges and custody of certain things as helpers and assistants to the Priests (the house of Aaron) with the Kohathites being given the privileges of bearing the most sacred parts of the tabernacle - Numbers, Chapters 3, 4. But it was the Priests, Aaron and his sons, that were given the oversight to oversee the rest of the Levites - Numbers 3:32. It was Aaron and his sons who appointed them everyone to his service and his burden - Numbers 4:16, 19, 27, 28. The difference between Priests and Levites ... all Levites were from the tribe of Levi; all Priests were out of the house of Aaron. All Priests were Levites, but not all Levites were Priests. Even so with Bishops and Deacons ... all Bishops are Deacons but not all Deacons are Bishops. Christ is said to be the Bishop of souls - 1st Peter 5:25, and Deacon-DIAKONON "minister of the circumcision" - Rom. 15:8. Paul and Barnabas was said to have fulfilled the service of deacons - DIAKONIAN-ministry - Acts 11:30, 12:25. Upon their return to Antioch they were sent forth again; this time by the Holy Ghost - Acts 13:4, preaching in all the cities from

Seleucia to Derbe - Acts 14:20, 21. "And when they had ordained them Elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" - Acts 14:23. Here the word PRESBUTEROUS ELDERS is the same word used for Elders in Acts 11:30.

We have already said Acts 11:30 is the first mention of Elders in Jerusalem, whereupon Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch. The very next journey they ordained Elders in every church. These facts strongly suggest the Mother Church at Jerusalem set the example and all other churches followed the example.

Much controversy has centered around the word CHEIROTONE-SANTES-ORDAINED - Acts 14:23; some contending the word means a show of hands, others the laying on of hands. In my judgment the word means both a show of hands and the laying on of hands...a show of hands as chosen by the church and the laying on of hands as appointed by the PRESBUTERIOU-ELDERSHIP - 1st Tim. 4:14. This is in total agreement with the multitude's choice of the seven and the Apostles' appointment by the laying on of hands. Any Elder thus chosen and appointed having "budded and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" - Numbers 17:8, is none other than the Lord chosen - Numbers 16:5, and should cause all murmurings, bickerings, and questions to cease pertaining to his rule over them among whom he has the oversight - Numbers 17:5; 1st Peter 5:2.

After all is said and done, the bottom line is Elders are over brethren in the Lord ... they labour among and admonish them, and brethren are commanded by the inerrant word of God to *know and acknowledge* them, to *esteem them very highly in love* for their work's sake - 1st Thess. 5:12, 13. The rulers are to be obeyed and submitted to - Heb. 13:17, given double honour - 1st Tim. 5:17, not accused but before two or three

witnesses - 1st Tim. 5:19, and certainly not rebuked - 1st Tim. 5:1 except, of course, they sin and then only after it has been proven before two or three witnesses. Then, and only then is the Elder to be rebuked before all that others also may fear - 1st Tim. 5:18, 20. Any other procedure is sin itself, a strict violation and transgression of the word.

For a deacon to think he has jurisdiction over the Elder, what he preaches and the pulpit is a bit like Simon the sorcerer - Acts 8:9. He has neither part nor lot in the matters, his heart is not right and may still be in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity - Acts 8:21-23.

As it was with Christ, our High Priest, and his apostles, so it is with Elders at present. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as Aaron" - Heb. 5:4. Those who say we "Elders" take too much upon us ... why then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord - Numbers 16:1-3, should carefully consider the sins and judgment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is not ye but *He* that places the Elders as overseers and *He* that gives deacons as serving assistants to attend to business and to help in every way wherein he is able according to the measure of the Gift of Grace which God has given him.

I have believed and will continue to believe the Church of the First Born to be the highest court under the sun. In every irreconcilable confrontation between brethren the church is the court of last appeal. It's judgments are final and binding upon all parties, both defender and plaintiff. Every saint is a justice and should, at all times, and in every case, through prayerful solicitation pray that righteous judgments be rendered. In speaking of supremacy, do we not know the saints shall judge the world? Know we not that we shall judge angels?...How much more things that pertain to this life - 1st Cor. 6:2, 3.

In this supreme court Bishops and Deacons do not occupy civil but ecclesiastical offices. Their law book is the inspired word of God which is their thorough furnisher unto all good works - 2nd Tim. 3:16, 17, which they should study along with all the brethren to shew themselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth - 2nd Tim. 2:15.

In writing this I didn't purpose to deal in technicalities as much as I have, but found it somewhat necessary in order to better prove all things and hold fast that which is good. I haven't written this to make things seem better than they are, but rather that things appear as they are.

By comparing the old Welch brethren in their day who were willing, because of variances among the Baptist, to come and reason together resolving, in spite of differences, to sit in occasional communion for the sake of Sion, how can we in our day point with pride to the state of Sion when there are so many divisions among God's people and so much jealousy between Bishops and rivalry among Deacons and Bishops? When princes are hanged by their hands: the faces of the Elders will not be honoured; when the Elders cease from the gate, the young men will cease from their music. When the crown is fallen from our head, then woe unto us that we have sinned! Lam. 5:12, 14, 16. As James said, "Brethren, these things ought not to be".

My dear Brethren, as I said at the outset, I was requested to write this for publication, and if it be deemed worthy of publication, some may cast a suspicious eye of criticism, some of consideration, and possibly a few of appreciation. Whichever; whether suspicious criticism, consideration, or appreciation, my benediction remains the same ... if I haven't said it, then I will surely say it, *"I speak not this to condemn you, for you are in our hearts to*

die and live with you".

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen; and Amen.

Elder R. H. Hale

10220 Ridgely Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
October 28, 1982

Dear Brother Joe,

After hearing your sermon on "Go home and tell what great things the Lord has done for you", I wanted very much to tell the church all He had done for me. I was given to say but a little at that time, so I am writing what I believe He has done for me.

What I trust to be an experience of grace began when I was 11 or 12 years old after my granddaddy's death. I had never really given thought to life after death until then. All my friends were accepting the Lord and joining churches. I started reading the Bible and was shown what a horrible sinner I was.

I was so afraid I would die and I knew I was justly condemned to hell if I did. I thought I was praying to God promising I would live the life He wanted me to if He wouldn't let me die. This went on what seemed an endless period of time. I finally was shown there was no hope for me; my sins grew blacker and blacker. The better I tried to be the worse I was. There was not one thing I could do to save myself. Going to revivals as my friends were doing just condemned me more.

We had no church of my parents' belief near enough for us to attend. Elder Rhodes has started making special appointments at Mt. Olive Church. Mother and Daddy asked me if I wouldn't like to attend with them. I didn't think anyone knew about my feelings as I hadn't told anyone. I didn't want anyone to know what a horrible person I was. I had respect for Mother and Daddy's beliefs, but thought they

believed as they did because they were old fashioned. I didn't think it would do me any more good than going to the other churches. I thought I was going out of respect for them.

Little did I know what was in store for me that day. It seemed the sermon was preached right to me to show me all I had been trying to do for myself Jesus had done for me. I was given a precious hope I was included in the elect He had died for. That awful burden and fear were taken away. They sang "Amazing Grace" that day which seemed to fit my experience perfectly.

After this I looked forward to each time we were enabled to attend church. It seemed I was given to rejoice in each sermon. Then at a District Meeting at Rehobeth the doors of the church were opened. I wanted to go so badly, but I told myself Mother and Daddy weren't members. If they weren't worthy surely this was of myself and not the Holy Spirit. This I used to justify to myself my disobedience to His command to follow Him.

After this I started college and was going to church less. The things of this world and my plans became more important. After college I married and things seemed to be going smoothly.

It was at the birth of our daughter that I believed God had turned His face from me. We were living in Germany and were away from any church. Our daughter was born crippled. I felt her crippled condition was my chastisement for turning away after being given a hope. I truly believed God could make her crippled feet and legs whole then as in the time Jesus was here. I thought I was truly asking God to make her whole and put my chastisement on me and cripple me. My problem was that I was asking my will be done and not God's will be done.

It was at this time I was made to confess to God the true reason I had turned away from His command to follow Him in baptism. It was vain

pride--I was ashamed of the example of foot washing our precious Lord had given. I had heard Mother tell of all the fun poking at foot washing when she was young. I believed then and still believe it is wrong for such to be allowed. It is "casting His pearls before swine" in my opinion. I believe that foot washing should be done in an "upper room" with only members present--as when Christ washed his disciples' feet.

It was for a number of years that I seemed to get very little from the sermons I was able to hear. I believed what was preached, but it was not the rejoicing as before. Through all this I was not left completely without, as the *Signs of the Times* gave me much comfort.

I have been shown over and over I know not what to pray for. I could see nothing in our daughter's future except misery once she was old enough to start school. We loved her so much and I thought I would rather give her up than for her to go through what I felt to be before her. I asked the Lord a number of times to take her unto Himself while she was small. Then when she started school, she became ill. I remembered what I had asked years before and thought surely she would be taken. How I begged her life would be spared. I was shown I did not love her enough to give her up. This was answered and was the first time in years I felt He had heard me.

I was shown at this time how horrible it was to even think that God had ever made anything that wasn't exactly as He wanted. I was also given to believe God has a special reason and work for her. I hope I was reconciled at this time.

For a number of years I longed to be given to rejoice in the preached word as I had at first, to feel God was hearing and answering me, to show me clearly what He would have me do. When my father-in-law, his body cancer ridden, lay on his death bed, I believe I was given to beg Him to have mercy and take him to Himself quickly. I believe I was shown

He still hears and answers, as minutes later we received a call that my father-in-law was dying; shortly it was all over. I thank God I was blessed with this answer and truly believe that he is now in peace with Jesus.

Another time I was given evidence of His answering my prayers was when our daughter was in such spiritual trials. I have never felt like this before—grieved with her as I felt what she was going through. I remember reading one of her letters and begging Him in my heart to have mercy on her and to give her a direction for her life. I believe He was hearing and answered at the time as minutes later she called and was telling me how happy she was. I was so happy for her and was given such assurance that prayers given from above are surely answered.

I had wanted a home in the church long before our daughter joined. I thought at her baptism I could ask for a home but I could not. I couldn't truly believe our Lord wanted one who had turned away after being given such a precious hope to be added to His church. I wanted so much to hear my Lord say "Come" with such power I could believe it was surely from Him and not of myself.

After this I believe my husband was very much under conviction of his sins and was as much a running Jonah as I. It seemed there should be something I should do. I asked the Lord to show me what He would have me do. I believe He revealed to me in a dream that everything I did would be of myself, that I must wait on Him. For some time I was content after this.

Then the past few months it seemed we would never get back to church. It was very much on my mind what was the Lord's will concerning me. The scripture, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" came to my mind. I found it exactly like this in John 14:15. I believed I must be baptised. I thought

surely I must be baptised as the eunuch because I could never go before any church and speak to them. "My strength is sufficient for you," came to my mind. I tried to find this in the Bible but could not in those words but found many places where He was the strength of His people. I did find where Paul was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This was enough for me.

This was constantly on my mind. I tried to ask Him to show me where He would have me go. I wanted to be shown in a dream what church and minister because I loved those at New Hope, Mt. Olive and Hopewell. Instead of a dream I believe my answer was given in the form of taking away our means of attending New Hope and Mt. Olive. Our trailer in which we stayed to attend New Hope and Mt. Olive was robbed and we could no longer use it as before.

Now it seemed I knew what I must do. I asked the Lord if this truly was His will to give me strength, to stop my tears and give me what He would have me say to ask a home at Hopewell and be baptized that weekend.

Then I talked to my husband about it. I had asked the Lord many times if it could be His will that he would be brought forward with me. This did not appear to be His will as he told me he was so unfit he shouldn't be allowed to attend church much less be a member. He said he wouldn't stand in my way but he doubted if I would be able to attend very much.

This was all this Jonah needed to think, "I can't, I must wait until we live closer.

All this was changed that Saturday morning when our Lord enabled his minister to speak just the words to show this Jonah it was the tribulations I was running from. Then when the doors were opened with singing of "Amazing Grace" and I did not break into tears but could sing, I knew my Lord was giving me strength and I remembered my

prayer. I had to go and ask for a home with those dear people.

As I started forward I realized my husband was coming also. It was almost more than I could believe! I was fully convinced that he wouldn't be brought with me and now my Lord was granting this also! I can not express the joy I felt at this time!

The peace of mind I have been given compares to, but does not equal the peace I was given when I was first given that precious hope.

I hope our Lord will keep us from ever giving the brethren reason to regret giving us a home. May He give us strength to endure every tribulation and persecution that is ours to endure for His sake.

One who has been shown a little of the meaning of, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power", and "Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine and we shall be saved."

Nancy Pullig

What a wonderful, sweet privilege it was to see the workings of the Lord's hand in the heart and soul of this precious one, along with her companion. There was great joy in the hearts of the members and friends of Hopewell Church as they asked for a home expressing a desire to follow their Saviour in baptism. They were received and baptized on September 12, 1982 by their son-in-law, Elder James D. Hamrick, who is the husband of the little daughter mentioned in her experience. How precious are the workings of the Lord in the souls of His people.

Her Pastor,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

January 27, 1983

Greetings to the Editors, Board of Directors and subscribers of the *Signs of the Times*:

I am grateful to the Board of Directors who have shown confidence in me to appoint me to serve as Associate Editor to the *Signs*. It is true that I have maintained an interest in the *Signs* throughout my ministry because I feel that it is a profitable medium to offer succor to those who would be comforted by reading the experiences of those of like precious faith, both past and present. Yet, I am fearful of my own inabilities and feel that there are so many others who are far more capable than I. Having been taught that "With God all things are possible," I pray that God may use me in the execution of these duties to His honor and praise and that through Him some of His little ones may be reassured of His "sure mercies."

It is with anticipation that I look forward to working with the Editors and all who are involved in publishing the *Signs*. I trust that God will bless all of us to work together in love and harmony, having as our aim to write, by God's grace, "That which is sound and comforting to God's people throughout the land." If we are blessed to this end, then our efforts will be to His honor, praise, and glory.

In love and fellowship,
(Elder) D. B. Stokes

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION
OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

To December, 1982

| | |
|---|--------|
| Mrs. H. C. Lax, N.C. | \$3.00 |
| Mrs. Sandra Green, AL. | 1.00 |
| Reuben French, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Fannie Thomason, VA. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Willie M. Kimbro, N.C. | 3.50 |
| Mrs. Neva M. White, TX. | 3.00 |
| Ballard Barker, VA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Margaret Barefoot, VA. (In memory of William H. Holloway, MD.) | 105.00 |
| Mrs. Taft Purvis, AL. | 1.00 |
| Dr. G. H. Harrell, TX. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. P. L. Hosier, MD. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Irma L. Messick, DE. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Mary Benton, TX. | 10.00 |
| Jessie R. Somers, N.C. | 19.00 |
| Elder Stanley C. Phillips, MS. | 10.00 |
| Elmer McClanahan, W.V. | 2.00 |

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL | 3.00 |
| Roy Hester, TX | 2.00 |
| R. L. Fleenor, TN | 7.00 |
| Levie D. Goad, VA | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL | 3.00 |
| B. W. Kunkle, DE | 2.00 |
| Dollie C. Ward, VA | 2.00 |
| Charles Alders, TX | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Karen Pipkins, MS | 2.00 |
| Charles S. Reynolds, DE | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA | 7.00 |
| Willard J. Page, N.C. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Frances Andress, AL | 1.00 |
| Elder Clyde Daniel, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Robert E. Moore, AL | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Coline Daugherty, LA | 3.00 |

EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS 1:1, 13

Having found in our last the family of God as they were chosen in Christ, we now come to the delightful theme of what they were chosen to. The contrast between what we were by nature and practice, to what we were chosen to, is so great our finite minds are carried away in wonder and holy ecstasy. All of the skill of linguists cannot describe the gloom and despair of a soul when sin is revealed in us. Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death, and there is a death at the manifest entrance of sin into our consciousness that cannot be described by tongue or pen. The effort to describe it to one to whom sin has not been revealed, is one of the most futile things among men. The love of God now takes on a meaning that we have never contemplated before. What we were chosen to, and the suffering of the precious Saviour to bring this delightful state about is more than a match for our dull comprehension.

Look upon the theme in our text. The height and length, the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ for His church passes all understanding. Well might the apostle say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past

finding out". (Romans 11:33). The love of God as manifested in the love of Christ for the church, can never be described by mortal man - in fact, it is past finding out. The choosing of His people in Christ before the world began is full of nutrition for the hungry and thirsting children of the kingdom. No other name would do; no other personage could measure up to our sin. My soul is astounded as I stand before the bar of God's judgment. Out of Christ there is not any salvation. Only the righteous have an acceptable standing where sin has abounded. The costliness of our salvation is seen in the crucifixion of our Master. Pilate, in answer to the demands of the high priest for the crucifixion of the Saviour said, "Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him" (John 10:6). If there has ever been an execution like unto that, the pages of history are silent about it. That is understandable because He needed only once to die; the offering had to be a perfect one. We, like Barabbas, were guilty, and we the guilty went free, but although Christ had no fault, He was a fit offering for our sins. He did not have any sin, but we did, and He loved us and made our cause as His cause. May the Spirit of the Lord arise in our being, that we understand and be blessed to praise His high and lofty name for coming to earth in a body to suffer, to be mangled, spit upon. Being the son of Mary, who had fallen into sin, being under the rigid, death dealing law of God He came in a body to meet and endure the penalty for our sin, and yet He was God the conquerer of all the enemies.

Let it be remembered that these things must needs be. The rites and ceremonies and ordinances had to be fulfilled. They could not be passed by. How weak and trifling is that doctrine that would leave one thing missing, one thing unfulfilled, one step, one journey missing from His travels here below. Could it be so, my soul knows, that there being no acceptable sacrifice for sin since He

gave up the ghost and died, that the portion of His mission's work unfulfilled would still be charged to me. How beautiful, how gracious, how kind that if I am not deceived, He made my cause as His cause. He came to earth to solve a case that hopelessly involved the sinner, you and I, as each of us hopes, even a case that we never could have won and never could have extricated ourselves from out of it. What a beautiful doctrine. To this end was the covenant of redemption set up from all eternity. That covenant involved Him in coming and making the sinner's cause as His. Whatever our transgression brought upon us, He took that upon Himself; all privation, all sorrow, all His being cut off out of the land of the living. All His coming to the ignominious end that He did was for the purpose of giving poor covenant children a home beyond this vale of sorrow.

However, let me retrogress backwards. In the annals of eternity, His love was so great, so strong, so lasting, that He was ever rejoicing among the inhabitants of the earth, ever delighting in this people, in this family that God chose in Him in eternity and that He was so in agreement and in unity with every single individual of that family, and in support of, and a part of every stipulation of that Covenant that He delighted always in the beneficiaries of that covenant. How my poor heart leaps for joy that such a Being is on the side of sinners (Psa. 124); that this is not something that had its beginning among the sons of Adam, but that this is an old arrangement, as old a covenant, as ageless a purpose, as the eternal predestination of God to the end that His Son came down from heaven in behalf of His bride, his people, and that he came down from heaven as God's free gift to the children of men, and that He came to do what He did do, that His life from conception in Mary's womb was

laid out, appointed for Him from the cradle to the grave.

My soul is astonished at such a display of sovereign mercy, and to see the eternal fixedness of God in us being chosen in Him, and as a result of that choice of the Father of us in Him, the arrangements of every step, every thought, every action, every bitter draught of vinegar, every taunting and sneering insinuation and reflection on Him and His mother, all, all was for the lifting of Him on high, and that it was for the bringing of poor sinners into such a manifest relationship that they be brought before Him holy without blame in love.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." O my dear children of God, there are not any dropped stitches or broken links in the salvation of God's people. He made the world and the fulness of it. Now who will dispute that? It is still His world. That likewise is indisputable. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. That is indisputable. He declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:10). This is Israel's God and Saviour speaking. Let us keep the record straight; let us settle every doctrinal tenet of faith by His word, for it is forever settled in heaven (Psa. 119:9). When I survey the vast degree of difference between me and my God in the dispensation of His purposes, I am thrown upon His mercy time and time again. I need His counselling grace to teach me that as high as the heavens are above the earth, even so are His ways above my ways. There is a tendency in all of the roving around of my mind, to mark out a way and a channel in which my God can consistently work. If He does not stay in the channel that I have

marked out for him, He immediately crosses me. His doctrine becomes heretical; His ways become austere; His ways become partial and tyrannical. This is universal among the children of men, some even going so far, when they read of His ways in the Bible, or hear the rich gospel of grace preached by the hearing of the natural ear, that if He is that kind of God, that they do not want any part of Him. At this juncture of my investigation of God's fulness, let me note this thought, to wit, It may be thought that only dyed-in-the-wool Arminians would say such hard things about God. How wrong we are. The hardest things said about God, about His doctrine, about His children that trust in the arm of Jehovah God, are said by those that come the nearest to saying that God is a Sovereign over all things, worlds, and times.

At every step of the way, in all kinds of situations, under all kinds of circumstances, I need the leadership, the guidance, the superintendence, the keeping power of God's Holy Spirit to keep me meek, submissive, graciously reconciled to His way and His will. No mother's knee is sufficient, no fatherly elder in the church can do it, but enabling us to say, "Have thine own way Lord," is taught alone by the Spirit of God. It is the same fleshly lusting and workings of the nature of men that objects to God choosing one and leaving the other that is to say that He cannot raise up and bring together the mob that crucified our Saviour. The flesh has always objected to God's way, whether it has to do with some being elected to glory or to His having wicked men do His will. Both are objecting to His right to do what He wills with that which is His alone (Matt. 20:15). Since this question did not stop the carping objections of unbelievers, I am not expecting my expounding of these things to make objecters to the glorious doctrine of God's Sovereignty to suddenly turn and give credence to it. I

do not expect it, nor am I out to overcome the objections of creatures that are at variance with God over His ways, but I do write, and I humbly trust that I speak the truth in Christ Jesus our Lord that they, one and all, even everyone that is called by His great name be reconciled to God.

Perhaps I will be criticized for using the word, but I do hope that I am not amendable to men for the words that I use. I use many words not in the King James version of the Bible. And those that object to me using the word theory are just as guilty of using other words not in the lids of the Bible. Thus, the doctrine of God's election is as much spoken against as is His unlimited doctrine of predestination. Anything said against God's predestination of anything is equally to be said against His election of some of Adam's race to eternal glory. Our text tells us so clearly that God had predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to good pleasure of his will.

Undoubtedly, and without reservation, I declare unto you that God's determining act of predestination of some unto the adoption of children, and the leaving out of some who were not adopted, that if it is unfair to predestinate and determine to leave them out, and yet hold them accountable for being left out, that there is not any difference in doing that, and in predestinating the act of men in wickedness and charging their sin to them. I have read all of the sob sister stories that God did not predestinate the wicked going to hell. Whoever heard of God preparing an abode for a class of people and He did not know whether He would have anybody to send there or not? When God chose a certain number to be saved of Adam's race, the very fact that He did not choose them left them for the devil, in the relationship that each of them bore to their earthly father, they were all children of wrath, all exactly alike, the

only difference in the two portions of the race of Adam was in the fact that one portion of that race had an everlasting place of rest prepared for them, and the other portion of that race of Adam had a place prepared in the abode of Satan and his angels.

It does not make any difference how much name calling is indulged in, it is still solidly established that there is a great gulf fixed between those for whom the adoption was not carried out for, and no man has ever crossed that gulf and got in among the redeemed of the Lord. When some are predestinated to a certain end, that end is just as certain as a thing can be, if those that are left out of God's predestination to the adoption of children, or to a home in heaven. Nothing, not one thing at all, be that thing whatever you desire to call it, that can be sure of the outcome of His predestination concerning it, unless the whereabouts, the coming, the going, the movements in every way of the thing left out of the predestination is secured in some way. Yes, I realize what men say. They say, since God foreknows all things, He is able to avert disaster by outwitting the devil. But let us see. If God only foreknew what any given part of His creation knows, if only some things are predestinated, who is establishing the other things which, it is said, God foreknows alright, but that He did not declare, fix, ordain or predestinate. Have we got a third party that makes the things foreknown a certainty? Who is it that makes these things certain? They must be certain by someone because God does not foreknow anything except certainties.

Furthermore, if it was according to the good will of God to predestinate the chosen of God unto the adoption of sons, was it not equally according to the good pleasure of God to leave the others out. What kind of God have we before us? Is He so weak, or so unconcerned or so helpless that really and truly He had rather have predestinated all of them

unto the adoption of children, but that His hands were tied? Is that what you are preaching for gospel? Is that kind of spurious fulness to be preached to the Gentiles? The limiting of God as to what and when He does a thing, the sitting in judgment on what He is involved in, and how entangled and involved He becomes if He does things this way instead of that way, is not the fulness that satisfies a poor sinner.

What God does he does it freely. No creature can say unto Him, You doing this or that or the other is wrong. He is under no restraint, nor is He constrained by any of His creation from doing His will in heaven or in earth. He does as He pleases and He is pleased with what He does. I do not blush when I say it; I do not apologize to Him for preaching it, but, by the grace of God, as I humbly hope, I preach that the acts of Joseph's brethren, the acts of Potiphar's wife, and everything else connected with getting Joseph down to Egypt was from God--it all was the direct, the moving, the intentional work and purpose of God. It may be said that I am being childish--and I hope that is true, for the brethren of Joseph, the brethren of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ acknowledged the salvation that they were given came immediately from God meaning it, intending it, to be for their good. Every hungry destitute Israelite in that day, and every hungry and destitute Israelite today rises up and pays homage and adoration to the God of Israel that according to the good pleasure of His will He sent Joseph a man of sorrow, a man who was hated and persecuted in his own household to save much people alive by the sacrifice of Himself to the evil caprices of those for whom He was laboring in order for them to have bread, even the fulness of life forevermore.

May the Lord enable Israel to know that all of our blessings here, and the precious and waiting things ahead for them comes as the fulness of the gospel

of the grace of God. God forbid that any one of the family of God ever again raise their voice or lift their pen to ascribe this fulness as coming from us that are filled from time to time on these things. The man of God was received without grumbling by the poor widow woman. They, (she and her son) with Elijah, ate what she had. He was willing to eat the last she had, and she was willing for him to eat the last she had. When he left a promise of fulness was left with her. The barrel of meal wasted not (was not consumed), and the cruise of oil continued. Elijah (God sent or God Himself) promised her that kind of sufficiency, that kind of fulness. I humbly trust that, by the grace of God, I have known that fulness, even that fulness which is in the Lord Jesus Christ among you for more than fifty years, and I hope that as long as I am on this time journey not to know anything more among you other than the fulness, other than the salvation that is in Him, and that of Him and by Him each of us will be brought to His table and fed on it.

Elder W. D. Griffin

Walnut Springs, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am enclosing my check to renew my subscription for another year. Please use the balance to help in any way that is needful.

I have just received my December issue of the *Signs*. I don't remember ever getting a copy that held more sermons that fitted my need as much as this copy. I especially needed and enjoyed Elder Griffin's comments on "The Virtue of Keeping Quiet." I also enjoyed Elder Lefferts' sermon about the ravens in I Kings 17:6. I do believe that the "ravens" can and do drop a few morsels for God's humble poor. But, of course, they are not aware that they are doing so.

I received my copy of Elder Beebe's

Editorials, Number 3. I am enjoying it very much. In the near future I hope to order Volume 4 also.

In trials,
Sister Neva M. White

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

AUTHORITY OF CHURCHES

In determining the effect of any action of an individual church, it must necessarily be considered by what law the church was governed in the particular action under investigation. Upon the assumption that sovereignty rightfully belongs to every organized church, the most erroneous and conflicting decisions have been promulgated in all ages, even before the apostles were taken from personal supervision of the administration of the affairs of the kingdom of Christ. Certainly in the perfect law of our King there is definite provision for determining every question which can arise in practical obedience to the directions which he has given. Whatever of difficulty may appear to be involved in the application of his complete law to any circumstances surrounding a church, there can be no defect in that law; the darkness is in our own ignorance of the things which God has revealed. It is of great importance, therefore, to carefully examine the subject in the light of that only standard of infallible direction, the law of the kingdom of Christ, as written in the New Testament.

The first certain and essential fact to be observed in this investigation, is that the exclusive source of authority, and the only power in the church, is that which is immediately derived from her omnipotent King. However the system of popular sovereignty may be adapted to the government of the nations of this world, it can never be recognized in the kingdom of Jesus, which is not of this

world. This is plainly asserted by our risen Lord himself; and is by him assigned as the ground upon which his inspired apostles were to go and teach all nations. He does not bid them rely upon the support of created beings, whose breath is in their nostrils. Such dependence might fail them in the trying hour. Trusting exclusively in the presence of their Lord, they obeyed his direction; and in all subsequent ages they have gone in their recorded judgment, according to his commandment; and he has not failed to verify his word by manifesting himself with them always, even unto the end of the world. When the words which they were inspired to write are taken by the Spirit of truth and shown to his saints, they never fail to recognize in them the testimony of Jesus, and thus he is with his witnesses. Without this divine revelation of Jesus in those writings, the most earnest efforts of inspired apostles could never give the knowledge of God. Much less could they give instruction in the things of the kingdom to those who were dead in the sin under which all men are already condemned by nature. Jesus Christ is the only absolute Sovereign. From him comes every blessing to each of his saints; and his faithfulness must fail before any good thing can be withheld from one of his little ones. It should never be forgotten that in the gospel kingdom, the new Jerusalem, "there shall be no more curse." The gracious law of liberty is fulfilled only by that perfect love which casteth out fear. In the gospel kingdom no slavish terror enforces unwilling obedience to the inflexible demands of a fiery law. Those who are governed by the Spirit of Christ are judged alone by the law of liberty. This principle shines in every ordinance of our king, since the admonition speaks to the saints expressly, saying, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and

trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. He has given no commandment but that he has made his people willing to obey. None can know of the doctrine of Jesus, except they have the desire to do his will; and all such are included in the blessing written in the last chapter of the inspired record. To those who do not love him, Jesus has given no commandment. This principle is inseparably identified with the whole system of the kingdom of divine grace. There can be no room in this kingdom of love for discord and jealousies to find entrance. This is as true of separate church organizations as of individual members. Fellowship and love cannot be enforced under penalties. It is not an oversight on the part of the Lord that no direction is given by which the church may enforce the respect due to her dignity when her decisions are not recognized. There can be no disobedience to the law of Christ but that which is rendered as the most joyous privilege of those who hear his commandment. Evidently such obedience cannot be rendered under the prompting of any other power but divine love.

As in the primitive churches, wars and fightings among them originated in their lusts that warred in their members, so it has been in all ages since. It is impossible that such works of the flesh should be found among the gracious fruits of the Spirit. "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality (or wrangling,) and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James ii. 16-18. It is well for all who love our Lord to carefully examine themselves by this infallible test; and whatever is condemned, must be rejected, even

though it should manifest carnality in what we had supposed to be zeal of God. It is of himself and the saints to whom he writes, that James speaks in asking, "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, *The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*" Surely there can be no difficulty in discerning the difference between this work of the flesh, and the love which is the fruit of the Spirit. Crafty workers of iniquity may bewilder the unwary by a form of compliance with the letter of the discipline of the gospel, while in spirit they violate the law of Christ. Such evil workers are very earnest in claiming respect for their decisions; and they complain bitterly of all who prefer implicit obedience to the commandment of Jesus. Having secured from some organized church such action as sustains their carnal notions, they are very intolerant of all who question the authority which they have supposed to be thus established. In support of decisions attained by adroit management, the dignity of the church is cited, and if opposing decisions are obtained in sister churches, these enemies of real peace are ready to proclaim war; and when sustained by civil power they have enforced their authority by the sword. According to the most reliable records of history, by far the greater part of the bloodshed in the last nineteen centuries may be traced to the maintenance of the dignity of professed churches. Surely no subject of divine instruction can accept as truth the theory which makes the law of Christ the source of such abominable works of iniquity. The true church of Christ never did, and she never can, depend upon any earthly power for the maintenance of her dignity. When her King was nailed to the bloody tree, her dignity was not sacrificed. Even the accursed cross was glorified by the blood of that suffering Lamb of God, in whose death the sins of his chosen people were blotted out. It is the only ground of boasting with the saints that the grace

of God in Jesus Christ has given them all the worthiness in which they can glory. This is universally understood by those who hope in the salvation of God which is in Jesus. None dare claim any personal merit or dignity. The song of the glorified myriads ascribes all worthiness to the name of Jesus exclusively. As the only Sovereign of heaven and earth, he reigns supreme. He has never delegated any of his honor to creatures, whether they be called popes, or bishops, or independent churches. All dignity and power are still in the hands of our divine King. His law is perfect; and no circumstances can arise for which that law has not provided. There is therefore no need that churches should have any authority committed to them. Nor has it been revealed that such power has ever been bestowed upon any company of mortals.

The only authority which can be justly recognized in any local company of believers, or individual church, is the power and privilege of implicit obedience to the word and spirit of the law of Christ. While acting under such direction, the authority of her King makes every word infallible as his own immediate decree. Certainly the correctness of such action does not depend upon the number of members by whom it has been adopted; nor can the validity of any doctrine or practice be derived from age or established custom of uninspired believers. While courtesy concedes the recognition of all actions of a sister church as presumably conformed to this supreme law of Christ, it is an unjustifiable extension of courtesy by which any church demands that other churches regard her action as above questioning. Only direct inspiration can be so received. Under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, every church will sincerely wish all her steps to be critically compared with the perfect law of Christ; and with humble submission to the word of the Lord she will gladly receive correction whenever

her decisions have been without the warrant of inspired direction. The only and exclusive authority of individual saints, or churches, is the authority to hear and obey the word of the Lord. All other actions are in contempt of the law of the only King and Lawgiver in Zion; and it is rebellion against him for his saints to render obedience to such decrees as have no higher authority than the commandments of men. They are not less guilty of idolatry in honoring such decisions of churches, than in giving heed to decrees of popes and ecclesiastical councils. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—Eccl. xii. 13. 14.

WM. L. Beebe

Warwick, N.Y.

March 15, 1897

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The 9th annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 27, 28th, and 29th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road about 4½ miles and follow signs.

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

There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Pastor
Hopewell Church

ASSOCIATION NOTICES

If the clerks of the associations would send in their notices now, we would be relieved of having to contact them at the last moment.

Please, if you want them in the *Signs*, send them in early so we can prepare them in advance.

Thank you, Editors

BOOK NOTICE

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

Editors

PREDESTINATION

I am sending you a short article on the following text: "And he wept aloud."—Gen. xlv. 2. This is the language concerning Joseph, after all the bitter experiences he had undergone, from the humble shepherd boy to the place where he was exalted by the power of God. Is it any wonder that he should weep aloud? Joseph said, Cause every man to go out from me. The time had now come when he was going to manifest himself unto his brethren, and it was no wonder that he should want to be alone. God had brought him through all of the dangers and troubles to a place that he could now no longer refrain from telling his brethren who he was, and he said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, doth my father yet live? His brethren could not answer him. No wonder, for we must know that all their wicked conspiracies against him came again to their mind. They remembered of lowering him into the pit, of stripping him of his coat of many colors, dipping it in the blood of the kid and then showing it to their father to deceive him. The struggles of Joseph's resistance from being lowered into the pit, as well as all his wails and cries when being sold to the Midianite merchantmen, and being separated from his relatives whom he loved, now all came afresh to their minds, and we cannot wonder that they should be troubled at his presence. Joseph said

unto his brethren, Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves. It would be very strange according to natural reason that he should use such language, but the natural man cannot understand it, and so he says to them again, For God did send me before you to preserve life. This was the truth of the matter, God had been using these brethren of Joseph's to accomplish his plan. They did not know it. They had no knowledge that Joseph was yet alive, but now after he tells them who he is, he says, God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth.

The years of plenty had preceded the years of famine, the dreams of Pharaoh had been interpreted by Joseph, enough was stored up that all should have a sustenance; God was causing all this to come to pass. Shall not the God of the earth do right? There can be no doubt that all this was predestinated, and all came to pass just as it had been fore-ordained. It is very hard for us to reconcile ourselves to God's power; in fact, of ourselves we cannot, but when taught by the Spirit of God we can then see the beauty of all his wondrous works, and are made to exclaim, as did the apostle, He doeth all things well, also, He ruleth in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

I am inclined to ask, Was it possible for this deliverance to be brought about without these wicked acts, these evil conspiracies of Joseph's brethren? Was there some other way that Joseph could have been exalted? In fact, we are made to wonder why the famine should have taken place, just the same as we are made to wonder at God's dealings with his people in the work of salvation. Was there some other way? The natural mind says there is another way; in fact, many other ways: develop the will, strengthen the judgment, cultivate the reason, lay hold upon God, and you will be saved. We as a people in nature are inclined to ignore God's work in salvation and come to the conclusion that it might

have been some other way, and yet He says, I am the way. He has predestinated from all eternity the salvation of his people, just as he has predestinated all things that have already, or ever will, come to pass, and now he is manifesting unto them their deliverance.

When holy men of God spake they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and they told of things certain to come to pass. This deliverance is according to the counsel of his own will. He says, I will work and who shall let it? Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? Not one atom of the entire universe but what fulfills the exact sphere for which it was predestinated. You may call it purpose if it breaks easier with the brethren, as a Presbyterian minister once said to the writer, but it is predestination just the same. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 26-28.

Joseph's rule was revealed by dreams, Christ's rule is made known unto us by the sure word of prophecy. I heartily agree with brother Adams that we cannot unify any doctrine that denies God's sovereignty. I was much pleased with his and brother Vail's letters; in fact, they are all good. Let me say, brethren, Cry aloud and spare not. Deceivers are waxing worse and worse, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

If it seems this article is worthy to be used in the *Signs* and may be of comfort to the brotherhood you may publish it. Spread the mantle of charity over the writer, for I realize my own imperfections. May God bless you, with all of like

precious faith.

Respectfully,
E. D. Elder
Nov. 1, 1920

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CLIFFORD SHARP DANIEL

It is with a heavy heart I attempt to write a tribute to the last surviving child of a family of ten children of my grandfather, Thomas Abel Daniel, and grandmother, Martha Joiner Daniel.

I grew from a toddler to the present holding Brother Daniel in the highest esteem. I must say that his counsel and judgment has had a great influence on me all of my life and especially in recent years when he served Shady Grove Church as Deacon and I as moderator.

Brother Daniel was deeply established in the knowledge, doctrine, and order of the church, and served the church in the highest honor.

Brother Daniel was born in Crenshaw County, Alabama, on July 3, 1898, where he grew to manhood and married Myrtle Thagard on January 31, 1925. To this union was born five daughters who join their mother and grandchildren in the sorrow of this great loss, along with many relatives, friends, and acquaintances. They are Mrs. Charles (Gladys) Settles, Madison, TN.; Mrs. Sam (Evelyn) Furguson, New Port Richey, FL.; Mrs. Earl (Joan) Woodard, Winter Haven, FL.; Mrs. Milton (Jean) Kent, Mulberry, FL.; Mrs. Bill (Joy) Dougherty, Jacksonville, IL.

Brother Daniel moved to Eagle Lake, FL. in 1939 and later to Wahneta, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was baptized into the membership of Black Rock Church in Alabama, by Elder E. D. Gafford, in July, 1946. In August 1950, he joined Shady Grove Church by letter, in order to be with his wife, who had her membership there.

In June of 1966 Brother Daniel was ordained to the office of Deacon. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather served as deacons in Sweetwater Church in Alabama, going back to the 1830's. He passed away on February 21, 1981, after attending church that day.

His funeral was conducted in Ott Laughlin Funeral Home by Elder E. P. Stott; his grandson, Michael Woodard; and his Pastor, Elder J. Y. McCormick. Uncle Clifford told me several times he was not afraid to die. We feel our loss is his Heavenly gain.

The following was a tribute to his birthday several years ago, and was written by one of his daughters:

Seventy-four years ago today
A child was born on Alabama clay;
To Martha and Thomas Daniel's home
Another son to call their own.
He joined the group of
Five brothers, one sister,
And they chose the name of Johnny Clifford.
The doctor came and fell in love
With Johnny Clifford - sweet as a dove.
Martha smiled as the doctor harped
And they changed his name to Clifford Sharp.
They say it's a bad omen to change your name.
But don't you believe it;
For I'm here to claim,
One of the greatest men that ever lived
Is Clifford Sharp from the Crenshaw Hills!
Have a Happy Birthday!!!

(Clifford Sharp was a well-known and highly respected educator in Crenshaw County Alabama in the 1890's.)

WILLIE FOSTER SMITH

It has pleased our Heavenly Father, by His tender love and mercy, to call home one of His precious saints, Sister Willie Foster Smith. At the time of her death she was hospitalized in Amarillo, Texas and lovingly cared for by her only daughter Ela Simpson, of Amarillo.

Sister Willie was born July 19, 1901 and departed this life October 4, 1982 making her walk upon this earth 81 years, 2 months, 15 days. She was preceded in death by her husband, M. R. Foster and later by Brother D. A. Smith. She is survived by her daughter, 2 grandchildren, several great grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews.

Sister Willie asked for a home and after relating her experience was received into Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma on May 12, 1934. She was baptized the same afternoon by her father, the late Elder W. N. Green. She remained a member until her death.

Sister Willie loved the church and she believed very strongly in the absolute predestination of all things. Her poor health prevented her from attending church during the last years of her life but her faith and strong belief in the doctrine never wavered and was exemplified by her daily walk and talk with those about her.

She loved nothing more than to have brethren and sisters visit in her home, to sing the dear old hymns and to hear the truth proclaimed.

Sister Willie endured much pain and suffering during the last years of her life but her prayers were never to seek relief but rather to be made submissive to the will of her Heavenly Father. She was made willing to suffer for Christ's sake.

Her funeral was conducted at Tims Funeral Home Chapel, Altus, Oklahoma on October 6, 1982

by her Pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood of Saltillo, Texas. Her body was laid to rest at Altus Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord and the final resurrection.

Those of us who are left mourn her passing for we miss her presence among us but we are thankful to God for His loving kindness and tender mercy. We know our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by one who loved her very much,
her nephew,
Bob Champeau

MOLLIE BELLE CLARK

Mollie Belle Clark was born on November 12, 1892, the daughter of Henry K. and Bannie Cash, and was called away to her heavenly home on March 30, 1982. On December 15, 1914 she was married to Clem J. Clark who preceded her in death. Six children were born to them, one of whom, Tommy Clark, died at the age of four. The children who survive her are: C. J. Clark, Jr., Mrs. Elizabeth Hunt, William L. Clark, Fred C. Clark, and Mrs. Bobbie Riggs.

On April 18, 1959 she joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church and lived out her life there as a lovely and faithful member. She was a quiet, thoughtful person -- a woman of few words with a kind and compassionate heart -- and greatly loved by the people in her community. She was rooted and grounded in the doctrine of salvation by grace and was constant in her love and attendance to her church -- walking softly before the Lord -- and she was blessed with a lovely family who respected her belief and love for her church.

Elder C. B. Davis conducted her funeral at the Durham Church and her body was laid to rest beside her husband and little son in the cemetery at Rose of Sharon Baptist Church. Shortly before her passing she had talked with a close friend concerning her feelings about Paradise and we feel that the poet who wrote this hymn beautifully expressed the longing for Paradise which God's people often feel:

"There is a land mine eye hath seen
In visions of enraptured thought
So bright that all which spreads between
Is with a radiant glory fraught.

A Land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow -- falls no stain
There those who meet shall part no more
And those long parted meet again.

Its skies are not like earthly skies
With varying hues of shade and light;
It hath no need of suns to rise
To dissipate the gloom of night.

There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm serene abode:
The wanderer there a home shall find
Within the Paradise of God."

DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

SISTER TESSIE IRENE HARRIS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst a very sweet sister in Christ, Sister Tessie Harris. She departed her life on earth in a Tyler hospital, August 17, 1982. Sister Harris was born August 30, 1902. Survivors include a brother, Joe Smith Harris of White Oak; a sister, Opal Bergin of Hawkins, Texas; and a number of nieces and nephews.

She was deeply interested in the truth and through sovereign grace she adorned the gospel of Jesus Christ, her Saviour. She depended upon the Lord for temporal mercies, as well as for spiritual blessings.

In her last few weeks she had sorrow and suffering; but neither the bitter sorrows of life nor the suffering of death could separate her from the love of God which was blessedly manifested in supporting and comforting her during the last few weeks of her life when she could say; Dear Lord, come, and take me to thyself, I am quite ready. Her great God who has been her refuge and strength during many weeks of suffering and trial was the same to her in the end. Her love to the Lord, his truth and to his people continued to the end. That well of water in her heart kept springing up into everlasting life.

Sister Harris had no fear of her soul departing from her body for she was given a precious hope of joining the godly departed souls to join them around the throne of God and the Lamb, to sing "worthy is the Lamb to receive honor and power and glory, for thou hast created all things for the glory of thy great name."

We miss her greatly at Paran Church and so do the neighboring churches. We feel we have lost a precious member. Her mortal remains was committed to the earth in Paran Cemetery there to await the resurrection morn when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

WILMOTH WARD DALTON

In my weak way, if God will bless me, I will write a few words in memory of our beloved Sister. Knowing that God does all things well both in

Heaven and earth, he called her from this life on October 20, 1982, in Virginia Baptist Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Wilmoth was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to the late William Tazewell Ward and Etta Hammock Ward, who survives her. She is also survived by six brothers, Addison Ward, Hurt; Stuart Ward, Altavista; Austin Ward, Mount Airy, N.C.; Woodrow N. Ward, Rocky Mount; Ernest Ward, Danville; and Isaac Ward, Gretna; and one sister, Doris Dearing, Lynchburg. She was married to the late Acie Brown Dalton.

Sister Wilmoth was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 23, 1970, and was a faithful member. She was not permitted to attend her meetings several months prior to her death, due to her health.

She bore her afflictions with much patience and enjoyed the visits of her Brethren and friends. I believe Sister Wilmoth was made reconciled to her illness and to death. She will be greatly missed by her church, family, and friends. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father, who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on October 23, 1982, by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. John Johnson. Her body was laid to rest in the Dalton Family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Heavenly Father.

O. K. Tench, Moderator
Raymond Goad, Assistant Clerk
Written by, Marvin Brumfield

SARAH ELIZABETH HAMMOCK WORLEY

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our Dear Sister. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove Sister Worley from our midst on July 9, 1982, at the age of 75 on arrival at Ramsey Memorial Medical Center, Gretna, Virginia. Sister Worley was born December 15, 1906, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to the late Raleigh Thomas Hammock and Emma Reynolds Hammock. Survivors are one daughter, Gladys Light of Roanoke, eight sons, Wilford, Dave, James, Sam, and Oscar all of Gretna, Virginia, Douglas of Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, Clay of Lynchburg, and Charlie Worley of Alexandria. One stepson, Robert Price Worley, Montvale; two stepdaughters, Roberta Brumfield and Annie Dalton, both of Gretna; three brothers, J. T. Hammock, Gretna; Henry Hammock, Concord, and Ollie Hammock, Appomattox; two sisters, Snowie Shelton, Gretna and Kate Bingley, Providence Forge.

Sister Worley was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950. Due to Sister Worley's health, she was not permitted to attend her meetings several months prior to her death.

We will all miss her, but most of all, she will be missed by the family and friends. I feel our loss is her eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and James Worley at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

O. K. Tench, Moderator
Raymond Goad, Assistant Clerk
Written by, Marvin Brumfield

MAMIE E. WILLIAMS

The former Mamie Canterbury was born April 2, 1903, in Lamar County, Alabama, the daughter of James and Hester Otts Canterbury. She was married to Louis W. Williams on November 14, 1918, in Gattman, Mississippi. She moved to the Quad-City area in 1952.

Sister Williams was a member of the Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church in Sulligent, Ala. Her body was laid to rest in the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery.

Surviving are her husband; three daughters, Mrs. Earl' Newton, of New Boston, Mrs. Troy Morris, of Aberdeen, Miss., and Mrs. Bob Ingvall of Moline; two sons, Arnold of East Moline, and Ira of Moline; 24 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Houston Pitts, and Mrs. Tommie Williams, both of Sulligent.

She was preceded in death by three sons.

Taken from a Newspaper Obituary

FIVE MILE CREEK UNION MEETING

The Five Mile Creek Union Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Dorsey Creek Church, Friday, Saturday, and continuing thru the Fourth Sunday in April. (April 22, 23, 24.)

Dorsey Creek Church is located at Breman, Alabama, Highway 69, about halfway between Jasper and Cullman, Alabama.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Rt. 1, Box 167A, Breman, AL.
Phone (205) 287-1603
Rufus L. Jacks, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., MAY 1983

No. 5

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year - \$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spanger, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder James F. Poole, Editor

P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801
Phone (301) 742-6406

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555
Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115
Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court, Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

8902 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Keeling, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The 9th annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 27, 28th, and 29th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road about 4½ miles and follow signs.

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

There will be no business, just preaching and singing.

Elder Joe Hamrick, Pastor
Hopewell Church

RELATION OF MY EXPERIENCE

No. 5

Brother Beebe: Here I come with another *yarn*, though I think I will wind up with this. On the Lordsday morning I preached from the text given me, as mentioned at the conclusion of my last. My preaching, to me, was entirely different from any of my former preaching. Before my preaching was a formal thing, but now I preached in faith, felt that I *spake that I did know, and testified that I had seen*. From that period (if sent at all) I date my being sent of God to preach. Whatever purpose God may have had in my former exercises on the subject, relative to my being sent into the ministry, all my former preaching I consider as a running before I was sent. The cloud seemed now to depart and thus I conceive was fulfilled the declaration made to me the fall before, "Go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do." But it was not long before I was as much troubled with the calm as I had been before with

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

the tempest.

I do not wish to be understood by what I have said above about preaching in faith, that I am always enabled to preach in faith any more than I can always pray in faith. But I wish to say that with the gospel preacher, as with the gospel hearer, there is a preaching in faith, as there is a hearing in faith; and there is by the same preacher, a preaching at times, when only the powers of his own mind, enlightened to be sure, as they have been in the knowledge of spiritual things, are engaged in bearing testimony to the truth, as there are times in which the believer only hears with his natural understanding. In this case he judges of the truth, but he does not feel it or feed on it. If the experience of others agree with me on this point, they must also agree that faith is distinct from the exercises of any of the faculties of the human soul, that it is *fruit of the spirit*. Further in reference to my preaching, there have been times when I felt comfortable on going into the pulpit, and all at once a dark cloud has come over my mind, or the subject, which seemed to cast a mist all around me, so as to effect my powers of vision in looking at the congregation. Again there have been seasons when for months I have enjoyed none of the comforts of religion, only when I was preaching, and then I was almost uniformly enabled to preach in faith, could in faith point out the experience and trials peculiar to the christian, and in faith hold forth the fulness of Christ, and the consolations suiting the case of such. And when I have closed, and thought of what I had been preaching, I could no more apply it to myself than I could clear away the clouds from the natural sky. At times I have viewed this as according to scripture, that the *witnesses* instead of retaining the *golden oil*, were to *empty it out of themselves through the golden pipes* of ministerial gifts. See Zech. 4, and Rev. 11:4. The business of a *servant* also

corresponds with the above, though he may at times eat of what is left. But it is good for him at times to be taught his business, viz, to set forth the provisions to the family and guests instead of eating them himself. At other times this experience in reference to preaching has been a source of much doubting and distress.

Soon after my mind received satisfaction in reference to the ministry, I returned to the vicinity of Morristown, with the expectation of preaching for that church. But I went not with my mind impressed with a desire to convert souls. I went deeply impressed with the evil of that *legal bondage* which I knew by past experience was so prevalent in that region among the Presbyterians and others. I went therefore with the design of bearing my testimony against it, and to hold forth salvation as being of rich, free, and sovereign grace reigning through the righteousness of Christ. I soon, by that kind of preaching, aroused a pretty severe opposition against me, both in and out of the church. I was charged freely with being an *antinomian*, with bringing forward *new things*, and with *creating divisions*, etc. This drove me to search the Scriptures and to enquire more earnestly at the *mouth of the Lord*, and resulted in my becoming stronger in my views and in the defense of them.

From that day to this, the most aid I have received from man in forming my religious views has been through their opposition; thereby driving me from men to look to God and the Scriptures for my guidance. I have learned in my early experience many ideas from men, but have had again in many instances to unlearn them. I know that it has been my desire to learn of God and not of man, and he, I think, taught me that desire in my early experience. Whether I have learned of him, or deceived myself with my own fancies, it is not necessary for me to say. I am in God's hands, he knows me, and knows what to do with

me. And brethren will, as is their right, judge for themselves whether to fellowship what I have related as my experience, as the teachings of God, or to reject it as delusion.

I will add that these charges which commenced at Morristown, have been continued unto this day. They were made against me in Kentucky, and when I came into Virginia, I found Luther Rice had brought from Kentucky and other places, and circulated here the charge of my being a *pestilent fellow*, and a mover of divisions in churches. Hence those of the Old School who are keeping up the cry against me of bringing in *new things*, and causing divisions, etc., may see that they are but walking, in this thing, in the steps of the missionists. Whether this is evidence against me of being a disciple of Christ, I will not say. I know that neither Christ nor his apostles in their day had the reputation of being very subservient or accommodating to the opinions and dogmas of the great and learned Doctors of Divinity, or of the law, of that and the preceding ages.

I have had an impression on my mind since 1816 that I should live to see this *land plucked up*, that is, to see our liberties overturned, and the church brought into captivity or under oppression. As it is somewhat connected with my experience, in reference to what I have above been noticing, I will state the ground of it. Where I lived at that time in the State of Ohio, bordering in Indiana, the country I considered considerably destitute of preaching, and being confined to a school for support, I of course could not travel and preach as I wished. As I had not then seen the inconsistency of the mission plan of sending out preachers, with the New Testament order, I was thinking of writing on to New York to obtain an appointment to travel and preach in that region as a missionary, when this text was so applied as to make an impression on my mind, "The Lord

saith thus, Behold that which I have built will I break down; and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself; seek them not; for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord; but thy life will I give thee for a prey in all places, whither thou goest." Jer. 45:4 and 5. I have, it is true, never felt very confident of living to see this government broken down, and our liberties plucked up. But as far as to seeking great things for myself, it has been prophetically true. In reference to engaging in business for the purpose of acquiring property, I have been invariably held back from it. And I have never been able to engage in those measures or advocate any system that was popular with the multitude; but have been constrained by a regard to what I believed to be truth, in my preaching, and in my intercourse with brethren, to advocate that doctrine and cause which has left me in the background among the few. I have been glad to retire to the *cave Adullam*, with that *distressed, indebted, and discontented* little company. I Sam. 22:1, 2. It was so when we were altogether as Baptists, and it seems it must be so among the Old School Baptists. My life also so far has been given me for a prey, both temporally and in reference to enjoying the fellowship of those whom I have esteemed as knowing the truth. I feel confident that our government will be broken down, and the church in her present privileges be plucked up, whether I live to see it or not. Though if brother Calvert is correct, and the church has passed her last fiery ordeal, and got into the Philadelphian state, the *state of brotherly love*, as *Philadelphia* signified, and has an *open door which no man can shut*, Rev. 3:7, 8, then it will not be so.

In reference to seeking to be distinguished as the leader of a party, I confidently say I never have had any ambition for it. Never have I taken any

steps calculated to accomplish it. Whenever the Lord has been pleased to give me to see the error of any views which I in common with others have held, and also to understand the Scriptures as clearly revealing other views of the subject, instead of seeking to form a party by trying to disciple the members of churches to which I preached to my new views, I have in the first instance thrown them out broadcast, in preaching at Associations, or published them through the *Signs*, where they were sure to be canvassed before they were received. Or if in any instance I have first spoken of them in private, it has been in a company of ministers. I made this statement, believing that some who have made the above charge against me ought to know from circumstances, that the statement cannot be contradicted. I now make it, not so much to vindicate myself from the charge, for it cannot be long that the reproach will effect me, as to guard the minds of brethren from the prejudice attempted to be raised against the views I have advanced, by representing me as influenced by such motives in advancing them; views which I have thus advanced because I believed them, and still believe them, to be according to God's revealed word.

Notwithstanding the opposition raised against my preaching at Morristown, the church in the course of the summer called me to ordination. And I was ordained August 30, 1812, not as the pastor of that church, for that I declined, finding no Scriptural authority for it, but to the gospel ministry.

I wish to offer one remark before closing. I think it will be admitted by many that some of the exercises which I have related have been deep, and strongly marked. I call attention to this because so many brethren and sisters complain that theirs were not so, and think that if their exercises had been thus strongly marked, they should not doubt so much. Yet there are perhaps

more of these who have been more severely handled with doubts than I have; thus showing that it is not any past testimony we have received of acceptance, that can produce present faith, or relieve from present doubts, unless the Lord is pleased to give us a fresh realizing of those doubts. Whenever the Lord enables us to *walk by faith*, we enjoy a comfortable hope. But when he leaves us to encounter the assaults of the adversary, and the corruptions of our own hearts, and with nothing but our reasoning powers to combat them, however much our reason or souls have been enlightened in the knowledge of spiritual things, we have but a sorry, gloomy, doubting time of it; and we are made to know that it is not by any power that we have that faith can be brought to our rescue. Surely those who think that faith is merely the result of testimony, and that their souls have been renovated, and changed from natural to spiritual and heavenly souls, can never have been under that fourteen months cloud which I had to pass through, in which time I could so calmly and deliberately reason on putting an end to my existence; nor under many trials and dark seasons, such as I have had since to pass. I can as soon believe that darkness is light as I can believe that my soul with any powers it now has, though I hope I am born of God in a new and distinct life, can of itself exercise a comfortable trust in Christ and reliance on God. If they have experienced a different change from me, I of course can know nothing of that. But I am transgressing those rules which brother Beebe has found it necessary to adopt in order to sustain the publication of the *Signs*. This shows the propriety of what I am now in closing about to do; for I do not believe it is in me to write one of those kind of neutral communications which shall interfere with no one's expressed opinions.

In winding up, then, after acknowledging I think with gratitude, the many

and great indulgences brother Beebe has extended to me, in publishing my communications, I now take farewell of the *Signs*, not as a supporter and promoter of them and their circulation; and not, as not publishing through them such notices as I may have occasion to publish, but as a correspondent of the *Signs*. I do not this from opposition to the course adopted by brother Beebe in reference to the present volume, but as acquiescing in it. I know the turn which has been given to my mind in writing, and I know not that I can change it. And it appears quite manifest that we cannot have discussion through the *Signs* without controversy; and if controversy is further admitted, it seems, or has been thought the *Signs* could not be supported in the publication of them. This, by the by, does not look as though the church is now in the *state of brotherly love*. I wish I could see it in that state. As I wish the publication to continue even under the present arrangements, for two reasons, I draw back. 1st. I wish them continued, because they are so welcome a messenger and so comforting to many of the brethren and sisters who are so scattered as not to enjoy the privilege of hearing much gospel preaching, or of much personal intercourse with brethren. 2nd. Brother Beebe commenced the publication of the *Signs*, as a pioneer in the Old School cause and under many difficult and discouraging circumstances; and has valiently, laboriously, and successfully, battled the whole New School phalanx. Now after enduring the burden and heat of the day, it would be truly a matter of grief to see him suffering defeat and loss through the Old School.

But in acquiescing in the neutrality of the *Signs*, that is in reference to the differences of sentiment among Old School Baptists, I must be allowed to say that for myself I can consent to no neutrality, or armistice in reference to what has been so much the subject of

controversy in the *Signs*, viz; what is called *soul regeneration*. For myself, I would as soon ground arms in reference to Fullerism as to that. The more I look at it the more I am convinced that it strikes as directly at the ground work of salvation as does Fullerism, though more covertly.

My reasons for occupying this decided stand against this sentiment, I probably shall, if providence permits, hereafter publish in pamphlet or circular form, and distribute as I have opportunity.

Farewell.

S. Trott

P.S. Brother Beebe, on reading over the third number of my experience in the *Signs*, I feel a desire to make a few additional remarks on one point. I mentioned that when faith was given me in Christ, it produced in me a deeper sense of my own vileness, and of the vileness of sin than I ever had felt before, etc., etc. From my experience I have been led to think that the repentance which Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Savior to give, consists in that sorrow for sin in itself considered, and contrasted with God's love, which flows from faith in Christ, in distinction from that sense of just condemnation arising from the application of the law. I used to insist in preaching that genuine faith in Christ would be accompanied with this loathing of self and of sin, in distinction from that Campmeeting kind of faith, in which the mind of the individual seems altogether engrossed with joy and shouting. But finding so few mentioning this as connected with faith, I have thought it might be making my own experience too much a test. Still finding that those who give their experience through the *Signs*, mention nothing of this increased sorrow for sin flowing from their faith, the query has arisen in my mind, whether it is because they did not think it important to notice it, or whether their experience was not so; and that it was and still is, in every fresh manifestation, thus connected in

my experience in consequence of my peculiar vileness; for I know that I am and have been the vilest of the vile. There are some ancient worthies with whose experience mine seems to have accorded, Job in particular. See Job 43:5 & 6, Isaiah and Daniel. Isa. 6:5, Dan. 10:8. On the other hand, I know the declaration is, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." The question therefore again arises, whether this believing on the Son does, or does not, uniformly produce this self abasement and sorrow for sin? I would be pleased to hear, throught the *Signs*, the minds of brethren on this point. Not to participate with them in any discussion on it.

S. T.

Monticello, Georgia

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler,

I was busy talking to the brethren tonight and forgot to give you this little contribution.

It is a blessing to visit the Dan River brethren - and even when I am at home 400 miles from church, my thoughts are with you on meeting days.

I have enjoyed this visit very much, and Neal has, too. This has been a special visit for us both. I am glad we were able to be together at the French home on Friday night. We always enjoy being with you both.

Brother and Sister Minter are so good to us and make us feel so welcome. We're thankful to them for their kindness.

I will miss not being with you for the Sunday morning services, but I will have much to reflect on. I have enjoyed all the sermons. It is good to be with those of like faith and hear the truth, as we know it in our hearts, proclaimed.

Thursday evening you spoke of praise and prayer. You said the two are closely related. This is a beautiful thought. (Psalm 107)

Tonight you spoke of the power of God and of the meaning of the word "let"

(Psalm 40) In all of the scriptures man's frailty is contrasted to God's power - His sovereignty.

Indeed we are weak. May we ever look up for strength and strive continually to magnify Him.

You've given me much to meditate on. I have truly been fed.

We love you both,
Katie and Neal (Kilby)

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR HIS
CHILDREN WHO FORSAKE
HIS LAW

"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."

--Psalm 89:30-32

There is nothing more "conditional" than an "if-then" statement. "Conditional" is the very word logicians use to describe any two sentences or ideas joined together by the if-then connective. Some may wonder, then, how can anyone deny that the scriptures teach conditionalism regarding obedience, disobedience, punishments, and rewards? Are not the scriptures full of ifs and thens? Is not this very text an example of such? Does it not say that *if* God's children forsake His law and walk not in His judgments, and if they break His statutes and keep not His commandments, *then* He will punish them with the rod and with stripes? Read the text again before proceeding. Does it not plainly say that?

No, it plainly does not say that. One of the problems in discussing the scriptures with those whose citizenship is below is that things which the Bible plainly says, according to the natural mind, simply are not so.

"His children" mentioned in these verses are Christ's covenant children and are considered to be the children of God the Son as distinguished from being children of God the Father. While it is true that those who are children of the One are the children of the Other (for the Son is one with the Father, John 10:30), the contrast is nevertheless here emphasized because the relationship spoken of here is a covenant relationship. The ones spoken of here are Christ's children, one and the same with those glorified saints with whom Christ identifies Himself in Hebrews 2:13 in these words: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." In this text Christ Himself makes the distinction between Himself, as recipient of those children who are identified with him, and God the giver. So, they are children of the covenant which is prominent throughout the 89th Psalm: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, 'Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.' Selah (verses 3-4)." "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him (verse 28)." "My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips (verse 34)."

What is said of Abraham's seed in Galatians 3 may doubtless be applied to David's seed mentioned in Psalm 89:4, for David's seed and Abraham's seed are one and the same in Christ Jesus by virtue of the truth expressed in Matthew 1:1. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." And what is said of Abraham's seed? "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ (Galatians 3:16)." God's promises were made primarily to Christ, not to Christ's children, except as they were secondarily beneficiaries of His will and His covenant.

Christ the promised seed Himself owns a uniplural seed, his elect: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29)"; "But ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)." So, the children of the covenant are one in Him, and as such they are not viewed as separate individuals or as being separate from Him. It is not they, but Jesus Christ, who is spoken of in Galatians, being acted upon and acting in all ways and in all things as their Covenant Head, Mediator, and Representative before God the Father.

It is in this regard, then, with Christ as their representative, that "His children" are discussed in Psalm 89:30-32. In their Adamic nature His children are prone to forsake God's law, break His statutes, walk not in His judgments, and keep not His commandments. In connection with such depravity on the elect's part, God said He will visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. The natural mind of course assumes this visitation of divine wrath logically must fall upon those who are the guilty individuals; but if that were the case, why would not the next verse then say, "Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from THEM?" It should indeed say this, if His children were the ones who received the punishment, because this verse is designed to give assurance to the recipient of the punishment, that, although the punishment is severe to the extreme, nevertheless the punishment is no indication that God's lovingkindness will be taken from the receiver. And the receiver is not "them", but it is HIM. No, it is not the children who receive divine wrath. They stand or fall, not in their own righteousness, but in their Representative and His righteousness. In the context of this Psalm, verse 16 truly might be paraphrased, "In Christ's name shall His covenant children rejoice all the day; and in

Christ's righteousness shall they be exalted."

Then, the question arises, who received the rod and the stripes mentioned in verse 32, if "God's disobedient children" did not and do not? The answer is on every page of the sacred scriptures: Christ Jesus Himself, ever the Representative of His people, received the rod and the stripes. "He was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5)"—the transgressions of Psalm 89:32. "He was bruised for our iniquities"—the iniquities of Psalm 89:32. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." There is the chastisement which is so richly deserved by His "disobedient children" and which was so exquisitely endured by their Saviour. "And with His stripes we are healed." There are the stripes of Psalm 89:32, in Isaiah 53 along with the transgression, the iniquity, the wounding, the Saviour, His children, of Psalm 89.

"Where is the rod, then, where is the rod of Psalm 89:32?" someone asks. We counter: How else was he bruised for our iniquities, if not with a rod? Let no one doubt that the rod fell on the Saviour any less than did the stripes! The prophet Micah by inspiration links the rod and the One who was smitten by it with the eternal decrees of God Himself; "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1-2)."

In the latter part of Psalm 89 the sufferings of Jesus are then detailed. The covenant between Father and Son is again mentioned, but this time the God-man says, "Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant"; this was His feeling as a man, this was His experience, as He bore the chastisement

of His people and bore their sins in His own body on the tree, that they, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose STRIPES they were healed (See I Peter 2:24). As the Psalmist views the awesome crucifixion he says to God the Father, "Thou hast broken down all His hedges; thou hast brought His strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil Him: He is a reproach to His neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of His adversaries; thou hast made all His enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of His sword, and hast not made Him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made His glory to cease, and cast His throne down to the ground. The days of His youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered Him with shame. Selah."

Ah, Selah! Pause. Pause, and think about it! May we never, by God's grace, lose sight of the fact that this was the fulfillment by the Father and the Son of their eternal decree. This was not a battle between the Jews and the carpenter's son, nor between the prophet of Galilee and the Roman Empire, for He told the Emperor's lawful representative, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." It was not Pilate who broke down His hedges and turned the edge of His sword, but it was the Father Himself. No man or group of men from Adam's fallen race could perfectly offer a perfect sacrifice to satisfy perfectly the perfect God. He must do it Himself. And, when He had done so, He announced that it was done: "It is finished."

A God-blessed meditation on that fact should lead any living child of God to despise the horribly carnal idea that man's suffering a few "chastisements" while here below can equal the life, the sufferings of the cross, the death, burial, resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ in behalf of the sinner. Yet, millions swear by such a blasphemous idea that by enduring chastise-

ment and by obedience in the flesh we yet can escape further punishments and earn temporal or eternal blessings. But if Christ did not deliver His people from punishment by bearing it Himself, and if He did not give them all spiritual blessings including His own righteousness, beauty, and adornments of soul and spirit all as a free gift by grace, then where is the gospel, and what did He accomplish?

In the face of the cross of Christ, all man's obedience on the one hand and his suffering of chastisement and punishment on the other pale into insignificance. All these things remain to this day what Isaiah said they are: filthy rags.

The sacred scriptures and the Holy Spirit's sure witness only sustain the free grace position. That is all that ultimately matters. The free grace of God in Christ Jesus and His finished work are the only things which have proved to be a resting place for a poor, sin-sick soul. May He grant rest in Christ to both the reader and the writer is my sincere desire, if not deceived.

Unworthily
Elder C. C. Morris

January 12, 1982

Dear Elder and Sister Hamrick,

I thought of you all during the ordination of your son and his and Trudy Jeroline's wedding. I know it was a beautiful page in your memory-book of life, which, no doubt, was ordained by God ever since the world began. May he lead them over the rough places as well as the flower-strewn path to the very end that leads to life everlasting.

You are all so dear to my heart. I feel that God has blessed me far beyond my greatest expectations. Who am I, that He should manifest so much love and compassion for me? We are told that He gave His only begotten son to live and die, to redeem the sins of us, unworthy

sinner.

"Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song: he also is become my salvation." Isa. 12:2, Psalm 143:8-10. "Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning: for in thee do I trust: Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk for I lift up my soul unto thee." "Teach me to do thy will for thou art my God: thy spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness."

How well we know how David felt when he cried these words to God in prayer. How often we cry to God in the same way! I have felt His presence and power and love, ever since I was a teenager.

My first real experience, I think, started while on my way to a Primitive Baptist meeting. I had ridden my bicycle four miles into Gardiner where I was supposed to meet several southern members at the railroad station; and I was to follow them almost 10 miles, mostly through a wooded area to the home of one of the Whitefield Church members. However, I missed the train that had come in and the folks had already gone, so I tried to catch up with them. After I had traveled a few miles in the wooded area, a car pulled up in front of me and the driver ordered me to get into his car. I resisted but knew that if I screamed, no one could hear me. He forced me into the front seat and threw my bicycle in the back of the car.

It was still quite a ways 'til we were through the woods and came to a fork in the road. Meanwhile he threatened my life and pointed toward a distant hill where the autumn leaves were falling and said he could bury me there and no one would be the wiser! Oh, how I prayed to God! I had never felt the need so greatly! I told the man that God was watching over us, and I prayed to God to put words into my mouth that he would understand so he would set me free. I don't know yet what I said because they

were God-given. I was, as not! Then I heard the words, "I can't harm one hair of your head!"

God delivered me and I felt His presence profoundly! I cried all the rest of the way, only stopping once at a farm house to enquire the way. The lady was so sweet to me. She took me in and laid me on a couch, washed my tear and dust stained face and gave me a glass of milk and some cookies. Then she told me that her husband would take me the rest of the way! Needless to say, I have never forgotten that day! God delivered me out of Satan's hand and "led me to the house of my Master's brethren."

I think I was about seventeen or eighteen years old at that time and soon after that, I asked for a home in the Primitive Baptist Church. My mother and some of her people founded the South Gardiner Church at about the turn of the century. God has surely dealt with me many, many times since then and has manifested Himself to me!

He has led me in a beautiful way among wonderful people! I often think of the words, "behold the lily and how it grows, it toils not neither doth it spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!" I have found that our trust in God is powerful! With faith we could remove mountains and just leaning on His arm carries us safely on our way!

He has given me a beautiful life on this earth and I hope it will lead me into life everlasting.

May God continue to bless you and keep you, and if it is His will, may we meet again. It's my prayer! I love you all, so much!

Your little sister in hope,
Anna Dill
202 Maine Avenue
Gardiner, Maine 04345

BOOK NOTICE

To those of you who live in the North

Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

Editors

SCRIPTURE THOUGHTS FROM SISTER RUTH LUCHT

Dear Ones,

It has been a long time since I have written to you, but I've been enjoying the many fine articles and letters in the *Signs*. Being alone much, and so far from any of my brethren and others of our churches, I spend more time with my Bible, and the *Signs* and Volume 3 of Beebe's editorials. These all give me food for meditation upon the word of God and our wonderful Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Our fulness is in Him. Without Him we are as empty vessels.

Lately I've thought much on the mystery of the great love of God for His chosen people. How we feel to be so blessed far above what we deserve in the flesh. We know how unworthy and unfit we are to receive so much at His hand. We know He knew us from before the world began and before we were ever thought of (except in His mind). (Ps. 139:14, 15, 16) He knew all our failings even then, and knew those people that were His. (Eph. 1:4, John 15:16-19) He knows our hearts, our minds, and how sincere we are in our speech and actions. Knowing all of this, He continues to love us even more because we are His children and He loves us. He knows all our needs and supplies as He sees fit, even before we are aware of our need.

"Ask and it shall be given you." (Matt. 7:7, 8) Our cup is filled to the full and running over, even more than we can think or ask for so many, many times

These things are what amazes me! He speaks and it is done! His promises are sure and steadfast! His word is "Yea" and "Amen", never "perhaps or maybe!" His voice is like thunder and yet it is soft as falling dew; like nothing we've ever heard before. His wrath is terrible and yet His love is warm and comforting. His touch is gentle and loving. His compassion and understanding are not to be compared to, for there is none like Him. But the most amazing part of it all - He looked down and saw me, and of all there are in the world, I was chosen as one of His children! The many years of growing up under His watchful eye, when I was not aware of His guidance and love, He was teaching and correcting, chastising, and being patient with me. Finally he brought me into a felt knowledge of my need of His saving grace.

These last thoughts were brought to my mind again not too long ago on a beautiful Sunday afternoon when Elder and Sister Poole visited in our home. It was so good to welcome them here, but we only had a brief visit, and much that I wanted to speak of remained unsaid, because it just seemed to me I couldn't believe they had taken time from a long trip they had before them to stop by and visit me. I thought of how humble it has always made me when lovely brethren would visit in my home. All else is completely forgotten until later. Now I look forward to another visit, in the not too distant future, and I believe I will have to write a note to myself, not to get so carried away in wonder at the goodness of God.

Anyway, as I rested later, I thought of the way the Lord has always seemed to be with us, as a family, and watched over us during the many years of trials and blessings. Another daughter and husband dropped by later and I shared my thoughts with my two girls. They were speaking of the many sinful practices among the people today and especially of several of the most highly

respected people in the business world. I listened as they spoke of their teenage years and of the dates they had; of experimenting with a cigarette and not wanting it, while friends smoked all around them; and of schoolmates who drank and went out with strange people. They told of how the thought always went thru their minds of what I would think of them if they did this or that, and they did not partake of those things and even avoided ones who did, by not going with them. I had always left them in the Lord's hand. He could see them, and I could not. I told both girls that I had always felt the Lord was taking care of them, even before they had become believers. Now they can see that, too. They have their own families, who are under His care. Praise God for such a Saviour as our blessed Saviour, Lord, and Redeemer. They knew I trusted them and wanted to live up to that trust. Now they know they trust in the Lord, and He is faithful. Our Heavenly Father never ceases to watch over His children.

Tonight as I've been here alone and finding the beautiful treasures buried in our Bible, I think of so many ways it speaks to me. I will only name a few because it could get lengthy and I am certain these things are not new to the believing readers.

I think of Peter and Christ as recorded in Luke 22:31-32. Christ told Peter, "Satan hath desired you, that he might sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter was tempted of Satan and he denied Christ three times. Looking into the eyes of Christ, Peter felt condemned and knew the great sin of denying his Lord. "Peter wept bitterly, and went out." (Luke 22:61-62) Now after the crucifixion and burial, the disciples were sadly fishing. Their nets were as empty as their lives without their Master. He had been crucified and was buried. As they neared the shore they heard a voice calling them, but they

knew not that it was the Lord. He instructed them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they were not able to draw it for the great multitude of fishes. Then John said, "It is the Lord." He had prepared a breakfast of fish for them, and after they ate Jesus turned to Peter and asked the question, "Do you love Me?" He asked it not once but three times! (John 21:15-17)

Once I wondered why the question was asked three times, then I was given to remember - three denials, and 3 questions. Peter denied Christ three times. Now there by the sea Peter felt deep remorse at his denial, and each time Jesus asked the question he emphatically replied, "Yes, I do." One time for each denial. Then Jesus Christ told him "Feed my sheep," and I am certain Peter felt a burden of guilt removed! How lovely and complete was God's healing! As love replaced sin and Peter was told to "Feed my lambs" and "feed my sheep," what a great trust was given him, and in later years Peter fulfilled the trust His Lord had in him. If we will just pause and listen, we will note the mystery and beauty of that question that came thru the misty dawn of that long ago morning is still echoing in the world again and again. My own life has seemed to catch its fine vibrations. Each time I feel I have failed my Lord, in my sad and low moments of reflection and remorse, I seem to hear His voice within me, "Do you love me?" Then in a great rush of healing, I feel I can truly answer, "Yea, Lord, Oh, yes, I do!"

Another beautiful scripture I love to think upon is John 4:14, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Though it is a spiritual spring, I like to think of it as an actual spring bubbling forth with life in my heart. At times, when I feel a weight of guilt because I do not feel to have been

true to what God requires of me, then I like to turn to that spring, asking forgiveness, and its crystal waters seem to flow over me, washing away those guilty feelings, then I feel all fresh and renewed again. When I feel lonely or sad, I go to it as an empty vessel, asking to be filled, and as I patiently wait at His feet, the One who is Love fills me again to overflowing and I go away with my cup full and running over and to spare. That well never runs dry. In physical pain this living water flows over the painful area, comforting, soothing, and restoring. When I feel too arid and cannot seem to utter words of prayer, then I know I must go again to that living water and be refreshed. I never have to wonder when I turn to that well, because there is always that 7th chapter of John to reassure me of promises Jesus made to the thirsting ones. He said, "If anyone thirst, let him come unto me, and be filled." And He is always there; praise His Name.

These beautiful things I see in my Bible and feel deeply within me as I read. They give such comfort and peace because Christ has said them, and I know they are true for it came from God thru Jesus Christ our dear Redeemer. Just to know that well of water is always within and never dries up fills me with a deep assurance of my security in Him.

There is yet another scripture that has a lot of meaning and I love to remember. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isa. 26:3)

This is a favorite verse of mine and as I get older it means more to me, for I know all my peace is in Him. He is the Prince of Peace. We are told "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of Jesus." Col. 3 speaks of the peace of Christ, "Let the peace of God rule in your heart." (Verse 15) And "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom." (Verse 16) John 14:27 says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I

unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Then again in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." When we think these verses over and are given to meditate deeply upon them, we will see the all-sufficiency of Christ. The Peace of Christ, Word of Christ, and the NAME of Christ all emphasize the completeness "In Him." "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Oh, my precious brethren and sisters, Isn't it lovely to be given a mind to think upon these blessed truths? Think of how the very name of Christ means authority to resist the devil! Peter says, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith." You cannot help but see and be impressed by how Christ is in control in everything that has to do with us and our spiritual lives. His peace rules in our hearts: His word is our basic rule for growth, spiritually, and the Name of Christ identifies us as His. "Christ is all and in all." (Col. 3:11)

I know I've jumped about as I write this as it comes to me. But our thoughts do not always line up in a proper manner, waiting to be written. One thought leads to another, and on and on. I enjoy the book of Isaiah for a special reason. I see the prophesies of Christ all the way through and it is beautiful to read and compare, when given a mind to do so. It is not often I feel up to it, but when I do, I cannot seem to lay it aside until my eyes ache, and my head aches in sympathy, and then my whole body cries out for rest. But it is so interesting, as is all scripture. Woven throughout the New Testament we see that golden thread of Hope. Blessed Hope of life eternal with Jesus our Redeemer! That blessed God-given hope is a flame that burns brightly in the heart of a believer

and as long as I live I want to have that hope within me, always alive and bright. One sweet day that hope will become real and my Lord will come down from glory and take me home. O blessed day!

Precious brethren, I do not write often. Some of you know of the illness that caused me to give up my home and live with one of my daughters, until Jesus comes in all His glory for His chosen ones. I am alone a good bit and my Jesus seems nearer and dearer as I have more time to read and meditate upon His word and upon His goodness and mercy to such as I am.

The *Signs of the Times* is such a God-send to all who are given a mind to read and understand what is being said. We are richly blessed to have faithful ministers whose only desire is to carry out the word of God, to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! Paul said (Col. 4:17) "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." And I am certain the dear stewards of God's word are careful to "examine the Spirits" and see if they be true. It is a God-given responsibility, a trust, and is to be honored as such. We, as hungering, thirsting sheep, come to the church to be fed, and these same faithful under-shepherds, when blessed of God to speak, never send us away empty. There are times when we aren't receptive to a special message, but there is always someone there that it is meant for, and is blessed. It is not of man to be fed, but of God. I well remember an evening service I attended many years ago in Baltimore. Elder Spangler spoke upon "Apples of gold and pictures of silver." After the service I spoke to him of how I had enjoyed it so much. I have never heard that text used. Elder Spangler said, "Sister Ruth, if only one person hears a message I preach, it's worth it all." And I never forgot that. The *Signs* and all the staff are faithful in their "Watching upon the walls of Zion" that no termites

may enter the walls and destroy. The Editors carefully sort and sift. Our God needs no defender. His word goes out in power that no one can deny. Those who were against Him in the past are gone and His word still rings out loud and clear. We who believe and trust await the trumpet call of victory.

May His word abide always in your hearts.

Sister Ruth Lucht

EDITORIAL

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.”
“Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. (John 16:1-3, 32-33)

You will note, if you observe carefully, that the first verse in our text reads this way, “These things have I spoken unto you.” The last verse also reads, “These things I have spoken unto you.” Our Lord was always instructing His little flock. He was instructing them about things they knew not of, though often times they thought they did. In the first verse, He said He spoke these things unto them that they *would not* be offended. In connection with that, compare a verse of scripture in the gospel of Matthew. There is no contradiction there, but things seem to be quite opposite. Shortly before the Lord went to His cruel death, He says this to His disciples, “Then saith Jesus unto them, all ye *shall* be offended, because of me

this night. For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.” (Matthew 26:31) Now He plainly told them that they *would be* offended, and yet our text above says, “These things have I spoken unto you that you *should not* be offended.”

The Lord’s instruction is beneficial to us only when it is applied by the Spirit of God. So many times we may read the instructions of our Lord as it is contained in the Bible, and we are not blessed with the feeling sense of it, and as a result we do not see its beauty, nor feel its power. The Lord not only instructed His disciples who were with Him then, but these instructions are just as suitable to His little flock today. In the first instance He was speaking about these disciples who followed Him in His ministry, that He desired not that they would be offended, yet they would soon be offended, and they would soon be scattered. And then the time would shortly come that the people who considered themselves very religious, would put the disciples out of their synagogues. And for what reason? Nothing other than that they followed Jesus. That is the only reason.

Jesus told the disciples in the 15th chapter of John to not marvel that the world hated them, because the world had first hated Him. He said the world hated Him without a cause. It’s not a thing that we should marvel at, as some unusual circumstances had befallen us, whatever form it might take. Now in His introductory remarks here to them in this 16th chapter, He warns them about religious persecution. They would not only put them out of the synagogue, but the day would come that they would think they did God service by taking their life! Riding the other day to a meeting with Elder Spangler, he made a remark that startled me so that I didn’t know what he meant until he explained himself. He

said, "I had to flee from the church for my life two times." Why, that took me back. I didn't know that anyone had ever threatened his life. And I asked him when in the world did anything like that occur. He said, "I didn't mean my natural life. I mean my church life." He said, "Twice in my travels there were those who would have excluded me and put me out of my home church, but for warnings which were given to me, and I was blessed to escape the snare." So he was talking in figurative language. He had to flee for his life. And there is the time in the lives of the disciples, that those who would kill you (in a spiritual way) think they do God a service. Even at this very hour, multitudes of well-meaning people in high political places really feel that they would be doing a service to humanity to exterminate the bulk of religion, except for those who would conform to State standards. And they think it would be beneficial to all concerned. (The little flock of Jesus Christ knows better.)

There has always, and there always will be until the end of time, religious and political tyranny, in which the church of Jesus Christ will be caught up. Our Lord said on another occasion (in this same book) to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." Have you been blessed to receive the lovely words of that expression? If we are partakers of the grace of God, we have been brought into His kingdom, then though we live in the world, though we are involved in its commerce, its activities, there are many obligations that we owe to Caesar, but we are not *of* the world. There are two separate worlds - the world and the kingdom of Christ. The kingdom of Christ is in the world, and the world would do its best to get into the kingdom of Christ, but our Lord has a way of purging that. The kingdom of Christ will stand when the world is on fire. But just so long as the subjects of His kingdom live in this world, they are going to be subjected to tribulations,

persecutions, afflictions, trials, darkness of mind, fears, etc. This is the general lot of the children of God to some extent or another. One thing not mentioned, above all others which is not pertinent to this, but is equally important, is that aspect of our life called coldness. However, in fairness to the subject, we might say the chief way to eliminate the coldness of our life is when the Lord is pleased for us to suffer persecution, tribulation, afflictions, and distresses. The Lord will not long leave us in the barren lands where we may grow cold. He will, rather, lead us like He did Shadrack, Meshach, and Abednego to the furnace. And in the furnace there we will see the fourth Man - Jesus, the Son of God, who is in our midst.

While things are smooth sailing, we don't look up, but we look out. While things are going well, we might be self-satisfied, but when the storms of life begin to rage, we, like the disciples on the little bark on the Sea of Galilee, will attempt to arouse the Master, and say, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" It needs not be said, though we shall say it - everyone who calls upon the Name of God needs, and must have tribulations and afflictions, in whatever form they take. Whether they come from the highest levels of government, or the deepest recesses of their own inward being, they all work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8:28)

How many of you over the last year or so have, at some moment in your spiritual experience, been brought to grief? The bitter tears of sorrow flowed down your cheeks; the piercing of your heart because of some trial seemed almost more than you could bear, and yet what is always the inevitable results of such circumstances as these? They drive us to God's throne. Our Lord has said, "Come boldly to the throne." And those who are in pain get bold, don't they? Now let us use, if we may, a

worldly illustration. There is not a person reading this piece that, under normal circumstances, would pick up your phone and call your dentist. Everybody dislikes dentists. But if you were in enough pain with a wisdom tooth throbbing out of your head, you would boldly call him, if you had to get him off the golf course, out of bed, or wherever; necessity being upon you. A desire for relief would impel you to do what was necessary to gain it. Is that not so? How much more then when the aching heart, the groaning spirit, and all the inward being combined is heaving under duress, trial, and tribulation, do we come boldly to the Throne of Grace, pleading our cause?

How often are we going to have these troubles, you might ask? We don't have to tell you. Did your troubles just begin today? Or did they begin back sometime ago? We sing the song

"How strange is the course that a Christian
must steer!

How perplexed is the path he must tread."

Oh, what truth is in those words. And then the last verse says

"When his pardon is signed, and his peace is
procured,

From that moment his conflict begins."

When one is brought into the light and blessed with a lively hope; when one first feels that blessed hope that Jesus is theirs, it is then that the real trials begin! All before that were really just the ordinary things of the flesh. But when one is brought into a knowledge of saving life, and then the temper (Satan) sets in upon him, the old man begins to rise up against him, and enemies are found in quarters they knew not even existed. Then they begin to see that this business is not some minor thing. It is a real part of our life. Tribulations take many forms. Many of them are the results of our worldly troubles. The greatest anxieties that we observe in most believers is worry and distress about things going on politically, or economically. And isn't it an irony that

that is the area where we have the least control? We worry about most everything going on. We listen to news casts and get ourselves all upset in a fever pitch wondering, how can these things be? Isn't it a comfort if the Lord draws your mind back again to spiritual things; to realize and believe that God yet sets upon the throne and reigns supreme, and that the powers that be are ordained of God? And this all is but falling out to His glory, and to our good.

In the closing words of our Lord in our text, He told them that they were all going to leave Him alone. All of His disciples would abandon Him, and still He said, "And yet I am not alone." Why was that? He was not alone because the Father was with Him. Now ask yourself this question. Do you believe that Jesus felt as comfortable with His Father as He could have been if 10,000 legions of men and angels had gathered to rally to His support? Our Saviour was as fully satisfied with the solitary presence of His Father in His hour of grief as He could have been if all the world had come to His aid. His Father was sufficient for Him. He said, "I and the Father are one," and the next chapter says in the prayer of our Lord, "...That they (His disciples) may be one." That we might be in Him, as He was in the Father, and that we might commune together. One cannot fully appreciate what our Lord said in the 16th chapter of John unless he reads the 17th in associaton with it. But confining ourself to the verses of the 16th chapter, He said He was not alone because His Father was with Him. That was enough. Even so today. Listen. Did not our Lord say before He ascended back to glory that, "I am with you alway, even to the end of the world?" Did he not say previous to that, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?" Many times we may question that. In ourselves we cannot feel His presence, but He is here. We may be like the one in the Song of Songs, which was Solomons', "Tell me O, thou whom my

soul loveth, where thou feedest thy flock." We might say, like her, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth, and I found him not." And yet He's not gone. He may be withdrawn from our presence, but He is there. Why? If we are His, and He is ours; if we are one with Him, He is one with us. We have a dual relationship with Christ, and one is as true as the other. Christ *in us*, the hope of glory; but we are equally *in Him*, and it is this expression that should be so vital to us at this time.

"These things have I spoken unto you that *in me* ye might have peace." Will you find it anywhere else? Is it available in the marketplace? Can peace be obtained through political process, or will fighting wars bring about peace? Can we buy peace, or do we even want that kind of peace, or should it rather be we want the peace that is in Him?

Now let us then address ourselves to this subject of peace. "These things have I spoken unto you." Who is the *you*? Why, the *you* is His disciples! Our Lord shall not bring peace to all the world. Though he is the Prince of Peace, He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace, but a sword." And He will set family against family, friend against friend, and nation against nation, and all this is within His sovereign prerogative. But He does come as the Prince of peace for His children, His disciples. "These things I have spoken unto you that in *me* ye might have peace." But He goes on, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." There are two *ins'* there. *In me*. And *in the world*. And He governs both of them. We are in both of them. We are in the world, aren't we? Whether we like it or not, we are here until our Lord calls us out. And by His marvelous grace, we are *in Him*. We are in Him because of His free choice. In the chapter previous to the 16th, He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should

remain." And then further in that chapter He said, "I have chosen you out of the world." Now mark you well. He says, "I have chosen you *out of the world*," and yet He prayed the Father that He would *not* take us out of the world, but that we might remain here, and that He would protect us. Listen. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "*In me* ye shall have peace." "*In the world* ye shall have tribulation." "I have chosen you out of the world." And then He says that He prays to the Father that He would not take them out of the world. They have been called out of the world, and yet they remain in the world. And yet they remain in Him as well.

Is this a mystery? It is not a mystery to any of you that love the Lord, the Saviour. You understand His language in your inward being, though the world might think it is strange doctrine. Now, which is it? Are we *in Him*, or are we *in the world*? Why, we are in *both* of them. Well then, what will our lot be? Will it be peace or will it be tribulation? Some, many in fact, may want to teach us that we can rise above the things of the world. There is no need to suffer, they say. There is no need to be sick. There is no need to have fears; and many go so far as to say that God doesn't want you to be broke. On more than one occasion many of us have heard so called radio and TV evangelists widely proclaim the idea that if you will but contribute to God's cause, (and what they mean by that is their particular little ministry) then God is obliged to repay you a hundred fold, and that you can just get rich by contributing. And a lot of folks have found out that "that just ain't so." Aside from that, though, we know that those things are not so. We know there is no escaping tribulations, trials, or infirmities of the flesh, or the warfare within.

We are in Christ, and we are in the world, and the Lord wills to have it that

way, and we shall experience the being in both of them. When we have fully experienced the both of them and the Lord begins to ripen us for glory, there is no question in the mind of the true believer which he would prefer to stay in. Many of you reading this have been in the world a long time. Some above 80 years. Most of you can safely say that you are getting a little weary with this present evil world. The sooner the Lord calls us to our happy home, the better, when we shall there stand before Him to have all our tears wiped away. No more groaning with the old man; no more wrestling with evil thoughts; no more coldness and deadness, lifelessness in prayer and study; no more hard thoughts toward our brethren. All of the things of this world will then be gone, and we will enter into the full glory of the kingdom, world without end, ages forevermore, if our hope be not vain.

What a blissful anticipation to leave this world that we are in. Why? Because in the world ye shall have tribulation! Our Lord said it is so. *It will be so!* The tribulations take varied forms, but they are all real, none the less. In the 5th chapter of the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul said, "Tribulation worketh patience." Most every one would like to be patient. You would like to heed the admonition of the Psalmist as he uttered (by the Spirit) "Be still and know that I am God." How can you be still unless God stills you? It is tribulation that worketh patience. Would you be patient? Then prepare for tribulation! But, you say, I am a coward. You are no bigger coward than anyone else. Some have dared to bargain with the Lord, saying, "Lord, if I do this again, send a certain tribulation upon me." Brethren, be fearful when you do things like that, for you know that you can't keep bargains. It is better that we don't make vows and promises to God that we know we can't keep. May we rather spiritually acquiesce, and bow submissive to the determinant will of God that His people

endure tribulation. Though the tribulation might at times seem to be severe, it worketh patience.

It is needful that the saint of God be tempered with tribulation because if he is a genuine child, true born, home born heir, the tribulations will only further stimulate him to disavow this world that he is in and direct his allegiance towards the Christ he is in. "*In me ye shall have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation.*" We will have them both at the same time. Did you know that? Have you even been calmed in a storm? Have you ever been placid in the tempest? Have you ever felt comforted in the furnace? The three Hebrew children are a good example of tribulations the saints can expect. They were in a furnace heated seven times over, and yet their clothing was not singed. Not even the smell of smoke was upon them. In tribulation they were blessed to experience ultimate peace, walking with Jesus, because in the tribulation He was with them. He was their God and their Master in the flame, and over the king who had thrown them in the furnace, and all of this only served to show them that their allegiance *to Him whom they were in* was far superior to the trials and tribulations of the furnace *they were in* at the same time. They were *in peace* because they were *in Him*, and they were *in the furnace* because they were *in the world*. At once they experienced the both because they were two men, and not one. They were a new man and an old.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace." Shall you find it anywhere else? Need you look for it in any other quarter? It was as if the Lord was warning His disciples. "You will not find peace in the world; look where you may, cry as you will. It is not there." Even in His departing discourse to the disciples He said, "There shall be wars and rumors of wars. These are the beginning of sorrows." Why, if wars and rumors of wars be the

beginning of sorrows, what must be the climax? "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Turning now to I Thessalonians, Chapter 3, "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that *we are appointed* thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." Why, the minister was sent for their comfort and their strength because they knew that they were *appointed* to tribulation and afflictions. It says, "As ye know." The children of God know that just as surely as the sun rises in the east that there will be sorrows before the sun sets in the west that day. There is not a day going by in the lives of any of us, however good we might feel in the morning, but what before the day is over we have our share of bitterness and anguish, trial, and affliction. We find that without are fightings, and within are fears. We find that we are cast down. We find that there are many adversaries, many woes. The Apostle Paul even said on one occasion that he had to fight the wild beasts of Ephesus.

One of the most grievous trials, the sorest trial of all is the frowns of our own brethren. When we feel we have lost the fellowship, or the comfort, or the union of brothers and sisters in Christ, what a lonely, lonely world it is to believers: to find that they cannot associate themselves with those of like precious faith. What a horrible loss it is when we become so wrapped up in the world and suffer tribulation at the expense of the joy in the kingdom. My dear readers, this world holds nothing for us; none of us. The only joy, naturally, that you shall know in this world (apart from

being in Christ) is the peace that is ours in the kingdom of God, wherein He has called you, which kingdom we call the church of God. You may forsake it for a season; you may grow cold and might find brethren distant there. You may think, "Well, I'll just drift away." But be assured of this - God has set the church as a city upon a hill, and this is our refuge. Christ is here. He is the King in Zion. And yet, He says that we through much tribulation enter this kingdom. No, it is no easy road into or traveling with the church of the living God.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation." (Are you not glad that verse didn't end there?) "But be of good cheer." Oh, it is enough to make you want to shout. Why, He just told us how *bad* things were going to be. He forewarned us "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but He knows His disciples better than they know themselves, and He said, "Be of good cheer." Did He say we *ought* to be of good cheer? No. He said, "Be of good cheer." And it does cheer the hearts of every little disciple to hear these words. These are the words from the lips of our Lord. "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "I have overcome the world." And the Lord overcame the world all by Himself, and He did not ask us to overcome it with Him. He bore the cross alone. He endured the anguish, the suffering, and even the frowns of His Father from heaven. He endured to the going down into the regions of woe. He agonized on the cross alone; suffered the horrors of death. All of these things He did that He might say to His disciples, "But be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." Why then, the world is not the master, but He is the Master of the world. Whatever tribulations come our way come by His *direct appointment*.

Look at one illustration in closing. We consider the servant of God, a man

called Job, as Satan pitched in upon him with all the fierceness of tribulation that any man ever endured. But all of that was under the direct dispensation of God's eternal purpose; to the point that even in all the suffering, death in his family, loss of his prosperity, sudden departure of his health, wife abandoning him, friends ridiculing him, misunderstanding him, he said, "The Lord gave and the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Is not that true faith? James says, "Consider the patience of Job." Where did Job get his patience? "Tribulation worketh patience." "In me ye shall have peace." You will have peace in the Lord, but you shall not fully appreciate that *peace in the Lord* until *in the world* you have tribulation. "But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." The victory is His and the joy is ours. The warfare was His and the spoils are ours. What He has done was not for Himself, because He needed nothing. He did it because He loved His children. "I have overcome the world." And immediately after He said that to His disciples, He offered the most solemn, God-honoring, wonderful prayer ever uttered in eternity or time - the 17th chapter of John. May God bless you to think on these things.

James F. Poole

EDITORIAL WRITINGS ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Founder and Editor of the Signs of the Times)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each
(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of

excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volumes 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly even 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support. Send orders to:

Signs of the Times, Inc.
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

- 1 copy - \$5.00 plus \$1.00 for mailing
 - 5 copies - \$20.00 plus \$3.00 for mailing
 - 10 copies - \$30.00 plus \$4.00 for mailing
- (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hard-bound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:
Signs of the Times, Inc.
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Mrs. Frank Sizemore, W.V. | 5.00 |
| Dale Haygood, TX. | 2.00 |
| Cascyle Bagwell, TX. | 7.00 |
| J. Henry Chamberlain, TN. | 2.00 |
| J. A. Smith, TX. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. William I. Teel, PA. | 2.00 |
| John L. Sanders, AL. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Betty Southard, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Ora S. Conner, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Tommy J. Ford, TX. | 12.00 |
| Dan Anders, AL. | 3.00 |
| Elder W. D. Griffin, AL. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA. | 2.00 |
| Elder B. J. McLaughlin, TX. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN. | 7.00 |
| Harvey Blalock, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Lloyd C. Spikes, OR. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Hettie J. Wade, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Albert H. Davidson, LA. | 7.00 |

“THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD”

We also have a limited number of Elder David Bartley’s excellent book “The Priesthood of the Son of God”. While supplies last, we will sell them for \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing. (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax.)

Send orders to:
Signs of the Times, Inc.
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

CONTROVERSY

There is truly a diversity of opinion among brethren on the subject of *religious controversy*. Some of our brethren have expressed a great aversion to the discussion of important and deep subjects, on which our correspondents do not fully agree, while others profess to be greatly edified and comforted by hearing and comparing the conflicting views of those who differ on such disputed points. Under such circumstances, what course should we, as the editor of this paper, take? A venerable and dear brother writes us from Warwick, N.Y. that our readers in his vicinity are tired of the discussion on *Justification*; another brother writes from Troy, N.Y. that he is pleased with the idea of discussion through the *Signs*, when such discussion is conducted in the spirit of the gospel, with a desire to instruct. A third published a pamphlet in Maryland in opposition to our views on *Justification*, and says he is *no sectarian*, and hints that until the Old School Baptists can see eye to eye in every particular, that he judges it an unauspicious time for uniting with us. Again we ask, what course should we pursue? It is our desire (as far as we can do so without sacrificing truth) to please all our brethren; but we have a still

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

To January, 1983

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| W. T. Pennington, N.C. | \$ 2.00 |
| Hilton Haney, N.C. | 5.00 |
| Lawrence D. Otts, AL. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Maggie Priddy, W.V. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Virginia Apple, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Ethel Viers, W.V. | 2.00 |
| D. H. Richardson, FL. | 7.00 |
| M. M. Richardson, MS. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA. | 18.00 |
| Mrs. Mabel Ellis, VA. | 30.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. Francis Adkins, DE. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Nova Largen, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Arliss Hiatt, VA. | 3.00 |
| E. M. Reeves, TX. | 2.00 |
| Ricky West, TN. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Nellie Fuller, TX. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Judy A. Williams, TX. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Lovie Thompson, N.C. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Smith, LA. | 10.00 |

greater desire to edify, instruct, comfort and build up the sheep and lambs of our Heavenly Father's flock.

From a conviction in our own mind that well written discussions, in a spirit of kindness, on various subjects, will contribute to the interest and usefulness of the *Signs*, we have concluded to ask the indulgence of such of our brethren as do not see with us the propriety of such a course, while we will promise, on our part, to reject all such communications on controverted points as are written in an all-natured or unbecoming spirit or style. Why should we be afraid to discuss what we hold to be the truth? Nothing but error can suffer from investigation; the more closely the truth is scrutinized, the more brilliantly it will shine.

On the discussion of the subject of Justification, much has been written, and of that *much, some* has not been in that brotherly edifying manner that we could wish; but we conceive that more remains to be said, and more can be said to great advantage on the subject. We are persuaded that very little difference would remain among our Old School Brethren, could they understand each other, and each feel willing to yield to the word and testimony of Holy Writ. The communication of brother Goldsmith, in this number, appears to us to be written in a proper tone; we therefore cheerfully admit it. Let those who wish to reply to him, or otherwise to shew their opinion, avoid harsh expressions, and manifest at once in their writings their love for the truth, and their desire that all the purchased possession of Christ may know and be set free by the truth. Remember we are brethren.

Alexandria, D.C.
January 15, 1839

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CORRECTION

It has been brought to our attention that an

article we printed some time back contained an erroneous statement. We wish at this time to correct it.

In the August, 1982, issue (Volume 150, No. 8) on page 175, left hand column, paragraph 1, beginning with line 5 the incorrect sentence is as follows: "The author of the book is among the Progressive Primitive Baptists, who love to think of themselves as the Old School or Primitive Baptists."

We have been informed that Elder Sorrels, the author in question, is, in fact, not connected with the Progressive group, but rather, he is with the semi-arminian, limited predestinarian, conditional time salvation, Old Line Primitives.

We regret not correcting Brother Webb's otherwise excellent article.

Editor

Eden, N.C. 27288

Dear Brother Williams,

I am so sorry my subscription has expired, but appreciate you sending it on until I got around to renewing it. This human flesh is so unperfect and we manifest this every day. While raking leaves in my yard the other day, my thoughts rambled to the human flesh and its dying daily. If we ever have a good thought, it comes from God. Within ourselves no good thing ever is manifested without Him. I believe in a God who is all powerful and does His pleasure in Heaven and on earth and among the inhabitants thereof.

Going back to the leaves - Brother Williams, as I raked, each leaf seemed to say something. There has been a dying in me since the day I first became a bud on the tree in the spring, (relating this to the child of God.). If I be one of His, we are brought alive when God reveals Himself to us. On the mountaintop we seem to be for a while, and then we find ourselves in a bottomless pit. There is no way out until God gives us enough faith to believe again. Sometimes it seems gone. We go to church and wonder if we're deceiving someone or all. Why am I here? If these people knew me like I

know me, they wouldn't want me to be numbered with them. When our dear saints come to ask for a home in the church, I just want to ask, "Do you still want me?" I feel so barren and dry - wanting to forget outside worldly and transitory things while at church, but sometimes it is not possible. I hear the minister saying the words. I know he's telling the truth because it is what I believe, and at the same time asking God to give me a little crumb and to renew the faith I hope He has given me.

There are things that happen in our daily lives of which we have no control. Sometimes we can't handle these burdens and worries, and I believe that is God bringing us to know to whom we should turn in time of need. I hope I've done that in the recent past. If everything went as planned every day, according to ourselves, we'd soon get so puffed up and full of vanity that we would be downright hateful. I don't want to deceive anyone, but I can only manifest what faith God gives me. If my portion is small, it's enough. If it is large, I hope I'm thankful. We can't carry any of it over for another day. How I wish we could because some days there doesn't seem to be enough to go through the day.

Each morning recently, I thank God for bringing me through the night and for strength to do what I have done the day before, and for what I have ahead of me that day, and for health to stay on my feet.

The past Thanksgiving holiday was a joyous and happy occasion for our family. We are thankful that all were well and everyone was together. There have been times in my past life when I took these things for granted. I hope I haven't worried you with my thoughts.

Hope you and Sister Mae and all your family are well. We love you all for Christ's sake.

A Sister in hope,
Bea French

FAREWELL

With this the May issue I now complete six years as one of the editors of the Signs of the Times. To serve the people of God in this manner is a great blessing and I trust I am thankful for the privilege.

I have submitted my resignation to Elder Spangler as President of the Board of Trustees, and he graciously accepted the same. I hope to continue my support of the paper.

To one and all, our faithful subscribers, I thank you for your support.

Humbly and in love,
Elder James F. Poole

February 7, 1983

Dear Editors:

My subscription to the *Signs* expired with this February issue. I am enclosing a check to cover another year.

I have always enjoyed the pages of the *Signs* and hope we'll be blessed to have it for many years to come.

I hope you editors (and also even more of our good spiritual writers) will have a mind to give us more of your views and comments thru the *Signs*.

We are so wonderfully blessed of our God to have so many such people among us. It seems we have more of the young ones everywhere we go to church. "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

A little sister in hope,
Ella Pearl Lee
Niceville, Florida

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It was on October 12, 1982, that we were made to feel God's blessings on Brother Irvin Ange. We feel that God called him to a better home, and he is now

resting in peace with his Saviour.

Brother Ange was born November 30, 1924, making his stay on earth almost 58 years. He was blessed, along with his wife, to join our church September 2, 1973 and baptised the same day.

He was a faithful member, and even though he suffered a lot the last year he lived, you never heard him complain. Brother Irvin was always praising his God, and giving thanks for all his blessings. To know him was to love him, for he dearly loved his brethern.

Therefore, we at the Tarboro Church, resolve that three copies of this resolution be made. One copy for the church records, one copy for his family and one copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

We also send our sympathy to Brother Ange's family, for we feel he is resting in peace where trials and suffering are no more. We will miss Brother Ange, but we feel that God's will has been done.

This done in conference at our November meeting.

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

SISTER ORIE WILLIAMSON ODOM

In wisdom and mercy our God has called home another one of His precious jewels, our dear Mother, Orie Williamson Odom. She lived to be 100 years and 10 months here in this world. She was born in Butler County, Alabama, October 2, 1881. She was the daughter of James I. and Mary T. Williamson.

She was a member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church for 67 years and was often called the "Association girl," as they had to get the doctor, who was attending the Association at Moriah Church. She loved her church and the Primitive Baptist doctrine. She was a faithful member and always there when the church doors were open, as long as her health permitted. She had beautiful experiences that gave her precious hope that she was a vessel of mercy.

For several years she seemed to have no interest in worldly things. Her desires were heavenly and she walked in relation with our Saviour, in that He was a Man of sorrow, meek, and lowly, and submissive to the will of God the Father.

She was laid to rest, to await the resurrection, in Shiloh Church cemetery beside her husband, Jacob Benjimen Odom, on August 2, 1982. She leaves one son, Woodrow W. Odom, and one daughter, Grace O. Jones, both of Greenville, Alabama; also one brother, Martin R. Williamson, of St. Petersburg, Fl.; 22 grandchildren, 60 great grandchildren, and 23 great-great grandchildren.

God was merciful to our beloved Mother. She did not suffer and breathed her last breath easy. We do miss her.

Grace O. Jones and
Woodrow W. Odom

SISTER ATWOOD DALTON VEDDER

Sister Atwood Dalton Vedder was born August 31, 1888 in Pittsylvania County. She was the daughter of the late Lewis and Emma Zell Dalton. Survivors include four daughters, Sister Viola Amos and Juanita Wilks, both of Gretna, VA., Myrtle Beagly, Baltimore, Maryland, and Frances Beane, Harrisburg, N.C.; 6 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Sister Vedder was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, and she was received by experience and baptized September 9, 1951.

Sister Vedder was loved by many. She spent some time with us before my mother died and we enjoyed her very much. My husband loved to hear her tell of olden times. She was faithful to fill her seat in church as long as she was able. She spent three years in Liberty Nursing Home, Lynchburg, Va., where she died September 27, 1981. She was tenderly cared for, especially by Sister Viola, who lived closer than the others.

Sister Vedder's funeral was held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O. K. Tench, Raymond Goad, and Denver Simpson; with burial in the church cemetery. We at Springfield miss her. At the ripe old age of 93, we should feel relieved she is at rest.

Written by one who loved her,
Sister Annie Tosh

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN AND ELDER RICHARD CAMPBELL

Thursday, May 26 at 7 P.M.

Malmaison

Friday, May 27 at 7 P.M.

Dan River

Saturday, May 28

Staunton River Union

Saturday, May 28 at 7 P.M.

Reed Creek Church

Sunday, May 29

West Country Line Union at
Greensboro, N.C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., JUNE 1983

No. 6

S I G N S O F T H E T I M E S

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions, gifts, re-newsals, announcements, obituaries, notices of meetings and any other communications, should be addressed to:

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 6/83

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

In the May issue is the announcement of the resignation of Elder James Poole, as Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Last July, Elder Poole handed me his resignation as editor. I prevailed upon him to reconsider and he withdrew his resignation. After receiving his recent resignation, I contacted him by telephone and asked him to reconsider the matter, but he informed me that his decision was final.

As President of the Board of Trustees, I believe I am expressing the sentiment of the entire Board, in expressing the Boards appreciation for his excellent work in carrying on this work.

I have contacted all the Members of the Board of Trustees in regards to some one taking up the work where Elder Poole has left off. It was the unanimous mind of the Board that Elder Kenneth Key, of Greensboro, be appointed as Joint Editor with me. Elder Key has accepted the appointment.

I am now eighty-one years old and am not physically able to carry on this work. No one knows the amount of work involved in getting out each issue of the paper.

Some write in to tell the editor that they enjoy the VOICES OF THE PAST most and others say they desire the current writings most. You cannot please all. We can't publish current articles unless we have them.

May I suggest to our elders that they do more writing. Especially, we desire that our elders write articles on the Prospectus Of The Signs.

Above all, we ask an interest in your prayers in our undertaking.

D. V. S.

September 1, 1982

To my Brethren everywhere:

I would like to tell a little of the dealings of the Lord with me. I was born in a family of ten – eight lived to adulthood, and two died in infancy. We all had to work hard to live.

Things began to happen to me at an early age. My mother was baptized into the Primitive Baptist Church when I was six months old. I remember when I was a few years old, she took me by the hand and led me to the old Indian Creek Church. Church was a serious thing for me from that day forward. As I grew into manhood, many things happened. When I was eleven years old, I was talking to my father. I walked out, and in about 10 minutes, I went back and found him hanging by the neck. I verily thought that would be the worst thing I would ever have to see, but to my surprise, there have been many more. After this my other brother came back home to help take care of us.

I became ill one winter and during this illness the Lord of all glory seemed to appear to me, convicting me of my sins. There I was, condemned to die and go to hell, and rightly so. I lived in this terrible condition for a few years. When I was 18 years old, I was called up and entered military service. The morning I left home I thought I was leaving for good; that I would be killed and hell would be my home. But to my surprise, again the Lord had some beautiful things in store for me.

I was sent to a camp in Florida, and while there in came a tropical storm, and I had never seen anything like it. Up until this time, I had always felt that if I was near to mother, everything would be alright. There was as a voice spoke to me out of that cloud and said, "You are 700 miles from your mother. Who will take care of you now?" That same voice said, "There is a God in heaven, and He will take care of you." I found peace and relief from the things that had been bothering me.

Shortly after this, I dreamed a dream, and in it I thought I was at home. Then in about two weeks, I was on a five mile hike with full pack and rifle. I fell beside the road, and two days later I was dis-

charged and sent home. That was the 22nd. of December, 1944. I had promised the Lord that if I got home, I would tell the church about all the things the Lord had shown me, but I could not until 1949.

My brother joined at old Indian Creek Church in 1948. I got up to go with him, but I couldn't go. I had to wait another year. When I asked for a home in the church, I could not see anything but a lovely group of people. That was the first love for the church. I was received and baptized by Elder L. A. Harris. Two years later, I was involved in a church split and an association split. Then I saw that people were not as lovely as they had first appeared. Elder L. A. Harris was taken from me, also. After the division, we were recognized by Smith River and Pigg River and their correspondence, and have remained that way ever since.

There have been many things happen to me at Union Church where my membership is now. Most of the brethren who came to Union with me are passed on. There has been twelve join since then. Elder Odell Thompson served us for 18 years. At his passing, I was much distressed and troubled. Elder Hale Terry came to serve us and is our present pastor.

I will try to relate a little about my call to the ministry, if indeed I have one. When I was in my teens, I was mocking a minister, pretending to have a funeral, and the thought came to me, "Some day you will have to stand, and you will be ashamed of this." I was troubled from that day on. To the best of my memory, it was about 20 years ago that I tried to speak for the first time. As I tried to speak, there was some sort of commotion among some of the brethren, and I told Elder Thompson before I left the church that day, that if it had to be that way, I would not try again.

Shortly after this I became sick. I had a complete nervous breakdown. I stayed in a Virginia hospital nearly twelve months and became withdrawn and did not know anyone for about 30 days. I also had double pneumonia. I suffered

in this state and did not go before the church again until twelve years later. I feel I have been the poorest excuse that has ever been before the Lord's people, but it came to the place that it was death if I did, and death if I didn't. After much suffering and affliction that I will not go into, Piney Union Church asked for my ordination. It was set for the fifth Sunday in April, 1978. On Wednesday came 18 inches of snow, and I didn't see any way we could get in the church lot. I was troubled very much. When I arrived on the grounds on Saturday morning, the people came, got out in the snow and mud, and everyone was smiling and happy. There have not been many times I more felt the love that was manifested there that day. I have been going everywhere that the Lord has blessed me with strength and ability ever since. There are many things I don't understand that have taken place among the brethren, but I would like to use, in closing, some scripture that has been precious to me.

"We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I love my brethren. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined." That is the church in its beauty.

Love to Zion everywhere,
If saved at all, it is by grace.

(Elder) Willard Cox

302-A E. Lawson Street
Hahira, Ga. 31632
December 8, 1982

Dear Brethren,

Enclosed please find a check to cover the cost of one year's subscription to the *Signs* for the enclosed name.

I hope the Lord will bless you in your endeavors to proclaim the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I believe the paper either becomes better as time goes by, or else I receive more discernment to see how rich its writings are as time passes. Much of the time I find myself involved in the description in Isaiah 59:9, "We wait for light, but behold obscurity." I sometimes think that I have never had the slightest taste of genuine communion with God and that all of my religion is merely the stirrings of the flesh

as it contemplates the wrath and judgments of God with the dim light of nature. Yet, as that same passage in the prophet points out, this was the just desert of their sins and departures from God, and if I were to be left in such condition, both in this world and in the world to come, I would have no just cause for complaint. My condition and actions never cease to astound me. For one little season I am hot and heavy after the things of God and a brighter evidence of some interest in Christ; then with the rapidity of lightning, I find myself in a state of such deadness and dryness that I become almost indifferent to the whole matter and would think myself fortunate to be in the grip of the most desponding terror, since then, at least my attention would be fixed upon God and not on the trifles of this world. In short, I seem to spend nearly all my time alternating between terror and indifference, and my brightest hope seems to amount only to, "Who can tell?"

On the other hand, Paul warns us to be, "Giving thanks always for all things," (Eph. 5:20) and even in the above melancholy and self pitying account, I have been, I hope, shown many things to be thankful for. First, even if I do not see Christ as I would, I see something of myself, which is a necessary knowledge which only God can give, though not as a pleasant thing. Secondly, my terrors have never yet given away to final despair, nor has my indifference yet issued in final apostacy. Thirdly, there have been from time to time a few glimmers and hints of light along the way, though I have often feared that they were only sparks of my own kindling. Forthly, in the midst of my bitterest doubts and terrors, I have known a sudden sense of great thankfulness to God to rise up in my heart for having led me into the darkness, since many walk in darkness but think they are in the light, as one young man was who once informed me that he was glad that he was not bound up in such a system of belief as I was. Lastly, I hope I am thankful that although these exercises seem to me not to have all the essential marks of grace about them,

yet they are perhaps not unlike the beginning of a genuine conversion, which, if God has truly begun in the soul, He will bring to completion.

Nonetheless, I will share with the readers of the *Signs* a few things which mainly trouble me about myself, desiring their prayers on my behalf. First, I find no convincing evidence of having received from God a full and complete sense of pardon. I realize that this differs in degree from one to another, and I hope that I am not limiting the Holy One of Israel by demanding that He work in me according to some preconceived notion of my own, but my deadness, dryness, terrors, etc. seldom or never seem to be varied with any sense of what I would guess that the true children of God feel from time to time, namely, a felt sense of pardon, acceptance, and communion with God.

Secondly, I fear that my convictions arise more from the fear of punishment than from a genuine sense of having offended God and having wounded Christ. The experience so beautifully described in Zech. 12:10 seems to have never been mine. In consequence, I fear that my sorrow is not that Godly one which worketh repentance.

Thirdly, even the effort to think some appropriate thought or meditation upon God, Christ, Heaven, etc., is like trying to speak in a language that I never learned. I find any endeavor at spiritual mindedness to be as gruelling a task as ever was undertaken. Paul tells us that to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The difficulties that I have with the same are such that I know I have little peace, and strongly suspect whether I have any life.

Forthly, my convictions and serious concerns usually spring from having read some close and searching old writer. This makes me wonder if Isaiah 29:13, "Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men," might not have some application to my case. If it doesn't, I'm afraid James is more to the point when he speaks of those who are "Forgetful hearers." (James 1:22-25)

Lastly, I, like Saul, discover a constant tendency to hold back the best of the cattle, and not give up all to the dis-

posal of God. No haughty defeated king ever signed articles of unconditional surrender more reluctantly than I acknowledge the right of God to all that I have or am. Usually, I try to nicely calculate just how much of the world I can hold onto and still pretend to have a hope in God. The rich young ruler is a subject of solemn contemplation in this connection.

There have been times when I have been tempted, usually under the guise of impartial examination, to seek out some more agreeable and less terrifying belief. Atheism has, at times, seemed rather a charming alternative, except for the fact that I cannot believe it, nor deny the truth of Christianity even on a rational grounds. Another alternative has been to embrace some more agreeable form of Christianity. Roman Catholicism has a lot to be said for it under this head. However, it appears to me that any one who could deny the sufficiency of Scripture could deny the existence of God about as easily. In addition to these considerations, I find something that draws me to the truth even when I seem to make little progress in it and derive little comfort from it. Also, as I hinted before, I find a little hope-springing up from time to time that these reflections are indeed from God, and when this winter has subdued the old man to some extent, a springtime will follow.

I enclose a copy of a letter I sent to a Strict Baptist Pastor in Michigan who had asked me for a reason of my hope. I sent this letter, and I never heard from him again. If you see fit to publish it and any of the above lamentation, or any portions thereof, feel free to do so. Feel equally free to discard it, all or in part. Also, if any readers of the paper wish to make any comments to me on any of this, I would be glad to hear from them, and answer them at the above address.

Yours in such hopes as I have,
Elder John Crowley

(The letter alluded to will follow in a future no. of the *Signs*. Editor)

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS

Dear Brother Chick:

Your letter came as a comfort to my chastened spirit, and I am grateful that such helpful words were in your heart. Our King says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Let me speak to you of my experience in this affliction, hoping it will minister to your spirit. Two hours before my hurt, in closing a letter to brother Hite, of Nashville, Tenn., I said, "Cast down, but not destroyed." This word seemed so prophetic and true in the extreme suffering that so soon came upon me. When the doctors told me that my case was serious, and that I could never have good use of the arm again, it seemed that such restraint must cause me much impatience and worry, for I had been quite active till then, and had thought to so continue. How quickly and painfully all was changed with me. Was it a sad accident, which should have been avoided by greater caution, or was it in the purpose of God, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"? Faith in him led me to believe the latter. This soothed and quieted me, and it was not in my heart to murmur or fret. Trust and hope in God sustained me. His goodness and mercy through all my long life passed in review before me, and I was often moved to tears of peace and solace. Even through the many nights of great pain, so unrestful, a spirit of peace was given me, and with the early dawn the birds of song would cheer me, and my spirit would join them in praising God. To comfort and help me the more, the mails brought to us letters full of faith and love. These my wife would read to me, while I would try to keep back the tears of gratitude and comfort. So, my dear brother, I was sweetly constrained to both feel and believe that all this affliction, and its results, were in the counsel and love of God. To suppose I might have escaped injury would have changed all this experience that has come to me through the hurt. My deliverance from a violent death was a little less than miraculous, as a train of cars was near when I arose. But if I had

been killed, then again the results must have been different we know, yet, unless the counsel and purpose of God established the certainty of all things, then all might have been different. Let me mention a few things to show you this. My son wrote: "If father could only have been a little more careful, how much better it would have been." But I was trying to be careful, and the thought in my mind (with my sight on the rails) was, "I must step carefully, and not stumble and fall before the onrushing train. Just then my right foot struck an unseen wire, and the force of the fall was fearful, and for the moment I was stunned. The next thought in my mind was, the train is near, I must get up quick. I do not know how I arose, but found myself on my feet, out of the way of the train, and badly hurt, but felt that the Lord had delivered me from so terrible a death. My right arm hung powerless at my side, and with my left hand I felt that it was partially dislocated at the shoulder, and I hope that was the worst, though a long gash was cut in the bridge of my nose, in which the doctors took seven stitches to close the wound. They found the arm broken at the shoulder, and set it, but would not admit the dislocation, to which I called their attention. O how grateful I felt, even then, that my life was precious in the sight of God.

Dr. Wilcox, who attended me, said the arm could not be put in place unless I took chloroform, which at my age would be at the risk of my life. We then decided to leave St. Paul, Ind., and see Dr. Bedford, of Indianapolis, and did so June 18th. He called Dr. Haggard, Professor of Surgery, in consultation. They said there would be no risk in the chloroform, but the risk would be of breaking the arm again, or of rupturing a blood vessel. So they declined to operate on me, advised me to let well enough alone, and told me I had come off well at my age.

The next day we went to Olney, Ill., to visit my granddaughters, and to consult Dr. Webber at his sanitarium, for he had sent me word to come there and he would put my arm in place. He did this safely on June 21st. Trusting in the Lord and without fear, I laid down on the op-

erating table and inhaled chloroform. The next thing I knew I found myself lying on a sofa in another room, with acute pain in my shoulder. Soon Dr. Webber came in and asked how I felt. I told him, and said, "Doctor, you haven't put my arm in place, have you?" With a smile he answered, "Yes, my friend, your arm is all right."

O, brother Chick, the relief and gratitude I felt was too deep for utterance. About forty days my suffering had been severe, in which time the broken arm had firmly united and my lacerated nose was nicely healed, and most admiringly and thankfully had I watched this good physician, which the all-wise and beneficent One had placed within me, and now, by the skill of a kind surgeon, my helpless arm would again help its fellow arm. O how wonderful are the provisions of God in nature! How could I have realized all this goodness of mercy and comfort of love in the absence of the attendant suffering and need? How otherwise could the Head of the church perfect his body, and enter into his glory, only through suffering? He must first drink the bitter cup his Father gave him, and be baptized into death. He thus fulfilled all righteousness for his members, and is in oneness with them. So likewise must we be made partakers of his sufferings in the flesh, that we may also be glorified together with him; and so the reproaches and sufferings of Christ have been my consolation in affliction. God is rich in mercy, but only through suffering do we need his mercy and bless him for it. He ordained both the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we die, we shall also live with him. Surely then these are sanctified afflictions. I would not have chosen them, but God hath chosen us in the furnace of affliction, and in his son, and thus through the suffering of Christ he refines us.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

My spirit rejoices in him that it is so, and that none can stay his hand. Now I am in his hand, waiting his will, and

praying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I have wanted to write to you and the beloved in the Lord of these trials and consolations, and testify that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble." To his suffering and buffeted servant Paul he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. This is true of us also; it is Christ's strength in our weakness.

Now, with love to all the saints, farewell.

D. BARTLEY

Willow Hill, Ill. July 18, 1904.

November 15, 1982

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 1982 IN RETROSPECT

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41)

As a year draws to a close, man typically, whether from habit or expectation, reflects upon the more vivid events of the past twelve-month period. Certainly, without divine intervention and guidance we would, by nature, recall only those worldly occurrences which seemingly have a special appeal to the carnal mind. Even the November holiday set aside (by man) for "Thanksgiving" can only follow the pharisaical way without God instilling in us, through His grace, a heart of true "Thanksgiving." When the latter occurs, we are not restricted to a "day" or even a "season" of "Thanksgiving," but rather—as it pleaseth the Lord!

If God would bless me with a spiritual mind, I would like to reflect briefly upon a subject which is no stranger to the believer who has followed the command of God and who has been made submissive to go down in the liquid grave. From November 21, 1981, to present, it has pleased God, for reasons known only unto Himself, to lead fifteen lovely believers before the church to ask for a home with those of like precious faith. Each believer sweetly expressed his or her love for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Though the expressions varied according to experience, there was always evidence of a oneness of mind and

heart.

In my years of being blessed to go in and out among Old School Baptists, I cannot recall so many being led in this manner in a period of somewhat less than a year. Of the fifteen asking for a home, eight were baptized on a single occasion. It was for me a blessed privilege to assist my pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, as this ordinance was administered to the eight. The experience was humbling and one which, through God's grace, shall ever remain dear to me. Surely, God does move in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform!

God forbid that either our ministers, deacons, or members should ever become haughty or "puffed up" over the witnessing of increased numbers. Rather, shall our hearts be ever thankful for the manifestation of the love and power of our Lord as He makes His truth known to His little ones in such a way that they are made to willingly take His cross and follow Him. I believe the scripture quoted under the title line above (Acts 2:41) attests to these truths. I do not believe that the written account of the three thousand souls being added on the same day is included in this scripture to boast of the effect of Peter's work. Rather, it upholds the precious truth that God does indeed move as it pleaseth Him.

I feel a desire to list below the names of those who so sweetly professed the name of Jesus along with the date each was moved to ask for a home. May God continue to richly bless them, not only in their moments of joy and praise but also during those times when trials and tribulation are to be their lot.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Thomas W. Jackson | November 21, 1981 |
| Bettie Southard | November 22, 1981 |
| Frank Miller | May 23, 1982 |
| Beatrice Miller | May 23, 1982 |
| Linda Joyce Spangler | May 23, 1982 |
| Frank T. Simpkins | August 21, 1982 |
| Ella C. Simpkins | August 21, 1982 |
| Weldon Strader | September 12, 1982 |
| Irene Setliff | September 12, 1982 |
| Connie Page | September 12, 1982 |
| Roxie Strader | September 12, 1982 |
| Muriel Strader | September 12, 1982 |
| Theodore C. Austin | September 25, 1982 |
| Ira G. Strader | September 25, 1982 |
| Leonard O. Foster | September 26, 1982 |

Submitted in Love,
Bob R. Collie, Deacon

Dear Brethren,

To you who feel a sweet and precious hope in your breast of a place in heaven and immortal glory after this sin cursed earth has passed away, I, in fear and trembling, write unto you in love. I feel to hope it is that same love wherewith He first loved us, and worked that love within my very heart and soul for Christ Jesus the Head and every member of His body, the Church of the living God. I fervently hope I could, by His grace, be a member thereof. That, my dear friends, is the uppermost of my interest.

In the searching of my innermost desires while attempting this writing, I detect no desire to please the flesh by fancy words or otherwise, but desire that if it could be in accord with His holy will and pleasure, I might be enabled by His grace to write only those words that would be some comfort unto His children, and therein praise only unto His great and holy Name. I feel to realize His is the only Name given in heaven or amongst the inhabitants of the earth, ever to be worthy of any and all praise, honor and glory. If we be His children and are taught of the Lord, we surely know full well that every portion of what we are is only and entirely by His grace to usward, and most assuredly not by any means of our own selves. Are we not fully aware of what takes place every time our fleshly way and manner are let go to exercise itself; it is always to the praising and puffing-up of that very flesh of mankind.

Brethren, that perfect and unbreakable circle encompasses all – all worlds, all heights, all depths, all breadths, all times, and all eternity. Within it lies all the "I will's" and "You shall's" of Almighty God, the Creator of all things, the Father of His afore chosen children. Dear and precious little children of your (and I hope my) Heavenly Father, that perfect circle is wherein lieth any and all holy truth, and any and all that be outside that perfect circle is folly and lies.

It seems to me that if I did not feel for sure that absolute predestination were an absolute fact of Holy truth, as having if even one grain of sand, or one leaf of a tree could fall outside that perfect circle

wherein lieth the unhindered fore ordination of the Almighty God, then all my desire to trust and hope in Him and worship Him and praise His great and Holy Name would be completely gone, and of all men I surely would be most miserable. It seems to me that for even one minute particle or thing to take place in all time for this world to stand that was not already foreseen, foreknown, fore-ordained, fixed, and established, and absolutely predestinated to be to exactness in time, place, and manner, as it does come, and that to include every thought of every brain, every action or movement of every body, and this to most assuredly include every iota that has to do with the devil, Satan, and his angels; if any portion or particle of the above mentioned were not an absolute certainty with God from before the foundation of the world, then it's entirety would be and come by chance only.

Some speak of God having predestinated some things, but not some other things. I do not believe, cannot believe, nor do I desire to believe there could possibly be any such thing as partial or part predestination and part chance with Almighty Three-One God. The God and Lord in whom I feel and hope is my trust is in no wise limited upon the whims of any or all of mankind. That true and holy principle in which God is declared as having absolutely predestinated all things contains not even one small portion of even a hint at God being the author of sin; but rather declares that this great and merciful God does all the good, and that all of mankind does all the sinning. It seems to me that any less is an attempt at taking glory from God and giving it to puny, filthy mankind. Dear children of the Most High and Merciful God, there is no doubt in my mind or heart at this present time but that such attempts at taking from God and giving to mankind is in every instance at the very root and bottom of all disputings and trouble within and among churches of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. It is my understanding that whenever the true Old Baptists meet together at a meeting, the thing of uppermost importance to them is that

they might be enabled to worship and praise their God and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and therein refrain from even a hint at the praising of any one or more of finite and puny mankind. I think and feel about the absolute predestination of all things by Almighty God as being no more and no less than the absolute certainty of God. The very fact of His existance does in itself unquestionably confirm and establish that very fact of Holy truth, that all existance in all times and worlds and eternity must and shall be and is and ever was known and seen and fixed and unchangeably established by this great Almighty and Merciful God. To me the very word "God" verily and unequivocally stamps the seal of folly upon every thought or work or saying or writing that is outside that direct leading and guiding and directing by the Holy Spirit. Though some of those thoughts and sayings and writings might be a natural time and worldly truth, and yet still they are folly by reason of the fact that they are in nature's worldly form, and therefore shall surely fade or pass away as shall this earthly world and every stubble therein. But not so with every thought and word and action of God the Creator, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, the Three in One. For they are from and unto everlasting.

And so it seems to me that a denial of any portion of God's almighty power in foresight, foreknowledge, foreordination, predestination and its absolute certainty, is not less than a denial of His very existance. I feel no desire that my hope and trust be in one with any less power of certainty of the workings and outcome of all things. For were less the case, then the reaching of my poor depraved case could never be reached, and I surely would be lost, worlds without end. I desire to be, and hope I am, a begger of mercy and grace from God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, but never, no never, from poor and puny mankind, for he has neither to give. If I, or any other of mankind, have ever had even one unselfish thought or feeling concerning anything during our entire stay here upon this earth, then it has

every part and portion come into being entirely by the working of the Holy Spirit. It is not in mankind of himself to function in such unselfish and unfleshly like manner.

Brethren, God willing, let us think about these things earnestly and in His truth ask ourselves these questions – when first we were shown exactly what man was and is in his own nature, and how ultra void he is of any good thing, and his complete and total self helplessness to acquire any good way or mannerism that would be good in the sight of God, is this one enlightenment not sufficient evidence for us to know full well that it is entirely impossible for us to rightfully place even one iota of our trust in any one or more of mankind of himself for anything as concerning the holy way of doing things in the church of this Living God and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? I feel and believe so. The flesh always loves the things of the flesh; but that God given Spirit always loves only those things that be of the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It seems to me that if I know anything as I ought, then surely without any doubt in my mind, I know for a certainty that of my fleshly self I am nothing and less than nothing, and that any and all my fleshly self has or does perform in either words or actions, are no more than filthy rags in the sight of God. And (save Jesus Christ) this same applies in worth to every creature ever born of a woman. The Holy Spirit, while working within anyone, will surely hinder that person from giving any particle of praise unto any of mankind for anything. The flesh praises only the things of the flesh, while the Spirit of Holiness only praises the things of the Holy Spirit of God.

Dear Brethren, I do not claim to know very much, but I do not feel it to be amiss to make this next statement—you may mark this down as an infallible truth—to in truth praise God is also to in truth deny any self-sufficiency in mankind to perform even one single thing that could possibly be embraced within that Holy principle of good in the sight of God. Brethren, if this writing be copied in the

Signs, some of its readers may say or feel that I am repeating some things to the extreme, but I tell you what is the truth from my heart, what the fleshly man or woman may feel or think or say along those lines is of absolutely no concern to me at this point in time, for there are at least two things which I truly feel cannot possibly be repeated too often or too much. One is the praising of God's greatness and goodness, and the other is the denial of any of that same goodness in fleshly mankind of himself for either is conformation of the other. If I praise one or more members of a church, be he either a lay member, a deacon, or an elder, for what they accomplished, then I most assuredly am withholding and all praise, honor and glory from Christ the Head of the church. Dear and precious ones, if such praise of one or more (as if they themselves had accomplished some great thing) be a true expression of one brother's love toward another, then this love I feel for the brethren is entirely amiss. Brethren, I feel and believe with all my heart and soul that just as sure as one be under the influence of the Holy Spirit, just that sure is it that one will have no desire for any praise or honor for themselves. I feel of a certainty that the Holy Spirit has never and will never contradict nor disagree with Itself, but instead is always in complete and total harmony. With that in mind, from where does all disagreements and word fightings among the Old Baptists come? Does it not come from such things as jealousy, selfishness, and the false praising of one by the very workings of Satan or the devil? I believe so. Further, is it not that very same thing if I wantingly accept such praise for myself? I surely believe so, for it is assuredly false pride on my part. In my heart I know full well that I am not deserving of any part of it, for His furnishings supplied all the strength to make possible whatsoever was performed. So dear Brethren, let us ask ourselves this question – had we not just as well praise Satan as to praise each other? I feel and believe so, for all praise and glory belongeth to the Lord, for He is all our strength, not only for earning our daily bread, but much more so for receiving

our Spiritual food, and even our very existence is wholly dependent upon Him. There just simply is no power for any strength except that it be ordained of God. By the grace of God (and His grace alone) are you saved. And dear Brethren, it is not oh so great a blessing to be given to realize for a truth that grace is not only given freely, but is totally and completely free and that salvation (both in time and eternity) is of the Lord.

Dear Children of your Father, trials and troubles in and among the militant churches, and the heartaches derived therefrom, are oh so hurtful, but from time to time whenever we are blessed for even just a moment to remember His promises, we then know that all these things are necessary for our good if we (by the grace of God) are what we hope to be and can remember His words, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We are also taught this very thing - Satan was put here for a definite purpose, and just as sure as he is here, he shall serve that very purpose for which he was put here, and none other. But thanks be unto God, we also (as a gift from God) have a Holy hatred for him (Satan) and all his cohorts. That is the same hatred (I feel) as when Christ said, "Esau have I hated." Dear ones, you are still His little children. You are still precious to Him. You are still His same love wherewith He spoke and said, "Jacob have I loved." It seems to me that were I given a heart to pray, my prayer would be, "O Merciful God, in as much as be in accord with Thou holy will, give us Thy perfect willingness that Thy will be done in all things, and as Thou said, 'Go and tell John again these things that I have said unto you,' remind us, O Lord that Thy love and kindness toward us and Thy children everywhere, and show us our weakness, and helplessness, that in so seeing, we might be enabled, O Lord, to once again view Thy greatness and goodness and mercy, and grace, that is sufficient for us all in our every need. O Lord God, we do hope to have asked these things in the name of Thou beloved Son Christ Jesus and for His sake. Amen."

Brethren, it seems that surely there has been times with me that truly I could say, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend His cause," but also from time to time I am reminded of that certain time with Peter, when not only did he deny knowing Jesus Christ, but did also curse in the process. That is just one more witness or evidence to me that any time I am not kept from such things, I am always subject to Satan's ways, I tell you Brethren, even he has more power than this poor worm of the dust of the earth. What I feel I am trying to say here is - Though we have no doubt as to Peter being a child of God, even he of himself could not be trusted, only as he was led and guided by the Holy Spirit.

So Dear Ones, God willing, let us try those spirits that are working in the Peters' (members) of the church, and decide which are we to trust, - the Peters' or rather the Holy Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In other words, let us not (in our minds) raise man above what is his rightful stance or place, for have we not been shown what man of himself really is. Was it not an awful filthy sight? Was it not at the very center and bottom of the dung hill? Is this sight not very clear evidence as to whom our trust and hope and love ought to be in? Is not that manifestation we see come forth out from our Brethren of the working within them of the Holy Spirit, our one and only Guide, not only of our love for them, but also as to what degree of trust we may have in what they might say concerning the inner workings of the church of the living God. I feel and believe so. Brethren, whenever or wherever we gather together in His Name, though there may only be few, there He is in our midst, for that He promised. So dear and precious ones, may it be our hearts desire to meet together only in such manner of brotherly love of union and communion, ever looking upward to our Lord and Saviour from whom all our help comes. Let us not follow after any man, but rather our one and only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and what He stands for. But let us not follow after any one or more who manifests that their greatest desire is to

gather together great numbers of people and churches within their own fold. Now I say to one and all, whatsoever you find in this writing to be amiss, lay it all at my door. But whatsoever you may find as a comfort, or as being in accord with the Holy truth, render any and all praise unto the Lord for it so being.

Your brother (I hope) in Christ
 Jesus our Lord,
 Troy G. Shepard
 SR 28
 Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope the Editors and readers of the *Signs* will bear with me one more time.

This morning, after having attended the Soldier Creek Association in Benton, KY., and the Hopewell Association in Fayette, Alabama, I am so caught up in thought I feel I will burst if I don't try to say the things going through my mind. I have told it so many times, but being a witness among these two gatherings of God's children, and the power of God sent down to the ministers and servants to feed them, giving them proof (scriptural) that he is the same God He was in the days of the prophets and apostles, and will ever be, it has stirred and filled me to tell it again. It has made me go back and relive my experience all over again, and each time I meditate upon it, I go back a little further in my life. I don't want to be tedious, so will tell of the most precious part.

I had desired this thing – this hope and belief and knowledge of God – a long while, but did not know how, or where, to get it. At one time I thought maybe I could join a church, any church, and maybe it would bring about what I wanted. Only that would mean I would have to say, or pretend to believe, God had saved me. That thought was too horrible for consideration at all.

Finally I came to the conclusion that I was an alien, a black sheep, and would always be. I was as sure of it as one can be. I was sad and fearful, but confident

that it was that way. In a way I was more or less reconciled and seemingly at ease in this thought.

One morning I was aware of a feeling of joy, a feeling I hardly understood. I couldn't tell from whence it came, but knew it was different to anything I had ever felt. I pondered it in my heart as to what it was. I wasn't expecting anything new for the house, nor any coming event that could cause this kind of feeling.

I somehow think of three days in connection with this, though it may have been more. Anyway, the next morning this joy and light feeling within me was still there. I'd rather not take the space to tell all the thoughts that went through my mind, but the third morning it was there and with more power. I found myself so lost in thought, wandering from room to room trying to do my household chores, and finally realizing I was just standing in one place, not doing anything. I questioned, "What on earth is this feeling?" I walked into a room and sat down to think about it. I thought of God, and immediately I felt to say, "That's what it is." I felt a presence around me and thought if I reached out my hand I would touch Him, but I didn't dare try it. I was spellbound, afraid to move, but such joy.

I thought to myself, "There's something changed. There must be." I thought of going to the door and looking out, maybe there was something outside to be shown me. Softly and fearfully (and feeling a little foolish), I walked to the door and looked across the field and trees and viewed the sky, hoping there was something that would be evidence that this was truly of God. I saw nothing, and my heart sank and I was sad. While I was gazing at the scenery these words flashed in my mind (not by an audible voice but) as though indelibly printed there, "My child, the change is not out there, but within you. You've been baptized with the Holy Spirit and your heart has been washed in the blood of the Lamb." Such a joy more powerful than ever rushed over me and I was so confident that It was God. I had not a doubt and that sweet confidence stayed with me a long while.

I could write a book of all the things which led up to this experience, and the forty odd years since, but it might not be prudent. It seems I have been emptied from vessel to vessel many times. This may not make sense to anyone else, but it does to me. There are times I feel I've been emptied into this vessel of carnality, and in this state I find myself thinking, "I may lose sight of that glorious and all powerful God," and with a zeal (probably carnal) I want to go out and gather all the precious souls who are indeed followers, but do not come into the visible church here, and bring them in. Not wanting to wait for God's time and purpose, I want to see them added to our little membership here and now.

Sometimes He leaves me in this state so long. I once fould myself saying, "Oh, Lord, you know how weak I am, and it's dangerous to leave me too long, and I am without strenght to remove myself from it, forgetting the great power and mercy with which He brought me up before Him in the first place. Oh, how weak we mortals are.

And I hope He then from time to time lifts me out of that vessel into that spiritual vessel, or place. I for a while can view Him in all His perfection and I'm so at peace, and I fall, I hope at His feet and rest there, knowing all things are in His hands. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; just and right is He. And when it is His will that we be gathered together and hear words of wisdom fall from the lips fo His servants or ministers here, we feel so blessed, though poor and weak we be.

I trust I have not written this out of the vanity of my own mind, and I trust whosoever's hands this falls into will dispose of it anyway they see fit.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

EDITORIAL

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:17)

The prophet was blessed in this one verse of scripture to condense into a very few words a truth that is as basic to the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of an almighty and merciful God as is to be found in the printed word. It sets forth the complete security of the servants of the Lord and the absolute assurance that their righteousness before a just and holy god will ever remain sure and steadfast. The Apostle Paul expressed the same sentiment this way, "If God be for us, who can be against us." Just think for a moment of the awesome majesty and power of these statements: who is making them and to whom the statements are directed. They are from the infinite wisdom and power of a loving and merciful Heavenly Father and they are directed to a specific people who are the objects of His love and care that He created for Himself to show forth His glory.

The scripture does not say that no weapon shall be formed against His servants, but that "No weapon shall be formed against thee' *shall prosper* or be successful in overcoming them and separating them from their Father's care. Actually the servants of God are confronted daily by weapons that are formed against them and tongues that rise up against them in judgment, and this has been true since the beginning of time. This began in the Garden of Eden when the serpent beguiled Eve and the judgment was pronounced. God said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel." Ever since that time the seed of the serpent has been making war against the seed of the woman and is continually forming weapons against the seed of the woman but the scripture above promises that the seed of the serpent shall never overcome. It will continue to attack because it hates everything that the servants of the Lord stand for and uses every weapon it can devise to hurt them.

The beautiful and comforting thought in the above scripture is the fact that there is no possibility that these weapons and tongues can prosper. If they

could prosper or the promise and power supporting the promise could fail, then the children of Israel would have perished at the Red Sea; the three Hebrew children would have burned in the fiery furnace; Daniel would have been eaten by the lions; Isaac would have been slain by Abraham, and Joseph would have been killed by his brethren. If any of these could have happened, It would have changed the entire course of the world. The certainty of all things in the future rests in the hands of the same power that has determined all things in the past and not one in either category did or can fail. The hope of all who declare that if they have any righteousness it can only be by the imputed righteousness of Christ, acknowledge that all of their salvation depends upon the fact that the adversary cannot prosper in his attacks on them by the same power that has supported those in ages past. They realize that but for promises such as the one above, and the continuous demonstration of this care and lovingkindness in their lives that they could not stand for a moment.

The prophet says that the fact that God is fighting their battles for them and that their righteousness is of Him is the heritage of all of those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. In the song that God gave to Moses to teach to the people, He refers to this choosing of His people as a separation of the sons of Adam and a setting of the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. "For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." These and many other scriptures speak of the way and maner in which the Lord's people were called out from among the nations of the earth. They are given a knowledge of God through faith, which is the sovereign gift of God, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The song of Moses began, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." This is the solemn

and mysterious way in which the truth is instilled into the heart and soul of man. It is the gracious and majestic work of the God who created the world by the word of His power, the One who speaks and it is done; the One who commands and it stands fast. Oh, the beauty and the glory of this God and all His work, and the comfort to those who have been exercised and can claim these promises as their own because of a work of grace in their heart.

Man who will declare that God wants things a certain way but must have the cooperation of the creatures has never known God; has never been changed from the natural into which he was born; has never been born of the Spirit of which all must be born before they can see God and the glories of His kingdom. He is the one that raised up His voice in judgment against the Lord's servants and is condemned by them because they realize where the judgment is coming from, for they were also once in that condition. He is in the same place that the Apostle Paul was before the light shined around him and Jesus revealed Himself to the Apostle. This experience is a part of the lives of all of the children of the Almighty God of heaven and of earth and regardless of how and when it happens, it is sufficient. They then have fellowship for the Apostle Paul when he said, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." It is a wonderful and glorious heritage to live among and enjoy the fellowship of a people who have been made to acknowledge that their righteousness is of God because they are not sufficient of themselves.

Jude is speaking of this heritage when he said, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and perserved in Christ Jesus, and called." This is declaring the absolute safety and security of the salvation of all the saints of God and it involves all of the Godhead. God the Father sanctified them, before the world was, unto His glory; Jesus the Son preserved them, His death atoning for all of their sins and making them accepted in the Beloved and the Holy Spirit

calls them in this life and reveals to them that they are indeed a chosen vessel of the Most High God and heirs of the fullness of His kingdom.

Speak of a heritage! Can you imagine a more grand and glorious heritage that could belong to a people and all because it was their Father's good pleasure to give it to them. It seems that they would never doubt or question their experience or fear anything that might confront them in this life with such evidence that cannot be denied. The Apostle Paul must have been thinking on these things when he wrote, "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." There is a race that is set and it includes every weapon that shall be formed against them and every tongue that shall be raised against them in judgment. They are all for a specific purpose and they shall fulfill that purpose, but Isaiah says they shall not prosper. The cloud of witnesses that encompasses the children of God are their brethren from former generations who have left on record their travels that those that were to follow would be encouraged as they learn that the trials and afflictions that they are suffering have ever been the footsteps that the redeemed of the Lord have walked in. They will see and bear witness that these truths are eternal and are a heritage that all of creation does not possess. They strengthen the hope of the weary pilgrim that theirs is the journey of the people that are called "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." They witness with David who said, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."

In Bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard Campbell

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW XVIII

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, particularly on the subject of church discipline? Can a member of the church be lawfully excluded, except in be done according to the rule laid down in that chapter? Some think it unnecessary to take labor in all cases, especially cases where the offence is committed in the presence of the church. Your views on the subject will be kindly received.

Yours, with esteem,

C. B. FULLER

Roxbury, N. Y., January 17, 1862.

R E P L Y

We do not feel competent to explain all the questions which may be suggested upon the subject of church discipline, still it appears to us that the subject is very clearly laid down in the New Testament. We have observed in our fifty years membership in the church of Christ, that as a general thing the greatest discrepance in opinion in regard to the laws of Christ have been where churches have been least inclined to be governed by the work and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master. We do not feel sure that what is said by our Lord on the subject in this chapter (Matthew xviii) was designed to embrace all cases of discipline that should ever occur, but rather to cover the ground embraced in the subject on which our Lord was at that time instructing his disciples, for we find other portions of the New Testament devoted to an extended view of the same subject, and particularizing many cases in which individual christians and whole churches are required to act in obedience to the laws of Christ. Still, it seems to us that no action of a church or of a member of the church can be valid where the general instructions of this chapter are not observed and practiced.

The time and circumstances attending this instruction, show that an unbecoming ambition to excel each other was betrayed by at least some of the disciples, and to settle the matter they brought the subject to Jesus, and put the question in undisguised terms to him, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This kind of ambition lies generally at the bottom of most, if not all, the dissensions which divide churches, and individual saints, and is

prolific in the production of disaffection and alienation; and as that ambitious fiend is still alive, and sometimes harbored in the breasts of christians, it will be well for us all to observe carefully the instructions given in this case. Jesus set a little child in the midst of them, What an example! What a volume of much needed instruction is here! "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And who shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

Here are the primary instructions in regard to discipline. Deep humility is the very first requisite, and it is indispensable as a qualification to transact the business of Christ's kingdom. Without this childlike spirit the gates of the kingdom are barred against us. The profession of this meek and humble spirit is a passport to the kingdom, and such an humble little child that believes in Christ cannot be rejected or excluded without rejecting and excluding Christ himself. How fearful, too, to offend one of those little ones who believe in Jesus. The term here rendered, offend, has a broader signification than merely to ruffle the feelings or excite the resentment. We understand it to be in the sense that Peter was on one occasion an offense to Jesus; that is, when he savored the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. To offend may be understood to mean to lay a stumblingblock in their way, to deprive them of their sacred rights in the house of God; to grieve their childlike spirit by unbrotherly conduct, or to overturn their faith, as did Philetus and Hymeneus the faith of some. The church as a body, and every member should be solemnly impressed with the weight of these instructions, or they cannot be competent to administer the discipline

of the church of the living God. Beware then, brethren, how you attempt to meddle with the discipline of the church if actuated or even influenced by a haughty spirit that would strive for the mastery. We answer, therefore, one of brother Fuller's question. No member of the church can be lawfully excluded from the church without a strict conformity to this rule. Where the supremacy of this rule enjoining a childlike humility on each acting member of the church is not regarded, it were better that they were drowned in the sea, than under any other rule to expel from the privileges of the church of God one of his humblest disciples. Where this rule is observed, and the church is solemnly impressed with a sense of their responsibility, they feel that to expel from communion any who should be retained in fellowship, is to reject the Lord Jesus; there will be no room for thrusting with side and shoulder, but an ardent desire to restore the erring in the spirit of meekness, and in the bowels of Christ.

This consideration is enforced on our minds by a beautiful illustration in the same connection: "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." A brother who has given us the evidence that he has been converted and becomes as a little child has been accordingly received into fellowship, but subsequently he is overtaken in a fault. Shall he at once be killed? Shall he be rudely thrust out? No, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi.1, 2. Go in the spirit of humility into the mountain an search diligently for the strayed sheep, remember that it is the will of your heavenly Father that he shall not perish. You can-

not fulfill the law of Christ if you do not desire his restoration to the fold, and after all your toil and labor in searching the mountain, if you succeed in reclaiming the wanderer, if you possess the Spirit of Christ, it will afford you more joy to see him reclaimed and brought back to his privileges in the church, than to see all the other members, which have not strayed, in their place in the church. It is not the will of God our Father which is in heaven that he shall perish, and should it be your will to consign him to perish in the wilderness? "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Christ would not charge us to take heed if there were no liability of our doing so. Do not underrate them, they are precious in the eyes of him who came from heaven to save that which was lost; and in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. Yet, notwithstanding the full force of all this admonition, there are cases in which exclusions are unavoidable. Woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh! "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee." "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." We are the mystical body of Christ, and members one of another. No sane man would consent to the amputation of a healthy and sound member of his body, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ does the church, Should a hand, or foot, or any other member become diseased, bruised or painful, all the sound members would sympathize with the diseased member, and before we could consent to amputation we would exhaust all the healing medicines within our reach; but if mortification sets in, and the inflammation is actually spreading to the center of vitality, to the heart, as a last painful and dreaded resort we apply the surgical knife. So in the church, if the hand or foot, or even the eye, however useful these members may have been, or may be deemed, as indispensable for usefulness or convenience, if the law of Christ requires us to cut them off and cast them from the body, it must be done, for it is better to enter into life halt, maimed, or

with but one eye, than, retaining all these disordered and incurable members, to be cast into hell fire. That is, into confusion, in the sense in which James speaks of the tongue as an unruly member, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. The discipline of the church of God must be enforced strictly according to the law of Christ, without partiality; but it must be done as well in the Spirit of Christ as in strict obedience to the letter of his precepts, for his word and his Spirit always harmonize and go together. The most essential point is to be guided by his Spirit, for that Spirit will lead us into the truth. Whenever we are led by the humble, loving, tender, forgiving Spirit of Christ, and the law of Christ and health of the church demand that we should pluck out right eyes, or cut off right hands, there will be deep lamentation and mourning, certainly not exulting, and boasting, that we have carried our points. Who ever exulted that he had lost an eye, or suffered the amputation of a hand or a foot? When we see brethren or churches exulting that they have carried their points, and procured the expulsion of any of their members, we feel confident that the law of Christ has been violated.

Brother Fuller asked our views on this chapter, and we have endeavored to state as plainly as possible what are our views on the first fourteen verses, for we do not believe any brother or any church can possibly obey the remaining part of the instructions unless they are governed by the instructions thus far considered.

We now come to the portion of the chapter to which we suppose Elder Fuller more particularly refers, in which our Lord says, "Moreover," that is, what he is now about to say is added to what he has said, and is to be taken in the same connection; these instructions are not to be separated, divided, garbled, nor handled deceitfully: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee." Let us observe as we read, he is thy brother who has trespassed, he is still to be recognized in that relation until the whole course of discipline has been faithfully pursued; under no circumstances then is the la-

boring brother or the church at liberty to apply to him offensive epithets, such as heretic, drunard, liar, thief, fox, crafty, disorderly, &c., terms which are only calculated to excite angry passions and render a reclamation more difficult, if not impossible. Although you feel certain he has trespassed against thee, still regard and treat him as a brother, and as a brother dearly beloved, whom you desire above all things to reclaim. Keeping this in view, you cannot go to any one else without trespassing against him, and becoming guilty of the same wrong which you hold against him. Nothing can more clearly violate the laws of Christ than to publish your complaints to others before you have pursued the course here enjoined. Under no pretence are you at liberty to get up a prejudice against him, by whispering, hinting, or in any way insinuating your complaint to others. The instruction is plain: "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." If you succeed in gaining him, no other person under heaven should ever know that he has ever trespassed against thee. How often have the churches been thrown into disorder and confusion by an aggrieved or an offended brother disregarding and disobeying this divine rule. Instead of going to the erring brother alone, how frequently nearly the whole church, and perhaps the world, become familiar with the matter before the offending brother has been visited alone. After going to A, B and C, asking their opinion on the merits of the case, relating to them the circumstances, exciting their suspicions against the brother, under the pretence perhaps of asking their advice, it is too late to go to the offending brother alone, unless it be to confess your own wickedness in divulging the matter. The object of the private interview is thwarted by your own disobedience to the law of Christ. But supposing you have not communicated the matter to any one, now you are required to go to him. Your errand is to reclaim him in the spirit of meekness; you are not to go as a lion, but as a little child, considering your own infirmities and liability to err. And as old father Thomas used to tell us, "Mind

and go alone. Try and leave the old man behind, he will be greatly in your way." You are on the King's business, therefore put off the old man with his affections and lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; then you will not seize the offending brother by the throat and demand immediate payment, but you will remember how much your Lord has forgiven you, and how much your brethren have to forgive you; then will ye be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. If you fail to gain your brother, then take the next step, in the same kind and humble spirit, and if in this the brother cannot be reclaimed, tell it to the church. There leave it with the church, do not try to raise an unjust prejudice against the brother, but let the church carefully investigate the matter, and in the spirit and temper of the gospel make a decision. If all this be done in the manner directed, what the church shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what she shall loose on earth is loosed in heaven. Heaven has ratified and established this course. But it is wicked and impious to pretend to administer the discipline of the house of God in any other way, or when influenced by any other spirit. We conclude, therefore, and answer brother Fuller, that no member can be lawfully excluded from a church, except it be in conformity to this rule. But while we say this, we do not intend to be understood that private steps of labor are by this rule required in taking cognizance of offences which take place in open church meeting. A disorderly member is to be called to order by the church, when he acts disorderly in the presence of the church, as we understand this rule. But this must be done between him and the church alone. No member is at liberty to publish or even mention it out of the church; and the same childlike meekness is to be felt and exercised by the church as is required by the individual member. As we have before said, there are further instructions contained in the New Testament on the subject of discipline beside those in

this chapter, but none which are not in perfect harmony with what Christ has here given. The apostles were inspired to set all these things in order, and to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is perfectly safe then to follow their directions, and not only safe, but imperative; we cannot disregard them without involving disobedience to our King. Every instruction we can require is clearly presented by Christ and his apostles, to apply to all cases that can possibly call for the exercise of gospel discipline among the children of God. The greatest difficulties we meet arise from a lack of that childlike spirit which is enjoined by Christ in this eighteenth chapter, rather than from any lack of clearness in the law of Christ; for when christians are in that humble and spiritual frame they seldom, if ever, fail to settle all their differences; but in absence of that spirit their efforts are vain, for holiness becomes the house of the Lord forever.

The point on which we understand brother Fuller to desire us to be more definite is, whether there are any cases in which exclusion of members is lawful, where private labor is the first and second steps, according to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, have not been formally taken. We answer, We think there are. For instance, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."—Titus iii. 10, 11. An heretic is one who holds and utters heresy. The church is authorized to judge in this matter. One member shall speak in the church at a time, and the rest shall judge. That is, the church shall judge of what is said by each one, whether it be sustained by the Scriptures and by the experience of the saints; if it be contrary to the word and spirit of truth, admonish him. The church should admonish him, and all who hear him utter heresy should admonish him, tenderly and in love; and if he heed not the admonition, admonish him again, labor to convince him of his error; but after the first and second admonition reject him, if he be not reclaimed. A man that is an heretic may be a

preacher, or he may be a private member in the church, but in either case he should be first admonished faithfully twice, and then if not reclaimed, reject him. We do not suppose that each member of the church should be required to go personally and separately to tell him of his faults between the two alone. If the heresy be known only to one, then let that one take the first, and if need be, the second step of gospel labor, and then tell it to the church. But if the heresy be uttered before the whole church, then let the whole church admonish him, between her and him alone, once, and then again, and if he persists in his heresy, reject or expel him from fellowship.

Further examples may be found: 1 Corinthians fifth and sixth chapters. If it be known that a member be an adulterer, a fornicator, an idolator, a thief, a drunkard, a reviler, or an extortioner, or covetous, we are required to at once withdraw all association with such; and Paul commands, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that such be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." But it is to be done when the church is gathered together, "and my spirit." Let us be sure that the Spirit of Christ, which inspired Paul to lay down this rule, is with us, pervading the whole church; and he adds, "with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." If we have and are actuated by that Spirit that inspired Paul, we may feel an assurance that we have the power of Christ, the authoritative power of Christ, in delivering such unto Satan, or in other words, in putting such manifestly wicked persons away from among ourselves.

Finally, whenever a christian is offended or aggrieved with his fellow christian, so that his fellowship is marred, he is bound to regard it as a personal matter, and go privately and tell him his fault, between him and the offending brother alone, and labor to gain, not to destroy, his brother, and pursue in the subsequent steps laid down, let the offence or trespass be what it may; and if a brother bring his gift to the altar, and

there remember that his brother has aught against him, let him leave there his gift, (unoffered) before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift. Christians and churches are sometimes too backward in attending to what they may regard as but small matters, and allow them to grow and feter until they learn, by painful experience, how great a fire a little matter kindleth. A faultfinding spirit is unbecoming our holy profession, but christian faithfulness is indispensable to the peace of the church, and as members we are required to watch over one another, to exhort and to admonish one another in love. Nor is this obligation limited to any particular branch of the church of God. Although the church is scattered in her locality, and there are many organizations, yet they are all branches of the one church which is the body of Christ. Much is said of the independence of churches; that is, of their independence of each other, and of any ecclesiastical court above the church. This independence should be carefully considered, for although we acknowledge no pope, or bishop, no synod or association, as having a right to lord it over the churches, we must contend that the whole church is the body of Christ; all who are members of that one body are members one of another, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, We have no need of thee. It takes every member to make the body, and all the branches of the church to constitute the bride of Christ; and although all the several branches, if on gospel ground, have equal rights, still these rights are limited, for no church has a right to do wrong. All are bound to be governed by the law of Christ, and the several branches of the church are as vitally connected to each other as the members of a particular branch are one to another. Hence the duties of the churches of the same faith and order toward each other as churches do not differ essentially in this respect from the relative duties of members in a church. To illustrate: My two feet, though members alike of my body, claim to be independent of each other; one of them resolves to

travel eastwardly, the other is equally determined to go the the west, how long can they maintain their independence and pursue their respective courses without dividing the body to which they both belong? A house or a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. How can two walk together except they are agreed? To maintain fellowship and harmony among the several branches of the church of God they all should be willing to compare notes together, to communicate with each other freely, to behold each other's order, and their steadfastness in the faith. Our real fellowship demands that we should be fully satisfied that we are all led by the same Spirit, that we are pursuing the same course, that we, as one body, are of one heart and one mind; for what use has one body of more than one heart or one mind? When churches become reckless of the esteem and fellowship of sister churches, they speak loudly of their independence, and seem to have forgotten that a naughty spirit goeth before a fall; while churches walking more cautiously in the valley of humiliation feel that they need the fellowship, the sympathy and the prayers of all their sister churches.

But as we have already extended this article to considerable length, we will submit what we have written to brother Fuller, apologizing to him at the same time for delaying so long to answer his request.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 15, 1862.

SANTA MONICA, California, Oct. 31, 1932.

MY PRECIOUS FATHER AND MOTHER:—I have for some days suppressed the desire to tell you some of what I trust I have been made to see and feel, by divine love. I do not know that I can lead you into the pastures on which I humbly hope I have feasted, but I know you have traveled the same road before, and by experience will be able to grasp what I fail to tell. Words, used to the very best advantage, are very weak to convey these precious things, and I am very ignorant of language, so I will ask you in the beginning to bear with my

weakness. If I had command of the finest language, and did not have the Holy Spirit's guidance, it would be only a mass of confusion; but if he will lend me his sweet presence for a while, what I say may be a little comfort to you.

I hardly know where to begin, for I cannot remember when I did not realize, in a measure, that I was a vile sinner in the sight of the holy God. That, I suppose, was due to your teaching. You taught me the letter (all you could do), but I hope that God has applied it to my heart; and here is the reason of my hope: A little less than four years ago I began to see myself as I really was: a vile sinner. I thought I had always seen myself thus, but it did not bear so heavily upon my heart. Then I realized that I had never really known it. Once in a while I felt that I was the most sinful one of your children, but generally I thought I was quite a good girl, which, as you know, I was speaking after the manner of the world. But when, as I hope, the light shone into my heart I saw it filled with every unclean thing. I thought for a long while that I was getting to be the most sinful being alive. Everything I did seemed awful. I wanted every one to think I was good, especially the Old Baptist. I wanted them to love me, and I thought that if I was good they would love me, and oh, how I tried to raise myself in their esteem. But far above this, I wanted to appear good before God. I had a longing to be holy, and would say, I will not do such and such a thing again, only to turn right around and do it again. Then I would try to pray to God and beg him to give me strength to do good. I seemed willing, even anxious, to be what is called good, but how to get the ability I knew not. I struggled along this way for months, trying to do good, and always found that when I would do good evil was present, and oh the agony I have endured. Every day my mountain of sin was increasing in size and getting darker and darker. It was as a wilderness, dense and deep. Still I labored on, trying to do some good thing to decrease the size of this enormous mountain of sin, and still it continued to grow.

One time, about two years ago, I had several days of bemoaning my condition, and it seemed that I would just give up. I would not try to pray any more, for every time I went to my knees I would think, "The prayer of the righteous availeth much," but I am not righteous; no, no, I am vile, vile and unclean. So I would only say, O God, if thou wilt, have mercy on me. Like the beautiful words of Hart,

"I could only sigh with sore contrition,
Begging mercy every hour."

About this time, as you know, my health was very poorly, and I had gone to bed deeply groaning and sighing in weariness of body, mind and soul. Winford said, "Can't you rest, darling?" Then the words seem to come from the very center of my heart, Oh I need rest for my poor weary soul. Then the words came so plainly for me, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I was amazed for a time. I thought, It may be that God will have mercy on me yet. So for a while I seemed to be relieved of that constant burden, though once in a while it would return heavier than ever before, until the past summer. When I had come to the very end of the way, it seemed, I was made to realize that it was the Holy Spirit within showing me the depravity of my heart, and then, I trust, came more hope. I realized that I could do nothing, because I was vainly trying to struggle along and do something that was done and finished when our blessed Savior expired on the rugged cross of Calvary, and said, "It is finished." I found, by the light of his countenance, that I was trying to do the very thing that he had declared finished. I was trying to bring myself into favor with God by poor, puny works of mine, not realizing that I was trying to drag a pile of filthy rags to his righteous throne to make him look upon me in mercy. Poor presumptuous wretch! trying to present One so divinely fair with such a gift. No wonder I was having such a hard time making him accept it. But when I was brought to where I had no works of my own to offer, when I could plead merit only through what Jesus had done, then, I trust, I received

a token of his acceptance, and oh the sweet peace that filled my heart. There was nothing for me to do but lean on him. I had such a sweet period all alone I cried for joy and my heart was filled with love for God and everything. I sang, and these words flowed from my heart,

"Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander. Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above."

A sweet peace has filled my life a part of the time this summer. Oh the indescribable peace when our affections are placed on things above; when we can look up; when we no longer struggle with the vanities of life, but just look to the loving Father, and trust him for his grace, believing that "behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." By his grace to say, no matter what may come, what hardships or pain, what trials or persecutions. No matter, all is well. Oh it is a sweet feeling just to know that all is well; to not be wearied by time-things and fretting about frivolous things, but to just trust him, knowing that

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

Oh that he will go with me all along the way and guide my feet in that strait and narrow way. If his presence is for a moment withdrawn all is dark and I begin to fret about everything, a little pain, or some other little care. If we could but realize at all times that we really deserve nothing, that all we receive is in mercy sent, we would not expect so much of this world. I long to praise him for what he has done for me, the weakest, frailest, most sinful one of the fold, but I am utterly helpless to give the praise that is due. It would seem that after such unmerited blessings my days would be filled with praise, but alas, I find still many things to take up my mind and my time. What manner of life should we live, seeing from what we have been delivered? Let no one say to me, If I believed in predestination I would take my fill of sin. It seems that I have had more than my fill of it already. How can

one who is killed to the love of sin roll it under their tongue like a sweet morsel? Every sinful act causes me much grief and lamentation. I long to be what I cannot be, but trust I appear before Him as spotless through Christ's redeeming blood. For, far from rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel, it is most distasteful to me. But I am still in the flesh, and the warfare will continue until we conquer through Jesus' blood. "We shall be conquerors ere long, and more than conquerors, too." Since, I trust the light and love of God have shone into my sinful heart it has shown me many things from which I have been delivered. As dear Elder Durand says in his "Fragments," It seems that a light shines back over my past life revealing many things to me that when they occurred seemed of little consequence. I can see God's hand guiding me all through my youthful days, and realize now that I was not allowed to go in the paths of sin only because his grace restrained me. You, my dear father and mother, taught me to walk uprightly at all times, but when I was tempted to do wrong it was not this that stopped me. It was the knowledge of the fact that God's all-seeing eye was upon me, and, if I did not love him then, I feared him. I cannot remember when I did not fear him more than you, even as a small child. Sometimes in my latter youth I have gone out to behold some lovely scene of nature, and have looked and listened, and a solemn awe has fallen upon me. I have realized the power and the wisdom of God and felt a longing to live a holy life, for I thought then that I must live holy before he would love me. At such times I have felt that I would live to express my feelings to some one, but even as near and dear as you were to me I could not utter a word. It seemed so solemn, so sacred. I could only gaze on the wonderful work of his hand, and many times I have uncontrollably sobbed out my feelings for no other reason than just the greatness of God and his creation. I cannot tell you of these times even yet. I cannot get into the sweetness of it either by tongue or pen; but just the memory of these times now, as I write at my desk, blind my eyes with tears and fill my heart with love and

fear of this great Being.

I must stop this part of my letter, and tell you what happened yesterday. Our (oh the sweet realization that now I can say "our") little church met an dear sister Miller's, and when dear brother G. O. Walker said the door of the church stands open, my darling husband stepped out over all opposition of the flesh and related his experience and was accepted. I followed him, trembling with joy and fear, feeling my unfitness very keenly, and tried to tell them some of my experience, but it seemed that I utterly failed. But in their love and forbearance they accepted me. Oh if I could but tell you how utterly unworthy I feel to be among them. Oh that my God will keep me where I belong: at their feet at all times. The Lord willing, we will meet at Ontario next second Sunday and go five miles to Santa Ana River and then follow our dear Lord in baptism. Oh such a feeling of peace rests in my heart this morning! I wish I could describe it. It seems that I am resting from a long and hard day's labor.

I will close, asking you both to pray for your poor little girl, that she may always live to serve the brethren and sisters in meekness and humility. I wish I could go into your loving arms this mornin, and there sob out my feelings on your breast, but God has seen fit to place many hills and valleys between us.

Your loving, and only daughter,
MABEL BERRY.

ASSOCIATION NOTICES

The Smith River Association is scheduled to be held with Charity Church, in Patrick County, Virginia. On State Route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, on First Sunday, Friday & Saturday before in September 1983, the Lord willing.

We look forward to meeting many of the Saints then.

Yours in Hope of Eternal Life.
Amos I Hash

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, for its one hundred, forty-second session at the Danville Primitive Baptist Church, July 8, 9, & 10, 1983.

Directions to the Church at Danville follows: Traveling from all directions, you will come to Danville, Virginia, located in Pittsylvania County. Upon reaching the intersection of north-south highway #29 and #41, follow highway #41 about one mile, turn left and follow signs to Road 1515.

We invite visitors of our faith and order and especially the various ministers of our correspondence.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord Willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. (August 5, 6, and 7, 1983). Martinsville Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds and the meeting house at Leatherwood Church, this is the same location as 1982.

Leatherwood Church is located in Henry County, Virginia, on State Road 657. Those coming from the south on Route 220, and those coming from the east on Route 58, go to the north side of Martinsville, there take Route 108 N. for about 8 miles, turn right on Route 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from the North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 goes to the Henry County line, then go 2 miles to Route 657, turn left on Route 675. Follow above instructions.

Those coming by Route 57, take Route 657, go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections, you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of Dad

Lewis Moses Johnson was born Feb. 8, 1897 in Putnam County, West Virginia, and died Feb. 8, 1983, making his stay upon earth 86 years.

He was married to Mary Belle Young who preceded him in death June 7, 1933. To this union was born one son Silas Eldon Johnson of Hurricane. He then married Nancy E. (Lizzie) Bird, to this union were born nine children, six boys and three girls. Willard A. of St. Marys, West Virginia, William, Lewis, Harold, of Hurricane, Mamie Crouch, Arbutis Carpenter, of Hurricane, and Mae McCoy of Sod, West Virginia. Two sons preceding him in death.

Daddy was a Primitive Baptist for over forty years, he lived a life in front of his children and the world, that I believe was pleasing in the sight of God.

His funeral service was conducted by Elder Amos Hash of Virginia. He took the 15th chapter of 1st. Cor. and read from these scriptures and spoke comforting words to his family and friends. I believe that God directed his speech in such a manner for the comfort of his children.

I have wondered in time past why Dad and Mom traveled this country over to hear preaching, and I believe that God has given me the answer to this question. It is because of the great love that has been given them from above that only God can give.

It says in the 104th. Psalms, verses 33 and 34, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord."

Dad would always rejoice when he heard the sweet songs of Zion. Before his death, he would sit in his chair and sing or hum these beautiful songs he loved so much, I truly believe that Dad was praising God, until the good Lord

said it is enough and called him home, to ever be in the presence of Jesus, the One who gave his life for his children, the ones that were given him in covenant before the foundation of the world.

Dad, we will miss you so much and we love you dearly.

Your unworthy son, Harold

SISTER GRACE SHORT KEEN

Sister Keen was the daughter of the late Parker Fields Short and Nannie Gosney Short. She was born January 11, 1896 in Gretna, Virginia. She was the widow of John C. Keen. Sister Keen was received by conference in Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia on August 14, 1966. She passed away May 23, 1980 in Danville Memorial Hospital.

Sister Keen is survived by two sons, John C. Keen, Chatham, Virginia, and Carroll E. Keen, Smithfield, Virginia; one daughter, Esther K. Adkins, Chatham, Virginia; one stepson, Morris C. Keen, Danville, Virginia; two sisters, Mary S. Fox, Richmond, Virginia, and Nannie S. Smith, St. Augustine, Florida; and 14 grandchildren.

She was a very meek and quiet person and never had much to say, but attended her meetings when possible. She was in bad health for many years and not able to go very much, but we feel she is resting in that better home prepared for God's people.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench at Scott's Funeral Home in Chatham, Virginia, and burial was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia.

May we all of Springfield Church bow in humble submission to God's will.

Written by one who loved her,
Sister Annie Tosh

SISTER MARY HARSLEY MINTER

Sister Mary Harsley Minter was our dear sister in the church for many years. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church

at Camp Branch and was a faithful member and she loved the doctrine of Jesus Christ. When she got to where she didn't have transportation to attend her home church she asked for a letter and came to Leatherwood Church. She enjoyed going to hear preaching as long as her health would allow her to go.

Sister Minter was born October 5, 1900 and died January 6, 1982. We all miss her so much, but the Lord saw fit to call her home to the place she had so long waited for. She is, we feel, there resting where there will be no more suffering or pain.

Written by a little Brother and Sister in hope.

Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Brown

DEACON NOBLE E. SMITH, SR.

The Lord has called from our midst my Dad and Brother in hope, Noble E. Smith, Sr. He died January 4, 1983. He was born March 5, 1908 in West Virginia, and had been a member of the church since around 1935. He was baptized by Elder Harvey Bird at Providence Church in West Virginia, and at his death he was a member of Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Jane Smith; his father, Elder John J. Smith, Sr.; two sons, Elder B. K. Smith, and Noble E. Smith, Jr.; four daughters, Lila A. Osborne, Nancy J. Clay, Lois J. Thaxton, and Linda L. Milam; 26 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren; four brothers and two sisters.

Funeral services were held in the Rose Hills Memorial Chapel in Whittier, California, with Elder B. K. Smith officiating. His body was laid to rest in Rose Hills Memorial Park.

He loved the Old Baptists because he considered them to be a manifest portion of the children of God, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. He would not have me sing praises to him, nor is it my desire. He manifested a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ that fadeth not away. He believed that the Lord called His people out of nature's darkness into

His marvelous light, according to the measure of His grace in the appointed time.

Dad was a subscriber to the *Signs of the Times* for many years. I cannot remember when a *Signs* could not be found in his home.

May the Lord bless and keep all who mourn his passing.

Bud Smith

TO OUR READERS

WE HAVE HAD AN OVERWHELMING RESPONSE FROM OUR READERS IN OUR APPEAL FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS. WE HAVE RECEIVED OVER ONE HUNDRED NEW SUBSCRIBERS. HAVE YOU SENT IN YOURS?

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR FEBRUARY 1983

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Miss Lora Smith, N.C. | \$ 3.00 |
| Nathan Phillips, Va. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. David Coty, AZ. | 13.00 |
| A.R. Elmore, N.C. | 2.00 |
| James W. Brown, TN. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Ella P. Lee, FL. | 1.00 |
| Joseph MacKenzie, CAN. | 1.00 |
| S.R. Fanning, TN. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Elizabeth Akins, VA. | 2.00 |
| Jack K. Hays, TX. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Audrey Glidewell, N.C. | 7.00 |
| Miss Brookie Steward, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. G.W. McDuff, LA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Erie Thurston, LA. | 3.00 |
| Eld. Noel Conner, VA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Maud T. Taws, MD. | 100.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Lucht, MD. | 36.00 |
| Mrs. Ann M. Dill, ME. | 25.00 |

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MARCH 1983

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Mrs. Alice Hatcher, VA. | \$ 1.00 |
| Eld. Eugene Taylor, FL. | 6.00 |
| Mrs. Mary J. Nelms, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Grace Manly, FL. | 2.00 |
| Hugh Knight, Jr. N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. M.D. Merrill, TX. | 12.00 |
| Wayne Germany, TX. | 25.00 |
| A Friend | 1000.00 |
| Mrs. Maude P. Truitt, MD. | 18.00 |
| Mrs. Biddie Collins, AL. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth W. Eastman, FL. | 76.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Smith, LA. | 25.00 |
| Mrs. Rachel Green, WV. | 4.00 |
| Chester A. Dirkes, N.J. | 24.00 |
| Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. J. R. Blackwell, N.C. | 13.00 |
| Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA. | 5.00 |
| Virginia Friends | 60.00 |
| Harold T. Clayton, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Bert H. Knox, WA. | 12.00 |

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., JULY 1983

No. 7

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions, gifts, re-newsals, announcements, obituaries, notices of meetings and any other communications, should be addressed to:

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the attonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistable, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| EDITORIAL..... | 122 |
| Written by Elder D. B. Stokes | |
| CORRESPONDENCE | 128 |
| VOICES OF THE PAST | 133 |
| Written by Elder W. C. King | |
| MEETINGS | 140 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS | 141 |
| CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... | 142 |
| BOOK NOTICES | 143 |
| OBITUARIES | 144 |
| Esther L. McLawhorn | |
| Jesse Edward Lang | |
| Elmer Francis Hastings | |

EDITORIALS

PREDESTINATION

Attempting to write on this subject, I do so in fear, knowing it is a cardinal point of doctrine about which many have set forth their views; and in doing one is left to wonder what is meant by predestination. Some say absolute, some eternal, and others limited predestination. I do not believe that a cardinal point of God's decree has to have absolute or eternal in front of it, or in other words a handle. I firmly believe that it is strong enough to stand for itself. We do not find the word "predestination" used in the Old Testament, nor the New Testament. But we do find the word "predesti-

nate." Predestination is derived from the Latin word "praedestinare" which means to predestine, to determine beforehand, to settle in advance. In modern English, Webster, a writer of dictionaries and a very learned man, says that predestination is: "the act of predestinating or the state of being predestinated: the theological doctrine that all events throughout eternity have been foreordained by divine decree or purpose: the foreordination by God of each individual's ultimate destiny particularly to eternal life."

By God's grace, let us look in the *Book of Acts 15:18*, "Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning of the world." and *Isaiah 46:10*, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasures." These two verses of scripture are sufficient to settle our minds concerning the sovereignty of God's power. That is to say that God even before the world began set the things that have been, and the things that are, and the things that will be in motion, and declared that they would be as He did foresee them. I will admit that this point of doctrine is hard to be understood, and that all of God's people are not favored by the Heavenly Master to see or to understand it. Peter said concerning Paul, *II Peter 3:16*, "As also in all of his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which that they are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Yet, if we have a belief in God, we have to admit that the things that are here are by God's purpose.

There is an order in the sovereignty of God, first His foreknowledge. Surely we will all say that God did foreknow all things, and when I say all things, this I mean—the good as

well as the evil. He knew Adam would fall, and in that fall God had a purpose as He does in all things. There was a purpose in Joseph's being hated by his brethren. He was given a dream; that dream came when he was asleep. He had no physical knowledge or mental capacity to stop it from coming, but it was sent by the Divine Providence of God. Do you know what the purpose was? Surely all will say, "Yes, I know what the purpose of that was." Joseph was a type of the Saviour. He was to be sent down into Egypt by his brethren; however, we find when Joseph's brethren who had done this thing in malice, with evil intentions in their hearts, were brought to the true understanding, Joseph embraced them and said, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

Do you not believe that God knew what would happen to his Son when He was born of a virgin and was sent into this world? Jesus himself says, for this cause came I unto this world and for this end was I born. He was to lay down His life; and, yet, it was wicked hands whom God did before ordain that should take Him and crucify Him that the will and the purposes of God might be made manifest. In that wicked act alone came the salvation of the Church.

Surely there is beauty in the doctrine of predestination. There are some points on which I feel all of God's people are agreed.

Now let us go further into the matter, if the Lord is willing, concerning God's foreknowledge and predestination. *Proverbs 16:4* "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This verse of scripture says he hath made, not going to, but already has. We not only find that the good things in life are made by God but also the wicked. Now may we consider that the sovereignty of God is in control of one as much as the other. Look in *Acts 17:*

26 again as the Apostle speaks:

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

I find there is a spirit of truth that comes from God which is Jesus Christ, our Lord, because He is true. He says "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Also, I find there is a lying spirit. Read *II Chronicles 18:22* concerning Ahab, the king of Israel. "Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee." Only God is able to do these things; yet, some will say this is a fatalistic doctrine. This is fatalism only if you can't believe. Not only are the righteous in His hands; but the wicked as well, even as the sun and the moon are under His decree. And they move in the predestined course that God did determine they would move in. So does all of creation. The birds, the insects, the fish, the creatures, and even man move in the course that God, even before He created the heaven and the earth, saw that they would. Even our steps are numbered, even the hairs of our head; and we are told that even a sparrow cannot fall without thy Heavenly Father. If God knows and controls the minute things, how much more so the large obstacles that are in our life, that are there by the decree of God.

The condition of the world that we are in now comes as no surprise to God because He has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. The wars, the contention, the hate, and the condition of world orders are as God would have them to be. Some will say, "No, this is not God's way." Oh, man, who art thou that replies against thy maker. He maketh one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Let it be known here and now, God

by justice owes no man anything but hell and damnation. Paul also says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Truly, it would be more simple to humanity if we did know the mind of God. But we cannot find out the works of God from the beginning until the end, for we find in the *Book of Proverbs* that He has made all things beautiful in His day. He has put the world in the heart of man that no man can find out the works of God from the beginning until the end. God is supreme in all of the things that He has made and created. He governs them by a decree and a control. He did foreknow what they would do in the time and in the seasons that He has appointed here in this world. If these times and seasons were not in the sovereignty of God, then everything would be chaos. If there be a part of it of which He has no knowledge, there is a part over which He has no control. The scriptures that have been laid down for our learning have told us that God has fixed all things, that He has ordained the righteous unto everlasting joy in heaven and immortal glory, and that the others He has seen fit, by the sovereignty of His own will, to leave in their sins and damnation even by sending them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and not be brought to the knowledge of the truth. Let us also know this one thing, that the powers that be are the powers that are ordained of God, and there are no powers in this world or in the world to come but those which are of God.

Oh, my loved ones, if we could understand the beauty of the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, of God's election, of God's predestination, that all things hang on a firm decree and that He sits on no precarious throne. As we wrote in the beginning from *Isaiah*, He declared the end from the beginning. In our manner of speaking, we mortals would start at

the beginning and go to the end. We start at birth, and we go to death not knowing what one moment of time in advance will bring, but hoping. But God in His sovereignty has declared this one event that God went to the end—the final consummation of all things—and came back to the beginning, declaring the end from the beginning, not the beginning to the end. And the things that have taken place are the things that have been, the things that will be are the things that were ordained of God. This is proved again and again in prophecy, for instance when the Lord said unto Peter, before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice. Here is a point of predestination. Peter declared that he would not do this thing, yet, the Lord knew that he would. And when it came to pass, it brought repentance unto the heart of Peter when the Lord looked at him. You know we find many things in the scriptures that foretell future events and when they come to pass, God doesn't look down and say, "I told you so." Jesus, when Peter had denied him, didn't look at him and say, "Well, I told you about it." No, He smiled at him as if to say, "Peter, I know you are of the flesh, you are weak; but remember, Peter, I have told you that I have prayed for thee."

This doctrine of foreknowledge is the effectual cause, predestination is the power of God to make His foreknowledge come to pass. He said, "As I have thought so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand." Remember, what God did foreknow moreover He did predestinate. Not only the heirs of heaven and immortal glory conformed to the image of His only begotten Son, but also those who did not receive the imputed righteousness of the blood of Jesus Christ are under the decree of God. Yea, the wicked are in His hands. He has made them for the day of evil, as we quoted out of the 16th

chapter of *Proverbs*. And yet God in his infinite wisdom has placed in man a mind, a will, and an understanding which conforms man unknowingly to the decree of God.

There is a doctrine that says man is free with the ability to choose right from wrong. Do we mortals really know what is right and wrong? We do things in the most sincere manner of our heart, sometimes thinking that they are right, and later we find those things were wrong. We find that the Apostle Paul thought he was fulfilling the will of God concerning salvation. He went about in his manner shutting up those who called upon the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Paul says for this ignorance God winked. Paul did it in ignorance, not knowing. When he was brought to the knowledge of this beautiful truth, he was a strong advocate of predestination and of the sovereignty of God controlling all events.

We are told that God in His infinite wisdom has set the times that are in this world and in the world to come; He has also placed all things in the hollow of His hand in a manner that will work to the glory of Him and to the glory and to the admiration of the Church. He holds the issues of life and death in His hands.

Solomon, who was a wise man, wrote in the third chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, "*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*" Solomon went on to say there is, "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and

a time to cast away; a time to reap, and a time to sow; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Does not this embrace the beauty of the sovereignty of God in that He has made all things? Some have said, "Well, the Lord has let the wicked go in such a manner that He is not watching over them as well as He does those that belong to Him by the blood of Jesus Christ." But even the wicked, as we have stated already, are in the hands of God. Their steps are ordered as much so as the steps of the righteous because the ways of a man are not hid from Him, but the Lord delights in His way. Man cannot conceive or perceive of His ways, for he knows nothing as he ought. Thanks be unto God; all of these things are in the hands of God.

Surely in this doctrine of the sovereignty of God's elect and love, He looked down from heaven and out of this chaos, He has picked a few to embrace life eternal through the suffering of His Son, Jesus, and He has brought them to the knowledge that of themselves they can do nothing. That embraces creation as well as the mortal things upon earth. All creation, of themselves, can do nothing; but by the spirit of the Son of God that strengthens them, they are able to do all things. Surely one would say, "Well, why does God do this?" We cannot always give an answer that would satisfy all of the minds of all individuals concerning why God does these things, why He had created the devil, and why He made him more subtle than any beast of the field. Why these things are we cannot truly say. Some day, I believe, we shall know when we are gathered around the blood-washed throne if we are His children. Only God, in all of this, is able to bring good out of evil. God said of the evil He sent in the life of Jacob, "I will surely do

thee good all the days of thy life.”

In every war that we have seen upon the face of the earth, if we could see the hatred and malice that has been and the destruction of humanity, we could say, if God would give us the spirit and the understanding, that in each one there has come some good. In World War II thousands and thousands were killed. I believe that this war was by the decree of God. Some have allocated this to Hitler, and to the Japanese Emperor, and to Mussolini, and to Stalin; but out of that war came the technology that we are living with in this day and age. The modern techniques of medicine and modern equipment for operations which have eased the sufferings of thousands and thousands of lives came out of that war.

Man is only able to produce something worth while when he has been tried by serious afflictions which come from God on High. Not only does this relate in the spiritual realm when we are enabled to call upon God, but also in the physical realm. There are always things that come out of it that are good. If this were not true, how could the Apostle Paul say that; “All things work together to good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Paul on one occasion had a messenger of Satan, and Paul said the Lord gave it to him. I have no reason to doubt Paul. Though Paul did not charge God foolishly by saying, “Now, Lord, you made me thus. That is the reason I am as I am.” Paul could not charge God in such a manner. Some would say, “Well, by predestination God has purposed our sins and our iniquities.” True, there is a purpose in it. But whether it is God’s purpose to send us to hell or to make us suffer hell here on earth in the knowledge of knowing godly sorrow and repentance in our hearts of the things which have been done in

our body, we do not know. That we are unable to say. We do know this one thing, there is a purpose in every event, in every action. There have been actions which have hurt many people. We believe that those things had to be simply because they have been. We could not say they should not have happened.

During World War II, two men were discussing the doctrine of predestination, and one believed it and one didn’t. One said, “Oh, that ship that sunk had many hundred boys on it. They all drowned. You know that was not God’s will.” The other one looked at him and said, “I hope it was His will, and I firmly believe that it was. For if it had not been God’s will, God would not have known anything about it; and not knowing anything about it He might not have been there to be a present help in the time of trouble and in the time of death.”

In our feelings we believe that the end has been fixed, that the beginning has been fixed, and that everything in between has been decreed. We believe that our station of life is fixed, that what we will be tomorrow, where we will be, and even when our death bed has been prepared for us. Some say, “I do not like that kind of a doctrine.” Oh’ I revel in that kind of a doctrine. I have been taught that I am not able to direct my own steps. There were times in life when I felt that I could do this; but the time came when God made me realize what a mess I had made of it. Then I was glad that someone else had directed my steps, that someone else was watching over me, and that someone else had been with me—even when I knew it not. Jacob said the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. That is to say, God’s providence, God’s purposes, or God’s decree was with him when he knew it not.

Therefore, it is God’s foreknowl-

edge that causes predestination to be. Since predestination is the power causing God's foreknowledge to come to pass, it is always looking towards the final consummation of all things. It is the active will of God concerning the events that are in this world; therefore, we would say, "I am glad that God knows this." It is comforting to know that God has already prepared our death bed. We, some day, will be brought to the death bed by the motivating cause of life itself, the spirit that God has placed in man. That spirit belongs to God. It moves and motivates the body to the will of God concerning the providence wherein God has decreed. That will applies to one individual, or to one nation, or to the whole world. Some would say that it seems strange that war could be to the good of God's people. Do you not realize, dear children of God, that God has given nations for the benefit of the children of Israel. Some would say that it was not good that the whole host of Egypt and Pharaoh were destroyed by God for persecuting His children. Oh, dear children of God, this was God's way of delivering His children. It was God who hardened Pharaoh's heart. It has been said that God left Pharaoh alone and that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. I am told by the scriptures that He said unto Moses, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart." This is the sovereignty of God concerning the events in this life and in the world to come. This is the doctrine that our forefathers have advocated. This is the doctrine that nothing has transpired or ever will transpire without the will of God in direct control of the events.

David said, "Is there not a cause?" May God enable us by His grace to look around and say, "Is there not a cause?" Surely there is a cause. What is the cause? We are not always able to see or understand.

Therefore, the scripture says, "The revealed things belong to us but the hidden things belong to God." May God enable us all to see the beauty of the sovereignty of predestination in all things and in all events that are in this world that are under the direct control of the Almighty God. Isn't it wonderful to think about, that our Heavenly Master did foreknow, did foresee, and did declare all of the things that are here and has made us to rejoice in them concerning the doctrine of predestination. No wonder that the Apostle Paul could speak concerning this doctrine as a doctrine that is surely a doctrine that is able to stand without the inventions of man but a doctrine that God had decreed within himself that He is able to deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us unto the kingdom of His dear Son. And Paul goes on to say that by Jesus Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

Think about this beautiful doctrine of God's everlasting predestination that governs and controls the mind, not only of the animals and the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air but also the minds and the actions of every human, preordained of God and declared to be. This same power controls the stars and heavenly constellations and governs even the grain of sand upon the sea shore. I am assured in my closing remarks

that it would be easier for heaven and earth to fall away than for one decree of God to ever fail. All of them shall take place accordingly as He has purposed and declared that they shall be.

Elder D.B. Stokes

CORRESPONDENCE

JUSTICE

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God’s law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is “guilty” and the only sentence “death”. That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God’s law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have

many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likeness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likeness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” The church is the mystical body of Christ, “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of

his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:30).

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless,

undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sinfilled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the

curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righteousness imputed unto us who believe in him. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake

alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks

Louisiana

GENESIS 4:2-5, 8.

“**A**bel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. .. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

Much time and effort has been set forth dealing with the offerings of both Cain and Abel and the recep-

tion of one by the Lord and the rejection of the other. I mean not to improve on these but to reiterate some key points. First, why was Cain angry? Some would quickly answer that it was because God did not have respect for his offering and they would be partially correct. For it was also due to the fact that God had respect for Abel's offering and had blessed him for it. This enangered Cain greatly – which brings me to my second point. Toward whom was Cain wrothed? To Abel? Initially I think not. Even though Abel did bear the manifestation of that anger, he was not the one who passed the judgment for or against either of the offerings. It was not to him that the offerings were made but, in fact, he and Cain entered in as equals to making offerings before God. Therefore, I conclude that it was toward God that Cain was wrothed because He had chosen Abel's offerings as being in keeping with His commands and blessed him for it. How tragic the results of this man's anger because of God blessing another; the death, yea murder, of his brother.

Again we find a similar experience in the 18th chapter of I Samuel. Saul was king and had brought Israel many victories and had slain thousands for the cause of God and Israel. Yet when he saw that the Lord had seen fit to bless David with greater victories and the slaying of tens of thousands, his anger waxed great against David and he sought to kill him. Again – why was he acting this way toward David? Had he not done great things for the cause of God and Israel? Was not his anger toward God for he “...saw and knew that the Lord was with David...and Saul became David's enemy continually?”

The prophet Jonah was not immune to this carnal feeling – for when he saw that God had given Ninevah grace to repent “..it displeased

Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry...I beseech thee now, oh Lord, take my life from me for it is better for me to die than to live.”

Habakkuk was perplexed at how the Holy One who is “...of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” could use, let alone bless, evil Babylon in her iniquity. Although his feelings did not progress to the point of violence, he did cry out to the Lord. “O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? Even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save.” Surely these accusations are untrue, yet the perplexity of seeing someone else blessed, who was deemed unworthy or at least less worthy than ourselves, can drive one to shake a fist of accusation at the Almighty or even to the murdering of a brother—physically or in character assassination. When Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of the city, those on the outside accused him of being a traitor to the king and sent correspondence to the king stating such. All this because it was apparent that the hand of the Lord was good toward Nehemiah and his efforts.

Now the spiritual status of each of these examples need not be evaluated—for jealousy is a basic human characteristic which does not know the difference between regenerate or unregenerate and is present in the sinful world as well as the local militant church. We of the Old School Baptist, while despising Arminianism, may be very prone to accuse one of our own ministers of dabbling in an Arminian work system when the Lord sees fit to bless the congregation under his service, rather than ascribing all glory and honor to Him to Whom it is due. This is not to say that any of the Lord's people are free from the contemptible disgusting frailties of the carnal man but rather should alarm us to their intrusions into all we do. Our earthen vessels

are full of corruption and decay, which shall be with us until the day of grace, when they shall be laid aside and be replaced with incorruption that fadeth not away. We should, therefore, give serious consideration and examine ourselves to see that our inner feelings not be motivated by a jealousy for what God sees fit to do in others. Let us heed the admonishment of Paul to the Romans to "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Is it not enough that the Almighty God, who "...hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry...." should, according to His good pleasure, show to wretched vile creatures like us just a glimpse of His holiness. But "God who at sundry times and diverse manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who, being the brightness of (God's) glory, and the express image of (God's) person..." The very Son of God was made flesh and dwelt among us, became sin for us, "...endued the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of God..." there to make intercession for His people. And should we begin to compete for His blessings, comparing gift to gift and servant to servant or should we rejoice in the blessedness of the grace of God in whatever degree? I am persuaded that if we be given a heart to examine ourselves, we should find a storehouse of the grace of God to the fullest

measure, packed down, shaken and running over.

May this prompt us to thankfulness of the God of Heaven for His great love, His people, and His church.

Chet Dirkes

Barrington, N.J. 08007

Elgin, Oregon

Dear Editors:

My subscription is due. I didn't intend for it to slip up on me but it usually does and you are so good to keep sending the "Signs" to me. It is getting more difficult for me to read as times passes, but I pray the Lord will give me enough eyesight to read as long as my stay here on earth.

We don't meet often here. I have been able to attend only a few times this year. I am still able to read the "Signs" and have enjoyed the wonderful editorials of Elder Beebee in Nos. 3 and 4, although I have had to lay aside No. 4 until I can get someone to read to me.

You will find a check for \$13.00 in this letter for continuing my subscription.

Yours of a little hope
unworthy as I am
Elva C. Spikes

Dear Subscribers:

I have fearfully accepted the task as an editor of the "Signs Of The Times" along with Elder David V. Spangler and the associate editors. I appreciate the confidence placed in me by Elder Spangler, the President, and all the other members of

*"A word fitly spoken is like apples
of Gold in pictures of silver."*

Proverbs 10:11

the Board. I pledge to you my best efforts and beg when you have a mind to pray, remember me.

We welcome any comments concerning the "Signs," whether they be good or bad. We shall hope to receive either in a most gracious manner. The "Signs" belong to you, of the household of faith. We want to continue it in such a way that it will be something for you to look forward to each month.

We would like to hear from you the readers. I think it would be strength to someone, if you feel to write and SHARE the reason for your hope. Let us know how you have been brought along. We would like to realize that out there are fellow travelers and that we are not alone in our experience.

May we work together and may God bless us to run the race that is set before us with patience; may we be grateful for whatever our portion in life might be, not asking of Him to change that which He has purposed for us, whatever the cross, but give us courage and grace sufficient as we press on and as the "signs of the times" come into focus.

Humbly yours,

Kenneth R. Key

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Excerpts from a sermon by Elder W. C. King at McCray Church, N.C. on third Sunday in September, 1970. This was his last service at McCray Church, he died about three weeks later. Elder King served McCray Church for forty-six years, longer than any of the other churches he served.)

I hope that I may have the prayers of each of you that we

may be able in the time that we may spend here to be spent in praise and in honor and glory to God. We hear Jesus speaking, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things." And no man has ascended up to heaven but he that come down from heaven even the son of man which is in heaven. And that Moses lifted up his serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whomsoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus has just been conversing with Nickodemous. This man who was a teacher and ruler of the Jews who had come to Jesus by night and had expressed his knowledge of Him by saying that we know that Thou art one sent from heaven, for no man can do the miracles that we see you perform. No man can do the things that we see you do except he be from God. This man went to Jesus by night. I know that some writers have said that Jesus, being known by Nickodemous as he was, who sought Him and desired to inquire of Him some of the things that he was concerned about felt ashamed to be seen going to Jesus in the day time and, therefore, he sought the opportunity to contact Christ by night. I do not know whether that interpretation is good or bad, but I am persuaded that Nickodemous sought Jesus in the night and I am persuaded that you and I have done likewise. We are prone in ourselves to forget God or to be unmindful of His mercy and of His benefits and often become more involved and so engulfed in the things of this life that we almost shudder when we stop to take inventory of ourselves and to think how little and how seldom we have been meditating upon God and upon His mercy and upon His grace with us. And so when we come into the valley of despair, when we find ourselves

engulfed in trials and in afflictions and in trouble and in sorrow, and we have used every means at our command and every resource that we have and yet find that we are helpless, that we are needy, and that nothing that we can produce has been able to bring that peace and that joy into our souls that we find ourselves seeking and longing for and so when Nickodemous had come to Jesus and he told him that ye must be born again. Nickodemous applying natural thoughts to this matter, said, how can we be born again at this adult life, enter into our mothers womb and be born again? He tells him that he must be born of the spirit. He must be born from above. He says that the wind bloweth where it listeth, but canst not tell from whence it cometh and where it goeth, so is everyone that is born of the spirit. Now, He said, if I have told you these earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And I feel that you long since have learned as well as I that when we learn these heavenly things, we will learn them by the spirit of God. When Jesus made inquiry as to whom do men say that I the Son of man am, some said that Thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, some one and some another. But when Jesus asked Peter, but whom say ye that I am? He said Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." We take the position that if God had revealed this knowledge into the hearts and minds of His people when He was here upon the earth, then the same power would be needed to reveal His love and His mercy unto each of us as the generations have come and gone until this very present day. The scriptures tell us that we shall all be known of the Lord,

from the least unto the greatest, they shall all be taught of the Lord. Now is there any other teacher that teaches men to know God whom to know is life eternal? The scripture says that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby that we must be saved. Now if there is no other name, no other way, no other means under heaven whereby that we must be saved, we are going to conclude that salvation, preservation, and the final glorification of the Church of God is still in the Lord, Jesus Christ, and that is the only way that it ever has been or ever will be. And so He tells him that no man has ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven. Now Jesus came, born of the virgin, conceived of the Holy Ghost, therefore, having of his earthly mother and divinely a father from heaven and so when we think of this union, when we think of this condescending and this coming into the world and to this virgin that which God conceived of the Holy Ghost, she was pondering these things in her mind saying that I know not a man. The Angel of Heaven would tell her that this thing is of the Holy Ghost and that it was propheticized hundreds of years before, that she would bring forth a son and His name shall be called Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins and then He tells us here that as Moses lifted up his serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son Of man be lifted up. Now, we know when we read this parable and prevail into the souls of those who God hath brought forth by the hand of Moses, out of the Egyptian bondage we find that they were just as people are today. They sang the songs of Moses and the lamb when they were delivered across the Red Sea. That is the first time we find singing recorded in the scriptures. And we have found singing recorded throughout the Bible. It has been as-

sociated with the Lords heritage. Singing is associated with Gods People. It was characteristic to the Church of God and, therefore, they sing the song of Moses and the lamb, but they had not journeyed but three days into the wilderness until they began to complain. I often think of poor Moses and Aaron. I think of them often in my feelings. When the people complained to them to their faces, why has thou brought us out? Do you ever ask yourself sometimes why are you not content to receive that which God has dealt to you? Are you asking yourself the question, why? They asked the question, why hast thou brought us out of this land where that we are hungry, where we have no water to drink? We are no more faithful and we have no greater faith than our forefathers had. We are the same Adam multiplied and when left to ourselves we are going to ask God why. Sometimes I have been made to feel that I would not ask God to change one thing that he proposed for me to endure in this life. The only thing that I would desire of God that he give me grace to accept it, that he give me faith to stand faithful and that I might know that He is God. Even through my tears and through my bowed head and my bended knees and with bleeding heart, I would still recognize that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind and my portion and my lot was due me and that I should be faithful and accept it. But when these people complained to Moses and to Aaron of the condition in which they felt they were in, the scriptures tell us that Moses and Aaron left the assembly, the congregation of people, and they went out, the two of them, and they fell to the earth upon their faces. Do you ever feel like sometimes that you have come short? Do you ever feel like sometimes that you just can't face it? But there is a way. They went out to

themselves and fell upon their faces, and God, whose eyes have never been dim and whose knowledge has never been surpassed, knew their position.

He knew how they felt. He knew their leadership. He knew He had commanded them to go and lead these people out. He knew that He had sent them to do this task. And O you feel for one moment that He is now going to forget them and leave them there to be crushed. Oh, how typical it is to your experience this morning. How typical it is in your own experience many times when you are just made to feel to almost give up the ghost and you can feel that my feet is almost gone, but God heard their cry and he told Moses to rise up. He said take the rod that is in thy hand and smite the rock and it shall bring forth water. What a great miracle was performed. What a great display, of the power of God was made manifest there to those doubting and murmuring and complaining people. And the scripture says that Moses prayed for the people. Sometimes we wonder why people will call you, maybe on the telephone, or come to see you or meet you on the street or wherever they may be and say pray for us. Moses prayed for the people, and I believe that God has put it in the hearts of many of His dear people in this world to pray for one another. But you know what God did, He sent a serpent among those people and they were bitten, not only were they bitten, but they died. And now we find Israel coming to repentance. We find them coming to Moses and saying unto him that we have talked about God and we have said this and that about God and about you because we have sinned and we come asking forgiveness. It has taken much more for the people to come and acknowledge their sin than it does to sin. It takes a great person to

admit their sins and that they have mistreated you. They had seen the hand of God so strong. They had seen the hand of God as supplying them with the manna from heaven. They had seen them supplied with water. They had seen them supplied with every needed blessing that they needed and now we look back and see how short-sighted that I was. How faithless that I was, and how sinful in my poor heart I have been to complain about my lot and my portion in life. Aren't you sometimes ashamed of your complaints? Aren't you sometimes ashamed to raise your voice in complaining about your condition and circumstances in life when you can behold the great blessings and the great mercies of God that He so blessed you with and so surrounded and cared for you when your eyes were closed and you were slumbering in sleep. Watched over by God who neither sleeps nor slumbered, but preserving you and keeping you as an apple of his eye. What did the Lord do? The Lord knew something to do for those people. He had not forgotten them, though in all their backsliding and all of their complaining and all their murmuring, He still loved them and He told Moses what to do. He said make a brazen serpent and place it upon a poll where it can be seen and, He said, all who look upon this brazen serpent shall be healed. Moses provided that serpent and placed it there and he told him to make it of brass. It was not to be made of gold or made of silver, but to be made of brass that could be seen from afar. How precious it is this morning, I am trying to leave, if I can, from personal experience in these scriptures. I am trying to find a Christian experience in your poor soul, tho you go lame and halt and go complaining and murmuring and unfaithful in so many things in this world.

I want, if I can, to draw a picture of what has gone before and how God has dealt too faithfully with people who complain and murmur. God did not remove the serpent out of the wilderness. They were in the wilderness land. A land, a lonely road, but I will tell you what He did do. He provided a cure as the type of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the type the Lord Jesus Christ, those who look upon this serpent lives. This morning this Christ that was crucified, this Christ that must be lifted up. He must be lifted up though He was upon the cross, crucified, put to death for you and me, if indeed we are embraced in that great covenant of grace. The serpent is still out there. The devil is still out there. That is what it is. It is a type of satan still out there in the world and I want to tell sinners that there is no other place to look and I want to tell sinners there is no where else to go, that there is no other power but the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses from all sins. And when somebody's eyes have been opened, there is somebody who has been attracted to this thing. They are the ones who by faith have been given to look to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith, has been healed by the one offering that God has made who spared not His own Son but delivered him up for us all. So freely gave us all things. Everything that you need today and everything that you will need tomorrow and all the days to come is treasured in that great God head that has loved you. That who so ever believeth in Him should not perish. Who ever and whereever they are, I don't care, Jews or Gentiles. Let us be straight. Let us know where we stand if we can. Who is going to believe in Jesus Christ? None but those who have been touched by the blood of Jesus Christ. Touched by His prayers and by His power and with the heart man be-

lieveth unto righteousness and with the tongue confession is made.

To tell people to believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Saviour and be saved who have not been touched by the finger of God's love, Whose eyes have not been opened to see their sinfulness and who have been able to recognize and realize their loss and ruined condition before God, is as casting your pearls before swine, is as sounding brass and tinkling symbols. It has no meaning and no power but when God has opened the eyes and given an understanding heart to His precious ones here in this world. He has told them to look unto me all the ends of the earth. Those who have gone to the full extremities as far as they can go in their own works and righteousness and look to Him and they are going to look. There is no question in my mind, they are going to look. There is no where else to go. We tell many people that are lying flat on their backs in bed that there is no other way to look but up when you are in that condition. How true and how true it is that there is no where else to look when you have come to the end. This is the God I'm trying to tell you about. God said, "That whoever believeth in Him shall not perish." Now they are going to get hungry, God's people are. Christ said I give them eternal life and He said they shall never perish. I give them eternal life, everlasting life, and they shall never perish. And we hear Christ say that no man can come to me except my father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. And sometimes we feel the last day here in the world, sometimes we may feel in our own pilgrimage here that we live in the last days. Some of you may have had the experience like that, you felt so cast down and so blue and so forsaken and so lost that you would never see the dawning of another day when

you retired to your bed or room for the night. That has been my experience. I don't know whether it has been yours or not, but I have felt so keenly and so forceable in my mind. I remember when I was but a lad of a boy that I would never see the dawning of another day and that God was going to send my soul to an everlasting and an endless destruction. And if He did it, He was a just and a holy and righteous God. And while I was lying with uplifted hands in our humble home on the second floor in a room all by myself that night that I shall never forget as long as my memory serves me. I somehow or another, as I laid there praying to God to have mercy upon a poor, lost sinner that I felt to be. My earthly father had just departed this life. He had just died and left me as a lad of fourteen years old any my life seemingly could mean nothing. I had nothing to live for and I had nothing to die for. I had less to die for and I had nothing to live for, but somehow or another I found out I was deceived in the whole matter, but there was a power that was made manifest to me. I could not see how that I could go on in this life without my earthly father and being so condemned and so crushed, I remember the morning that he departed that I went out into a lonely place in the darkness of the night and I fell upon the ground and I asked God to take me and leave him. I felt with all my soul that he was a father and a husband and a member of that family who would be of more use than I could ever be and I asked God not to take him but let me go in his place. It did not please God to have it that way. I walked back in the room, and I assume in a few moments time, I saw the last breath leave his body.

I want to tell you, my dear people, why this is the God, this is the power that I want to bring to you that God can reconcile and can make you to

feel as I did on that memorable night that a voice came to me as plain as I've ever seemingly heard anything in my soul and He said, I will be a father to the fatherless and a husband to the widowed and some how or another I felt from that moment until this time that I have a heavenly father. I have a father that neither sleeps nor slumbers. I have one that will never die and I have one I can pour out my soul to and I can tell Him my needs and I can tell Him my feelings and He always has a listening ear. I want to tell you, my dear people, if you don't find in your daily vocation of life that you want to talk to God, I don't understand it. I feel like that I just want to talk with God sometimes. I want Him to know that I appreciate His kindness, and His love, and His mercies to me in praising His name. And then I am so childish to bring my complaints to Him. Yes, I am so childish to bring my complaints. O Lord, why does it have to be this way? Why do we have to be this way? Solve the great problems, sooth the aching hearts, bind up those who, O Lord, who go lame and limp. As Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of man must be lifted up. And who so believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." There was a man, the scriptures tells us and I feel this morning this world is saddening with all its sorrow, with all its turmoil, and difficulty in nations over the earth. This world is standing because of the elect of God. It is standing because of His promise to His people and I feel with every assurance when we read in the scripture it tells us when we hear of wars and rumors of wars, it is not a sign of the end of time but a beginning. My doctrine shall be preached in all the

world. What for? For a witness and I feel when that gospel has been preached in every nation, every kindred, and every people in all the world, I believe the sun is going to cease to shine and the moon is going to be turned to blood and this world shall be rolled together as a scroll and time shall be no more. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and who so ever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. I hope that we have tried to cover that there are those who would believe and there are those who God had given forth to look to Him and how He promises all the way throughout the scriptures, not a broken link anywhere but that God has promised to be with his people. They that could say, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, because Thou are with me. The Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want. How precious indeed that it is when we are made to feel as though we have to go in the places that are so adverse to our feelings and such a warfare to our flesh and how crushing indeed many times it is, yet to feel that God's hand is there. The poor jailers, I think often of the great patriots of God when they had faith of God who were placed in the inner prison and when the shackles were placed upon them and they were told to make sure that they did not escape. There, when the midnight hour arose, they began to sing. They began to praise God and the jailers heard, the earthquake came and shakes the place, and the doors were all opened and when the jailers came in, he told them to do thyself no harm that we are all here. Oh, how necessary it was for those people to be put in prison in order that the jailers might hear. They would not have heard the voice of Paul and Silas had it not been for the fact that they were put in jail down there and their serv-

ice aroused the jailers attention. Their service aroused a miracle of miraculous things that were done there that night when the foundation of the very jail was shaking and trembling there and when the doors were opening there to them. These jailers were astonished, something new and something different that we have never seen and known anything about was taking place. They went down and talked to these men and I want to tell you the scriptures tell us they washed their stripes. They had been beaten with forty-nine stripes before they were placed in the jail.

Why were they there? Because they were preaching the doctrine of salvation by grace, ascribing all honor and glory to Jesus, and they felt that they were disturbing the peace of that country and they did not want them preaching it there but that did not change their lives. They went down there in their stripes and their bloody backs but still singing His praises and the jailer and his family were baptized at the midnight hour. What a great place it must have been. What a great and glorious scene that it must have been for them to be down there and when they were set free, they went back to their company and they praised God that we have been counted worthy to be persecuted. We just thank God that we have been counted worthy to be persecuted. Sometimes we may thank and praise God that we are counted strange. We sometimes can thank God that we have counted different from the world. That we can be said of the world how strange a doctrine they believe and how strange things they contend for. Sometimes I think that we can count a blessing to be numbered with that few that believe in the sovereignty of God, determined, everlasting, and unshameful things that God has decreed for these people. Those that believeth in Him are not condemned,

but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he had not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Now there is, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. There is, therefore, now no condemnation.

I would like to, if I may talk about it just for a moment. Therefore, now at this time, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Not only that but He says they walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. Now there is somebody walking after the spirit, is somebody walking after the inner teaching of the Holy Spirit of God, teaching them how they ought to live, that they ought to live soberly, righteously and Godly here in this present evil world. Christ said that it is necessary that I should go away that the Holy Comforter may come, that shall keep you and bring you in remembrance of all things whatsoever that I have commanded and, therefore, this unseen power, this spirit of God, has taken up its abode in the hearts of His people and is teaching them how they ought to live and how they ought to conduct themselves here in this world and if you do not believe it is so, you find yourself going contrary to that which you feel, know which is right and see how you are chastened for what you have said or actions in which you have committed or something that you have done and how that God has chastened you and the Lord chastens all of his people. He that receiveth not chastisements, they are bastards and not sons. How precious indeed it is to feel that we have a Father that knows when the rod of chastisement needs to be placed upon us. and He knows how to use us and to bring us into the knowledge of this truth and to bring us to honor and to glorify Him. The weapon of His warfare is not carnal but they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

bringing under submission every high thought into the obedience of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He brings us unto obedience to Him. He brings us to be obedient children. He brings us to acknowledge Him as Lord of lords and God of gods and ascribing honor and glory to His great and matchless name. May the Lord bless you, may he keep you ever that you will never in time or eternity be condemned because your condemnation and your sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ and you stand in His righteousness, in His justification, and in His holiness and not in your righteousness and not in your own strength, but in Him that we live and we move and we have our being. May God bless you!

(The above was taken from a tape recording of the service and edited for publication. It was sent to us by Sister Ruth Jeffres with the consent of Elder King's wife, Sister Bronna King. We wish to thank Sister King for sharing this with our readers. We, who knew Elder King have fond and precious memories of our association with him.)

Editors

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Charity Church the 2, 3, and 4 of September, 1983. The church is located in Patrick county on state route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia. Those coming on 220, take route 40 west at Rocky Mount, come through Ferrum by Lawn Branch Church and Charity is about eight miles on the left.

We invite all our brethren and sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Elder Roy Agee, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

ORDINATION PROPOSED

The Lord willing, Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church will call for a presbytery to form on Sunday afternoon, August 14, 1983. This will correspond with our regular second Sunday meeting for worship.

Our purpose is that Brother Robert N. Lackey, a member of Welsh Tract, may be examined, and if found acceptable and qualified, be ordained to the full work of an Old School Baptist Minister. He has been called to serve the Little Creek Church near Laurel, Delaware.

Any who plan to come please contact Elder James F. Poole as soon as possible for lodging and directions. His address is P. O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Maryland 21801, and the phone number is 1-301-741-6406.

Sister Ruth Lucht, Church Clerk

GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Greensboro and Big Meadows Church looked out among themselves and recognized certain gifts. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday afternoon April 3, 1983 at three o'clock at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, Greensboro, N. C., for the purpose of examination of these gifts, brother Wilson King of Greensboro Church and brother Casey Johnson of Big Meadows Church to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work and service of deacons.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to set together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Elder Kenneth R. Key was elected as moderator and Elder Paul Lambe to serve as clerk. Brother Batts acting as spokesman for the churches, delivered the candidates to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures, third chapter, of First Timothy by Elder Raymond Goad. Examination followed by Elder O. K. Tench and Elder H. W. Wray. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of these candidates, proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Leonard Key. The charge was delivered to brothers King and Johnson by Elder David Spangler. After assurance from the churches that they were

satisfied with the work of the presbytery, they were delivered back to the church as ordained deacons.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery was read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the *Signs of The Times* for publication and a copy to be given to brothers King and Johnson, along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Paul Lambe, Clerk

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lord willing, Bethel Church of the Buttahatchie Old School Primitive Baptist Association will have a two day meeting the fifth week-end of July. (July 30 and 31, 1983.) Services will begin at 9:30 a.m on Saturday morning.

Bethel Church is located about 2½ miles from Steens, Mississippi, or about 12 miles from Millport, Alabama.

We would like to invite all of the Old Baptist faith to attend this meeting, and we invite all lovers of the truth, also.

For more information or directions please call one of the following:

- Mrs. Eulie McCool 1 (601) 328-0532
- James McCool 1 (601) 494-6694
- DeWitt Ray 1 (601) 328-9115
- C. W. Baines 1 (205) 662-4462

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will hold a tw day meeting at Dan River Church on the Fifth Sunday in July and Saturday before. All churches of the West Country Line Union will host this meeting. We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us.

Elder D. V. Spangler

"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

CONTRIBUTIONS

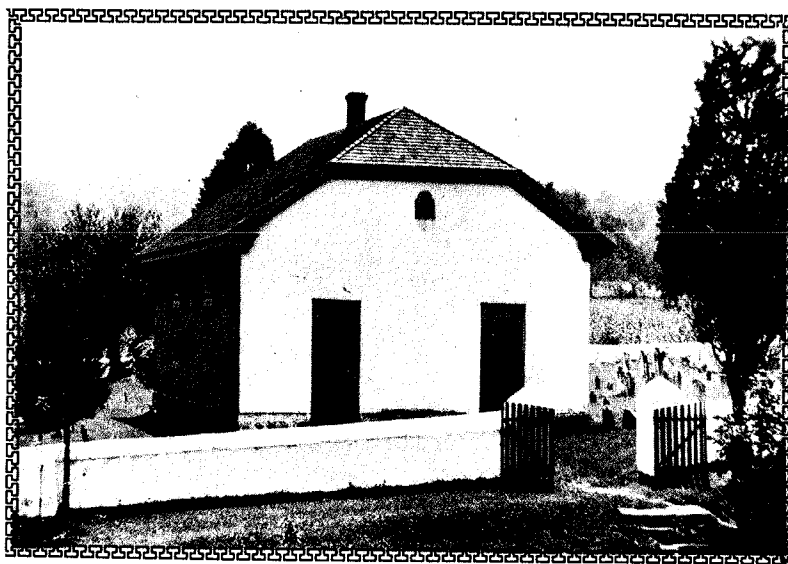
CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MARCH 1983

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Mrs. W.W. Haynes, AR..... | \$ 7.00 |
| C.L.F Fowler, TX. | 9.00 |
| Mrs. Pauline Shelton, VA. | 5.00 |
| Harvey Vick, TN. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Pearl Law, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA..... | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. William Griffith, N.Y..... | 4.00 |
| David Harrell, TX..... | 2.00 |
| Bill G. Clinton, CA. | 3.00 |
| Vermell Beech, MS. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Mary Benton, TX. | 20.00 |
| Mrs. Vickie Barrett, TX..... | 20.00 |
| Frank P. Wall, AL..... | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Florence A. Gibson, GA. | 13.00 |
| Mrs. Glen H. Bremer, TN. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Robert Hunter, KY..... | 3.00 |
| Millard S. Griffin, TN. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD. | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Lessie Jones, VA. | 25.00 |
| Mrs. Mabel Ellis, VA. | 14.00 |
| Mrs. Novaline Stewart, N.C. | 10.00 |
| Charles Alders, TX..... | 50.00 |
| Mrs. Flora C. Vest, VA. | 5.00 |
| Paul Wright, VA. | 3.00 |
| Victor H. Laws, MD. | 18.00 |
| Mrs. Donald E. Attebery, WA. | 15.00 |
| Mrs. Lester Haning, WV. | 13.00 |
| Mrs. Rena Smith, N.C..... | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Sarah E. West, MD. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Maude Pruitt, N.C. | 6.00 |

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR APRIL 1983

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| H.B. Rhoades, TX. | \$ 7.00 |
| R.D. Smothers, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Lonzie W. Nichols, VA. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Nannie Carter, N.C. | 6.00 |
| Mrs. W.B. Humphreys, VA. | 2.00 |
| Peter M. Vliestra, N.J. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Frances M. Thorpe, VA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Priddy L. Shaw, VA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Alice Lemons, MD. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Charles H. Allen, N.C. | 15.00 |
| Homer L. Hudson, AL. | 100.00 |
| Mrs. Flora Stutts, TX. | 7.00 |
| W.L. Harrell, TX. | 3.00 |
| Eld. Paul Lambe, N.C. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth T. Hyler, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Claude Mann, FL. | 11.00 |
| J.O. Harrod, AR. | 7.00 |
| Claude S. Brown, N.C. | 20.00 |
| Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA. | 5.00 |
| W.B. East, MD. | 3.00 |
| J.R. Roberts, FL. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA. | 25.00 |
| Mrs. Julia Hinson, N.C. | 3.00 |

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



In the month of June, 1701, this body of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, later to be called *The Welsh Tract Church*, sailed from Milford-haven, South Wales, in Great Britain. The number was sixteen including their pastor.

They landed in Philadelphia, September 8 of the same year, and continued in that vicinity for about a year and a half.

Early in the eighteenth century William Penn granted to David Evans and William Davis a track of land, thirty thousand acres. This tract has since been known as "The Welsh Tract." This land was to be divided and deeded to settlers from South Wales.

To this place moved the Welsh Baptist church, and in 1703 built a log meeting house in which they worshipped until the present structure was erected in 1746. The first house occupied the same location as this present building.

The brick in the present house were brought from England and carried by muleback from Newcastle to the present location. It is reported that these mules were led by women members of the congregation.

As the Church was composed of Welsh people, the preaching for about one hundred years was in the Welsh language.

Buried in the church cemetery are nine former pastors as follows: M. E. Thomas, David Davis, John Boggs, Gideon Farrell, Enoch Morgan, William K. Robinson, G. W. Staton, Joseph Staton and John Eubanks.

On September 3, 1777, the meeting house took part in a military engagement. The Americans after being driven from Cooch's bridge retreated along Christiana and made their last stand under the shelter of the church walls. At this time a cannon ball is said to have passed through the building.

Meeting time at Welsh Tract is second Sunday of each month. Their present pastor is Elder James F. Poole.

(We would like to introduce by way of the "Signs" a church of our faith each month. We invite our subscribers who would like to do so, to send a black and white glossy snapshot of your church along with a brief history, Sunday of your meetings and geographic location. We will publish them in the order they are received.)

BOOK NOTICES

**EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE**

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each

(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volume 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support.

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Vol-

ume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

1 copy - \$5. plus \$1. for mailing

5 copies - \$20. plus \$3. for mailing

10 copies - \$30. plus \$4. for mailing

(Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hardbound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

OBITUARIES

ESTHER L. MCLAWHORN

Esther L. McLawhorn, daughter of the late M. Thomas McLawhorn and Bessie L. Robinson McLawhorn, was born June 4, 1911, and died May 29, 1982. She is survived by a sister, Mrs. Irma Lang.

Esther was a lovely, gracious lady, one of compassion and integrity. She was frank but good-hearted and was very accommodating, ever ready to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever she saw the need. Her walk in life was that of a christian. She was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God and she loved the church and was a faithful attendant from youth until death. She loved to mingle and converse with the church members. Her concern for the welfare of the church was manifested in the many ways in which she contributed to it. Esther, like the lovely flowers she loved so well, was here for only a season, then gone, leaving with us beautiful memories that linger on and on. We shall miss her but trust that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

JESSE EDWARD LANG

Once again death has claimed one of our members, our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Jesse Edward Lang. He was born September 11, 1907, and died April 1, 1982, after a long illness. He was married to Irma McLawhorn on December 24, 1927, and to this union was born two sons. They were a loving and happy family.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, Eugene and Melvin, a sister, Mrs. Cora Lee Morris, and seven grandchildren.

Brother Jesse was a man of good report, one who led an exemplary life. He was a man of strength and integrity; one when confronted with making an important decision, he would carefully think the matter through before forming an opinion and when convinced of what was right, he took a firm stand. He was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by the grace of God, and on a confession of faith he united with Handcocks Primitive Baptist Church February 18, 1958. He was a faithful member until death. He often visited many other churches of the same faith and order. He was a regular attendant of the Union and Association meetings. He loved his church and contributed to its welfare.

On the third Sunday in December, 1964, he was ordained a deacon of Handcocks Church and on August 15, 1971, he was chosen as the church treasurer. God blessed him with the qualities to

fill both offices well. Brother Jesse conducted himself in the manner that befitted a christian hearted man.

He is sorely missed, but we feel that our loss has been his eternal gain.

Done by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

ELMER FRANCIS HASTINGS

Brother Elmer F. Hastings of Parsonburg, Maryland, was born April 4, 1889, and died at his home December 19, 1982 of a stroke at age 93. He was the son of Levin and Caroline Holloway Hastings. Services were conducted in the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland by Elder David Spangler of Danville, Virginia, assisted by Elder James Poole of Salisbury. Burial was in Forest Grove Cemetery.

Brother Elmer was a pioneer in the hatchery business. In 1919 he and his first wife, Agnes Laws Hastings, who died in 1961, founded Hastings Hatchery in Parsonburg, later expanding to Bishopville, Maryland, Rogers, Arkansas, and Gainesville, Georgia. He retired in 1962. He was also past president of the Parsonburg Fire Department.

Brother Elmer was baptized June 7, 1964, by Elder David Spangler as a member of Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church. His grandparents and parents were charter members of this church which was organized in 1886. He served as deacon and trustee of the church and traveled to Washington State, Canada and many southern states for church related meetings.

Surviving are his wife, Oliver Miller Hastings; a daughter, Mary Belle Holland, Ocean City, Md.; a son, Henry L. Vinyard, Salisbury, Md.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Brother Elmer was a firm believer in the doctrines taught by our Lord. He enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren and particularly enjoyed sharing his lovely home with friends and brethren far and near. In his last years of decline, his mind wavered, but he still would recall the joys of fellowship in years gone by. Brother Elmer in his last few days seemed unaware of those around him. But about a week before he died, he had a very clear evening and knew his wife and neighbors well calling them by name. He said, "I want to be home by Christmas." We fully believe that by God's grace he made it home by Christmas.

Written at the request of the Church
Elbert Robbins, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., AUGUST 1983

No. 8

SIGNS OF THE TIMES ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

PROSPECTUS OF THE “SIGNS”

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. “These three are one.” John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

C O N T E N T S

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| EDITORIAL..... | 146 |
| Written by Elder W. D. Griffin | |
| CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... | 151 |
| CORRESPONDENCE | 151 |
| VOICES OF THE PAST | 154 |
| Sermon by Elder E. J. Lambert | |
| Sermon by R. W. Rhodes | |
| MEETINGS | 164 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS | 165 |
| OBITUARIES | 165 |
| Eva Eggleston | |
| Mary Moore Simpson | |
| Jesse W. Ray | |
| Myrtle Veles | |
| Sophia Marshall Alderman | |
| Pearlie Billings | |
| Mollie Kellum | |
| George Howard Taft | |
| BOOK NOTICES | 168 |

EDITORIAL

I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Eph. 4: 1,8.

Without perfection no man will

see God in peace. There is not any in and among the children of men. It must come from God. All of it is from and of God. It will not mix with the imperfections of mankind. The man is described as being in a sinful state. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy one of Israel into anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more: The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, petrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. (Isa. 1:4,6). This is a good description of a man in his natural habitat. The apostle and the Psalmist joins in this wholesale description of us as related to our Father, Adam. (Rom. 3:16,18; Psa. 14: 1,3).

If I could move out of this sinful body that I dwell in, I'd gladly take up lodging in the fourth chapter of Ephesians for it is a land and a place wherein love abounds and the superlative blessings of our covenant keeping God never cease nor diminish nor are curtailed because of any shortage of failure in heaven or in earth. In the first place, I desire to take one moment of the readers time to go over something that has been affirmed time and time again since our Saviour returned to His Father.

Those that believe in God testifying to what Paul declared as the lasting truth of God, with a still greater train of witnesses claiming that those things which was promised the chosen vessels of mercy at the time of His choice were not really fixed or established every jot and tittle; that we either had to behave a certain good way for them to really be effective, or that we had to refrain

from this or that or another. If need be, we would have to use a combination of both in order for them to become effective. It does not matter in the least who says that is the doctrine of grace, there still is not a word of truth in it. Such a doctrine. If one iota of it was ever made manifest as being the truth, would certainly have been God fighting against the very thing he has determined and promised His elect.

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

I pause here that we might explore what the apostle has said. In all Christendom none of us believe that they were then blessed to any of these embraced in the promise in a manifest sense. Christ was yet to come, the chosen of God were yet to be made manifest. Every reader is aware of that. Yet God being from everlasting to everlasting, all things were then open and naked before Him. Thus He blessed every one of them in His Son before the world began. What was the basis or the foundation of this blessing? What was it upon? Those that hate and despise the eternal fixedness of God and hate those that are established in it, answer me. If Paul had of said that God blessed them in eternity according to their conduct here in this time state, we would have never heard the last of it, but he did not say it. Since Paul did not say it, then, God giving me grace, I will never say it. God did bless people in Christ with every spiritual blessing in Christ in heavenly places, but not according to what we would do with His commandments, but according to something that He was then doing. God is not a conditionalist, none lay down to Him any conditions. Any ifs, any ands, any buts, any conjunctive propositions whereby He must connect with or cooperate with in order to bring about. That

God is not the God of Israel; that God is not able to save without a combination of His prowess with Satan's cunning to establish salvation. Away with such moles and bats, for wherever they infest the kindgom of heaven, there is languor, wanness, sickness, instability.

I do not doubt but that some would have, had they been there (and I confess my own weakness there) offered help in wisdom and in power in electing the heirs of salvation, the chosen of God, but none of us were there. The election of God stemmed only from God. None were there to meddle nor to suggest. His choice was that of a Sovereign, Eternal, unchangeable God. Ah, how my poor heart is comforted by such abounding good news. God has acted in behalf of that which belongs to Him, acted towards and upon that which belongs to Him by right or ownership that existed from all eternity, and that He had a perfect right to do with what was His without having to answer any carping questions or criticism from those that have ever been replying against God. This blessing of them (all of them) in Christ was according as He chose them. Now if there is one loose link, one dropped stitch, one poor sinner in hell that died for his sins after having been chosen in Christ, then, THEN, but not until then will there ever be a condition in our spiritual blessings that we were blessed with in Christ before the world was. Of Course, if there has been discovered a rule up until now unknown, whereby fleshly obedience is acceptable to God, we then will deal with that matter when it is thus proven. Until that time, speculation and private interpretations will not be noticed.

In the fullness of time (all according; even as, like as) as He chose us in Him before the world began, the time came for Christ to make His advent into the world. He did not

come and spend thirty-three years as God in the flesh, to see the blessings treasured in Himself in eternity scorned, evaded, disobeyed, but as always in regard to His purpose in eternity, He came to execute it, to order it, to establish it, to carry it out to a jot and to a tittle. He came to save His people from their sins. And I say, and I preach (if I preach the gospel) that He had all power in heaven and in earth; that not a power was before Him to create, or to destroy His creation, not a power to save, or to keep Him from saving, thus His saving of them is His predestination being made manifest. He being before all things; He creating all things, and all things having been made by Him and for Him, all things were then present that would ever rise against the children, and that in order for no enemy to ever rob them of their inheritance which God gave them, and blessed them with the joys of it forever. Then all of the enemies, be them powers, men, events, things present, things to come, principalities, whether visible or invisible, all were gathered together to do no more, nor not a whit less, than would constitute the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

As men and devils have ever thought, the more ignominy and shame that they heaped upon Him, the nearer, ever nearer, He was coming to have sealed the destiny of elect and non elect. Yet neither one of them was aware of what was transpiring around them. His people sinned and fell in their father, Adam. I go no further than the Bible goes in that, to wit, they sinned and fell in their father, Adam. By man came sin, but I am not losing sight of the willingness, the cunning of the fowler that caught them in the snare. (Psa. 124:7.) We were tempted into following him, but we could not get out, and he has never done anything but mock us in our captivity. Do not let me lead you unawares;

do not listen to me or to any other man unless we bring the good news of the gospel. We were caught in the snare of captivity and there was none to help us as far as we knew. As far as the children of God knew, there was no help, there was none on our side, there was no man that cared for our soul. We were sinking down, held bound by the strong power of he that held us captive. I am sure, and being sure (at least by the letter) that there was none to help among the sons of Adam, that our case was hopeless and we were helplessly bound in well forged chains of our captivity.

However, one had been on our side from all eternity. We did not know about it, therefore, we could not have been a link in providing help for our deliverance. As far as we knew, and as far as we could do about deliverance there was not any help for us. The eons of time, of eternity, had not been long enough to dull nor dim the memory of He that had been from all eternity on our side. Ah, dear bretheren, this is all that we need, yea, it is all that we needed to break the snare, to lead captivity captive, to let us go free. This is the free deliverance of He that has ever been on our side, and that is as faithful for the future as He has been in the past. His memory did not forget us when in the dungeon of captivity not knowing that release was only a hand breadth away. (1 Kings 18:44). He did not forget us on the instant of waking after crucifixion, and methinks--ah, no, I do not think, I know, dear little ones, that He will never forget us as long as the curtain of time is hanging, and I even know if we lie in a dust bound grave a thousand years, that He will know as much about where our dust lies as He did in the antiquities of time when He formed us from the dust in our natural creation. Yes, you may be assured that sometimes unbelief

staggers me, but I do hope that I am thankful that for the most part I am waiting patiently and yet longingly for Him to appear and to give me release to go hence to see Him that led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.

There were not any exceptions when we were captivated and captured soul and body and spirit, held in bondage by that enemy, Satan. I would at all times beg for divine guidance that I might present all of God's people perfect in Christ. I do not preach any man perfect in the flesh, nor do I preach the Adamic race ever to be perfect in Christ, but, if I preach the gospel, I do preach every man of the family of Christ as perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). Each and every one of the chosen vessels of mercy are perfect in Christ. There is no spot in thee my love, thou art all fair (S. S. 1:6). They had been in abject captivity so long without the light of His countenance to shine upon them.

Come hither dear reader, dear sorrowing disciple, wayworn pilgrim, come and dine. Wisdom has set her table well. After the fare on the table of the custodian of the flesh bound bars of prison, the table is set with dainties that the weak, the wan, the afflicted, the poor, the ones that do not know, the ones that are simple, the ones that desire more understanding of the great love wherewith He loved us while we were still prison bound. Yes, come one and come all, eat, drink, and joy in the opening of the bound doors of captivity.

As we deed and muse on the goodness of mother wisdom, let us behold Him coming down from God His Father, to earth where Satan was, and where he had them all in obedience to him. Here Wisdom had already gone before. The cost had already been counted; the waters of adversity had already been measured in the hollow of His hand, incidentally, the same hand measured them

while manifested in the flesh that weathered the awful agony and intense suffering as the nails were driven through them. Furthermore, lest we forget it, this hand, the right hand of deliverance, the right hand on which the sheep which had been captured by sin and released from that captivity, as we shall shortly see, which right hand is the source of the victory that God had gotten over the enemy which had captivated His children.

There never has been such a display of love and compassion as Christ manifested for His bride, for His elect people. No husband has ever had as faithless a wife as He has had; no wife has ever had as faithful a husband as she has had. He went under the law, which we had broken, for us. He has made of the woman that broke the first commandment that her Maker gave her. He was made a curse for His bride. He made her cause, which she dragged through the slime of our sins, as His cause. All of her debts He assumed and paid for her breaking them. All of His credit (righteousness) was credited to her account. And how His excellence shines as we see Him taking on the flesh and assuming a husband's obligation to pay her indebtedness, although it entailed Him laying down His life to take care of her sin, and the consequences of His having stepped into the breaches of the law which she had made.

Only in the power and the glory of His Godhead could He become marked for captivity, and yet break the bars of that captivity, and come off conquerer over captivity itself forever bringing him into captivity in which a way that He has reviewed a deadly wound, even now is always relegated behind the back of Him that let captivity captive. May His dear name be honored and adored in our lives by our walk and our talk, in songs of praise, in harmonious preach-

ing, and victorious death.

But that is not all. In the consummation of Satan being brought into subjection to the King of saints, we find that we have one of doubles given the children of the kingdom. I ask that you turn back to the beginning of this Ephesian letter and find out who it is for. There is not a second letter coming to these people. This is the first and only one to them. It is to all of the family of God; the things written to them then, are ours as much as they belong to them. These same promises will belong to all that ever are brought in, and I assure you that not one will ever be brought in that Christ did not die for, and redeem from their sin, and I likewise urge that He did not forget, or miss, or fail one that were chosen in Him before the world was, and now remember this: To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. No other people thus blessed, and none of that elect people left out of this blessing. I must urge also that Peter wrote a valuable treatise on the same subject, and to the same elect people, that God had given them all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). Furthermore, I must insist that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and that all we have received of that fulness. (John 1:14,16).

Not only did He save us by overcoming Satan who had us in captivity, but He gave gifts unto men, and the gift in each case was commensurate with the gift of Christ, that is, that the same measure of gift is given to one and all.

This leading captivity captive for each of them (that is, these elect people) is doing the first work for them, that is the imparting unto them eternal life, but then, after saving them with eternal salvation, He gave every one of them grace and gifts, and keeps right on down life's journey giving the people of God

grace and gifts to the end that they be perfected, that they be edified, that we be unified into the perfect body of Christ in a manifest and glorified sense.

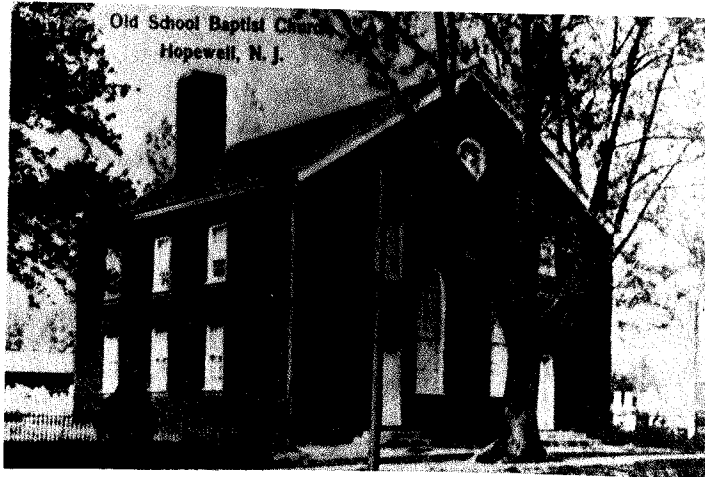
Dear brethren, this is the gospel day. This is the day wherein we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved. We need these gifts, we need this saving grace, whereby we may serve God addeptably with reverence, realizing that He is a consuming fire, and that every idol, man made or imagined image, will be removed from us, that all strange fire will be put out which we have kindled, That all of our sparks, and all of the lights that we have lighted will be extinguished by His severe wrath at His visitations among us. On the other hand, the gifts, the callings of God will suffice at all times to enable us to stem every rising tide of criticism, every wave of persecution, to silence every enticing and cunningly devised voice hailing to the little ones of the kingdom to come over here with us.

This way of Grace was conceived in God's eternal mind. It saves to the uttermost every poor sinner that is brought as a begger to Him. This uttermost saving is the only kind of salvation that will reach my case, for I am a poor sinner, weak and wounded, sick of the tiresome journey, have no lasting resort nere, feel desperately the need of one as evening approaches closer and closer, and feel to hope through divine grace and effectual calling that in and through and because of the uttermost purpose of God (that is, that covered every created thing) without one thought or one pulse beat effort by me that He has prepared a home for me and all.

In that blessed hope,

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



The Hopewell Church, Hopewell, New Jersey was constituted in 1715, the oldest Primitive Baptist Church, constituted in America. (The oldest, Welsh, Newark, Delaware, constituted in Wales

1701).

To the right of the meetinghouse is a tall monument, erected to the memory of John Hart, a member of the Hopewell Church, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

CORRESPONDENCE

Route 5, Box 220
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Elder Spangler:

I want to write a little on some of my thoughts on the 10th chapter of **St. John**. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. St. John 10: 1-2.*

Verse seven explains what the door is. Then said Jesus unto them again, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. In this we see that Jesus is both the shepherd and the door, and if the shepherd brings*

them into the fold, then they have not climbed up another way.

I hope that I am thankful that Jesus said into the fold, and not into the kingdom. The only way into the Kingdom is to be born into it. Jesus answered, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."*

Many do climb up another way, 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.

Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the

simple. Romans 16: 17-18.

Here are some of their fruits; loving the most high seats, greed of filthy lucre, hatred of them that are orderly, railers, untruthful -- by their fruits ye shall know them. Those that the Shepherd brings in, these are the fruits they bring forth; love, humility, long forbearing, striving for peace in the house of God. Let us not fear them that would destroy us for Christ sake, for Jesus said, *if serpents bite you, or if yo drink any deadly poison it shall not hurt you.* Remember that the weapons of our warfare is not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Let us all watch and pray.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

Route 2, Box 920
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Editors:

I do so much love to get and read the "Signs". The May and June issues has the most sweet reading in them. I enjoyed the sweet and wonderful experience of Sister Mable Berry. In reading her experience I can see my own better than I could tell it myself. I also enjoyed the article on church discipline. I have read it over and over again. I am so pleased and I hope grateful that the Lord blessed dear Elder Beebe to write that article.

I will soon be 79 and the good Lord has been so tenderly and good to me all the days of my life. Sweet Jesus blessed me while in the hospital some time back to see His smiling dear face in a cloud. It was so bright that the cloud shined like the sun. He spake these words to me; "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I can not express the sweetness I felt in those

dear words. I was on my bed in the hospital, I know not whether I was asleep or awake. I only know those words were so sweet to me who feel to be a vile sinner and not worthy of the breath the good Lord gives me to breathe.

I do want to send some money to help with the dear "Signs". I know it takes a lot of hard work and expense to publish it.

May God bless and comfort all the dear editors and all those who love His appearing. I have enjoyed the books of Elder Beebe, especially book number three is so sweet to read.

Your little sister in hope
Collie Clark

Route 2, Box 1095
Umatilla, Florida 32748

Dear Elder Williams:

I am sending you part of my experience written a long time ago. If you think it worthy of space in the "Signs", please print it. I am now eighty-six years of age. I hope I am thankful to God I believe as I do, feeling that God has all power in Heaven and in earth. He works and none can hinder, He hinders and none can work. If not deceived I feel that God has shown me this, how weak I am and can do nothing good. When I was about fourteen years old, I found myself deeply concerned about my soul, at times more than others, thinking there was work for me to do, and I would soon give up the pleasures of this world and live a christian life. I would promise myself this, then would find myself doing worse, would feel condemned and promise again. I went on this way for several years. My burden got so heavy I thought it would get me down, some times I thought I was really sick.

Sometimes I tried to pray, Lord

have mercy on me, Lord what is wrong with me? One day I found myself on the ground, a short distance from the house, dying, I knew this. I can never forget that awful death chill, it seemed to start at my feet and creep up my body. I knew when it reached my heart I would be gone. This was sure death, I can not describe this as I felt it. While in this condition my first thought was, I must live for the sake of my children, and tried to open my eyes and found I had not strength to lift my eye lids. At this time a voice seem to say, just what are you any way. I had thought for a long time I was a sinner but I had never realized it to the fullest as I did now. The things I had boasted of doing were before me now. I saw I had not even done my duty to my family, much less any thing good as I had thought I had done, and now it was too late. I was dying, I tried to pray, Lord save me or I am gone was all I could say. Then this terrible death chill seem to stop about my waist line, I got up from the ground with a humble feeling. I had never before realized how God had all power. Until this I could not accept the thought that I could not accomplish something with the work of my own hands.

Here I was willing to give it up, I had not done anything but sin. I went about groaning to myself, Lord will thou be merciful to me a sinner, Lord what will become of me. Some times I tried to pray for my brothers, Lord keep them from the sinful things of this world. I seem to worry most about my father, he was getting old and gray, had not told us of a hope. One evening I called my sister, told her I was coming to her house to spend the night. I had not been in her house but a few minutes when I told her I was worried about Papa. She said well how is his foot (he had recently mashed his foot), I said very well I guess, but if Papa dies without

giving us a reason for a hope, I cannot live through the funeral. I can not describe my feelings when she answered me thus; I don't see why Papa don't join the church and live a christian life. This was not food to me. I was ready to return home but stayed the night. A short time after this I became so miserable I complained of headache and went to bed early, cried until my pillow was wet with tears. After some time I went to sleep and dreamed I went to my fathers home. As I drove up near the house I saw my father, I thought there to meet me. As I got near him I saw he had turned to a white stone, except his eyes moved and I thought of Lots wife and I said to myself, dead but yet alive, this is the Lords work.

As I got out of the car I saw that my father was gone and a wild beast was near me. I became afraid and started running back up the road. I looked and saw this beast running after me. I ran for some distance, almost out of breath and thought of turning off to escape this monster. I looked to my right, there seemed to be a dark wall and on my left also. I ran on to where the road got to be a narrow path with this dark wall on both sides and suddenly this path ended. I said to myself only God can save me now. I felt He could if it were His will, even if the beast had his mouth on me. I turned around with the thought I would fall before the beast and ask God to save me. When I turned around the beast was gone and Jesus stood there. I felt ashamed I had run, and fell at His feet, and said Lord have mercy on me a sinner. Suddenly I came straight up on my feet without any effort of my own or any one, face to face with Jesus. He smiled and a beautiful light shone around and He started walking from me. He was clothed in a white robe, no seams or wrinkles. The earth seemed soft as He walked, no trees,

no hills, a level beautiful place. I woke up and got out of bed. It was four o'clock in the morning. I hardly could keep from waking up some one and tell them my dream. It was a beautiful spring morning, birds were singing, every thing seemed to be praising God. Leaves on the trees not full grown seemed to be waving at the command of God. I was so happy all day, I felt I would never doubt again. These words were with me throughout the day; *what more can He say than to you He hath said, you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled.*

When I woke on the following morning, doubts arose again, I felt so fearful and was glad I had not told any one.

After several years a heavy burden came on me to join the church and be baptized. I felt I could not offer to the church, unworthy as I felt myself to be. I felt the Primitive Baptists people were such good people. What could I tell them, they would not believe me. I felt they could look at me and know that I didn't belong with them. On the second Sunday in September, 1933 I went before the church at Basham and was received. I was baptized on the second Sunday in October by Elder J. P. Helms, and this has given me great joy. Not being able to express my feelings to the church at the time has given me a lot of trouble. Afraid I might have deceived the church and feeling if this people could see me as I see myself they could not fellowship me. If I know my heart, I desire to live with the Primitive Baptist and to die with them.

Sincerely,

Ida E. Palmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times'* "PROSPECTUS" says: "That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers – that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God."

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks and spues* churches and ministers out of His mouth. We desire to carefully examine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Psalm 23:1

is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the *element* under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and "The doctrine of baptisms", in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, *baptism*.

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip*. This *dipping* includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called *baptism*. The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?; To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the *death* of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; — the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism portrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in

Jesus' *death*, which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Water baptism is the "Likeness" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (v. 11) When you obey from the heart that *form* of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust. This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a *servant of the law*. His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a *servant of sin* because he has disobeyed the holy law. This *servant of sin* despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a *servant of our Lord Jesus Christ* who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the *baptism of repentance of heart*. Repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need

of further turning.

John preached the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit — not man — in the expression: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...” (1 Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is the answer to a good conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who “walked according to this world”. After baptism one is classed with “fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God”. (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, “Purify thyself with them.” (Acts 21:24) This was necessary because of so many mis-representations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanations of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias: “Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” The water baptism purified Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of perse-

cution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb. John was termed by Jesus as “More than a prophet.” John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mentioned is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.” This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, “...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” The simple expression, *In the river of Jordan*, convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, “And it came to pass in those days, that

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him." This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan*, the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized." Why the necessity of *much water*? The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is necessary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, "they came unto a certain water." This must have been a place where there was *much water*. Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water."

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: "and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include *burial*. The person uninformed of the meaning of the word *baptize*, would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and

brings him completely out of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: "Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, — depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: — I baptize you, Brother P_____, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, "Amen". This is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, "Pricked in their heart." They were undoubtedly terribly upset by

these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter's sermon must have pierced them sharply. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him!! What Guilt! No wonder they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we *do*? "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the remission of sins*, used in this expression which greatly confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24; "When Pilot saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorrence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water is the presence of this people with the expression, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people responded, "...His blood be on us, and on our children." (v. 25) These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, will-

ing to *do anything* to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to:—"Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Fifthly: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Sixthly, they were added to the Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer?*

"And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12) We ask, what was Philip's subject on this occasion? We read Acts 8:5; "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them." We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." (v. 35) When the eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." The eunuch answered, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*" This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a *believer*. It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the

eunuch's baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consulted before one could become a member of a certain church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be *set apart* by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in "Hassell's History of the Church of God," page 695: "Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another..." This quotation shows that in the 18th century that *the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus*. It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to *faith in Christ Jesus*; it need be that we clarify

our position upon this.

A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to

please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last editorial prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

"In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we

have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him, and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Reprint from "Signs" 1968

PSALM 100

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

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

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

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

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

THE SEVENTH DAY

I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8, 9, 10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before proceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do no work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our understanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we

(even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in the typical sense, when commanded by the Lord of Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always after they have done fully six days' work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrews; (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and

puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hard work, we are brought to our wits end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them, yokes them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their

salvation, and their entire six days' work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or someone else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in

the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes in his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, "It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he possesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them." So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, "I have finished the work." Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and

trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and blessed satisfaction in him.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I do humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been brought into that blessed Sabbath and have ceased from my own works, and have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

Reprint from "Signs" 1965

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

MEETINGS

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association, composed of the following churches: Bethlehem, Beulah, Flat Swamp, North Creek, Old Sparta, Singleton, Shewarky, Smithwick Creek and Tarboro, will be held the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. It will be held at Flat Swamp Church, located between Bethel and Robersonville on the Big Oaks road. We invite visitors to come and worship with us.

Hassell Allen, Clerk
Flat Swamp Church

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOC.

Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association Meeting:

The next session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, September 16th, 17th, and 18th 1983.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas, turn left on 273, and the Church is located one-half mile on left.

Frances Townley, Clerk

FIVE MILE CREEK ASSOC.

The Five Mile Creek Association will convene, the Lord willing, at the Shady Grove Church, the third Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before. (September 16, 17, and 18, 1983)

This Church is located off highway 69, between Cullman and Jasper, Alabama. Turn east at Bugtussle and go to top of hill, turn right and it is about three miles to the church. You may also turn east off 69 at Wil-

burn and go south to the church on Ridge road.

Elder H. C. Moon, Moderator
Phone (205) 287-1603
Rufus L. Jacks, Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOC.

We wish to announce that the Ninety Third annual session of the "South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association" will convene with Smyrna Church on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September 1983.

The Church is located six miles south of Eldorado, Arkansas, and one half mile east of highway 167.

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

Elder David Turner, Moderator
Doyle Murphy, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord Willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. (August 5, 6, and 7, 1983). Martinsville Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds of the meeting house at Leatherwood Church, this is the same location as 1982.

Leatherwood Church is located in Henry County, Virginia, on State Road 657. Those coming from the south on Route 220, and those coming from the east on Route 58, go to the north side of Martinsville, there take Route 108 N. for about 8 miles, turn right on Route 657, and keep on this road for about 5 miles to the church.

Those coming from the North or East on Route 40, take Route 890 at Penhook. Route 890 goes to the Henry County line, then go 2 miles to Route 657, turn left on Route 657.

Follow above instructions

Those coming by Route 57, take Route 657, go about 2 miles to church. At each of these intersections, you will probably see a road sign "Leatherwood". Also watch for Association sign.

Jamie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Charity Church the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of September 1983.

The church is located in Patrick County, on state route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia. Those coming on 220, take route 40 west at Rocky Mount, come through Ferrum by Lawn Branch Church and Charity is about eight miles on left.

We invite all our brethren and sisters that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Elder Roy Agee, Moderator
Elder Amos Hash, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR APRIL 1983

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Mrs. Elma Griffin, VA. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Dixie Davis, VA. | 12.00 |
| Eld. W.D. Griffin, AL. | 50.00 |
| Mrs. Shelby R. Stratton, MS. | 10.00 |
| Frank Hunt, VA. | 6.00 |
| William L. Neal, N.C. | 50.00 |
| Miss Myrtle Thomas, VA. | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Ethel Viers, WV. | 21.00 |
| Miss Reidy Pickeral, VA. | 50.00 |
| F.L. Shortt, VA. | 3.00 |
| U.H. Alverson, N.C. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Carla Smith, TX. | 8.00 |
| John F. Simpson, FL. | 19.00 |
| Mrs. Elsie B. Houchins, VA. | 6.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. Ira L. Bell, VA. | 6.00 |
| Andrew Agee, VA. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. James diZerega, VA. | 7.00 |

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MAY 1983

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Julian Noland, S.C. | 1.00 |
| Tim Barron, Tx. | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Ruby Gilbert, WA. | 4.00 |
| W. E. Mitchell, VA. | 3.00 |
| Elder Amos Hash, VA. | 2.00 |
| Elder R. H. Pennington, WV. | 10.00 |
| Mrs. James F. Tompson, N.C. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Olive F. Hastings, ND. | 3.00 |
| W. D. Godwin, LA. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL. | 7.00 |
| Whitney Mobley, N.C. | 25.00 |
| J. J. Bird, WV. | 1.00 |
| T. R. Pulling, CA. | 2.00 |
| Milton S. Harrell, CA. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Amy D. Heppler, AZ | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Leroy Jones, TX. | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA. | 2.00 |
| Fred C. Winfrey, KS. | 12.00 |
| Henry Shockley, MD. | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL. | 3.00 |
| Mrs. O. E. Bishop, AR. | 6.00 |
| Mrs. Lual E. Anderson, VA., | 1.00 |

OBITUARIES

**SISTER EVA EGGLESTON
(1900-1983)**

Sister Eggleston was born July 4, 1900, and departed this life February 1, 1983, at the age of 83. She was the daughter of the late W.F. and Carolyn Ward Pruitt. She was married to Elder Frank F. Eggleston who died in July, 1965.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in 1915 and remained a loyal member, and attended church service regular, as long as her health would permit.

Her illness was long drawn out, but she bore her suffering with great fortitude, until God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst our beloved Sister.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Lucile Humphries of Roanoke, Mrs. Lorene Garrett of Collinsville, with whom she made her home. Sisters, Mrs. Bell Martin, Mrs. Mary Motsinger, Mrs. Nettie Richmond, one brother, Allen Pruitt, five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister Eggleston will be greatly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints."

In the absence of our pastor, Elder J. R. Hollandsworth, Elder Haywood Wray along with Mr. Glenn Voss and J.A. Eggleston had charge of the service.

We wish to extend to the bereaved family our heart felt sympathy.

Done by order of Dan River Church while in conference, Saturday night March 27, 1983.

Written by one who loved her very much.

Maude Pruitt

SISTER SOPHIA MARSHALL ALDERMAN
(1897-1982)

Sister Sophia Marshall Alderman was born November 9, 1897 in Carroll County, Virginia. She died February 10, 1982. Her funeral service was held February 12, 1982 at Swicegood Chapel, Danville, Va., conducted by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. She was burried in Mountain View Cemetery, Danville, Virginia.

Sister Alderman united with Dan River Church on March 26, 1978 and was a faithful member until her death.

She leaves to mourn her passing one daughter, Mrs. Naoma Scarboro, one son, Marvin E. Alderman. Brothers, Graham Marshall and H. S. Marshall, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

We the members of Dan River Church will miss her presence with us. May the Grace of our Heavenly Father be with each of the family, to reconcile them to His will.

Done by order of Dan River Church, February 26, 1983.

Elder D.V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

SISTER MOLLIE KELLUM

By the request of the North East Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will attempt to write a few words in memory of Sister Mollie Kellum, whom the Lord saw fit to take from our midst to be at Home with Him.

She departed this life Jan. 9, 1982. She was born Nov. 23, 1902. She was married to Brother Willie Kellum on May 2, 1921. She is survived by her husband and three children, one son, James Kellum and two daughters, Glenda Bright and Dorothy Williams, ten grand children and five great grandchildren, one brother, Eddie Humphrey and three sisters, Effie Morton, Bessie Morton and Emma Kellum.

She joined the church Feb. 1937 and was a faithful believer in predestination and attended church as long as her health would permit. We, the Church at North East will greatly miss her along with her family, friends and all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder J. T. Prescott. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

This being done by the request of the Church, three copies being made, one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*, one sent to the family and one sent to the Church Record.

Moderator: Elder J. T. Prescott
Written by Clerk: L. J. Sammons

OBITUARY OF PEARLIE BILLINGS

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of our Sister Pearlle Billings. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her from our midst on January 23, 1983 at the age of 79. She died at Memorial Hospital, Danville, Virginia.

She was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Church on August 28, 1949 and was baptized the same day by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

Sister Pearlle was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and was the daughter of the late Charlie Billings and Eliza Kate Dalton Billings. Sister Pearlle was a faithful member of Weatherford Church, always filling her seat. I believe Sister Billings was made reconciled to her illness and to death because she bore her afflictions without mumuring.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Jan. 25, 1983 by Elder O. K. Tench and her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written By: Marvin Brumfield

GEORGE HOWARD TAFT

George Howard Taft passed from this life on August 26, 1982, making his stay on earth eighty years. He was a native of Tyrell County and the Son of George and Laura Taft.

Brother Howard united with Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church on the third Sunday in April, 1981, while in Guardian Care Nursing Home in Elizabeth City, N. C. He was baptized by Elder Reeves Smith in the home. He was never able to attend any more meetings at his church, which was in his native county, although that was his hearts desire.

His mother and father were faithful members of Bethlehem Church, and he said that was the doctrine he had always believed. He had never united with any other church. He and his brother Jimmy were faithful in taking their mother to church after their father passed away, when old enough to have a car and drive. He told me he had walked with his mother to church, which was about three miles and waded through water when it would be over the road in places. He loved to talk about these things.

He was well known throughout the county and liked by the people. Brother Howard never married. He left behind one sister in her nineties, nieces, nephews and

other relatives.

Grave side services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Reeves Smith, in his home town of Columbia, N. C.

Nellie H. Barnes, Church Clerk
Columbia, North Carolina

SISTER MARY MOORE SIMPSON

It has pleased our Heavenly father in His infinite wisdom to call sister Simpson from this world of woe on November 29, 1982, to be with Him in paradise. She was born in Rockingham County, N. C. on March 21, 1896, to James W. and Mary Moore. She was married to Brother Spencer Simpson, October 21, 1920 and to this union were born three daughters; Sister Mary Simpson Blacklock, Mrs. Nancy Simpson Rumble, and Mrs. Bettie Simpson Burris. Four sons; John W., Thomas M., James H. and S. Franklin Simpson. Fifteen grand-children, ten great grand-children and two great great grand-children.

Sister Simpson united with the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1937 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder W. C. King. She walked in humbleness and love for more than 45 years with her church. *A good name is better than precious ointment: and the day of death than the day of ones birth. Ecl. 7:1.*

Her funeral was conducted at Lowe's Funeral Home Chapel by her paster, Elder Wallis Smith, assted by Mr. Michael Hooper. Her body was laid to rest in the Alamance Memorial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, there to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Written by Thomas I. Rice as ordered in conference by Bush Arbor Church, January 8, 1983.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JESSE W. RAY (1915-1983)

Brother Jesse W. Ray was born March 30, 1915 in Danville, Virginia. He was the son of the late William Louis and Naomi Spangler Ray. On November 23, 1934, he was married to the former Mabel York and to this union were born two children, Jesse W. Ray, Jr., and Martha Davisson who, along with our Brother's dear wife, are left to mourn his death. There are also nine grandchildren to whom our Brother was so tenderly attached. Additional family members include two sisters, Lillian Guzzo and Helen Shane; three brothers, Herman, Julian, and William Ray.

Brother Jesse Ray joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1965 and was a devoted and faithful member until his death. He was blessed in that his dear wife along with other family members were also believers and members of Dan river. He so keenly believed the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus and loved to mingle among those of like precious faith. He indeed worshipped the God he loved and loved the God he worshipped. He so often related to this writer that his entire life revolved around being with and talking to his brethren at the church meetings. I think it only fitting that one of Brother Jesse's favorite songs was "*My Dearest Friends in Bonds of Love.*"

Our Brother completed his purpose in life to a "jot and a tittle" and on February 3, 1983, received the call of the Father making his stay on earth nearly 68 years. His funeral was held at Dan River on Saturday, February 5, 1983 with two lovely Elders, Haywood Wray and Kenneth Key, conducting the service. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the Glorious Resurrection Day.

This memorial is written by order of Church Conference on March 26, 1983. It is respectfully requested that a copy be made available to the family and that one be forwarded for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Written in Love,
Rob R. Collie, Deacon

MRS. MYRTLE VELES

Shepherd Fold Church grieves the passing of our precious sister Myrtle Veles who was born February 26, 1905 and departed this life January 30, 1983. She was the niece of Elder John Lee Smith and the grand-daughter of the late Elder Woody K. Smith, who served our brethren in Louisiana and Arkansas for over fifty years.

She was a humble sister who loved her Lord and attended her Church meetings regularly. She traveled among the old Baptist from the days of her youth and as long as her Lord enabled her to do so. She is survived by her husband of 48 years, Brother Ramon Veles and of this marriage there were born four daughters: Mrs. Hannah French of Seattle, Washington; Mrs. Ramona Sikes of Houston, Texas; Mrs. Betty Ann Webb of Houston, Texas and Mrs. Alicia Nilson of Biloxi, Mississippi; one sister, Mrs. Mary Berkley; twelve grand-children and seven great grand-children.

Funeral services were conducted by Glen Dale Funeral Home in Houston, Texas on January 31, 1983.

One copy of this memorial is encouched in the February 5, 1983 minutes. Done by order of the Church while in conference.

Written by Robbie Holloway
247 Blue Castle Lane
Houston, Texas 77060

BOOK NOTICES

**EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE**

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each

Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each

(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)

(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volume 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support.

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole

P. O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Vol-

ume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

1 copy - \$5. plus \$1. for mailing

5 copies - \$20. plus \$3. for mailing

10 copies - \$30. plus \$4. for mailing

(Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hardbound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:

Elder James F. Poole

P. O. Box 1250

Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., SEPTEMBER 1983

No. 9

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one."
John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

C O N T E N T S

EDITORIAL..... 170
 Written by Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... 174

CORRESPONDENCE 174

VOICES OF THE PAST 177
 Sermon by Elder E. J. Lambert
 Sermon by Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS 187

CONTRIBUTIONS 189

OBITUARIES 189
 Roosevelt "Ruzie" Kendrick
 Sister Kate Dodd
 Sister Maud Truitt Laws
 Rachel Ruth Ballard
 Alma Searce Burnett
 Glenn Horton Stuart

BOOK NOTICES 191

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

EDITORIAL

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, hear-
 est thou not my daughters? Go
 thou not to glean in another field,
 neither go from hence, but abide
 here fast by my maidens: Let thine
 eyes be on the field that they do reap,
 and go thou after them; have I not
 charged the young men that they
 shall not touch thee? When thou art
 athirst go unto the vessels, and drink
 of that which the young men have
 drawn. Then she fell on her face, and
 bowed herself to the ground, and
 said unto him, why have I found
 grace in thine eyes, that thou should-
 est take knowledge of me, seeing
 that I am a stranger? Ruth 2:9, 10.

May I come in and tarry with you,
 and go over the Christian's pathway
 once again? Yes, I know that this is
 ground that we have been over time
 and again. But the man who was, and
 is, a man after God's own heart need-
 ed to be shown again these things.
 Mat. 11:4. There is not any doubt but
 that the Master and the servant loved
 one another devotedly, but the ser-
 vant needed to be shown again and
 again. Do you need this kind of care?
 Does it delight your soul to go over
 the way again, and even again the
 ground over which you have tread?
 If so, I hope to write to you the good
 news of the gospel of peace, even the
 gospel of the grace of God. If you get
 wearied with repetitions of these
 sacred matters, why act as though
 you do not? 1 Cor. 4:7.

Sound doctrine is of primary im-
 portance; it is the foundation, the
 framework that holds all other basic
 truths of the gospel together. How-
 ever, that alone does not give us a
 heritage among the family of God.
 Close to a million people profess to
 believe in what we call the sover-
 eignty of God, but have no conception
 whatever of a profession, let alone
 the possession of the Lord Jesus
 Christ in their life. It stands out that
 ever so strong a profession of faith is
 present, without the love of God in
 our hearts that the thing of which we
 have professed becomes as a tin-
 kling cymbal and as sounding brass.

Before we venture into the text,
 let us always remember that every-
 thing in which the Lord was not in,
 always sounded much louder than
 the speech of the Lord. 1 Kings 19.
 God is love. His love was bestowed
 upon His children in Christ in eterni-
 ty. Eph. 1:1, 7. The Text starts there.
 Have any of my readers got an earlier
 text than that? Did any of my readers
 supply anything that was needed at
 that time, or that has been needed
 since in order for the test to be ful-

filled? The answer being, in both cases, no. I will proceed as blessed of God, to write on the beauties of it. This love of God did not have a beginning; it did not have a place nor a time in which it came into existence. As long as God has been, this love has been in Him, and as long as it has been since His creation of man, that love has been flowing from that cleansing fountain of love into His children. In the day of the Apostle he tells us that this love is the love of God; that we have been justified by Him, even manifestly by the rich gift of faith, gift of God; that both the fruit of faith and love is fruits growing on trees which He has planted, and that this love is shed abroad in our hearts by another gift of God, to wit the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:1, 5. This love is an abounding love; it is shed abroad love, it is something that moves all to whom it is sent; it is always an effectual love, working in whom it is sent that which is well pleasing to the Giver.

This love is not made manifest in a debauchery of polygamous atmosphere. There has never been a case where one was under the law, married to the law, could ever be married to Christ. There is not any exception to this. One that is under the law, that is married to the law as their first husband, that can ever be married to Christ while the law still lives. Ruth had been married to the son of Naomi, and the Moabitish people were under the condemnation of the law. Moreover, they all were wicked and idolatrous. While unaware of it, the law had them under condemnation. How clearly we see that all around us, people of every denomination claiming that by keeping the law there is salvation to be had, when, as a matter of fact, the law condemns all that are under it.

Not anything at all can stay the hand of God in saving His people.

God puts to death the law; He robs it of its power. Moses is not permitted to enter Cannan; one who is a chosen vessel for God's mercy is not given any option in continuing to live under the dominion of the law. The law is put to death and removed out of the way before one is married to it can ever come into the organic body of Christ. Thus we have three widow women before us, and each of their husbands have died. They have been living off from the provisions of the law relationship. Time, that does not bring about, nor deter, gives away to He that gave us time, and it comes to time of entrance for the reign of the Spirit. The law, which is represented by their husbands, is put to death, lo and behold starvation sets in. The wives, including our subject, does not have a livelihood any longer. There is not anything in the experience of grace that approaches as relentlessly as does hunger. Reading about it is one thing; observing the suffering of those that have fallen victim to it is another, but no observation teaches as does experience. The sudden hunger of the thief on the cross made him cry out for that which Christ alone gives; the giving out of the riotous living carried the prodigal back to his father's full house. No Adam creature has ever been deluded as has the man or woman that thinks that it is optional with them.

For centuries after this episode in the life of God's People the name Old Baptist had not been mentioned, but if I have ever read the history of a destitute beggar here it is before us. I do hope precious saints that we can travel together as we explore the goodness of our Boaz as He deals with His people. Truly, here is Godliness in the way of a man with a maid. Pro. 30:19.

Let us digress backwards and see if we can find any marks of our past

history. Let us see if there is one thing that we contributed to the union between Christ and His bride. Let us look a long time back into the eons of time, even before the world had a beginning. He loved His people before the dust of the highest hills were laid. You will hear nearly all God called ministers refer to that. Why? Because they, like Ruth, know that God loved us before time, and blessed us in His Son with every timely blessing needed. Moreover, that no one will ever know the sweetness of rest until they have known the futility of laboring to satisfy a broken law. God was good to us in that. Look at those still laboring to satisfy a law that can never be satisfied. Ah, how bright His determinate counsel shines. Ponder well my dear readers what a great mercy it is to hear Boaz say, stay in this field. Oh, yes, we were all strangers, as Ruth was; we were all trespassers, as Ruth was; we were all of a sinful race, as Ruth was; we were all destitute, as Ruth was, and we were all hungry as Ruth was, and this destitution and this hunger brought us out of the land of Moab seeking Christ or Boaz.

It has ever been that way; those that came to Him came because of hunger, of destitution, of nakedness. Not one that has ever come to Him but that has been filled. John 1:14, 16. No one has ever come to Him for dress that was not given a change of raiment.

Ruth did not advertize her skill or aptness as she ventured toward the field. She did not ask for the harvested wheat; she did not take a grain of the wheat that they had planned for the barn. She was, as the poor woman of Cannan that came begging for help from the Master's hand. He called her a dog, but she resented it not, but acknowledged it, only saying that the dogs ate the crumbs from their master's table. The Lord recog-

nized her and helped her. She did not have a legitimate plea that could be made. Had it not been for the mercy of Christ, she would have been sent empty away. Nor Ruth had no plea to make, nothing to pay with, and, lo and behold, she had nothing to pay. Of one thing we may take refuge in, and that is that no sinner has ever been empty sent away that came begging for mercy for Jesus' sake. There is not any reference in the Bible of a case of this kind, but there are many scriptural lessons and examples where He has had mercy on such a sinner as Ruth was, and as you and I are if so be that we have come to Him begging mercy.

The Lord sent her there right in the harvest time. It is always at that time. The law husband was put to death in time for her to get to the kingdom of Boaz. Boaz had been blessed in basket and in store, with rich fields, lovely harvest laborers, the grain was ripe when she arrived.

Come hither poor sinner. Let's look the situation over once more. Boaz owned the field before she needed it; Boaz fell in love with her before she knew him. She did not pay a farthing on the farm; she did not dig up the field for seeding it down; she did not furnish the seed; she did not turn her hand to produce the ripe grain. She did not go to where she gleaned by arrangement of her own. It was a happen so with her, but there is not any happening with the owner of the field. One of the most lovely Elders I have known in the fifty years has often said to me. Elder Griffin, watch the hand of the Lord, for it will go before you and will settle you on the lees of His choice. Let us dear brethren, watch for that hand and be found ever listening for His instruction as to what to do, where to go, and above all else to wait, ever be found watching and waiting and listening for His voice at

our back saying in our ear, this is the way, walk ye in it

As Boaz came from Bethlehem he found Ruth gleaning in His field. Who is she, he asked of his laborers? Ah dear doubting child, let us look in upon the scene. The words of our text fill our minds with delight as we hear him address her. How precious! How delightful to those longing for words of comfort from the Saviour of sinners. How moving, yea, O Lord how fitting to our hungry soul as we hear Him address this trespassing damsel, this transgressing Moabitish woman. How full and rich and complete is the good news of the gospel. Go not into another field; this is the field that has every needed thing in it; take, eat, thy fulness, even to the satisfying of thy soul.

O, Lord our precious Master, ever give us this bread, even the bread that is in the prepared field for us when we are brought into thy Kingdom, ever make us satisfied with that bread that was made fit for our consumption by the hot wrath and fury of our God that was poured out on thy Son and our Saviour, making Him palatable and nourishing to every destitute sinner brought to this fertile field. Tell us no more of any other field, make us satisfied to abide here where both bread and water is administered to us from the hand of the inmates of His household.

How overwhelming it is to a poor stranger in a strange land to have riches of that land bestowed upon us. Our cup runs over. Our soul is flooded with the love of our Lovely One. To me the coming of Ruth to Boaz, the going of Paul to Ananias, the long barefooted journey of the prodigal, the cry of the church, look not upon me for I am black, All these journeyings of the children of God are but steps that wayward lambs take into the corral or sheepfold, for we sing:

*Courage my soul, on God rely,
Deliverance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.
Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written Lord for me.*

And I hope that the rich fields of sovereign grace will furnish us green and shady places to lie down in, cooling fountains of water to drink from and new and living bread to feast on in Immanuel's land and while waiting for the glorious day of keen anticipation that I will have my eyes on Boaz my lovely kinsman who has entered into that Holy Place, after having fulfilled His royal pledge to redeem all of the poor sinners.

In the meantime, pray for me, pray that Boaz guides my pen and my tongue, if indeed, I am a laborer in His field. Pray for me that I might be day and night about my Father's business, and that He ever keeps me regulated, but that He never allows me to become a regulator in His field.

Elder W. D. Griffin

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Mat. 11:28

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."

Psalms 107:23, 24

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help."

Psalms 121:1

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



In the year of 1830, Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized; this being an arm of Country Line Church.

The meeting house is located on Parks Springs Road near Providence, N. C., about one half mile east of Highway number 86.

The present building was built in the year of 1890 and remodeled as you see it today in 1974.

Meeting time at Moons Creek is

eleven o'clock on the third Sunday morning of each month.

Their present pastor is Elder Kenneth R. Key.

Surely this church is a planting of Gods hand and for more than 150 years He has kept it watered with the dews of Heaven.

NOTE: To introduce your church, please send a snap shot along with brief history, Sunday of your meetings, geographic location and name of present pastor.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Beloved of the Lord;

For some reason I feel a desire to write you a few lines today, trusting in the Lord to guide our mind and hand, as we pen a few thoughts concerning this scripture:

“Let no man deceive you by any means; for the 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 timple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” II Thessalonians 2:3-4.

We shall long remember the significance of Geneses 1:5 wherein our attention was called to the fact that the evening and morning were the first day. This denotes and places emphasis on the fact that man is of the earth and as such cannot see

God as his creator or Christ as his

Redeemer for he came into the world in the state of darkness.

But thanks be unto God who did predestine, elect, and create in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to eternal life, a chosen people, whom are called out of natures darkness and are given a hope in Christ Jesus whereby they become the children of light.

In Phil. 1:6, we read, "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," showing that there is an appointed time for each and every child of God, as he sojourns in this world of toil and strife for a work to begin that will lead him to the knowledge that his salvation lies in none other than our blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ.

By nature man, not having been born of the Spirit, by his own works seeks to obtain salvation and most oftentimes deems himself worthy as did the Pharisee in Luke 18:11-12. Among such God has a people who are called out of nature's darkness and in whom he does begin a good work that brings them to the knowledge of Christ Jesus. In some, they are brought down to their knees as was Saul when on the way to Damascus to persecute the children of God. While in others we are reminded of the eaglet spoken of in Deut. 32:11, who in comfort rested in a nest, lined with feathers, and high upon a cliff only to have its parent stir up the nest; then finding itself resting upon the sticks and thorns. (The beginning of doubts.)

John 9:41 reads, "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." All the posterity of Adam came into the world under the curse of sin and by nature are totally depraved, yet there is a sense wherein the unregenerated who have not as yet come

under conviction are without a knowledge of sin; they not yet having felt guilty and rely upon their own works to obtain salvation. Such as these may from birth until death go through life never feeling in their minds and hearts their unworthiness, and in their natural minds (for they have no spiritual mind) opposeth all things pertaining to God and Godliness, and exalt themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." I Cor. 15:50.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Rom. 9:21. We might say that one vessel shall be filled with oil of grace, and the other void of the blessings of God.

We did so enjoy the few moments that we got to spend with Elder Hollingsworth when he visited among us. We had so hoped that you and Sister Spangler would be able to accompany them. We hope that this finds you both feeling better.

Give our love to all the brethren. Florence sends her love.

In hope, your unworthy brother'

Lloyd C. Spikes

33 Hillcrest Ave. N. E.
Roanoke, Virginia 24012

To the Editors of the
SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
To those who proclaim
full glory to a just
Savior and the total
depravity of mankind:

I enjoyed reading Elder Trott's

writings in the three last issues of **THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES** because they helped me to see how subtile self righteousness is. It showed how mankind does have a zeal, but cannot be saved any way but through the mercies of a merciful Savior.

Yes, we desire a closer walk with our Savior, but it is only he who is the atonement. How very precious was his experience of having seen the ram caught in the thicket to save him as He saved Isaac, the type of the crucified Savior.

After he was brought to know that his rituals and laboring for perfection could not save him, how sweet to know there was atonement of Christ.

I have been so foolish and doubting in my time. I hope I can apply the scriptures as applicable to my case of where John was shut up in prison and in doubt and Christ said go show John again these things, and so it was to me that the rewriting of that old servant of God long ago showed me spiritual error and the subtile error of thinking we can work favor with God. I want God's favor and we hope we hate evil and oh to God that we might love good. We recall the scriptures telling us there's none good but one. Only God is good, and indeed God is love. The only source of true love, which again brings us to the atonement and the son of God as our mediator, we hope, to save us from hell, if we are saved.

How good to read of God's precious relief to him as he said; as I was there upon my knees, the account of Abraham's offering of his son, Isaac, as in Genesis 22, was brought to my view.

Isaac was bound and laid upon the altar, appeared as representing the care of the heirs of promise, and as fully representing my case as bound by the law and doomed by its condemnatory sentence of death. As A-

braham knew nothing but to inflict the death blow so the law knew nothing but to inflict the curse upon the sinner. My attention then turned to Abraham's arm, being arrested by the angel's call to him, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns being taken by him and sacrificed in the place of Isaac. This ram appears to represent Christ as involved in the demands of the law, in the power of His Godhead, by viture of His headship and union with His people, and therefore as made to suffer the penalty of the law in their stead.

Elder Trott went on to say; my views then were not as distinct on all these points as I have here given them, but the substitution of Christ in the place of the condemned sinner was fully presented to view. And the atonement of Christ appeared so full and so exactly adapted to my helpless, guilty and condemned case that surely, I said to myself, as I viewed it, God must have had me in view when he made this rich provision in His son. I was therefore enabled confidentially to rely on His atonement for pardon, and to plead for it for my acceptance with God, and the sense of condemnation was gone. He went on to say how he was filled with gratitude and praise. It seems to me all believers in the Lord our Savior should enjoy the article the above writing appeared in.

Even copying and rewriting an article requires a lot of labor as well as publishing and mailing. May God continue to be your guide and help, yes, all who labor and love in Him everywhere.

May we be kept in humbleness and love for another and before our Savior all through life's journey, if it can be His will.

Humbly

Mamie Rose Ferguson

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

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

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

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." We recall that in Psalms 100:4

it says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise . . ." Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, "I love you." The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit: tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. "Go through, go through the gates . . ." is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of *regeneration*. You can not climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one

would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being "born again" is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to re-live for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I re-lived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I remembered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in his gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they

all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the world to come. This man who said unto me, "Let us go to meeting," saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, "Let us go to meeting." I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy scriptures.

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

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

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the benefits He merited would be mine to experience in the future. These gates lead into the inner place of the King. The most inner-gate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, "My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door." (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven. . . ." (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, what

peace, and happiness we do experience as a result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together.

While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, "Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together." Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: "Jerusalem

is builded as a city that is *compact together*: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to *give thanks unto the name of the Lord.*" A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordinances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough fortaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to rejoice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious

beliefs. Being "Compact together" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "Let us to into the House of the Lord."

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

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us to into the House of the

Lord.”

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshipper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians. David said, “Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: *bring an offering and come into his courts.*” You may ask, “What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that he does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits towards me?” (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The word contrite means bruised. Paul says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*” (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any

but we certainly need His strength in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of the house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to this rule.)

“I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.” (Psalms 116:17). I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: “I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now* in the presence of all His people.” David said, “God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: *Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.*” (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable sacrifice is fervent constant confident devotion. That which binds is faith. Streams of God’s love are the cords. The altar is Christ. Christ’s merit and power are the horns of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their chil-

dren, relatives, and friends, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

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

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

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

Elder E. J. Lambert
(From the "Signs" 1965)

MATTHEW V. 16.

Editorial of Elder Beebe as it appeared in the "Signs" 140 years ago.

New Vernon, N. Y.
Sept. 15, 1843

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

—Matt. v. 16.

This exhortation was addressed to the disciples by our Lord Jesus Christ in the course of his discourse upon the mount. Retiring from the multitude that had gathered round him, Jesus withdrew to a mountain with the little group of his disciples, and sat down and instructed them. First in regard to the blessings of God which rest upon all such as possess the characteristics of true discipleship, which are these: poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness,

yet a proscribed, persecuted, suffering and reviled people for Jesus' sake. That the development of these characteristics is to distinguish the children of God as the blessed of the Lord throughout all time, there can be no doubt; so that in the absence of these there are no marks by which we are at liberty to recognize them from the unregenerated mass of mankind. The children of God are not blessed for possessing these discriminating qualities, for that would imply that they were chosen on account of some personal excellency in themselves, which God has said is not the case; but the possession of them is the evidence of their being blessed, the effect and consequence of their having been previously blessed. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 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. Thus we see that all spiritual blessings were prior to our personal holiness and exemption from blame, and our holiness and deliverance from guilt result from and are in accordance with his blessing upon and choice of us before the foundation of the world; and this choice and provision of grace and mercy had in view, as its ultimate object, and did secure to God's chosen people holiness and deliverance from blame. For the encouragement of this distinguished and blessed people, Christ has, in this chapter, given exceeding great and precious promises for their faith to live upon, viz.: 1st, the kingdom of heaven is theirs; 2d, they shall be comforted; 3d, they shall inherit the earth; 4th, they shall be filled with righteousness; 5th, they shall obtain mercy; 6th, they shall see God; 7th, they

shall be called the children of God; 8th, theirs is the kingdom of heaven; 9th, great is their reward in heaven. What a glorious catalogue of *shalls* are strung together like a chain of gold to comfort, adorn and sustain the people of God.

“Each of them powerful as that sound
That bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid pole
On which the wheels of nature roll.
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.”

Such a people, thus distinguished in the eternal choice of God, thus chosen of God unto holiness and ordained to eternal life, Jesus separated from the multitude, and sat down upon the mountain to teach as never man taught; and unto this people the exhortation placed at the head of this article is addressed. To no other people under heaven can this admonition apply. No other people are in possession of this light, nor can any other people let it shine, or aid in the diffusion of it. To this distinguished people Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Then follows the word of command: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. That the disciples to whom these words were immediately addressed were designed in a special manner to diffuse the light of divine truth, as ministers of the gospel, we shall not dispute; but we must at the same time contend that the gospel church, embracing all the subjects of his kingdom, is included with them, as the city set upon a hill; and each member of the gospel church is addressed, and in these words commanded to let his

light so shine. The testimony which the sons of God are called to bear, is something more than can be borne by a mere articulation of sounds, and in the spirit of the admonition before us, it is to be borne by a display of works, at the development of which God is to be glorified, and all that are in the house of God are to be illuminated.

It is of vital importance that we should understand by what description of works God is to be glorified; for we live in a day in which there is great confusion and error upon this subject. For this very reason we have called the attention of our Old School Baptist readers to the consideration of this important subject, and we wish to be very particular in defining the nature and description of the works by which our testimony of Jesus is to be uttered. In order that we may be the more distinctly understood, we will first state some kinds of work by which a correct, true and faithful testimony cannot be borne and consequently, by which the declarative glory of God cannot be advanced by us. And first, the works of the flesh have nothing to do with the diffusion of the light of Zion. By the works of the flesh, we understand all such works as the children of men, in an unregenerate state are capable of performing. All our powers, whether physical or mental, are by nature depraved; so that all the emanations from our fleshly powers are earthly, sensual and devilish. The thoughts and devices of the unrenewed heart are evil, and that continually. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Christ has informed us that it is as impossible for man in his unregenerate state to perform that which is acceptable to God, as it is for a corrupt fountain to send forth pure water. The fountain must first

be made pure, and then, but not until then, will the streams be pure. The tree must be first made good, and then its fruit will be good. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these:" (disguise, modify, or shape them as you may, still they are there). "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-24. Consequently the works of the flesh are not the works by which the children of the kingdom of Christ are to glorify God. The declarative glory of God cannot result from our works, as the apostle clearly testifies to Titus, iii. 4,5: "But after the kindness and love of God our Savior towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done," &c. All the works which we as creatures can do, whether good or bad, can never make the kindness or love of God appear, or in anywise develop the glory of our Father which is in heaven: therefore, such works as can be planned by our mental, and executed by our physical powers, are not the works intended in our text.

Second. The works of the law are not intended: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. And the works required in the text are from such as are under the blessing, and not under the curse. Works which are wrought by us, however unexceptionable, if wrought in obedience to the Sinai covenant can never show forth our redemption from the law, or our translation into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. So very far are we from glorifying our Father in heaven, when we attempt to liquidate the demands of the Sinai law, and by obedience to its precepts render ourselves acceptable unto God, we in-

sult the divine Majesty, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith Christ was sanctified, (or set apart as the law fulfiller) an unholy thing. A thing of itself insufficient for the perfect accomplishment of the complete salvation of his people. None who have faith in the perfect work of Christ will ever think it necessary for them to do his work over again, or to offer any amendment upon what Christ has done; but rather rest their whole soul on that finished salvation which Christ has effected by his perfect obedience to the requisitions of the law, and his suffering of the penalty due for the transgressions of his people.

If then, as we have proved by the testimony of the scriptures, the works required of the children of God, whereby they shall show forth the praise of him that has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, are not those which are of the flesh, nor even our works of obedience to the holy law of God, by what works, our readers may inquire shall let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven?

The light which the saints are to let shine is that which God lighted up in our souls, when he communicated to us the light of spiritual life; of vital union to Jesus, as our Head by which we are enabled to see the kingdom of God.—John iii. 3. And the only works by which that light can be made manifest to all that are in the house, are those works which God has wrought in us.—Isa. xxvi. 12. “For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—Phil. ii. 13. The works intended in our subject, are those wherein we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end thereof is everlasting life. They are those whereof we are born of God. They are defined by Paul as the fruits of the Spirit, viz: Love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c.—Gal. iii. 22,23. As also defined and enjoined by Peter, thus, “Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”—2 Peter i. 5-9. Those, therefore, who obey the injunction of Jesus, in our text, are those in whom these things, mentioned by Peter, abound and by the abounding of these things they let their light shine; for they, in whom these things do not abound are blind, cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins; while they who do those things, viz: the things which are to be added to their faith; do walk in the light—do let their light shine, and are not barren nor unfruitful, are not blind, they can see afar off, and do remember that they have been purged from their old sins.

No man can add to his faith, virtue, until he is in possession of faith; and faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, and without it we cannot please God. No man can let his light shine who has no light to shine. The breaking of the pitchers of Gideon’s three hundred men could have produced no light, if the lamps had not been in the pitchers. We were sometimes darkness, but God has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; has given us an inheritance among the saints in light;

constituted us children of the light; commanded us to walk in the light, and to let our light shine. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

Christians, Old School Baptists, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon you with healing in his wings? Do you know him as the Fountain and Fullness of light, life and blessedness? How is it with you at this time? Are you reflecting that light, by walking in the light as the children of the day? Are you adding to your faith, virtue, and to virtue all those excellencies made manifest by the refulgent radiance of that light? Or have you forgotten that you have been purged from your old sins? If this is your situation, may not the apostolic admonition be applicable in your case? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise."—Eph. v. 14, 15. Would you, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, let your light shine, remember that this can only be done by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called of God. We are not to sleep, as do others; there are foes for us to face, conflicts to be endured, enemies to be encountered, errors to be exposed, truth to be set forth, sheep and lambs to be fed, brethren to be exhorted, heresy to be resisted, persecution to be suffered, a cross to be borne, a warfare to be engaged in, a good fight to be fought, a course to be finished, and a crown to be received and worn in heaven. Each other's burdens are to be born, and we are to watch over each other, detect sin and reprove it, both in ourselves and in others; a world to be renounced and its vanities to be

laid aside. Besides all this, there are mourning Christians to be looked up and comforted, strayed sheep and lambs to be restored; lions, wolves, dragons and devils to be subdued; and God has given us a banner to be displayed because of the truth. Sons of Zion, purchase of the Redeemer's blood, can you discover nothing in all these considerations which requires you to "Let your light shine?"

But do we hear one say, "My hope is in the Lord, I do not expect to be saved by my works!" If your hope is good for anything it must be in the Lord; and if you look to works for salvation you will be awfully disappointed. But have you indeed a hope in God, and is it true that you rely on him and him alone for salvation? How will you make this known without faith and obedience? If your faith is of God, it will manifest itself by obedience. The very confidence which the Christian has in God as a whole Savior, swells his expanding heart with love and gratitude, and awakens every heaven-born sensibility of his soul with ardent desires to glorify him in his body and spirit which are Christ's.

Few, feeble, weak and persecuted as we may seem to be in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, we ask for no accession to our ranks, but such as love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are willing to suffer the loss of all things for his sake. A very orthodox theory of faith and loud professions of attachment to the doctrine which sustains and comforts our souls are not enough. That faith only is genuine which works by love and purifies the heart. It is true, the old order of Baptists have been in some cases imposed on by persons professing our faith, who have proved (but too painfully to us) spots in our feasts of charity—men who cannot let their light shine because they have none; all they deem necessary is to sign

with their hand our creed, and surname themselves Israel, and then make the livery of the Old School serve them as a cloak for their ungodly corruption of life and deportment.

Should we attempt a delineation of the characters to whom we allude, we might be thought quite too personal; we will leave our brethren and our churches to look around them, letting their own light shine at the same time, and drag into the light those who have crept in among them unawares. Those who can find hours to spend in the merry circle of the graceless and profane, and can find some trivial excuse for absenting themselves from the house of prayer, those who can find the time and the means to fill a whole community of Christians with tumult, bickerings, jealousies, contentions and disorder, but have no disposition to weep with those who weep and mourn with those who mourn; though they may boast of volumes of head-religion imported from neighboring countries or can give but poor evidence of a lighted lamp within their earthen pitcher. There may be preachers who can boast of preaching in the name of Jesus, and of casting out devils, and working miracles, and in their own estimation, giants among dwarfs, yet in the diffusion of the light they shall be detected, and should be put away. Those who are careless concerning what figure they make in the world, can join with the jovial and eat and drink with the drunken, cannot be at the same time shunning the appearance of evil, or letting the light of life, derived from Jesus, shine before men, that they may see their good works and glorify God.

Many of the dear saints of God may feel convicted of having been too remiss in regard to a circumpect walk and conversation. Alas!

How much we all have to lament of our shortcoming; but the apparent severity of our remarks in this article will not break their bones, they will not be offended, but they will acknowledge with the writer,

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

The stand which we as old School Baptists have taken, the sacrifices we have been called to make for the sake of purity in faith and practice, and above all, our love of holiness, our allegiance to Jesus as our King, our sense of the immaculate purity of his precious cause, will not allow us to walk in fellowship with those, under any name whatever, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. On the one hand, we should withhold our countenance from the heretics, and on the other, from all who hold the truth in unrighteousness; and so from every brother that walketh disorderly withdraw ourselves.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association wishes to announce their annual association meeting, which will be held on Friday the 7th, Saturday the 8th, and Sunday the 9th of October 1983, the Lord willing.

The meeting is to be at New Bay Church in Onslow County, Near Jacksonville, N. C. Directions: After arriving at Jacksonville, go to the intersection of highways 24 and 17 just south of town. From this point, go south on 17 for 5 miles (about 100 yds. past MacMillan Furniture Store) and turn right on local road 1107. Go 2 miles and you will be at the church.

All sovereign grace believers are invited to come and be with us.

Norma Jenkins, Clerk
Phone (919) 285-4319
Rt. 2, Wallace, N. C. 28466

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-eighth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1983 (Sept. 30, Oct. 1 & 2). Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road from Winnsboro about 4½ miles and follow signs.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us at this time.

If further information is needed, call 214-629-3561.

Hopewell Church

KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association, composed of the following churches: Bethlehem, Beulah, Flat Swamp, North Creek, Old Sparta, Singleton, Skewarky, Smithwick Creek and Tarbaro, will be held the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. It will be held at Flat Swamp Church located between Bethel and Robersonville on the Big Oaks road.

We invite visitors to come and worship with us.

Hassel Allen, Clerk
Flat Swamp Church

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Association of Alabama will meet with Little Hope Church, in Lamar County, on the third Sunday in October; Friday and Saturday before; October 14, 15, and 16, 1983; God willing.

The meeting house is ten miles west of Fayette on Alabama Highway 18.

Levert Howell
Association Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

In accordance with the request of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, a presbytery met June 26, 1983 at three o'clock p.m. for the examination of Brother Stafford Houston, to be, if found qualified, ordained to the office of deacon.

Those who constituted the presbytery were as follows: Elders O. K. Tench, C. B. Davis, J. R. Williams and Raymond Goad. Deacons Richard Stegall, Silas Payne, Homie Dalton, Walter Hamlett, Marvin Brumfield, Vance Duncan, Burnell Williams, Robert Shelton, Albert Hudson and Claude Johnson.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench, moderator and deacon Burnell Williams, clerk.

Elder C. B. Davis was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Marvin Brumfield was appointed as church spokesman. Elder J. R. Williams was chosen to deliver the charge and Elder Raymond Goad was chosen for the ordination prayer. After examination of the candidate by Elder C. B. Davis with the 3rd chapter of Timothy as reference, the church spokesman stated he was satisfied with the examination and answers of the candidate and the presbytery administered the laying on of hands at which time Elder Raymond Goad asked for divine guidance in prayer and Elder J. R. Williams delivered the charge.

The candidate was delivered back to the Church as an ordained deacon. The presbytery was concluded with the reading of the minutes of the work of the presbytery and a dismissal prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Deacon Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JUNE 1983

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Mrs. W. W. Lillard, N.C..... | \$ 2.00 |
| Maye Otts, AL..... | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Selma Strawbridge, N.C..... | 3.00 |
| G. R. Slate, VA..... | 5.00 |
| James A. Avera Sr., FL..... | 2.00 |
| A. Golden, AL..... | 1.00 |
| C. M. Straughn, N.C..... | 3.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. John Collie, N.C..... | 20.00 |
| H. Carroll Ellwanger, N.C..... | 7.00 |
| Mrs. W. C. Sutherland, VA..... | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Lucy W. Brown, AR..... | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Maye G. Bisette, N.C..... | 3.00 |
| W. C. Lake, FL..... | 12.00 |
| Mrs. Julia H. Ada, MD..... | 2.00 |
| Cecil Neal, IL..... | 7.00 |
| Lester H. Haymes, AL..... | 2.00 |
| Mrs. P. G. Divers, VA..... | 3.00 |
| Elder Kenneth Key, N.C..... | 7.00 |
| A. W. King, N. C..... | 7.00 |
| Elder C. B. Davis, N.C..... | 3.00 |
| Hartzel B. Nelson, WV..... | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX..... | 8.00 |
| Nolan Lanier, N.C..... | 7.00 |
| Doris Rivard, TX..... | 23.00 |
| Mrs. Jennie Denton, VA..... | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Margaret Smothers, N.C..... | 7.00 |

OBITUARIES

ROSEVELT "RUZIE" KENDRICK

Our hearts are saddened, the Lord has removed from our midst another lovely member. Brother Kendrick passed away January 27, 1983 in Memorial Hospital at the age of 80. He had been in declining health several years. Born March 26, 1902, at Callands, Va., son of the late James Kendrick and Alice Haskins Kendrick. He spent most of his life in Callands, before moving to Danville, fourteen years ago. He was a farmer and was married to Lizzie Gibson Kendrick.

Brother Kendrick joined Old Mt. Church April 14, 1973. He was a lovely and faithful member and attended regular as long as his health permitted. A firm believer of salvation by Grace and Grace alone and loved to talk on the scriptures.

He was very humble and bore his afflictions with patience. His lovely wife and family attended to his every wish and need as much as love, kind-

ness and loving hands could. We at Old Mt. miss him, but our loss is his gain.

Survivors are his wife, and two sons, Obie Kendrick of Danville, Va., Bobby Kendrick of Martinsville, Va.; three sister, Mary Blair, of the Roman Eagle Memorial Home, Effie Wells Callands and Alice Holland of Franklin Turn Pike. Four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The fuenral was held at Old Mt. Church Sunday, January 30, 1983, by his pastor Elder H. W. Wray, Elder Julian R. Williams and Mr. James Penticost. His body was laid to rest in the Kendrick family cemetery at Callands, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with Him.

Done in conference June 18, 1983.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

SISTER KATE DODD (1897 - 1983)

When my mind is carried back to the memory of our dear beloved Sister Kate Dodd, these words seem appropriate. She fought a good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith. Sister Dodd united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in 1916 and served as church clerk for eighteen years. Her special seat was always filled until recently when her health began to fail, then she came in a wheelchair or with a walker when able. It was never too hot, or cold, or wet for her to go to meetings, because it came first in her life. Her love for the church was shown more in deed rather than words. It was her contribution to the church that was one of the deciding factors in our building this new meeting house, and later the gift of an air conditioner for our comfort.

Sister Dodd was born July 1, 1897 and was called from this world of woe April 6, 1983. She was the natural mother of 14 children, and also mothered 5 stepsons, a son in-law, several grandchildren and a brother.

Surviving are 3 daughters, 5 sons, 2 sisters, 1 brother, 2 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, 13 step grandchildren and 21 step great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held April 8, 1983 at Malmaison Church by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench and assistant pastor Elder Julian Williams. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

By the grace of God "she kept the faith".

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

Peggy Wells

SISTER MAUD TRUITT LAWS

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Maud Truitt Laws, on Friday, April 22, 1983 after a brief illness. She was 103 years of age and had been an active member of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Maryland, since June of 1906 when Elder Silas Durand baptized both Sister Laws and her mother.

She is survived by one son, Victor Laws, Jr., of Salisbury, a member and deacon of her home church; one daughter, Margaret Engle, with whom she lived, as well as four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter and several nieces and nephews. Sister Laws' husband, Victor, Sr., also a member of the church, preceeded her in death in 1946.

All the churches of our area will sadly miss our beloved Sister in the Lord. She served her generation well and was greatly respected as a peacemaker among our people. To sit and talk with her was to engage in spiritual conversation for she had little else to spend her time on. It can be fully asserted that a few moments in her presence left one feeling that they had been in the presence of a favored child of God.

Sister Laws' funeral service was conducted in the Salisbury meeting house by her pastor, Elder James F. Poole, and was solemnly attended by a very large gathering. The hymn read was "How Tedious and Tasteless the Hour" by John Newton, and the text (her favorite) was Rom. 8:28. Burial followed at the Laws Family Cemetery near Wango, Wicomico County, Maryland.

We fully believe her hope was realized in death and that her spirit now rests with her dear Saviour.

Resolved, that one copy of this obituary be recorded in our church records, one be given to the family, and one be sent to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Done by request of the family and church.

Moderator, Elder James F. Poole

Clerk, Sister Phyllis Key

RACHEL RUTH BALLARD

Our beloved Sister Rachel Ruth Ballard passed from this life February 2, 1983 at McKenna Hospital, New Braunfels, Texas. She was born December 28, 1908 in West Virginia, the daughter of Elder Silas E. Angle and Edith Campbell Angle. Sister Ballard was married to Elder Homer Luther Ballard on January 4, 1937 in Connersville, Indiana. He preceded her in death on December 10, 1979. Sister Rachel leaves one daughter, Linda Lundquist, New Braunfels; two step-sons, John Dodge Ballard of San Antonio, Texas and Donald J. Ballard of Bryan, Texas; three brothers, Edward Angle, Elkview, West Virginia, Russel Angle, Canton, Ohio and Robert Angle of San Antonio, Texas. Three sisters, Mrs. Jessie Snavelly Loyd, Kentucky, Mrs. Gladys Cottle, San Marcos,

Texas, and Mrs. Mary Miller, San Antonio, Texas. Five grandsons and two granddaughters.

Sister Ballard joined Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1957 and was baptized by her husband, Elder H. L. Ballard. She was a faithful member of Mount Olive Church and attended regularly except for about one year when they lived in East Texas, and her membership was in Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church. God granted Sister Ballard a fighting spirit, especially the last three years as she had cancer during this time, she was very cheerful and a pleasure to be around.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder G. D. Shipman and W. M. Burkhalter. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Stockdale City Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Approved in conference

Elder G. D. Shipman, Moderator
Sister Iva Lee Sowter, Clerk

ALMA SCEARCE BURNETT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father by His love and mercy to call home one of our lovely members.

Sister Alma passed away in Memorial Hospital December 13, 1982. She was born in Pittsylvania, the daughter of the late Sidney S. Scearce and Mageline Shelton Scearce. She was married to Arthur G. "Jack" Burnett who died in 1977. Sister Alma joined Old Mt. Church February 25, 1939. Her church was her life. She was a faithful, devoted and lovely member, never missed a meeting unless she was too sick to get there. We loved her and she was loved by all that knew her. We feel our loss is great but her gain is much greater.

She leaves to mourn, one daughter, Deane B. Batterman, two sons, Arthur G. Burnett, Jr. of Danville, Virginia and Bobby P. Burnett of Dry Fork, Virginia. Also five brothers, Beauford, Leland and Harold Scearce, all of Danville, Wayne Scearce of Raleigh, N. C., and Melvin Scearce of Norfolk. Five sisters; Marie Farthin, Thelma Adkins and Linda Brewer, all of Danville, Virginia, Frances Bass of Ringold and Catherine Trent of Texas. Four Grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The funeral was held December 15, 1982, at Wrenn Yeatts Feneral Home by Elder H. W. Wray, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Wallis Smith. Her body was laid to rest by her husbands body in Highland Burial Park, beneath a beautiful mound flowers to await the call of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Done in church conference at Old Mt., June 18, 1983.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

GLENN HORTON STUART

"O Land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at Home?"

After a long illness that saw him in the hospital twice, the Lord in His infinite wisdom and loving mercy saw fit to answer this oft asked question on May 5, 1983. Mr. Stuart was born October 31, 1906 at Grassy Creek, N. C. but lived most of his life near West Chester, Pa. He was one of twelve children born to A. Mitchell and Minnie Blevins Stuart.

He was married to Beulah Anderson Stuart on August 17, 1932. To this union eight children were born. His widow and seven children survive. Three daughters, Mrs. Clara Chelland and Patricia Stuart of West Chester, Pa., Mrs. Helen Wright, Coatesville, Pa., Four sons, Glenn H. Stuart, Jr. and David of West Chester, Pa., William R. of Pottstown, Pa. and James A. of State College, Pa. Another daughter, Mrs. Ruth Wagoner passed away in 1975. Also surviving is one sister, Mrs. Ruby Ballou of West Jefferson, N. C. and three brothers, Gaither of Wilmington, Delaware, Worth and Earl, near Lansing, N. C.; eleven grand children and one great-grandchild.

Mr. Stuart, a retired farmer, was a firm believer in and a lover of the Old School Baptist doctrine. This love was manifested by his meek and quiet life among the brethren at Rock Springs, Pa. and Welch Tract, Del. Old School Baptist Churches for over thirty years.

Many are the lovely memories I have of visiting in the home of Mr. Stuart and his family, this being the first home I had stayed after being given a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. As Sister Stuart and I talked for hours it seemed Mr. Stuart would sit quietly by and listen, Seldom would he speak but when he did it was words fitly spoken and words of love and peace.

As I visited him in the hospital shortly before he passed away his desire was for peace and rest, yes the eternal peace for he told me he wanted to go home. Even as I believe he was made willing, yea, even longed to cross over Jordan into the promised land. His thoughts for those who remained were for peace as he spoke ever so sweetly of his desire for peace in the church.

His body was laid to rest, until the coming again of our Lord, in the cemetery at Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church. The service was conducted ever so sweetly and out of love for him by Elder D. B. Stokes.

We have a sweet hope that when our allotted time shall come that we may also enter into this land of rest for which we sigh. While that we remain in this time world may we be blessed with the same spirit of love as was this my spiritual brother is the prayer of

Barnabas J. Brammer

BOOK NOTICES

EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each

(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volume 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. *Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.*

Again, we thank you for your support.

Send orders to:
Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area – Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

“THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD“

We also have a limited number of Elder David Bartley’s excellent book “The Priesthood of the Son of God”. While supplies last, we will sell them for \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing. (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax.)

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book “Feast of Fat Things.”

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. “Everlasting Task for Arminians” by William Gadsby
3. “Fatalism” by H. M. Curry
4. “A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven” by H. M. Curry
5. “The Celestial Railroad” by Hawthorne
6. “A Riddle” by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

1 copy - \$5. plus \$1. for mailing
5 copies - \$20. plus \$3. for mailing
10 copies - \$30. plus \$4. for mailing
(Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hardbound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

Psalm 110:3

“Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.”

Psalm 73:1

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

Eph. 2:8

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., OCTOBER 1983

No. 10

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D.V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Williard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS 10/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| EDITORIAL..... | 194 |
| Written by Elder Joe L. Hamrick | |
| CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... | 199 |
| CORRESPONDENCE | 200 |
| VOICES OF THE PAST | 207 |
| Sermon by Elder E.J. Lambert | |
| MEETINGS | 211 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS | 212 |
| OBITUARIES | 212 |
| Guy Bernard Phillips | |
| Sister Lottie Minter Law | |
| Sister Annie Owen | |
| Lelia Blackwell | |
| BOOK NOTICES | 215 |

| |
|-----------|
| EDITORIAL |
|-----------|

“K now ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that ye should be married to another, even to him who is

raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Romans 7: 1-4.

Mr dear brethren:

I don't know why my mind seems to be led to write upon the above verses of scripture. They seem so deep, and I feel so weak and ignorant. I hope and trust the Holy Spirit will enable me to write in a way that would be to the honor of His precious name and of some comfort to you dear saints of God.

I believe the law of Moses is particularly in view in this text. It seems the apostle Paul is referring to both Jews and Gentiles, for in the beginning of his letter to the Romans, he says, “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints...”, and “Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was led hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.” Rom. 1:7,13.

Let me ask how many of you dear ones have been given to meditate upon the terrible wrath of God, due to sin, through his fiery law? May our minds be brought to view this awful sight. The same pillar of cloud that led the children of Israel in the wilderness led them to Mt. Sinai, where the Lord descended on the mount to deliver the law. So terrible were the effects that it shook the earth, causing Mt. Sinai to shake and quake from its foundation. All the terrors of fire, smoke, thunder, and lightening all together composed a scene that nothing on earth has ever equaled. God's fiery law displayed its fury, consuming all before it, scorching the ground and causing the mountain to smoke all over. All this was expressive of God's gloriour presence, and of his judgment upon all transgressors against his holy law. Stop and consider: we

are all guilty and deserve within ourselves to be included in this terrible wrath of God against our sins.

This terrible scene caused all the people in their camp to tremble, and Moses cried out, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Are we ready to stand before this great God in our own sins, in our own self-righteousness? We must stand either in our sins and self-righteousness or in Christ's righteousness. We will either hear Jesus himself saying unto us, "...come, ye blessed of my Father..." or "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire..." Can we imagine that the Lord Jesus Christ endured this terrible wrath of God on behalf of his people in the garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary? Did Christ endure all on our behalf? If Christ died under the law on our behalf, and if we be in union with him, we must also experience a dying under the law. Have you experienced this death?

The apostle Paul says, "...I speak to them that know the law..." I believe the apostle is speaking concerning the law of Moses. The first Adam plunged us all into the sea of death, in sins and trespasses. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..." Rom. 5:12.

Being in this fallen condition, how could man keep this law of Moses? With man it is impossible. The law could not give us eternal life; it was not given for this purpose; it could only curse us for disobeying. "...Man is not justified by the works of the law...for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Gal. 2:16 - 3:21.

I believe that all of God's creatures are under the law to him. The apostle Paul speaks through the Holy Spirit and says, "Tell me, ye that de-

sire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? Gal. 4:21. Surely all that desire to be under the law must be ignorant of its nature, for it demands what they cannot pay. The law requires perfect obedience to it, both in thought and action. And the very least offence brings with it this fearful sentence, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: 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." Gal. 3:10. Not one of us has ever continued in all things which are written in the law, and no one ever will. "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. 7:20. The law will always be to us the administrator of condemnation and the minister of death. It cannot justify. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..." Rom. 3:20.

The apostle Paul felt alive once without the law. He had not yet felt its killing effects. This may also have been the experience of many of us. He knew the letter of the law, but not its spirit. This comes only after being quickened to spiritual life by the Holy Spirit.

Christ, as a substitute and surety for his church (for the law was broken by the church), stood under its curse, and its curse was death. Christ was "...made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree..." Gal. 3:13. The original penalty was, "...In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. Not only did Jesus satisfy the moral law, he also endured that original penalty of death. He did all this to redeem his people. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law..." Gal. 4:4-5.

A child of God, while yet in a state

of being dead in trespasses and sins, may even confess to be religious, and may attempt (in many cases) to actually keep the law. He fancies it to be in his own power to obtain eternal life in this way, and feels he can merit it by his own works. This legal spirit reigns over all men in their natural state who feel to be religious as the apostle Paul did while he was persecuting the children of God.

In many instances, when the soul is first quickened, it may continue to seek deliverance by the works of the law. But the law can do nothing more than bring him to the knowledge of his exceeding sinfulness and the punishment which he deserves. He soon finds that the harder he tries to do good, the worse he becomes. While in this state, he feels as the song writer, "So by experience I do know there's nothing good that I can do; I cannot satisfy the law, nor hope nor comfort from it draw."

Will present obedience (if it could be rendered) atone for our past disobedience? Will God's just and holy law accept partial obedience for the whole? No, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

In the mind and purpose of God (as recorded in scripture), we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. But it is not made manifest until we are implanted or ingrafted into Christ by faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit. If we are among the elect of God whom he foreknew as his own, we shall also be conformed to the image of his son. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Rom. 8:29. To be conformed to his image begins here below, but is completed above. Christ was made to resemble us by partak-

ing of our nature (for he came in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin), and we were made to resemble him by partaking of his spirit. "And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." I Cor. 15:49.

"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." I Cor. 15:3,4. If we are to die with Christ, and without dying with him we shall not live with him, we must also die under God's just and holy law. As Christ died actually under the law, we must die inwardly and experimentally. We cannot set up a certain inflexible standard of experimentally dying under the law. The law must kill us by a sentence of condemnation in our souls. So as Christ died actually under the law, we must die inwardly and experimentally. Each of us must experience the sentence of death in our souls, and feel to be as effectually slain experimentally in our conscience as Christ died under the weight of the law upon the cross of Calvary.

What is it for us to die under the law? The law must curse us as it cursed him. It must bring guilt and condemnation to our hearts and souls. We die to our own self-righteousness, creature strength and wisdom. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." Isa. 40:6. All that we are or have, yea even our highest accomplishments, are but as the grass that fadeth and all our self-righteousness is soon nipped and brought to nothing. Unless we have a better righteousness than our own, we shall neither see nor enter into

the kingdom of heaven. All our fleshly holiness, righteousness, riches, honors, strength, beauty, wisdom, and knowledge must fade and perish. Why? Because the spirit of God "bloweth upon it." We soon are made to realize that all these things cannot recommend us to God. Does this not show the perishing nature of our fleshly works? We feel to be without God and without hope. We can only say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18.

Does not the conviction of our sins, our trouble of mind, our distress of soul and our guilt of conscience, bring us to see how wretched and poor we are? Can we not say with the apostle Paul, "O, wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. When we are brought here in our dying under the law, do we have anything to offer for our salvation? Do we not feel that all our works, merits, goodness and self righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of God? Some dear children of God may not be able to trace this death in themselves as clearly as others they have heard or read after. But have you come to the place where sin is a great grief and burden to your soul and conscience? There is a great difference in being a dead sinner (dead in trespasses and sins) and in being a live sinner, having been quickened to spiritual life. A dead sinner is a sinner but his sins are not so disturbing to him, they do not cause him to repent in sackcloth and ashes. But the live sinner, having been given spiritual life, is made to mourn, cry, and sigh over his sinful condition. Have your sins brought guilt and distress upon your conscience? Have you felt that unless you are saved by grace and grace alone, you have no hope of eternal life? If you have truly felt this in your heart and soul, it

must surely be because you have experienced dying under the law. The carnal flesh does not feel these things. It must come from the Holy Spirit and once he has begun a good work in you, he will continue it. Remember that the babe is as much a member of the family as the grown-up son, but not with the same understanding.

I believe that the apostle Paul's main purpose in verses 2 and 3 is to bring forth a principle showing that we are freed by the death of Christ from our obligation to the law as a covenant husband when a death occurs. Our first marriage was to the law, and the marriage is binding until the death of one of the parties. We believe from the standpoint of nature there are exceptions according to the scriptures in the case of adultery (Matt. 19:9) and desertion (I Cor. 7:15.) We only want to consider the spiritual meaning of these scriptures. If a person has not experienced an inward experimental death under the law, yet says I know I'm a child of God, I know I'm saved, and yet has not been separated from his first husband (the law) by an inward, experimental death, is this not spiritual adultery? Can a spiritual adulteress enter into the kingdom of God? "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers." I Cor. 6:9.

After dying under the law, we are then delivered from the curse and dominion of the law. "For he that is dead is freed from the law. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" Rom. 6:7,8. We may go for some length of time, before we can feel any deliverance from the curse of the law. Fear is so saturated in our hearts and consciences until we can't see or feel anything beyond our hopeless condi-

tion. We may go mourning in this condition for many days before any kind of deliverance comes to us. We must truly see and feel the ugliness in ourselves before we are given to see any beauty in Christ Jesus. The time will come when we will be given to serve in newness of life and spirit. "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 7:6.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom. 7:4.

Now my dear brethren, you that have experienced a dying under the law, are dead to the law, and are loosed from it, that you may be, and are lawfully married to Christ. By the grace of God, we may now bring forth fruits unto God. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. Not in order to obtain righteousness and eternal life by them, but because God worketh in us both to will and to do, to the glory and honor of Him.

"Therefore if any be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things become new." 2 Cor. 5:17. This brings about the greatest change imaginable, when we become new creatures in Christ. Do we not experience new affections and new desires? New delights and joys, new friends, new love for the precious truth as it is in Christ Jesus? All these spring forth from a new heart and spirit. We have been turned to go in the opposite direction, "Turn me, O Lord and I shall be turned." Jer. 31:18. We are turned from the love we once had of the

things of this old world. We are still sinners and we are daily conscious of our many sins in a sinful world. Though we die daily, yet behold we live. The more we die to nature, the more we live in grace. Nature must die that grace may live. The more we die to the world, the more we live for heaven. The nearer we are drawn to God, the less we feel of earthly things. The thorns and weeds must be plucked up that the fruit may come forth. Yes, my dear ones, when the Lord begins this new work in our hearts and souls, what a strange thing it seems to be, it is like waking up in a new world, or from a long sleep. Yea, what is this strange thing that is coming over me? What am I? Where am I? What must I do to be saved?

"Old things are passed away." Our old world is beginning to pass from us along with its delights and glory. We can no longer take part in the things we once delighted in. Our old religion (if we had one) even our old friends and old desires begin to fade in value to us. Why? Because "Old things are passed away" and "Behold, all things become new."

A self-righteous person who has never experienced what it is to die under the law, feels that God cannot be just without giving everyone a chance of being saved according to his own free will. The poor child of God who has experienced an inward death under the law wants to know how God can be just without damning him. Don't we all feel God would be just in damning us all? The law only acts as a schoolmaster to draw us to Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Gal. 3:24. The law in the hands of the Holy Spirit showed us the absolute need of a mediator, just as it showed us sin, accused and condemned us for it. It seem then that the design of

the law is to make us sick of self and fond of Christ, to condemn us that we may cherish the gift of free grace, to empty us that God may fill us, to strip us that God may clothe us. Yea, to kill us that Christ may make us alive. Christ's blood is precious in regards to the virtue and the effects of it. By his precious blood, a complete reconciliation has been wrought out; the church redeemed and the sins of God's elect have been expiated and fully done away with. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I John 1:7. It cleanseth perfectly and it cleanseth eternally. It is by the grace of believing that we experience its everlasting virtue and efficacy: and every true believer is as perfectly healed by the blood of

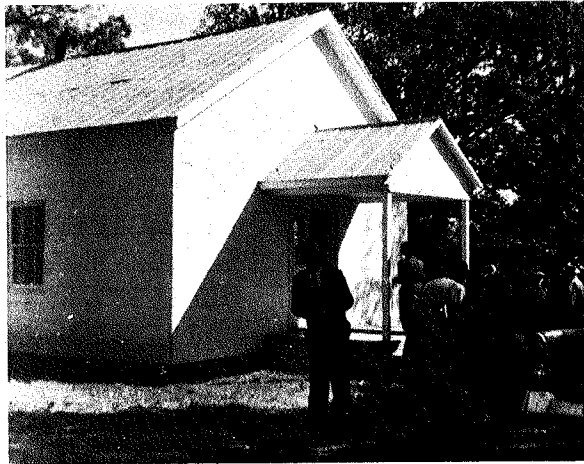
Christ as if he had never been wounded under the law. His blood is sufficient to cleanse us of all original sins that we brought with us when we were born into this world, and all sins we have committed in this world; yea, all the sins that are still engulfed in our hearts. The very feeling we have of sin should teach us how much we stand in need of that open fountain of Christ's most precious blood.

May we all be given by the grace of God to always continue "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." May God bless you all.

A poor sinner in hope of mercy.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Chapel Church was organized in 1823. The church building was built in 1769 by the British before this country was freed from England. The older people called it the King's house because it was here that they stored the tithes. It was purchased by the Primitive Baptist in 1825. They named the church Chapel because while under the English it was

called a Chapple. In the same year Chapel joined the Pigg River Association.

The church is located in Franklin County, Virginia about 10 miles west of Penhook on route 890.

Their meeting day is the third Sunday of each month and their present pastor is Elder O.K. Tench.

CORRESPONDENCE

2029-D Via Mariposa E.
Laguna Hills, Ca. 92653
August 3, 1983

Dear Elder Williams:

I sent the contribution because of a deep and true desire to help support the SIGNS. I wish I could put into words just what the paper means to me. I have been a subscriber for many years. I united with the Missionary Baptist Church at the age of twenty, (I will be eighty years old my next birthday). I was a zealous worker in the church, however some twenty years ago I became dissatisfied with the church, with myself, and everything. The things I had workd so hard for in the church, suddenly became a mockery. I could no longer carry on, so I stopped attending regularly. When I did go to service I always came home feeling so empty and bereft, and my sinful nature weighed heavily on me. About this time my natural father who lived in Arkansas, and who was a member of the Primitive Baptist sent me a years subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wondered why he did that. It was years later that I was made to know why. He knew nothing about my problems concerning the church or my forlone condition, and I might add here, that in all my adult life have heard a Primitive Baptist preacher in person only one time. That was once many years ago while visiting my folks in Arkansas my father had a meeting at his home one evening. At that time I was still an ardent church worker so I evidently didn't really hear the sermon. Any way, that first copy of the SIGNS was like Manna from Heaven to my sick and hungry soul and I have

renewed my subscription each time it came due since. I also purchased volumes three and four of the Beebe books, A FEAST OF FAT THINGS, and Elder Lambert's book TRIED IN THE FURNACE. I enjoy all of these good writings. Four or five years ago I picked up my Bible and opened it at the forty-first chapter of Isaiah and read: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them." And the eighteenth, "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water."

As I finished reading these verses tears of joy were streaming from my eyes, some how it seemed to tell me that the Dear God who doeth all things well had surely led my natural father to send me that gift subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There are no Primitive Baptist Churches any where near me, but I am blest with all these wonderful writings by writers led and inspired of God and I trust that this great paper and all these good writings can continue on and on.

Sorry if I have taken too much of your time but wanted to try to explain a little of how I feel about the good paper . . . SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Sincerely

A sinner saved by grace if at all,
Geneva Meara

Cramer, Ala.
July 8, 1905

EXPERIENCE

In the year 1868 I read for the first time the Bible. I was then seventeen years old. I did not commence reading with the intention of reading it

through, but just thought I would read some in it for the sake of improving my limited education, and just to see what it spoke of in the book of Genesis. I had not read far before I became deeply interested in the historical facts therein recorded; and the more I read the more I became interested in the wonderful things related in the Scriptures, and so continued to read till I had read to the last of Revelation. I thought the Bible was a wonderfully good book, and if any one had told me that I did not believe the doctrine set forth there I would have felt sure that they told a falsehood. I think I read it with as unprejudiced a mind as any natural man ever did, for at that time I knew but little about the differences existing among various denominations, and liked one as well as another. I thought that everybody believed the Bible, and did not think that any one had a different notion from me as to what it taught. I was astonished at the stubbornness and rebellion of national Israel, and horrified at the blindness and cruelty of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and thought that if I had been on earth in the days of the Savior, I would have followed and obeyed and adored him. When I read of the wicked, profane and unbelieving, it did not once occur to my mind that I was one of them, for I was considered a moral boy, and thought that the wickedness of the human family consisted in immorality.

Upon a certain occasion I went to hear my aged grandfather, a Primitive Baptist, preach. when he took his text I did not dream of his preaching anything contrary to what I believed, and hence was not prejudiced against him and as I had come to be very much interested in the Bible I was anxious to hear him. But he did not say much before he crossed my notions, and I soon became astonished, and, as it were, shocked at the doctrine

he advanced, and was really anxious for him to hush. I thought, Is it possible for a man as old as you are, and who has read the Bible as much as you have, not to know any better than that? I felt sure I could convince him directly that he was wrong; and accordingly we had not gone further than half a mile from the house after preaching before I attacked him about what he had preached, which only made him smile, and tell me that I was blind, and did not understand; but I did not believe a word of it, for I thought that I could see and understand just as well as he could.

The more I reflected upon the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, or "Hardshells," as they were called, the more I became embittered against it, because I fancied that I could clearly see it was contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and my desire to convince them of what I supposed to be the error of their way was so strong that whenever I chanced to meet them a controversy ensued. I now paid more attention to the preaching of other orders, and found the doctrine of the Missionary Baptists suited me precisely, and in defense of their doctrine and practice I labored with as much zeal, I reckon, as any nonprofessor ever did. When I looked around me and compared notes with the Primitive Baptists I discovered that nearly everybody was on my side of the controversy, and this fact was very encouraging to me at that time, and after carefully considering and investigating the matter I came to the conclusion that the doctrine contended for by the "Hardshells" was one of the most unreasonable, hateful and God-dishonoring systems of religion ever advocated in the world, and hence the Primitive Baptists were the most contemptible sect on earth. Can it be possible, thought I, that these few despised, illiterate people are right, and the great mass of the

people wrong? No indeed; and I would dismiss such an idea as utterly incompatible with common sense. I thought they were the most self-righteous, conceited, stubborn and bigoted people on earth, because they set up their opinion and judgement against the majority of the intelligent and educated people of the world, together with the great D.D.'s, and to do that was, in my judgement, the height of ignorance, folly and presumption. When I argued with them it was not with the view of investigating the matter in order to arrive at the truth, for I felt sure that I understood that, but my sole object was to convince them of what I considered their error. Some of my near and dear relatives were Primitive Baptists, but that had no tendency to abate my enmity against them, and I said that if the world believed their doctrine, I, for one, would not, as I did not want to believe it, and was fully determined that I would not believe it.

In the fall of 1870, that beloved minister and servant of the Lord, Elder J. T. Allen, had an appointment at my old settlement in the Missionary meeting-house, and I went to hear him. On Saturday night he preached at my father's, and after he dismissed the people I attacked him before he took his seat, and soon got the Bible and referred to the law to prove that eternal salvation was conditional. He admitted the conditionality of the law, but showed that there was no eternal life in it, and proceeded to show the distinction between the law and the gospel so clearly that I could not gainsay his argument. For the first time in my life I saw that I was mistaken in that one important point, and I humbly hope that it pleased God to open my heart that I might understand some of the things spoken by him. My Arminian platform was shaken from center to circumference. Still however, I had many props upon

which I relied with great confidence, but in process of time they fell one by one, till my last prop was gone, and the whole concern, with all its props and stays and braces, fell to rise no more. In sentiment I was turned right about.

On a certain Sunday night, directly after gone to bed, my repose was disturbed by a sudden and peculiarly dangerous sensation about my heart, which caused me to turn almost instantly in bed, and after lying there awhile it appeared to me that my breath was getting shorter and shorter, and that if I lay there I would die; I got up and went out into the yard, and looking about wondered what was the matter. I went back to bed, and after a time dropped off to sleep. During the week I felt about as usual, except that my feelings were somewhat disturbed on account of what had occurred on Sunday night. On the next Sunday night the same awfully dangerous and indescribable sensation returned. I concluded it was merely imagination, and decided that I would lie still and try to wear it off, but I could not; on the contrary, it seemed to wear on, and I felt that I would die if I lay there, and so I got up, and when I touched the floor I was in a tremble, and could hardly stand. I walked out into the yard and tried to examine myself, and in doing so I felt to be the most wretched sinner on earth, knowing full well that I was not suffering bodily pain, and I felt as I never had before, that the awful hour of death had come and that there was no remedy on earth for me. I felt that I was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. No pen can describe the agony of my soul that night, my distress was so great that I could not conceal it. I kindled a light, and walked the floor in extreme anguish, and in answer to

the inquiries of my friends I told them that I could not tell what was the matter with me. I did not tell them that I thought I was going to die, as I did not wish to alarm them. Very little did I sleep that night, and the next day was a dark one to me, and I felt as though it would be my last on earth, but to my surprise I continued to live from day to day, though in much distress of mind. If I could have believed that this was conviction for sin it would have afforded me much comfort, but this I could not believe, yet hoped against hope that it was. In this state I remained several months, In the spring of 1873 there came up a shower of rain, and I lay across a little bed and was meditating upon my desolate, forlorn and hopeless condition when the following Scriptures occurred to my mind: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." It then occurred to me that I had already passed from death unto life, and hope sprang up and I felt relieved. I went to the door and looked around, and with a feeling calm and serene I felt to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior. Still I was not satisfied, for I greatly desired a greater manifestation of love, and a stronger evidence of my acceptance with God. The light afforded was so dim that I was afraid to claim it as a reason of my hope, and I was fully determined that I would never offer myself to the church without a brighter and more glorious manifestation of God's love and mercy. I desired to feel sure beyond a doubt that the Lord had pardoned my sins, and to have his love and mercy so

clearly revealed to me that I would be perfectly satisfied, and others convinced that I had been born again. I saw, after this, that the Primitive Baptists had confidence in me as a christian, which made me feel sad indeed, for I thought, if they knew my wretched condition, and how little my hope was, they would not have any confidence in me. In this way I continued for more than two years, desiring all along, however, to live with the despised few, but my sense of unworthiness kept me from attempting such a thing. In the fall of 1874 my desire to go to the church was so strong that I as not satisfied anywhere, and before the regular meeting at Mt. Nebo, Bibb Co., in November, I became really anxious to go to the church and tell them the reason of my little hope, and when the time arrived, with my wife and some others I did go forward, and we were received into the fellowship of the church, and with some of the others I was baptized on Sunday by Elder J. T. Allen. My doubts and fears continue with me to this day, often causing me to exclaim in the language of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yours in hope of eternal life in and through the meritorious sufferings of the Son of God,

G. W. Stewart

EXPERIENCE

Although many times I have been requested to write my experience in full, yet it is with a feeling of great hesitancy that I am now making the attempt, for I have so many weaknesses and imperfections; but since it has been said to me, This is not your own, I feel that I have no right to refuse to try to tell my feelings

when (as I hope) God saw fit to manifest me as a child of his, and if a child, then an heir, and a joint heir with Christ Jesus our Lord.

I had the usual run of happy, care free childhood, surrounded by my friends and loved ones, although from my eighth year (when I lost my eldest brother) death was a mystery to me. I was in the habit of attending the meetings of various denominations of religion and hearing them speak of the line of accountability; I set about trying to figure out whether I had passed it or not, but could never decide it to my satisfaction. Even then I think religion was sacred to me; and from that time on the thought of death troubled me. But during my sixteenth year my troubles suddenly became much worse. The places of amusement I had been in the habit of attending with my brothers and young friends, all at once grew distasteful to me, and though I still continued to attend them, I took no pleasure in them, and felt convinced I would have enjoyed myself better had I remained at home. My young companions noticed this, and chided me for a lack of interest in their sports, and though I tried very hard to take part in their amusements, the more I attended them the less interesting they became. From this time until my twentieth year things gradually grew worse, until at last I had reached the very depths; I saw myself as I was, a poor, lost, ruined sinner, without God and without hope in the world. I was powerless to help myself, and knew there was not one hope for me; I knew my doom, and knew, too, that it was merited. Often I wished for death, yet at the same time when I began to think of eternity my fears cannot be described. It seemed that I could do nothing but beg for mercy, mercy for a wretch that did not deserve it, and my constant prayer was, Lord, have mercy on me.

So things went on for several months; then our Saturday meeting was held in August, 1902. There was a visiting minister with us, and he had asked to hear some of the experiences related, and my dear mother in relating hers, told of her great sinfulness, her great trials. O how sweetly she told of the pardoning grace of her Savior, his loving mercy to her and of the little hope that she might be an heir of the home above. As she was speaking the great burden rolled away from my tired heart, a voice was speaking directly to me saying, "Lo, I am with you always," and I was left rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." O the perfect peace of that moment! O that sweet, sweet rest! I was like a tired child that had traveled a long way and this was my first sweet rest. Surely I can never forget the perfect harmony in heart and soul when

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above

All sin and temptation and pain."

There was such a beautiful light surrounding everybody and everything, and O it seemed I was so near the dear Father, even in his arms. All nature was changed, and all faces wore a different expression. It seemed there was never so goodly a company as had gathered at church that day; the mark was in all their foreheads, and God's love was so sweetly surrounding them, and when they sang the following, my joy was indescribable:

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

That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the

Lamb:

When my heart first believed,

O what joy I received,

What a heaven in Jesus' name."

I wished very much to be with such a lovely band of his followers, but hesitated until too late. Can I ever describe that beautiful drive homeward? I had gone to church with a storm raging in my heart and soul, and now all was changed, and I felt so sweetly loved and protected by one who was able to pilot me through all future storms, by one who had so lovingly said, "Lo, I am with you always."

"And I could not believe

That I ever should grieve,

That I ever should suffer again."

Ah yes, it seemed that I would evermore rest in the sweet security of his everlasting arms, that I should always be soothed and comforted by those tender words, "Lo, I am with you always." Ah, blessed promise to cheer me through all the dark days of the future, for my gloom partially returned after a time, but never quite so deep and overwhelming as at first. Sometimes there was sunshine, sometimes shadow, but round about all (I hope) the strength of his everlasting arms. I told no one of my feelings then, and after awhile I desired to conceal them. This continued for about a year, then I became sick, and all my friends thought I must surely die. I became better, however, and was constantly worried by such Scriptures as these: "He that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." "Let your light so shine," &c. My mind was continually worried, for I felt I had left a duty unperformed, yet when I thought of asking for a home among God's dear people, the thought of my own imperfections seemed to make this an impossibility, and so I determined to keep the whole thing to myself; but

one day when I lay so sick, the physician who was attending me, and who, by the way, is a brother in Christ, came in, and during my unconscious moments heard me express some of my feelings (which I had meant to conceal). As soon as I recovered consciousness he told me of what I had been talking, asked me several questions which I could not deny, and which seemed to please him. Later we had conversations on the same subject, and he quoted to me the same Scriptures which had been puzzling me, and said to me, Ask for a home among the brethren. I replied that they would not think of admitting me, but his only answer was, Ask and see.

One night in my sick room, after I had suffered terribly and was completely exhausted, I had fallen into a troubled sleep, when O such a bright, glorious light illumined my room, and there was a sweet presence near saying, "Peace be still," and O the beautiful calm which followed the storm which had been raging in my soul but a moment before; I was left thankful and happy for many days. So many of these bright seasons have come to my sick room and though to some they may have no meaning, yet to me they were a great comfort and consolation, for it was then God seemed so near and hope so bright.

About a month after I had this dream they held meeting at the home of my childhood. Besides the church members there were my brothers, my husband and my sweet little four months old girl present. We listened to such a sweet discourse by D.B. Nowels, (now an Elder) followed by Elder W. C. Perdue, from Luke viii. 43-48. O how clearly brother Nowels spoke of our God as being a refuge, a God of last resort; how after we had used every available means of our own to save ourselves, we would turn as did the woman, to one who is

able to heal, comfort and soothe our every heart-ache; to one who would not turn us empty away, but would say, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." O what a comforting sermon, and it seemed appropriate. They had sung that ol, old song, "Amazing grace!" and now selected the song of which I had such sweet memories: "O how happy are they;" and though I hesitated until they were almost ready to close, I felt that I could not allow them to go away without first asking for a home among them. I would not have been surprised had they refused me then and there, but instead they asked me to relate the Lord's dealings with me. It is one of my characteristics to say the least when I feel the most, but in all my like I had never been as such a loss for words. I told such a little in such a stammering way I did not see how they could understand me, but I was received. how unworthy I felt of this blessing, this place among his children, and O how incomparably unworthy I felt of a home with God himself. I often feel that I have deceived all these good people, and feel tempted to tell them so, yet when a suitable opportunity presents itself I do not, and although I have not been baptized as yet, (my health remaining poor) I hope soon to be buried with him in baptism. My experience and my sufferings bring to mind that sorrowful scene in the garden when he cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! (yet with sweet submission) nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." and that cruel death of the cross when he cried, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" O how ashamed I grow of my complaints and murmurings when I think of his great agony. O glorious, O perfect work of redemption, when he set his people free from this terrible curse of sin. O how God must have

loved the poor, lost sinners to send his only begotten Son to suffer and die that we might live. after the toil and turmoil of this tempestuous life, which is painful at present, we shall mount to the heavens above to see our blessed Redeemer and be like him, where we are arrayed in spotless purity and made to sit down in the throne and forever sing praises to our blessed Redeemer. O what a beautiful thought it is, this life beyond the grave, where there is "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;" for God shall be with us and be our God. O when the summons comes to each of us may we be prepared to say,

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary load,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on
high,
To be at home with God."

Dessie S. Perdue

FROM THE EDITORS

We want to thank those who have responded to our request for new subscribers. The following is a list of those who have sent in one or more new subscriptions:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Harvey Vick | TN. |
| Mr. & Mrs. W. Fred Cobb..... | NC |
| Mrs. Lelah R. Hill | CA |
| Mrs. William Griffith | NY |
| Elder Joe Hamrick | TX |
| Mr. & Mrs. Phil Pittman..... | TX |
| Mrs. Kenneth Mathis | TN |
| Mrs. Florence A. Gibson..... | GA |
| Miss Cathrine Houchins | VA |
| Mrs. Mabel M. Ellis | VA |
| Mrs. Novaline S. Stewart..... | NC |
| Mrs. Leola Meador | NC |
| Mrs. Wade M. Poff | VA |
| Paul Wright | VA |
| Victor Laws | MD |
| Wallace E. Harvey | WV |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Ralph Hocutt..... | AL |
| Mrs. Estelle Hand..... | AL |
| Mrs. Oza Hill..... | TX |
| J.E. Mosley..... | AL |
| Mrs. J.D. Marge..... | LA |
| Elder Bennie Clifton..... | VA |
| Mrs. Mary H. Warren..... | MD |
| Mrs. Lloyd A. Delp..... | VA |
| Mrs. Julia H. Hales..... | NC |
| Mrs. O.J. Swan..... | LA |
| Mrs. Nellie Collie..... | NC |
| M.C. Crawford..... | VA |
| Mrs. Willie Davis..... | NC |
| Mrs. Alice Gibson..... | VA |
| Mrs. O.E. Bishop..... | AR |
| Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Patterson..... | LA |
| Miss Clarisse Brooks..... | VA |
| Mr. & Mrs. Reubin French..... | NC |
| Robert Cox..... | NC |
| Mrs. Flora Stutts..... | TX |
| Mrs. Hazel H. Bryant..... | VA |
| Miss Lora Smith..... | NC |
| Clarence Barton..... | VA |
| Mrs. L.V. Robertson..... | AR |
| Mrs. Lillian Wood..... | NC |
| Mrs. Maud Laws..... | MD |
| Mrs. Ruth Lucht..... | MD |
| Hobort Stallard..... | KS. |
| Elder Eugene Taylor..... | FL |
| Mrs. Ruth Eastman..... | FL |
| A.D. Blevins..... | TX |
| Mrs. Maude Truitt..... | MD |
| Elder W.D. Griffin..... | AL |
| Mrs. Vera N. Potter..... | FL |
| Dr. Tom Jackson..... | GA |
| Mrs. Rachel Green..... | WV |
| Chester Dirkes..... | NJ |
| Rufus Roberson..... | LA |
| Mrs. J.R. Blackwell..... | NC |
| Harold T. Clayton..... | NC |
| Mrs. C.A. Risinger..... | LA |
| Mrs. R.L. Mullins..... | AL |
| Mrs. Ruth H. Jones..... | VA |
| Mrs. Gracie Skinner..... | KY |
| Mrs. Ruth Pittman..... | NC |
| Erie Thurston..... | LA |
| Mr. & Mrs. Ira Bell..... | VA |
| Mrs. Ruby Gilbert..... | WA |
| Julian Nolan..... | SC |
| Elder R.H. Pennington..... | WV |
| John Crowley..... | GA |
| Mrs. Cora McDuff..... | TX |
| Elder G.D. Shipman..... | TX |
| G.R. Slate..... | VA |
| Mrs. David M. Spangler..... | VA |

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Mrs. Joyce Farley..... | TX |
| Elder K. Key..... | NC |
| Mrs. Charles Hayes..... | AL |

There are many young people among us, new members and friends who would be glad to receive the SIGNS if they knew about it. We are asking that each of you show your copy to some one and tell them about it. If each subscriber would get one new subscription or more we could easily double our subscription list. Will you do this for us? We will work hard on this end to make each copy more enjoyable than the last.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been published for over one hundred and fifty one years. The Lord has wonderfully blest it and it humbles us to be able to serve for so great a cause.

The Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST
 "he being dead yet speaketh"

"let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." (Songs 1:2)

The first words of the Song of Songs which was Solomon's as he penned them has this day become MY song of songs. Never before have I been carried into the sweet ecstasy of His wondrous love as I experience this moment. I can now more fully understand why such highly allegorical and symbolic language is used in this dialogue between Christ and His bride, the church. Nothing but an ardent, passionate, and tender love affair could well describe the intimate relationship of the Lover and the beloved. No wonder Solomon said, "Thy love is better than wine." No wonder Solomon named it THE SONG OF SONGS. I term the experience THE

LOVE OF LOVES.

Ben Jonson said, "Leave but a kiss in the cup, and I'll not look for wine." Wine only stimulates the power within and causes stored energy to be used up which leaves the body weaker: whereas, the kiss of the King of Kings graces with energy poured forth, which gives new strength that lasts. Wine exhilarates for but a moment then leaves you despondent; yet, His kisses give enduring joy which makes glad the heart and you treasure their memory. Surely Solomon's cup had already been filled with the wine of the kingdom poured forth by the kisses of His mouth, in order to write of such passionate and tender love as is so wonderfully stated in the Song of Songs. His heart was overflowing with love as a result of his mind being kissed with the inspiration to pen poetical allegorical truths. Once you have been kissed with the kiss of Christ's love, you will ever realize that His kisses are better than wine. His kisses are like drops of honey; they linger long and leave a sweetness that does not soon disappear. His kisses of gifts and grace to poor trembling sinners are His words of love in action.

A kiss is an expression and the symbol of affection. It is the language of love that knows no barriers. It is the action of affection which is fully understood and needs no interpreter to make it plain to all people speaking the many different natural languages. Even brute beasts understand the kiss. The little baby in its mother's arms understands and responds to its mother's tender kisses. Even though birds have long beaks, they kiss each more than any other creatures. A kiss shows regard, respect, reverence, tenderness, and intimate relationship.

The kiss has been desired and practiced throughout all ages. We

read in Genesis 27:26-27 "And his father, Isaac, said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near and kissed him. . . ." A real kiss has always resulted in the kiss being responded to by a kiss from the one who has been kissed. When Jacob met Rachel at the well of Haran who came with her father's sheep: "Jacob *kissed* Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." (Gen. 29:11) Not long ago I heard a person exclaim after being greeted by a kiss from one whom she esteemed so highly; "He *kissed* me!" Her voice was trembling with surprise, high regard, and humility. This must have been the case of Rachel. Jacob surely felt at ease and experienced contentment and peace of mind when Laban, ". . . Ran to meet him, and embraced him, and *kissed* him, and brought him to his house." (Gen. 29:13) When Joseph revealed himself to the brethren who had treated him so terribly, nothing but a *kiss* could seal complete reconciliation in the minds of these brethren and remove the guilty feeling so that they could freely walk with Joseph. Gen. 45:15 "Moreover he *kissed* all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him." A kiss was used in the anointing of Saul by Samuel: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and *kissed* him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance." (1st Samuel 10:1)

A kiss sealed the oath knitting Jonathan and David together during the time Saul's envy was so enraged against David. We read in 1 Samuel 20:41-2, ". . . David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they *kissed* one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace,

forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord saying, The Lord be between thee and me, and between my seed and thy seed forever." What a contrast between Jonathan's love for David and Saul's envy. Elisha wanted only to kiss his father and mother before following Elijah.

Luke gives an account of the sinful woman who kissed the feet of Jesus and how the Lord had compassion upon her. We want you to note that she *was* a sinner: surely, now she is not. She would not be showering kisses on His feet if her kisses had been for lustful purposes as before. Her presence in the same house with the Saviour proved that it was for a different purpose that her kisses were given. Heretofore she had used her lips upon the lips of other men to cause them to yield to her lustful passion: but now, she uses these same lips lavishly upon the feet of this man, Jesus, to prove her adoration and reverence. The same eyes that had been flames of fire coming from lust is now become a fountain of tears to such degree that her tears provide sufficient water to wash the feet of Jesus. The same hair that she had before used as nets to catch foolish lovers, is now being used as a towel for her Saviour's feet. Even though she has been changed she still carries the scars. She is yet called and considered to be a sinner. The same costly ointment she used to put upon herself to attract men is now used to put upon the Saviour's feet. We do not find on record where this woman ever uttered a word, yet her actions spoke louder than a thousand tongues.

The Pharisee who used his tongue to invite Jesus into his house as a guest brought condemnation to himself from Jesus because he spoke words of condemnation against the woman. Her eyes, hands, hair, and

bowed body together with her lips showed greater affection than the Pharisee did with words. Jesus said: "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet." (Luke 7:45) Jesus showed that where there was much forgiven there is much love. Jesus cared more for a true humiliation of sin than He did for a false pretense of respect and innocence. Smiles must have replaced the look of guilt upon the woman when Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:50) These words were kisses from the Saviour's mouth. They were much sweeter and more to be desired than the natural wines she had before drunk from the cups of her former lustful lovers. She had stood behind Him; now, He gives her the kiss of peace. No doubt she feels that she must do something for the One Who has done so much for her! Now, I pray, Lord, empower me to do something for Thee. Satisfy my conscience. I know that my glorious Head is such magnificent goodness that my goodness could never reach Thee. I could never help the Head, Lord, enable me to do as the woman. Let me wash Thy feet, Thy poor members here below. Empower me to know the sweetness of kissing Thee by administering to poor trembling penitent sinners here below. Let us bestow our tears of sympathy, upon the troubled. Let us do good with our hands to wayfaring pilgrims in need. Let us greet each other with the holy kiss of charity in doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. Lord, I know that without Thy kiss of power I could never do that which is pleasing to Thee. I know that I could never lift my bowed head without Thy kiss of mercy. I could never stand without Thy kiss of faith. I can never run the race without Thy kiss of patience. I could never preach,

sing, nor serve Thee without Thy kiss of gifts.

Surely the precious words of Jesus are the kisses of His mouth. It seems that Psalms 45 is a condensed version of the Song of Songs which is Solomons. We read in Psalms 56:2: "Thou are fairer than the children of men: *grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever.*" If Jesus speaks to you, all other men's words go into the background. Jesus only can speak words of life. No other character has the authority or power to give life to words. His disciples recognized it because they said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is no one to go to but to Jesus for living words. I have books by many authors, and if it were necessary for me to dispose of all books but one; I would keep the Bible. There are many person's words quoted in the Bible; if it were necessary for me to dispose of all person's words but one man: I would keep the words of Jesus. The reason I prefer the red-letter edition of the Bible is because Jesus' words are more easily found.

Have His words *kissed* you? Have they become more precious than the words of others? If they have, you are ready to listen to HIM. You will not subscribe wholeheartedly to the words of any other man. You are ready and anxious to search for the instructions Jesus gave rather than to follow the opinions of any other man as your rule of conduct. If I had to discard all sections of the Bible with exception of one, I would select the section of the Gospel as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; because they give the actual words of Jesus. I want to become more acquainted with His words. I want to base my conduct and doctrine upon what Jesus actually taught. I do not care to become involved over words and expressions that have caused

strife and divisions among us, which have originated from some preacher or great gift, whose contentions have become an offense to some little lambs. Men often make expressions that are not easy to be understood. Jesus used very simple language in His instructions. Jesus' words of doctrine and practice are so simple that even a child born of the Spirit can understand.

Have you ever picked up the Bible and read only the words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? May the Lord bless you to do it, realizing that each word becomes a kiss to His own people, yet a stumbling block and foolishness to those who know Him not. His words of warning, encouragement, promises, providences, and rule of conduct; all are kisses of grace to God's little children. We cannot do more than just hint at the glory of Christ's kisses in this article.

The first quotation that Matthew gives of Jesus is found in Matthew 3:15: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." This statement was made to John by Jesus to convince him that it was necessary for Jesus to be baptized by John in the river, Jordan. What a statement!! "IT BECOMETH US TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS." Even though Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost, John baptized with water only; yet, Jesus respected John by submitting to his baptism and proved thereby that He was not initiating something entirely new, separate, and apart from that which already existed. Instead of beginning a new sect Jesus was numbered with the many whom John had already baptized. Baptism was the ceremony, oath, or vow, or THE answer to a good conscience toward God, which brought even Jesus in unity with all whom John had baptized. What a *kiss* Jesus received from His

Father in the climax of Jesus' baptism in water!! The heavens kissed the act of Jesus as they were opened to Him. The Holy Spirit kissed this noble act by descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. What a kiss came from the mouth of the Father as He audibly said, "*This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*" (Matthew 3:16-17) What a sacrament is baptism! If Jesus practiced it as well as commanded it, do you not think that true believers in Jesus Christ will gladly be baptized and be numbered with those followers of Christ??

As you are baptized in water in partaking of this sacrament, —you, also, shall be kissed by Him with the kisses of approval, peace of mind, joy, and happiness for having participated in this righteous act. When you have been baptized upon profession of your faith in Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, the life, and light; you can look to Him with full confidence that He is not only your righteousness but also your sanctification.

The second quotation of Jesus that Matthew records is: "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4) These words were spoken while He was being tempted of the devil. This statement proves that there are no idle or un-important words spoken by Him. Each and every one of His words swells in magnitude and lingers long and becomes as many kisses from the mouth of Him who spoke them. These first words spoken to the tempter gave the written Word as authoritative, and sufficient proof to stop the mouth of the gainsayer. You must be kissed with the importance of the Bible in order to be given to use it as your only rule of faith and practice. Those who lived two thousand years ago had only the word of the prophets: What greater circumstance now exists than then?

We have the words of the only begotten Son of God as He spake them here upon earth: — greater still, we have them as kisses that reach the soul when applied there by the Holy Spirit.

We had rather stop this article short and point you to the words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels than to weary you with further meditations here. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for Thy love is better than wine." May His kisses reach your inner-most soul and give spiritual strength sufficient for the day, is our sincere prayer.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

BUTTAHATCHIE ASSOCIATION

The Buttahatchie Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Poplar Springs Church the 7th, 8th, and 9th of October 1983. The church is located off the Vernon-Millport Road.

We invite all lovers of the Old School Baptist to visit with us. For further information or directions, call or write Charles P. Hayes, 9 Vestavia Hills, North-port, Alabama 35476. Phone (205) 339-7382.

Charles P. Hayes

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Monticello Church on the fifth Sunday in October.

All churches of the West Country Line Union will host this meeting.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us.

Elder D.V. Spangler

| |
|---------------|
| CONTRIBUTIONS |
|---------------|

Remaining List Of Contributions
For March

| | |
|---|--------|
| Mrs. Betty H. Lovitte, NC \$ | 7.00 |
| C.C. Borron, LA | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Oza Hill, TX | 15.00 |
| J.E. Mosley, AL | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Annabeth Arne, SD..... | 25.00 |
| Elder Bennie N. Clifton, VA.... | 6.00 |
| Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA..... | 50.00 |
| Mrs. Fannie Sue Lucas, VA... | 10.00 |
| Mrs. James E. Fortner, TX ... | 17.00 |
| Mrs. Dorothy Barnes, TX..... | 7.00 |
| G.H. Hundley, VA | 3.00 |
| Irving Holley, VA..... | 10.00 |
| Mrs. Loyd A. Delp, VA..... | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Rosa R. Patterson, LA... | 1.00 |
| Jack E. Anderson, GA | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Elsie C. Turner, VA | 7.00 |
| Mrs. L.J. Swan, LA..... | 3.00 |
| C.W. Strader, NC..... | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Edna Simpson, AR | 20.00 |
| Mrs. E. J. Sutherland, VA | 2.00 |
| W.J. Lambeth, NC..... | 7.00 |
| George Townley In Memory of Gentry Townley, TN | 5.00 |
| Mary Townley In Memory of Annie Townley, KY | 5.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. Elvin T. Sutphin, MD... | 2.00 |
| E.W. Holland, VA..... | 2.00 |
| Charles B. Osborne, PA | 3.00 |
| Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR | 1.00 |
| Harry W. Ward, MD..... | 3.00 |
| Harold Daniels, Jr., NC | 7.00 |
| Levie D. Goad, VA..... | 15.00 |
| Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA..... | 19.00 |
| Mrs. Lewis Agee, VA | 20.00 |
| Mrs. Willie Davis, NC | 11.00 |
| A Friend | 500.00 |
| Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA... | 24.00 |
| Elder D.R. Cabbage, TN..... | 3.00 |
| Felix Mulind, TX | 2.00 |
| Dr. G.R. Harrell, TX..... | 25.00 |
| Elder H.L. Gardner, AR | 20.00 |
| Mrs. Lora B. Tullas, AR | 7.00 |
| H.R. Toney, MS | 1.00 |
| N.L. Raulenson, FL..... | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Clarisse Brooks, NC..... | 28.00 |
| Miss Dorothy J. Brooks, NC ... | 15.00 |
| Mrs. Eva P. Bradner, VA | 7.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Mrs. Sara W. Slack, DE | 100.00 |
| Mrs. Welma K. Sasser, AL.... | 2.00 |
| Tommy Clayton, NC | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA | 2.00 |
| A.E. Moran, VA | 50.00 |
| Mrs. W. J. Meara, CA | 50.00 |
| Harry F. Davis, NC..... | 20.00 |

*In the morning sow thy seed, and in the
evening withhold not thy hand.*

Ecclesiastes 11:6

| |
|------------|
| OBITUARIES |
|------------|

GUY BERNARD PHILLIPS

At the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church in conference fourth Saturday in June, 1983, I will attempt to write the memorial in tribute to our beloved brother. Brother Guy Bernard Phillips was born October 19, 1893 and passed away May 19, 1983. Services were held at Maberry Chapel at 1 o'clock Saturday May 21, 1983. Conducted by Elder Hale Terry, Elder Roy Agee and interment was in Indian Creek Cemetary. He left to survive him, his wife, four sons, three daughters, one sister, twenty two grandchildren, thirty nine great grandchildren and lovely brethren through-out this part of the country.

I have known Brother Guy all of my life as we did not live far apart. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church around sixty years. He served as clerk of Old Indian Creek Church several years and as clerk of New River Association several years. He had many things that troubled him along with the rest of us. As he suffered in his afflictions

for many years he became more humble and begged there might be peace in all the churches. We were blessed to talk on the goodness and mercy of a covenant keeping God and rejoiced together. I would go visit him and he would ask me to have prayer with him. The last three times I visited him we held hands and prayed together, I thank God for this to remember. He made his funeral arrangements about two years prior to his death and they were carried out to his wishes. Both Elder Terry and Elder Agee spoke very comforting and edifying at his funeral. He chose the ones he wanted for his pallbearers. He said he wanted the ones he had lived in the church with to carry him to his final resting place. There has been few people lived so long as he did that the brethren everywhere inquired and ask about as much as they did him. I will close by saying blessed in the eyes of the Lord is the death of the saints.

Submitted by Willard Cox
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Lessie Cox, Clerk

SISTER LOTTIE MINTER LAW

It is with a heavy heart I attempt to write the obituary of our niece whom I esteemed highly, yet I'm thankful to our Lord for one whom the Lord gave a precious hope in Him and to have the privilege to see her ask for a home in the church at Dan River.

She joined August 27, 1961, and was faithful to attend when she was able. She seemed reconciled to her illness and mentioned the presence of the Lord during her affliction. I

think she could truly say "Come Lord Jesus."

She was born May 19, 1924, the daughter of Paul and Annie S. Minter. Married to Roy E. Law July 26, 1945.

Besides her husband she leaves to mourn her passing, a daughter, Linda L. Craft of Jamestown, N.C. A son, Larry E. Law of Kernersville, N.C. and three grandchildren. I hope I can truly say the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be his holy name.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Church by her pastor Elder D.V. Spangler, assisted by Elder H.W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Eden, N.C.

May we all be reconciled to His Holy will. It is better to depart from this life to be with the Lord.

Written by request of one who loved her dearly.

Elder D.V. Spangler, Moderator
Lottie Minter (Aunt)

SISTER ANNIE OWEN

It is with sadness that we write the obituary of Sister Annie Owen. Sister Owen was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, December 13, 1898. Her parents were John Henry Powell and Laura Searce Powell. She grew up in Pittsylvania County and married Brother Hezzie Owen in December, 1922. Brother and Sister Owen had two sons, Melvin Owen and Stafford Owen.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 23, 1975 and was a faithful member until her death March 27, 1982. Sister Owen

enjoyed meeting with her brethren and friends and having them visit in her home.

Sister Owen is survived by her husband, Brother Hezzie Owen, two sons, Melvin Owen of Dallas, Texas and Stafford Owen of North Bend, Oregon. Also, four grandchildren, four brothers and three sisters.

Her funeral was conducted at Townes Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. Sister Owen will be greatly missed by her family and friends but we feel our loss is her gain.

Written by the request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, April 23, 1983.

Harold Weatherford

Moran, Ruffin, N.C. and Barbara Morris, Nashville, Tenn. Also, three sisters, Mary Brinegar, Spencer, Va.; Nellie Collie, Ruffin, N.C. and Essie Moose, Reidsville, N.C. She also leaves seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Sister Blackwell's funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 21, 1983 by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder Julian Williams, also Elder Haywood Wray. One of her favorite hymns "When Thou My Righteous Judge Shall Come" was read by Elder Spangler. At the conclusion of the service, Sister Blackwell was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await a coming of our righteous judge. She will be greatly missed but may we all be comforted to know that our loss is her gain.

Written by request of the church in conference.

Harold D. Weatherford

LELIA BLACKWELL

We have been given the sad task of writing the obituary of Sister Lelia Blackwell. Sister Blackwell was born July 3, 1904, a daughter of Larkin and Molly McKinney Dix. She grew up in the Mayfield community of Rockingham County, N.C. and married John Raymond Blackwell April 19, 1925. They lived in Ruffin, N.C. and were the parents of four children. Brother Blackwell died in October 1951.

Sister Blackwell joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized August 27, 1938. She loved the church and was a faithful member until her death June 18, 1983.

She is survived by one son, John Raymond Blackwell, Jr. of Richmond, Va.; three daughters, Dorothy Callahan of Spartanburg, S.C.; Jean

*Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it:
thou greatly enrichest it . . .
Thou crownest the year with thy
goodness;
and thy paths drop fatness.*

Psalms 65:9,11.

*. . . a man mine equal, my guide, and
mine acquaintance. We took sweet
counsel together.*

Psalms 55:13
Psalms 55:13,14

POETRY

"Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is he.
Know his love in full completeness,
Feel the measure of thy weakness;
If he wound thy spirit sore,
Trust him more.

Without murmur, uncomplaining,
In his hand
Leave whatever things thou canst not
Understand;
Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thy inmost soul shall fill,
Being still.

Fearst sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
Though the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt him not.
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath he comfort spoken;
Better hath he been for years
Than thy fears.

Therefore whatsoe'er betideth
Night or day,
Know his love for thee provideth
Good always.
Crown of sorrows gladly take,
Grateful wear if for his sake,
Sweetly bending to his will,
Being still.

To his own thy Savior giveth
Daily strength;
To each troubled soul that
To each troubled soul that liveth,
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of the tender Shepherd's care;
Ask him not then when or how?
Only bow."

Author Unknown

BOOK NOTICES

**EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE**

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each
Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each

(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

The large, beautiful books (6 x 9 in. trim size) are bound in heavy D Grade Library Buckram cloth in silk screen finish. The type is school book text and is large and very readable; even for older persons. We have used the finest paper available and can say these books are of excellent quality throughout.

We are very pleased with the response on both these volumes. If you have not ordered as yet, we hope you will do so soon. Later this year we hope to reprint Volume 1 and then Volume 2 to match Volume 3 and 4. If the sales continue to make it possible, we will continue to bring out future volumes. We estimate there are sufficient editorials by Elder Beebe to make a set of 10 and possibly 12 volumes when all are published.

These books will make excellent gifts and should be in the library of each of our churches. Please be sure to specify the volume number or numbers when you order these.

Again, we thank you for your support.

Send orders to:
Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

To those of you who live in the North Carolina and Virginia area - Brother Reubin French, Deacon of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, has agreed to act for us as agent to distribute the Beebe Editorials.

Anyone wishing to purchase Volume 3 or 4 may see him in person and purchase them, thereby saving mailing costs.

“THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD“

We also have a limited number of Elder David Bartley's excellent book "The Priesthood of the Son of God". While supplies last, we will sell them for \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing. (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax.)

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

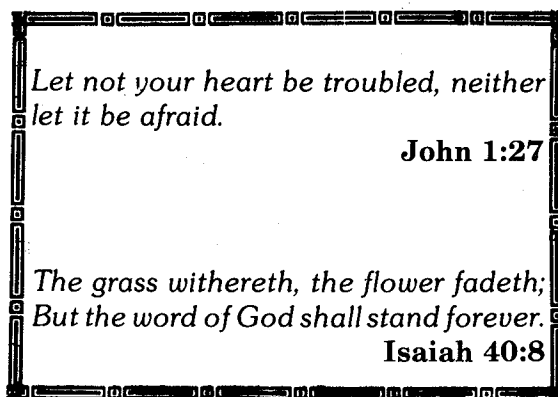
PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

1 copy - \$5. plus \$1. for mailing
5 copies - \$20. plus \$3. for mailing
10 copies - \$30. plus \$4. for mailing
(Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beautiful, hardbound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801



Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., NOVEMBER 1983

No. 11

S I G N S O F T H E T I M E S

P R O S P E C T U S O F T H E "S I G N S"

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years
Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D.V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....217
 Written by Elder W.D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... 222

CORRESPONDENCE 223

VOICES OF THE PAST 231
 Editorial by Elder Beebe

MEETINGS 234

CONTRIBUTIONS 234

OBITUARIES 235

Sister Mable Dawkins Hataway
 Emma Marshall Alderman
 Clarence G. Stegall
 Sister Minnie F. Weaver
 Ira Caldwell

BOOK NOTICES 238

EDITORIAL

SALVATION

Man fell in this time state. Seeing that he was not capacitated to stand, but that he did fall, it seems a futile effort to advocate that he would ever be able to save himself from his fallen condition.

During a lifetime I have been trying, as best that I could to show the source of a man's salvation. At first, when I was requested to write one more article on this important subject, I had my doubt about it being expedient for me to do so. But the desire of my inquirer has not been satisfied with that answer. If it seems trite for me to write on the subject again, please bear with me, for I write by request of one that has read the Signs as long as I have.

I do not expect to write to the satisfaction of everybody, for oftimes I am not satisfied with my own writing and preaching. Of one thing I am sure, no babe in Christ can ever grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth by being fed on an unstable diet. Balanced diets are best for babes and for those that have grown into men.

If there is a better dietitian than Wisdom, I have not met up with them. If you have, it is best to examine what is given for the growth and sustenance of the children of wisdom. If the house (dwelling place) that wisdom built is lacking in supplying a shelter for the children which she is justified in, please tell me where are these children to turn for that which wisdom was lacking in supplying? Please do not show your lack of confidence in her supplies in calling me vile names because that it seems

RECOGNITION

On behalf of all the subscribers and the entire staff of the *Signs Of The Times*, we want to thank Elder Poole for his service as editor for the past six years. We realize now more than ever the great responsibility and the work he did so well. We want to recognize and thank Sister Peggy also for her assistance and untiring efforts. To both of them again we say thanks for a job well done and may God continue to bless you.

The Editors

best to say that my supplies for this time journey come alone from the fullness and the perfection of her house.

Not only has she builded her house, but she has builded it well. The situation is beautiful (Psa. 48:2), and the foundation and the underpinning, was all completed for her children before there were any children. If there is anything to be added to the situation or to the foundation of this building, what is the name of the builder that we will go to? Please do not call me by brutal, cruel names if you are not able to name her helper in this vital building.

I would ask you as my fellow traveller, soon to go the way of all the earth, if this house and this Builder is not able in every way and at all times and under all circumstances to save these children, which one of them is going to grid up themselves and help their Mother to save her family? Among all of the other works of our mother, she has furnished her table. Please be kind to a poor worn out sinner and tell me the name of the dietitian that was her co-helper in providing the table and what is so plentifully supplied for this table. Instead of pouring out your venom on a poor way faring pilgrim, please pour in the consoling thoughts that you have found out is in the work of helping Wisdom to shelter and feed her children.

For these many years we have been reading about the determination of Paul not to know anything other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Is there something to preach that Paul had not been taught about? To what extent did Jesus fail him? Where and when did he need salvation and not find in Jesus of Nazareth the supplying of that need?

What would have become of our dear fellow companion, the apostle Peter, had his salvation from the first history of him in the relation-

ship of being a chosen vessel not been according to the mercy of his Saviour? Time and time again that Saviour plucked him out of the fire as a brand. If the Saviour had waited on the apostle to turn and repent before He saved him from himself, He would have waited in vain; there would have been no salvation for Peter. As I look back on the apostle's experience, and as I look back over my travels for the last fifty six years, I am sure that neither one of us would have ever lived to tell what Peter told us. He talked much about election, but there came so many weary hours with him, as there has been so many times in my life when I felt that He had hid His face from me forever (Isa. 45:15). According to what I hear at times, it seems that some have the mistaken idea that it is easier for one of His children to find Him than it was for Jacob to find him in the beginning. However, that is a deception, for when God hides Himself from His children, He is hid from them just as completely after having been born again as before they were born. If no, let it be forever posted in the streets of Zion that when Isaiah declared that He hid His face, that it really was not hid, for he could have found Him if he had tried. And if His children can find Him in and of themselves, that poor old Job spent a lot of needless sorrow when he cried out, Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

I am sure that had the Lord not looked upon Peter, that had He not had compassion on him time and again that he never would have recorded the language that he later left on record for us. To wit; That He had begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the

power of God through faith ready to be revealed at the last time (I Pet. 1:3,5). If ever there was a disciple of the Lord that believed in that salvation that is in Jesus Christ, it was Peter. He had given Peter a hope of better things to come, the things to come were reserved in heaven for him, and he was being kept while he remained on earth. Ah, what a complete work. The Lord knew the weakness of Peter, as He did of us all. He did not leave the things held in readiness for us with a poor profligate like me and Peter, but he reserved it in heaven for us, and keeps us ready for it while we stay here.

Oh, dear brethren and sisters, all ye, that fear God, come and hear what the Lord has done, and is now doing, and will yet do for poor sinners. I am aware that I am not a fit character to be associated with Peter, but I am sure about this much of what I write. To wit, This Jesus is the same stone that would be builders and saviours have been rejecting all of the time, and I tell you without fear of contradiction that either before this, or sometime before they leave this vale of tears, that He will become to one and all as the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we shall be saved. If Peter could come and verify with this poor sinner, as I am verifying with him, that our impulsiveness, our talking without thinking of the consequences, would have forever ruined us both, had not His mercy continued with us during his lifetime and mine thus far. Time and again Peter strayed; time and again he was brought back; this frail beggar has strayed time and again, and my only hope for the balance of the journey is that the precious Saviour will bring me back again and again, as He brought the poor sinner, Peter.

Blessed by 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; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved (Eph. 1:1, 6). There is not a portion of Holy Writ between the first word in Genesis and the Amen in Revelation that has been as denied as this, unless it is the 18th chapter of Matthew.

Are there any blessings of a fleshly or a worldly or a carnal nature that will be beneficial to the child of God? As far as I remember, there is not one reference to the work of the flesh being helpful in any way to our salvation. If I have overlooked anything that springs from our first nature that is beneficial in promoting our welfare in time or eternal salvation, will you please refresh my memory about it? My remembrance is that the deeds of the flesh are to be crucified, not made an ally in salvation. If I remember correctly, it seems to me that we are to flee from every lust of the flesh, not embrace them as partners in salvation.

The whole family of God was chosen in Christ according to God's sovereign right to do so. Simultaneously with God making this choice of His people, He blessed these people in Christ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. I did not make that up. Elder Gilbert Beebe did not make that up. God said by Inspiration that he blessed this chosen people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. This blessing of these chosen vessels of mercy was not reckoned on the reception that they made of these blessings. This blessing was made according as He chose them in Christ before the world

began. If the choice of them to salvation was predicated on the manner in which they would receive and dispose of the choice thus made for them, then the spiritual blessings will be disposed of in the same manner. However, that is not the truth. God did not consult with the yet unborn creature about accepting the choice. **HE DID NOT DO THAT.** And I declare to you my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, that the blessing of God's people with all spiritual blessings was not according to that legal covenant wherein God would do for us if we would do for ourselves, which covenant did not, nor cannot, save and justify a sinner (Acts 13:39). God chose His people in Christ according to the good pleasure of His own will, and the blessing of His chosen race with all spiritual blessings before the world began, was done according to that which governed God in choosing His people before time. There is not a single conditional idea about God's choice of His people in Christ, and His blessing of them with all spiritual blessings was just like the choice. It was done according to the way the choice was made. Each of these acts were done at the same time by the same God. I believe both of them. Do you?

These spiritual blessings only come to he and she that is born of the Spirit. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. It cannot change its nature. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The spiritual blessings are never made manifest until after the second birth. Then these blessings with which His chosen people were blessed in Christ is made manifest after birth. How many? Who wants to place a limitation on them? The apostle Paul, writing as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, left it on record that God blessed His chosen people with all spiritual blessings in Christ in heavenly places. Now Paul said

that as God moved him to say it. I believe that. Do you?

The apostle Peter waxed bold to say that the divine power of Jesus Christ, had given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us unto glory and virtue (2nd Peter 1:3). Now I beseech you, dear brethren, not to place a burden on me so that I must place a limitation on these gifts. If it does not mean that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, why did He say so? The Lord Jesus Christ DID give him a sufficiency of saving grace that he had been brought triumphantly off more than conquerer over all of the enemies, both inwardly and outwardly, that he is now telling us that the Lord has given us, the whole elect family, to which he was writing (1 Peter 1:2), that He hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Over nineteen hundred years ago, that poor old weak unstable sinner was established on the solid Rock of divine truth to boldly tell us that this outstanding gift was given us, the family of God, in Christ before we ever knew about them or ever needed them.

This unspeakable gift is an abounding gift. It originated in the eternal counsel of God's mind, was made manifest by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it has, and it is, abounding to our good and God's eternal glory. It is such a gift that it abounds in us, causing us to have faith, and all other fruits of the Spirit are added together in us (because of the gifts) and are (now) abounding in such a way that we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? May I pause there? May I use the pronoun 'who'? May I apply it to you? Are you going to question and cast doubt and as-

persion on the inspired question of Paul? According to the inspired language of Paul, not one voice, not one testimony objected to Paul's challenging question. The Holy Spirit did not inspire another writer to accept Paul's challenge, and bring forward a witness that could lay a charge to God's elect.

I preach, if I preach the gospel, that God's people are complete in Christ; that they have a perfect standing in Him. In short, I do hope that I have living faith that leaps out in power and comfort to me, and in great glory to Christ my Saviour, who abundantly comforts the church of the living God by saying, thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee. I do hope that I realize my shortcomings and my deficiencies in my relationship with the earth, but that I am blessed to stand boldly and yet humbly in the pulpit and preach the inexhaustible and unsearchable riches of Christ, and that God has given us Him, and having given us such an abounding gift, that He freely gives us all things.

The record is that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5:10). This choice of us to eternal life was made by God. I am not uneasy that any eye witness or an assistant in this work will ever be found. May God separate us as far from such a blasphemous thought as that as far as the east is from the west. Those thus chosen were chosen in Christ Jesus, being preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1:1). I have no hesitancy in writing it far and wide, in standing wherever the Lord opens a door of utterance to me and declaring that the preservation of the saints unto glory is a Bible doctrine; that it is fundamental; that without it, there is not any salvation for any of God's little children. This is preaching and writing about Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that every

God called minister is blessed with a determination to know nothing short of Him crucified, and not one of them thus called will ever preach Him as a failure, as a loser of the sheep given Him.

As this Saviour was teaching that which the Father had given to speak, He was telling them about His coming departure. Not once did He point out a failure in the Father's choice. Not once did He point out a failure of His in redeeming, preserving, saving those thus given to Him. The work of His Father in choosing was perfect. There was not a failure of His own that He paraded before them. They were not reminded of a single promise given them by God the Father, nor by Himself as the Saviour, wherein there was a shadow of a failure to disturb them, to make them shudder with fear, to make them doubt the veracity of His own word to them.

But His work as Saviour was coming to an end. It was necessary that He go away, for He had a work assigned Him in eternity. The Saviour ascribed honor and glory unto the Comforter. When He is come. Let us stop there. Let us contemplate the beauty of the whole. Every promise made in eternity concerning God's people in time had been fulfilled up to that time. Every single promise fulfilled. What more is to be said. Truly, praise waiteth for thee O God.

There is to be no period of time when these chosen people will be without God being on their side (Psa. 1:24). He has ever been on their side. Being unchangeable, He will always be on their side. He has ever been with them, that God being for us, hell and natural passion and unbelief has never thwarted God and robbed Him nor them of one thing promised them in Christ.

The Saviour said, When He is come, He will testify of me, and because of that testimony, ye shall also

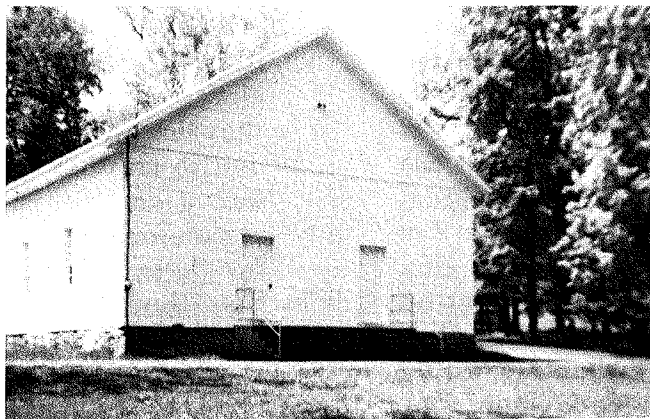
witness of me. The same care, the same love, the same everlasting and tender compassion is still in force. Furthermore, when He comes, He will guide you into all truth. The bringing of conditions, the adding of anything by creature effort, is an abomination to God. The same God that chose His people before the world was; the same efficacious death of our Saviour on the rugged tree, will bring you into all truth. When this Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in His name, shall teach you all things. Will you ever need anything more? With Him on your side, will you ever fall short of anything He has promised you? Moreover, He will bring to your remembrance whatsoever I

have said unto you.

My lamentation is that I am not sufficient of myself for these things. I know so little, that I fear I do not know anything. Yet, I am glad that another poor sinner had the same lamentation. He did not feel sufficient of himself. Pity the poor fellow that confesses to being a sinner, and yet that he is able of himself to walk in these things. May the Comforting influence of the Holy Ghost lead us into all truth, and teach us that our sufficiency is God. Herein, that is, in this doctrine of God our Saviour, is salvation, now, henceforth, and forever.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Salem Primitive Baptist Church also known as "Head of the River," was established in 1784. The meeting house is located on 221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Virginia.

The present building is believed to have been built in 1876. All of the older records were destroyed by fire, so there is no definite record, however the church is in progress of raising funds for a new building, hoping, if God be willing, to start in Spring 1984.

Their present pastor is Elder J.L.

Agee of Copper Hill, Virginia. Meeting time at Salem is eleven o'clock on the second Sunday morning of each month and the Saturday before at the same time.

NOTE: May God bless their efforts in building a new building. Anyone desiring to help with their building fund may do so by sending your remittance to:

Salem Primitive Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 173
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

The Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

1884

To the Churches of the Smith River District Primitive Baptist Association:

We once more make the feeble attempt to address you with a Circular Letter. We call your attention to the Gospel recorded by St. Luke, 21st chapter and part of the 36th verse. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always." We understand this as addressed to the Church of God; we learn that God is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. In ancient times the Lord was sought unto for his blessings by some of his people, seeing the need of the same. Not only national but individual blessings. The children of God have been a dependent people in all ages of the world, and this is the reason why they go to the Lord for blessings. As far back as the days of Daniel the prophet, when the children of Isreal were in bondage and he sought the Lord to bless that people, and God heard his supplication and sent an angel to inform Daniel that the time was drawing near when He would deliver his people and when they returned to Jerusalem God was glorified. Dear brethren and sisters this ought with many other things that we find in the Scriptures encourage us to go to the Lord when we feel cast down and forsaken. God's people does not only seek in word but in deed and in truth. Christ said unto his disciples, "seek and ye shall find." We believe one cause of the Church being established in her militant form is to show forth the praise of the Lord. Saints oftentimes feel like they can't praise the Lord. The Lord is not only praised in word but in deed, and

one of the deeds is to assemble ourselves together. When the Church is in peace each one filling their seats there is no greater praise that ever ascends to the Lord. We believe that many of the chastisements of the Church is for neglect of assembling together in order to worship God. Dear brethren and sisters we remember the time when we thought our souls must go for our sins, and we hope the mercy of the Lord came to our relief at a time unexpected to us. Then we desired to tell God's people what the Lord has done for us. Let us call these things to our minds and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another. When God's love dwells in our hearts our love is strong toward the union of God's people, and it does not stop here, for we desire to live peaceable with all men. When the love of the Lord sways our feelings then we can do as God's people anciently done, where it is said. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name." So God's care is the same towards them that think upon His name as it is towards them that speak. So dear saints let us try to honor God both in our bodies and our spirits which are his. So the saints don't feel worthy to walk in the foot-steps of Jesus. The worthiness is not in the saints, but in Christ; for thou art worthy who hast redeemed us from every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

May the God of peace be with us while we remain here on our pilgrimage, and at last bring us off more than conquerors through him that loved us, where God will be praised in a world that shall never end. Amen.

Asa D. Shortt

Steens, Miss.

Elder R. P. Hendrix: Dear Brother in the Lord, as I humbly hope:

It is with fear that I undertake to respond to your request for an account of my spiritual exercise of mind. But if it is the Lord's will to give me a travel of mind in that direction at this time I will endeavor to give you a reason of my hope.

I was born in the year 1892, and reared in a Primitive Baptist home. My father was a minister. Although as a child I loved the pleasures of the world, yet from my youth I maintained the highest regard for this people. But perhaps this was to be contributed to the great love and confidence I had for Daddy. I was happy; nothing seemed to trouble me. The first sorrow I knew was the death of Father; this was the beginning of my troubles. He died in 1920; in 1921 I became burdened. I felt that I was a sinner without hope, and without God, I would try to beg for mercy, but it seemed there was no relief. I had never read the Bible, but during that same year I began to read; it seemed that it only condemned me. I felt more and more that I was a sinner.

If I remember correctly, it was in the spring of 1922 that I had a dream; I thought it was the resurrection day, and that the world was coming to an end. The following words were spoken: "Be ye ready, watch ye and pray: for He comes as a thief in the night, lest He find you sleeping; for you shall see Him coming in a cloud, with power and glory." The dream was so plain that I awoke and got up and went to the window, but did not see Him. I felt to know in my poor heart that I was not prepared to meet Him, and to die unprepared I would be lost. I went on in this condition for some time. All I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me."

There were no Old Baptists here then, and we were poor and had no way to go to meeting. My eyes and health were bad, but I felt that I must do something; some way I felt a duty upon me. I desired to belong to the church; and I thought because Father and Mother were Old Baptists that I would be one, too.

In the year 1923 mother died and I was left alone; my husband was a Methodist. In 1924 I lost my eyesight, and I now felt that the wrath of the Lord was poured upon me. I was filled with despondency. I often dreamed of death. Because I had not been baptised I had much trouble of mind. I dreamed that I was at Zion church (Pikins County). In my dream my sister, Ruth, was with me. We wanted to join the church, but for some reason the audience left the house. There were two preachers in the stand, and they began to scuffle. I said to Sister Ruth, "We must search the Scripture." The Bible was laying on our laps; on the right was red print and on the left black print. We were reading concerning baptism. I was thirsty, and went to the table where a bucket was sitting. Someone gave me a beautiful cup; I took it but did not drink. I then walked out the door.

I hope, dear brother, that you can interpret my walking out. Oh blind and could not see; deaf and could not hear the joyful bells of salvation by grace; for in 1927 I joined the free-will Baptists here, and baptised the same day. I felt comforted to think that I obeyed Jesus by being baptised and that if I lived right I would be saved.

Two weeks later I found myself questioning what these people believed and practiced. I desired to be loyal to the church. One day I asked my husband to read to me the 13th chapter of John. I was lying on the bed, and fell asleep while he was

reading. I dreamed that I was baptised; it was the same place, and the same free-will minister that had baptised me into this order. I saw nothing as we went into the water, but when he raised me I noticed that the water was muddy; the surface was covered with trash. This troubled me, and I said to the preacher: "Just look at this water." He handed me a broken piece of an ear of corn; the cob was red and had just a few grains of corn. I took it and held it up; I could see the place of all the missing grains, and said to the preacher: "What in the name of the Lord is this?" He said as long as you eat this you will be alright.

I tried for three years to believe the doctrine of the free-moral-agent. Many times I was made to fall upon my knees and ask the Lord to have mercy on me; that I might not be deceived, that I might hear with the right ear and understand with a true heart. I tell you the truth: there was always a doubt; there was always a doubt with me whether this was the true church; but, Oh, I was blind to the knowledge of the truth. Like a drowning child, I would grasp a straw for help. When works were preached it would condemn me; yet I believed that I must work in order to live in the presence of God. But being condemned already, how could I be saved?

My eyes and health continued to get worse; I suffered continually. In 1930 they carried me to the hospital (September 1) to have my eyes removed. O dear people of God, I thought I could never endure this: the last hope of my seeing taken away. I cannot describe my feelings at that time; only those who have suffered in this way can witness with me. The doctors said I could not live long. But I was made to say: Thy will be done, O Lord. I cannot tell why, but as I thus resigned myself in the hands of the Lord, there was a calm

came over me, and I felt myself in the hands of Him who does all things well. They put me to sleep, and I felt sinking down; I called for Jesus. I thought I was lost in a wilderness and trying to find my way out. I came to a class of people and stood among them. There was an altar there, and just a natural-looking man standing there. The whole congregation looked natural. Their faces were turned in different directions, and there was not brightness, as it was a cloudy day. I was troubled and wondered who this people were. Then these words were written: "These are they who trust in the deeds done in the flesh; these are self-righteous people."

I was then greatly troubled and wanted to get away from them, but knew not how to go, nor do I know how I did get away; but I found myself standing by a beautiful class of people: the most beautiful I ever saw. They were all dressed in robes of white. They were all one size. Every face was turned in the same direction; they were looking at a beautiful altar; in that altar was the Lamb of God, and the light was brighter than the noonday sun. I loved those people, and wanted to stay with them. I said: "Oh, what are these?" Then these words were written: "These are they that have come through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." I felt to know that tribulation was what I had come through.

When I awoke I was praising the Lord; I felt a love in my poor heart that I had never felt. It seemed that dear Jesus was in the room, and I was trying to show Him to my doctor. I was quoting this scripture: "Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and none can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him.

All the time I remained at the hos-

pital I was made to forget all my sorrow over the loss of my eyes as much as I think any poor one could under the same circumstances. When I came away I felt to be a different person, although I was like one in a dream.

*"When trouble like a gloomy cloud
Has gathered thick and thundered loud:
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness, O how good."*

For five weeks those beautiful people in robes of white stayed before me. I felt assured that this was the bride of the Lamb of God.

I shall never forget the second Sunday morning in October, 1930. Neither can I forget the awful feeling I experienced as they led me across the yard at Mount Carmel Church on that morning. I felt just like all of you could read the expression of my face, and see what a vile, and helpless sinner I was. I was led as one blind and dumb, and I did wish myself at home, where I would not be exposed to the people but Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of Man, and they that hear shall live." When you arose in the stand that morning it seemed to me that every word you spoke you said them to me. Never had I heard before such comforting words, and for the first time, I could hear the truth, and believe every word you said. I felt the same love for you people that I had felt at the hospital, and that same desire to love with you all. I felt to realize what I was however. Yes, what I had thought to be unto life, I found to be unto death. And I saw what a helpless, vile sinner I was. I also saw that I was a different creature and that the way was too high for me to reach. All that I had ever done rose before me. Words cannot describe my feelings. I felt like I must hasten on, for I fear I have already written enough to weary

your patience, but desire to go on a little further, and hope you can bear with me.

On that second Sunday night after reaching home from the association at Mount Carmel, I lay down on my bed, and could not keep back my tears. I did not want my husband and children to see me weeping. But as I lay there my pillow wet with tears, there was a voice began preaching to me. This is a mystery to me. This voice I heard in the right ear, preaching the unsearchable riches of His grace. Oh why, when I felt so condemned? I turned over on my back, the voice ceased, and I saw Jesus expanded above me. He was on the cross. I felt like my sins had put him there, and Oh, that hell would be my doom, but here I hope I felt the precious mercy of God measure out to poor me, for there I heard these sweet words spoken to me: "He did it all, He paid the debt, He suffered for your sins."

O dear friends, if I can call you such, had I had ten thousand tongues they would have all been engaged in praise to the eternal King. I felt my burden of sin gone, and that heaven would be my home. Never had such joy filled my soul. I could hear the hooting of the owls, and even they sang sweet to me. I fell asleep, the sweetest sleep I ever had. When I arose the next morning I thought I never would have another doubt, or feel another burden, that I would be happy the rest of my days, and for some time I felt no burden, but alas! I had the burden of desire to ask the dear Old Primitive Baptist for a home as this desire grew stronger, I felt more unworthy to approach them. So I would go to meeting, and enjoy the sermon, but when an opportunity was extended, I would tremble like a leaf shaken by the wind. When I would get home, I was so miserable. I would think I will go the next time.

So on the third Sunday morning in November, 1931, I arose from a sleepless night, with a feeling of great unworthiness. I felt like one alone and that I had not a friend in this world. Had I followed my mind I would have gone home rather than to meeting, or any where else. There was to be a baptising that morning. I began to think that I was barred from the people I loved for when an opportunity was extended for members, I had no thought of going. My will was swallowed up by what I hope was the will of God, and I asked the dear people (at Zion Church) for a home, and to my surprise they received me. For a few moments I felt relieved but as you know, I was not baptised that day. I did not go prepared for baptism. You were my choice to officiate in this work. This also worried me, and I thought to pass it off, but the more I tried the stronger the desire grew. I had seen you so many times in my dreams, but I did not tell this to the Church when I joined, and this also worried me. So at last I sat down and wrote the Church, and tried to tell them my desire. This they granted, but still I was worried in mind with the burden of asking you to come such a long distance to baptise such a one as I, but the Lord is our Comforter in time of need, and he comforts us when no one else can. In a dream I saw my father. I asked him if it was right to ask you to come and baptise me. And he said it was. I saw you dressed in a long white robe, with silver slippers on your feet, and you took me by the arm and led me into the water. Many other dreams I will not mention now. But my mind has been relieved of a great burden to find others, as I hope, drawn by the same power of love as I hope I was. And but for the great power of the love of Jesus and His kingdom and His mercy which has followed me thus far, I would

have given it all up, for there are so many doubts and fears to arise and cast me down, but dear ones, these words will express my feelings more than any I could say, I am wearied and worn, I want to go home. My journey has been long, and the voyage stormy. My road has been hard and there are many thorns in my path, but I hope to find rest on Jesus' sweet breast. I feel that my faith is founded on the rock and I hope to be one of His chosen flock. When Jesus shall come to carry home His bride, I hope to be one to make up that bride. This I know, if I was redeemed on that day when He expired on the cross, I shall wear a robe that is fit for a bride.

I believe our goings are all appointed, and we cannot hasten His appointed times. I feel that my experience has taught me this, and that we are going to meet all that is in store for us. We will suffer every pain and heartache, and I know that I justly deserve all that He sees fit to put on me, and I feel ever more; for I feel that if strict justice had been meted out to me that I would have been where mercy could never reach, among the nations that forget God. But I feel a hope that His mercy has been extended to me, and has brought me down at His feet, and to the feet of His dear saints. During the eight months from the time I asked the Church at Zion for a home, until the day I was baptised, I thought many times of the children of Israel, when they were led out of Egypt. They came to the Red Sea, they could neither turn to the right or left. But Moses commanded them to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. On the sixteenth day of July, 1932, as I stood at the water's edge I was far from feeling like I thought one should feel when in the act of being baptised, for I always thought one should feel good. I would like to know if there is any one that felt as I

did? My burden of unworthiness grew to be so great that my body trembled as if I had a chill, and there was before such a great people in the presence of God, to represent the death, burial and resurrection of the blessed Savior, and oh, what was I? Had I, after all, been deceived, and deceived others? But as you led me into the water the clouds of the morning vanished from the sky, the sun shown brightly on me. When you raised me out of the water, I felt as light as a feather. My burden was gone, and once more again I felt the sweet assurance that heaven was my home. I thought I could never doubt again, nor fear, but in conclusion I must say I have my ups and downs, and it seems to me that I have more downs than ups.

I must close, and if the above is not an experience of grace, I must confess that I have none. I have tried as best I could to give you a hint at what I hope the Lord has done for me. I have been very scattering, but hope the Lord may enable you to understand what I have tried to tell. Should you see anything in this worthy of acceptance among God's humble poor, give God all the power and praise. If not, cast it aside, and remember me in your prayers.

Your little unworthy sister saved by grace if saved at all.

Balma Callahan

Turtle Rock, Va.
June, 1898

Dear Brethren:

Now I will give some of the reasons why I attempt to preach. The first impression that I had to try to preach was a few minutes after I received a hope. I cannot tell the full particulars of the impression, but my mind was impressed that I had to preach, and also the reproach that is connected

with the ministry was impressed upon my mind, and I was made willing to bear the reproach, and I promised to be obedient to the Lord. From then until I joined the church I thought but little about what I had been impressed with, though my mind was somewhat exercised in the Scriptures, and when I went to the church I did not think anything about what I had been impressed with, therefore I said nothing about it. I was baptized the next day, and I think in two or three days that my mind began to be impressed with the Scriptures more or less daily, and sometimes in my sleep.

I remember of having two dreams. In one of the dreams I was sitting and talking to a person of another denomination, and in our talk this person remarked that there would be vacant seats in heaven, and from that my mind was impressed, and I talked with great freedom. The other dream was - I was standing and talking to one individual about Jonah. The subject that I was talking about seemed to be plain, and I talked with as much ease, perhaps, as ever I did when I was awake. Sometimes a scripture would be offered to my mind, and the light of the same with a considerable feeling. I remember once when I was thus exercised I was plowing, and when I noticed myself I had the plow handles gripped very tight, which I knew was unusual. When my mind was thus exercised I desired to be like God's servants, for I believed that they were right. Few months before this time I heard Elder Howery say when he was impressed to preach he prayed as earnest as he ever did for the impression to be removed, and I tried to pray like he did; but I could not. My mind would be directed back to that time when I was made willing. The prayer that I had to pray was, if the impression was not of the Lord it might be removed. I desired to be obedient,

but feared I was deceived. I was impressed to go and talk with Elder Howery, and thought that I could not wait until the next meeting but I did. And when I got there I was afraid to tell him for fear he would ask me to talk some publicly. After the meeting was dismissed I thought that I would go home and say nothing about it, but I become fearful to disobey my feelings, and said, brother Howery, I wish to talk some with you, and I did so, and he said, if you had told me before preaching commenced I would have asked you to open the service. I told him that was the reason that I did not tell him. I went to preaching the next day, and there were two other preachers there, and Elder Howery preached last, and I did not enjoy the preaching like I would wish to do, and the reason was that something seemed to be saying to me that brother Howery is going to ask you to conclude the meeting. My mind was in a strait all the time of the service. Sometimes I would think that I could not say anything, and would not make the attempt. When brother Howery got through preaching he looked at me and said, brother Shortt, will you come up and dismiss, and I got up and went into the pulpit as though I had been accustomed to it, and talked some, and lined a hymn and it was sung at the conclusion of the meeting. And I never had as yet confessed that I was impressed to preach, nor did I desire to preach, though my mind was led into the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. I only desired when there was room to say something in the way of exhortation. When I would attempt to talk the things that would mostly impress my mind I was afraid to utter. Something would seem to say that it would not do, for brother Howery was a very able minister, and he would know I was wrong. So I remained in this condition for nearly

two years before I was enabled to express my mind, and then I received a little strength. A portion of this time I was very much cast down, and thought that God never intended that I should preach, and I thought that I would be certain to make shipwreck. A song would often come into my mind which reads thus: "No vessel built by human skill has ever sailed so far. But at last I was found aground on some dreadful sandy bar." There were several other persons that had commenced trying to preach a short time before I commenced, and I thought they were all right but myself. But some of them did prove to be wrong. A great many of the preachers that I have heard talk said that they greatly suffered before they commenced trying to preach, but my greatest suffering was after I commenced. At one time when I was much cast down I commenced feeling sick, and the thought was maybe you will die, and it was consolation to me, and why, because I thought I had brought a reproach upon my family, and also upon the church. I thought then if I had had these feelings before I commenced trying to preach I never would have commenced, but if the Lord had any hand in it he knew what was best. I have been often disheartened when I would hear some of the brethren tell so great a call to the ministry. I have decided mine if a call, to be weak, but every time I felt the manifestation of the Spirit when I am trying to preach it establishes me that I am required to preach. I have never desired to work on, or to arouse the natural minds of the people, but desire to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. I said I thought God never intended that I should preach, and one of the pressing reasons was that my grandfather was an old Baptist preacher, and left the Baptists, and joined another denomination, and something seemed to say

that you will be like him. My grandfather at one time attended the church at Salem. When I first commenced going to that church something seemed to say they will not hear you, and it was a disagreeable place to me, notwithstanding the church was in a prosperous condition, and had Elder John C. Hall for its pastor. And he is its pastor at the present time. I have been attending there with him for several years, and of late it is a very pleasant place for me to visit. I have been exercising in public twenty-nine years. I commenced in four weeks after I was Baptized. I was licensed to preach in three years, and ordained September, 1873, by the following Elders: Daniel Conner, G.L. Tuggle, and W.H. Dodd.

I can say a truth that I never sought to be set forward either directly or indirectly. Each time when it was named before the church to set me forward I never opened my mouth, though I felt a fear within. If I could have known that the Lord, directed the church I think I would have been reconciled. I knew the church had made mistakes, and it might be one again. If I have a gift in the ministry it is hard for me to tell the extent of the gift, though I am satisfied it is small compared with many of my brethren, but I feel a degree of contentment with such things as I have. There are some embarrassments for I have to contend with in trying to preach that many of my brethren are not encumbered with. Some of my words I cannot pronounce plain, for I have an impediment in my speech which makes me often dread to face a congregation, though occasionally from some cause I am made to forget the faces of the congregation, and when I would set down I would think that I would not be so timid any more; but they have in part followed me up to the present time. I am one that believes that

when preaching is effectual that the Holy Ghost directs the mind of the preacher, and also the hearer. I reckon it is well that I should feel my weakness in order that I might trust in the Lord. I think it is right for the preacher to be well posted in the Scriptures, but if the Lord don't give him the Spirit of preaching he will not preach to the edification of God's children. Preachers are sometimes exercised with the Spirit of preaching when there is no congregation present in order to establish them in the power of the Lord. I remember several years ago that I went to the field to pull fodder, and feeling unwell, and directly my mind was exercised in the Scripture, and when I noticed myself I was working as fast as I could, and I felt as well as ever I did; and it is a consolation to me yet. Not only at that time, but occasionally ever since I was first impressed to speak in public I have been exercised, I trust, with the Spirit of preaching. God's ministry receive the power of preaching. For the very power that Moses received when he came to the mountain of God afterwards manifested in the presence of Pharaoh and his wise men, and that to their astonishment. It is the case even to the present day when God moves the minds of His ministers they preach to the confounding of the wise and prudent of this world, and also to the building up of God's children.

Asa D. Shortt

NOTE: Above articles by Elder Shortt were sent in by his granddaughter, Catherine A. Houchins of Roanoke, Va. The Elder Howery referred to in the article is Elder Spanglers grandfather.

The Editors

EXPERIENCE

209 Taylor Rd.
Collinsville, Virginia

I received the *Signs of The Times* yesterday with much comfort and joy. Elder Gilberts editorial is so precious, just like the third and fourth volume of his books, which gives more understanding of other scriptures in the New Testament.

The last letter I wrote that I enjoyed the writings for they left man out of the picture. I am putting man and men in the picture, those who believe in the works of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and are contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Those chosen in Christ before the world began and not because of anything that they have done or can do to merit eternal life; through the washing and regeneration through our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for His elect people, the chosen ones, finished the work the Father sent Him to do and set us free.

I thought one time we had to keep the commandments of God. After asking a home with the Primitive Baptist at Republican Church I was asked if I could keep the commandments and at that time I did not understand them. I left there with a burden and was not going to be baptized. My husband wanted to send for my mother to talk with me. I told him that she could not help me with this matter. On his way to work on Monday morning he was praying for me, and at that time he saw the blackest cloud in the East and it disappeared and a beautiful white cloud arose. I believe the black cloud represented the old law covenant of works. The white cloud represented the new covenant, grace covenant, Christ covenant.

Soon after my husband left for

work, I was alone and had gone upstairs to make the boys bed. I knelt beside the bed to pray and couldn't move my tongue to speak. I came down stairs and was sitting in my chair with my hands over my face saying Lord have mercy, why did I join the church, if it be thy will please remove me from this burden.

The next thing I remember I was going from one room to another singing. The title of the song was "O Land of Rest." I was only singing the chorus, "This world is a wilderness of woe, this world is not my home." I especially like one verse of this song, "To Jesus Christ I sought for rest, He bade me cease to roam, and fly for succor to His breast and he'd conduct me home."

I can truthfully say I have found that rest here going through great tribulations, rejoicing in God my savior through the Lord Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh, salvation is of the Lord.

Yours in fellowship of
the Holy Spirit

Mattie Underwood

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD

*Editorial of Elder Beebe as it appeared
in the "Signs" 138 years ago.*

New Vernon, N. Y.
November 1, 1845

Thus spake the Son of God when, mantled in the flesh, he stood arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and when, if there had been anything in

the elements of this world which could contribute to the defence or benefit of his kingdom, they must have been called forth into action. All the interests of the kingdom which he claimed as his own, centered in him, and the destiny of that kingdom, for weal or woe, was at that important moment hinged upon the result of what was at that time progressing. None of the princes of this world knew him; he had not made a revelation of what he was, even to those who sat empowered to deliver him to death. He had not labored in his ministry to make himself familiar to the crowned heads of the nations of the earth; he had proposed no treaties or terms of alliance with them; nor had he called on them, or any of them, to propose terms for his acceptance; for the nature of his kingdom was so radically different from every kingdom under heaven, that it was not possible that an alliance could be entered into that could subserve the true interests of either party. His kingdom truly was destined to encounter the violence, enmity, wrath, strife, and persecution of kingdoms and men, both in her King, and in the subjects of her government. The powers which should oppose him in person and in his people, were not such as he was compelled to succumb to for want of power to resist, for he reminded Pilate that he would not have had any power if it had not been given him; and on another occasion he declared that he was able to call on his Father, who would instantly honor his requisition for more than twelve legions of angels—a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against him; but how, in that case, could the scriptures be fulfilled? Not an intimation was made of raising up an earthly force to resist the assaults of the enemies of his kingdom, even if a

force had been requisite, he would have called them from the heavenly world. We may well conclude that if in that most trying hour, when his holy soul was pressed within him, he had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, there could a period arrive when the powers of earthly princes should be required to defend him or his cause. To those who tempted him with their questions concerning tribute money, he said, Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto God the things which belong to God; thus clearly intimating that the governments were not only distinct from each other, but that the distinction should be perpetual; and that the requisitions of Caesar, or of the governments of the nations, had to do with men, as citizens of the world, and that their obligation to earthly magistrates and rulers was not relaxed nor abolished by the administration of his laws. And again, that the things of God were not to be rendered to Caesar, but unto God.

Things of a civil nature, relating to the natural rights of men, were to be settled by God's own providential appointment, by human legislation; but the things set aside from a respect for and obedience to earthly potentates, in natural matters, belonging to God, such as matters of faith, of conscience, of religion, were not things over which the kings of the earth had any supervision or power, and things in which his subjects were not at liberty, under any circumstances, to submit to the dictation or legislation of any other than God himself.

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, in its origin, elements, provisions, policy, protection, government or destiny. Its origin is heaven—it is a heavenly kingdom. The King is the Lord from heaven; he said, I proceeded forth and came out from

the Father; and again, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before," &c. The subjects of his kingdom are of the same origin; for, "Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" and he said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," &c. The laws for the regulation of this heavenly kingdom are not of earthly enactment. Christ, the anointed of the Father, is the sole Legislator, and he, by his Spirit, writes his law upon, and sets it up in the hearts of his children. The elements, or component parts, viewed separately or collectively, are all of God, and every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The provisions on which this kingdom is sustained, were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and being prior to, could not be of the world. Grace, mercy, peace, righteousness, and truth, with all things else necessary for the consummation of the everlasting and unchanging decree of God, were treasured up in the Head of the church before the world began; and all the provisions of his spiritual house on which his poor are fed, were brought down from the abounding and overflowing fountain from which every good and perfect gift cometh. And he will abundantly bless her provisions and fill her poor with bread.

The policy of this kingdom is from above, "For our conversation is in heaven," and it is therefore as becometh the children of God. All earthly religions have to depend on human policy, human wisdom, and humanely devised *means*: but not so with the kingdom which no man can see except he be born again.

The protection of that kindgom is

of him who is a wall of fire around about it, and the glory in its midst. All anti-christian religious establishments desire the arm of human government—regal power and human means, for their protection; but not so with the kingdom of Jesus Christ—the eternal God is the refuge of his people and underneath them are the everlasting arms.

All provision on which the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord are fed, comforted, instructed, and secured, are spiritual, and therefore cannot emanate from any other than a spiritual fountain. Although the world, the flesh and Satan have volunteered, like the aliens about Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to furnish God's people with food, the order of the government forbids the traffic with them; and it is impossible that the children of the kingdom should be fed with any other food than that which God has graciously provided, and abundantly blessed.

Should the government of the kingdom of our Redeemer be to any extent divided with angels or men, whatsoever part or portion these should administer, must necessarily detract so much from the power and glory of Christ. "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." So stands the record of the Holy One. The subjects of his government are forbidden to call any man *master*, or *father*, as their Master and spiritual Progenitor is in heaven, and nothing can be born of the flesh but flesh; so that without being *born again* no man can see the kingdom of God. A legislature of unregenerate men who cannot see the kingdom, would be very poorly qualified to legislate for a kingdom which is to them absolutely invisible; and if there were none but regenerated men seated in legislation,

they being by the new birth qualified to see the kingdom of God, would to a man, know the the same illuminating work of the Spirit, that they could do nothing to aid in the legislative or executive departments of the Messiah's kingdom.

The destiny of the kingdom of which we write, differs essentially from that of all other kingdoms. The best systems of human government are destined to crumble to the ground. In the providence of God, empires are founded, kingdoms and republics are raised up, they reach their climax, and then decline, and finally cease to be reckoned among the things that be; but the kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall never end. It shall never be changed, superceded, or transferred to other hands. The mountains shall depart, the hills shall be removed, the earth and sea shall pass away, and all the elements of this world shall be dissolved; but the kingdom of our God shall survive them all, and flourish in eternal bloom. How presumptuous, then, for monarchs of the earth, whose transient glory is as a withering flower, or human legislatures, which God shall obliterate, to prepare the way of the rising empire of his Son, to reach forth the guilt-polluted fingers of their power, to point out the course in which God requires his children to move.

Seeing, then, that we look for such things—seeing that we have received a kingdom which is not of this world, which cannot be moved—let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
John 10:11

MEETINGS

The Lord willing, there will be a fifth Sunday meeting in January 1984 at Good Hope Primitive Baptist meeting house, near Strong, Ark. Go about 1 mile out of Strong on highway 275, 6 miles to the meeting house. The church is located about 100 yards off the road to the left.

We invite all lovers of the truth and those of like precious faith to come and meet with us.

Lula Fox, clerk
Good Hope Church

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution List For August 1983

- Mrs. Frances Thorpe, VA ... \$ 3.00
- Mrs. Virginia Conner, VA..... 2.00
- Robert L. Fekote, NY 7.00
- Buford Holland, VA..... 7.00
- Howard L. Peters, VA..... 2.00
- C.R. Peters, VA..... 1.00
- Mrs. N. Hunt, VA 2.00
- Frank Hunt, VA..... 7.00
- C.B. Crofts, VA 7.00
- Mrs. Ruth Steiner, NY 3.00
- Kenneth L. Black, B.C. CAN.... 7.00
- H.M. Pullig, LA 2.00
- Ms. Martha Williams, MO ... 30.00
- Mrs. Ila F. Herbin, NC 3.00
- Mrs. H.H. Blanton, MS 3.00
- Zeno McKinney, NC 2.00
- James W. Burgin, TX 2.00
- Jesse Ramsey, VA 7.00
- Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX 2.00
- Ralph Horne, NC 13.00
- Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA..... 7.00
- Mrs. Geneva W. Meara, CA ... 50.00
- Mrs. Aleveta Hopkins, VA 2.00
- K.J. Carter, MD 2.00
- Rufus L. Jacks, AL 12.00
- Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA 2.00
- Paul D. Smith, NC 7.00

| |
|-------------------|
| OBITUARIES |
|-------------------|

**SISTER MABLE DAWKINS
HATAWAY**

We bow in humble submission to the Divine will of our Heavenly Father who in his infinite wisdom and mercy called one of his precious jewels, our dear Mother Mable Dawkins Hataway. She was born in Montgomery County, Alabama 10 March 1890 and departed this life 29 December 1982. She was the daughter of Washington and Frances Ellen Dawkins. She married Luther L. Hataway 7 September 1907, who preceded her in death by 20 years. She was a member of Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church, Montgomery County, Alabama. She had been a member of this Faith and Order since June 1909, 73 years and 6 months. She loved her church and the Primitive Baptist doctrine that it stands for. She had a wonderful experience that gave her a precious hope that she might be a vessel of Mercy. She was a faithful and devoted member, never missing a service unless providentially hindered. She desired that the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Savior dwell within our hearts. She was an inspiration to all who knew her. We feel that we can say she kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness. Although her work on earth is finished her memory lingers with all who knew her.

Funeral service was conducted at Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church 31 December 1982 by her beloved Pastor Elder J.P. Morgan. He told so beautifully of the things she believed. The hymn "Amazing Grace" was sung by a few of her friends, this being her favorite song. She believed that there

was no other way to obtain Salvation but Through Grace. She was laid to rest in the church Cemetery beside her husband.

Left to mourn her passing are three daughters, all of whom are members of Pisgah Church, and 6 sons, 18 Grandchildren, 25 Great Grandchildren and 8 Great Great Grandchildren.

God was Merciful to our dear Mother. She did not suffer Physically. We all miss her so very much, but have so many sweet memories. We feel the loss deeply, yet all must submit to the will of God, and believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Roma H. Smith, daughter
Church Clerk

**SISTER TOIA EMMA
MARSHALL ALDERMAN
(1897-1982)**

Sister Toia Emma Marshall Alderman died in the Danville Memorial Hospital February 12, 1982.

She was born in Carroll County, December 9, 1897; she was the daughter of Mary-Ellen Quesenberry and Elbert A. Marshall.

She is survived by a daughter, Naomi Alderman Scarborough of Danville, Virginia; a son, Marvin E. Alderman of Richmond, Virginia; two grandchildren; and one great grandchild; one full-sister, Ada Marshall Bond of Richmond, Virginia; one half-sister, Lillie Campell of Danville, Virginia; two half-brothers: Graham Marshall of Danville, Virginia, and Simon (Jack) Marshall of Durham, North Carolina.

Sister Alderman united with Dan River Church on March 26, 1978 and was a faithful member until her death.

She left to her family and friends many precious memories of joy for which we shall always be grateful.

CLARENCE G. STEGALL

We at Old Mt. Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who in His divine wisdom and mercy removed from our midst our dear beloved deacon and brother, Clarence G. Stegall, March 20, 1983.

Brother Clarence had been in declining health a number of years, and confined to bed several months, in much pain, yet never complained, bore his afflictions with patience, always smiling when his many friends and relatives came to visit. Brother Clarence often spoke of wanting to go home, and was not afraid to die. We feel that he felt as the poet; "If Heaven be then so glorious, Lord, why should I stay from thense?"

He lived and died with one hope, a hope in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.

He was so quietly taken in his sleep that his son Richard and his wife that was with him never noticed until they saw that he was not making the usual sounds. Sweet is the sleep of God's dear children.

Brother Stegall was born August 11, 1899, in Pittsylvania County, a son of the late Thomas Stegall and Mary Bishop Stegall.

On September 23, 1917, he was married to Hattie Holly Stegall, who survives. He was a retired farmer and deacon of Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church. He filled the office of deacon well, and was loved by all that knew him.

He leaves to mourn, his wife Sister Hattie, three daughters, Janie Wyatt of Danville, Virginia Turner of Rt. 1, Danville and Irene Oaks of Rt. 3, Chatham; four sons, Charlie Stegall of Whitmell, Percy Stegall of Hurt, Richard Stegall and William Stegall of Danville; one sister, Edna Powell

of Danville; thirteen grandchildren and nineteen great grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel by Elder Wallace Smith and Elder H.W. Wray. The body was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of his Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

May the family be reconciled to His will.

Done in church conference September 17, 1983.

Elder H.W. Wray, moderator
Sarah H. Barker, clerk

SISTER MINNIE F. WEAVER

On May 22, 1983, Sister Minnie F. Weaver was called away at the age of eighty-eight. She was a member of Liberty Church of the Seven Mile Association. We feel that she was blessed to live a very full life here and was blessed with good health to work and help others. Through much sickness in her home she was a wonderful helpmate to three husbands. Sister Weaver was the wife of the late Junius J. Weaver, also a member at Liberty Church, who passed away December 20, 1971.

She enjoyed being at church with Brother Weaver during the years that they were married. They both joined the church on April 3, 1966. They have been missed very much at Liberty Church, by everyone.

Sister Weaver is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Horton of Fuquay-Varina, Maybell Johnson of Angier; a brother Frank Cates of Fuquay-Varina; three stepdaughters, Effie Clayton of Willow Springs, Mrs. Maude Parker of Dunn, Betty

Sue Wilkins of Enka, N.C.; four stepsons, H.T. Weaver and Wade Weaver of Dunn, Granville Weaver of Benson, Coolidge Weaver of Spring Lake; seven grandchildren; thirteen great grandchildren and two great, great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Kennevec Baptist Church on Tuesday, May 24, 1983.

Committee:
Sister Bessie Hall
Brother Wade Weaver
Brother James G. Young

IRA CALDWELL

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call home a loved one, Ira Caldwell, a dear husband and dad. He was a firm believer in the predestination of all things. Born June 7, 1904 and departed this life September 4, 1983.

Surviving is his lovely wife Erma and three daughters, Freda Alice Daniels of Oceana, West Virginia, Dorothy Foster of Cedar Grove and Patsy Chambers of Danville, Virginia.

He was laid to rest to await the coming again of our Lord and Savior.

The beautiful service was conducted by our moderator Elder William Bird. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Written by his daughter
Dorothy Foster

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
John 8:12

POETRY

*What a glorious feeling from within,
Wrought by Our heavenly King.
He brings Us comfort, faith, and hope,
That We might praise His name.*

*He came to earth by the will of God,
To die upon a tree,
Redeemed His own, the church,
His Bride,
His blood has made Us free.*

*By grace He circumcised Our heart,
By faith We'll ever stand.
Following His footsteps day by day,
Sustained by His loving kindness.*

*Dear seeking Children Of His Grace,
Who receive a spiritual ear,
Give thanks to God for His dear son,
For He is always near.*

*How sweet it is to feel enshrined,
In the mantle of His Love,
Some day He'll call Us to that home,
To live with Him above.*

By George N. Lee
2414 Buena Dr.
Mobile, AL

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.
John 10:9

| |
|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">BOOK NOTICES</p> |
|--|

**EDITORIAL WRITINGS
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE**

(Founder and Editor of the *Signs of The Times*)
1832-1881

Volume 3 - 480 pages \$16.00 each

Volume 4 - 512 pages \$16.00 each

(Add \$2.00 each for mailing)
(Maryland residents add 5% Sales Tax)

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

**“THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON
OF GOD”**

We have a limited number of Elder David Bartley's excellent book "The Priesthood of the Son of God". While supplies last, we will sell them for \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing. (Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax.)

Send orders to:

Elder James F. Poole
P. O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

The *Signs of the Times, Inc.*, is pleased to announce that we still have available for purchase the book "Feast of Fat Things."

This book, first published by the *Signs* some years ago, was reprinted last year. It is rich with doctrine of Old School or Primitive Baptists and should be in the home of every believer.

CONTENTS

1. The Black Rock Address of 1832.
2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians" by William Gadsby
3. "Fatalism" by H. M. Curry
4. "A Dream Tour Through Arminian Heaven" by H. M. Curry
5. "The Celestial Railroad" by Hawthorne
6. "A Riddle" by Gilbert Beebe

These articles are all excellent for showing what we believe and the book will make an excellent gift for our children and friends who may inquire of our faith.

PRICING IS AS FOLLOWS

1 copy - \$5. plus \$1. for mailing
5 copies - \$20. plus \$3. for mailing
10 copies - \$30. plus \$4. for mailing
(Maryland residents please add 5% for sales tax)

We urge you to buy multiple amounts as we have only a limited number available. This is a beauti-

ful, hardbound book of 128 pages with a blue library buckram cover.

Send all orders to:
 Elder James F. Poole
 P. O. Box 1250
 Salisbury, Maryland 21801

POETRY

A PSALM OF PRAISE

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.

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

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

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

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

THE BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 151

KEELING, VA., DECEMBER 1983

No. 12

S I G N S O F T H E T I M E S

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

ISSN - 0199-0063

Subscription price \$7 per year-\$13 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D.V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/83
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| EDITORIAL..... | 242 |
| Written by Elder W.D. Griffin | |
| CHURCH OF OUR FAITH..... | 246 |
| CORRESPONDENCE | 247 |
| VOICES OF THE PAST..... | 254 |
| Written by Elder F.A. Chick | |
| MEETINGS | 259 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS | 260 |
| OBITUARIES | 261 |
| Gary E. Akers | |
| Hester Holland Vernon | |
| Sister Mary Louise Taylor Everett | |
| Fannie Lester Thomason | |
| BOOK NOTICES | 264 |

EDITORIAL

PROVERBS IX:I, 6

Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city, who so is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

The wisdom of this world did not have anything to do with this work. Every step in this work was, and is, performed by wisdom. It cannot be otherwise, seeing that every good and perfect gift come from above (James I:17).

Come hither, dear reader, and let us, by the effectual calling of God, glean in the gospel field. It is the only good field for a poor sinner to glean in. We gleaned in the earthen field in the morning. Wisdom spoke to us of the blessings in that field, and we set forth to have our way and we lost our standing, we lost our footing, we all fell. Wisdom, which is from above, designed a far better piece of work from which we would gain a standing in her house, in the building not made with hands. As to the origin of sin, I feel to leave that where Paul left it, exactly where it should be left, ledged against us (See Romans 5). Wisdom was in charge from all eternity, and the events in the early morning of creation did not cause her to destroy her blueprint, but rather she was the Masterbuilder all the while.

At the time of this writing she had already designed, laid the foundation and finished her house. As far as chronology goes it is not worthwhile for me to know the year and date of this building. In my Book, it was designed and finished before there were manifested anyone to need or to dwell in this building. To me, it was built in eternity, and thus the time is dateless with God and man.

How little wisdom is displayed by man, and what is displayed is that which has been given to him, to us. As long as mortal man is left to himself, he is ever learning and he never will be able to come to a knowledge of the truth. What a wonderful doctrine it is that this wisdom was on the side of God's dear family, thus enabling them to escape the snare

laid for them (Psa. 124). So poor is the kind of house that the wisdom of men would build that the Lord came down and confounded them. How great and marvelous is that wisdom which is from above; even that wisdom that built her house before one of her children ever needed it. Every situation that has arisen in the travel of the family of God was builded, made ready for occupancy before there was anyone of God's family to need housing.

Mothers in a greater degree, perhaps, than fathers, would have a suitable abode for her coming children. Mothers and fathers do have a desire to provide good gifts for their children, and that is the usual custom among us all. However, we are earthly, mothers forget her suckling child; fathers leave them to their own resources but wisdom provides first and always for her children. This is certainly exemplified in the building of her house. She is justified of all her children, not too large a house, not cramped quarters.

Wisdom begins the work; she finishes the work. Fathers and mothers of the earth oft times do as best they can in teaching and providing for the welfare of their offspring, but oft times fails to give wisdom to them and they stray afar. But not so with the mother of the children of the kingdom of heaven.

It has been said that order is the first law of heaven. It is true. May God impart wisdom to both writer and reader that we may be blessed as a pair of travellers to sit at the feet of Jesus and to ever be found learning that wisdom from whence true contentment springs.

These seven pillars claim our attention. To all building contractors that would be one too many. Who would know how to build a building with an odd pillar? Who of all the earthly teachers and people of wisdom

would look any further for an odd number of pillars? Do we have any use for this odd one? Does it have a place of usefulness in the whole. In the field of religion odd things are out. An odd pillar and an odd doctrine must not be had. Even things, to them are better. Each of these things must be compatible to human nature, therefore no oddities, no perplexities; no, not for a moment must there be such a thing as the purpose of God. That is not the seventh pillar, but it is the first pillar. It has been said that the cause purposeless is without a foundation. That is true in God's building as well as man's. Therefore in building the world, the house of wisdom, there must be a good and wholesome start, even a purpose that covers in detail all powers that be. A man that designs a house, or God that designs a world without a purpose is doomed to failure. To the amazement of the world at large, God counted up the cost to begin with; purposed in Himself all things, and, consequently, made the world and the fullness thereof. The world, still without wisdom, still learning, but never able to get a knowledge of the truth, is still in their pristine ignorance.

Since the Lord of wisdom has declared that He would pluck up every plant which the heavenly Father had not planted, I am equally sure that the removal (the attempt of removal) of anyone of the seven pillars or the attempt to add any pillars to the house of the Lord will meet with instant upheaval in the plans of those thus occupied.

In the providing for our families of the earth there is much vital labor necessary more than the mere building of a home. We are well aware of the difficulties involved for our unborn children if we left them unprovided for at their arrival in this earthy kingdom. It would be demoralizing

to children to be brought up under such rigid circumstances as that, to say nothing at all in regard to the contempt of our fellow citizens. Yet, they advocate such a hard doctrine as that, to wit, that the decision to be born is left up to them, and in addition that the food they get, and care that a babe must have in its infantile state is left up to them.

Come, dear children, gather around, and let us rejoice in the work our mother that begot us to better things than that, even a mother that builded her family a house before they arrived, and in addition had furnished the table to which each child is drawn by hunger and nature, and is made to know, and to hear and to heed Mother's voice, come and eat.

If not mistaken I write to you, that is, to the hungry and the destitute. Let us go up to the banqueting house which our Mother built, and to the table which her hand, even the hand of mercy dripping with her own blood, as she comes from Golgotha's Hill after having achieved victory over our adversary.

The soul feeding dainties on this table originated by purpose in the eternal mind of Wisdom. Every heir of hers were chosen in Her Son before the dust of the hills was laid. Not only were they chosen in Him before the curtains of time were let down, but every blessing from Him were according to that time of choice, and according to the purpose (or, if you prefer, predestination) of Him that chose them in Him. What a blessing indeed to be born with an appetite for these spiritual dainties, but what glories are concealed from the fancies of men, and are revealed by the Spirit of Wisdom. Thrice blessed art thou O Israel. Wisdom built you a dwelling, Wisdom furnished the table, and Wisdom wrought all of our works in us, even forgetting not to give us an appetite for such heavenly fur-

nishings.

My dear readers, there is another doctrine. It is not from heaven; it is not to heaven born citizens; it is not the doctrine of Wisdom. In our relationship with the earth, the hostess of party functions request the attending parties to contribute dish to help out. I do not object to that until it is brought in (or rather attempted to be brought into the house of Wisdom) to augment and to stretch out or increase or make up the lack in the furnishings of our Mother. That does not comfort; it has not any strengthening to a poor destitute sinner. This doctrine originated or was made manifest in a lie. Satan lied to our parents, he was, and is, a liar from the beginning. His doctrine was the doctrine of substitution. Substituting something else that was just as good and maybe better. It is not true doctrine; it is a fabrication, a conglomeration of partial truths close kin of Job's miserable comforters. When it is proclaimed today it sounds as out of place to the dear family of our mother Wisdom as it did to another of her sons in his day (See the testimony of Job).

So often the doctrine of God our Saviour is called a hard and offensive doctrine. Wisdom does not say so. Ignorant men say so. On one occasion the Saviour asked the question, to wit, The Saviour asked, Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? In His glorious ministry he asked that question several times. Not the first time did one ever answer Him. Thus it stands that not one in Bible days, nor in the days since then including the present day, has any one answered in the negative to His question. He does have that right.

Wisdom hath killed her beasts. She killed all of the beasts assigned to her, for her use. It was as much the work of Wisdom to give us the rigid law of Moses as it was the gift of the

grace or gospel dispensation. Every dove and pigeon, bullock and heifer were slain by Mother wisdom. That was the execution of the mandates of the law, and the law was given that the offense might abound. That Wisdom was designed that the offence might abound for where that offence abounded, grace did much more abound. Where that law was executed, it did of necessity, bring death to all that was used, either in the typical use of doves and pigeons and bullocks and heifers, or in the ultimate putting to death of the beast, the Lion of the tribe of Judea. What a display of mercy is this to poor sinners, and how free to them it was both in type and in the dying of the Lion of the tribe of Judea. My heart and mind and sould is given a respite from the burden of my guilt, of the burden of my many sins.

Not the first poor sinner could design such a glorious truth as this much less could they carry it out. It originated in the eternal mind of wisdom and she put the typical beasts, and the anti-typical Lion of the tribe of Judea to death. Poor sinner come drink deep of the ever flowing, ever free fountain of living waters.

The casual observer will say, There is not much wisdom in having the Lamb of God put to death for sinners that will never make a payment on the cost. Ah, come and listen closely little children. See the mighty display of that wisdom in saving the bride of Christ. She was ten thousand talents in debt and not a fathing to pay *with*. She was depraved within and without, and could not come into the nuptials of marriage. She could not do this. She never was seen as being able of herself to make a token payment. Now listen dear bankrupt saint. Listen at the work of Wisdom. She set Christ up in eternity as a Lamb slain for the sins of that bride. Time, even as

tempetuous as it gets to be, will not have an interrupting sound as this good news sounds in the ears of poor sinful creatures. Eternity, with all of its coroding influence on created things will never keep a hearing ear from hearing the good news in such a rich, such a complete, such uplifting gospel truth as this. Wisdom arraigned all things in such a transcending manner that she had nothing to pay *with*, but there is still more of the work of grace displayed in the glory of it all. She purposed in eternity that she would have *nothing to pay*.

She hath mingled her wine. The wine was hers. She did not buy this at the local dispensary, nor does she have a particular location among the deacons of the church from which she keeps a supply on hand for emergencies. It does not have anything to do with alcoholic beverages, and yet these mingled wines of wisdom will give you a feeling that is produced only by this mixture of wines well mingled.

Weak, trembling, undone men in nature also mingle wine. Some of the weaker of these weak men try with all of their wisdom to take this wine as a beverage to assuage natural thirst in the kingdom of heaven. The two do not have anything in common, and will not mix anymore than will any other fleshly works of men and the grace of God mix. The attempt to mix any part of the life of natural living with spiritual living which Mother wisdom gives, ends in ignomy and shame to the user thereof.

But what exhilaration there is in the joys of the wine of peace and humility of good works and humbly seeking to know the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ and frequently gathering at the mercy seat seeking aid to walk therein. And what humiliation, and what trembling, and what contriteness of spirit in one that is made to drink of land of

Lodebar, and to look up to our mother Wisdom in thankfulness that the things which we so much fear of losing are hid from all the powers of darkness; that they cannot destroy them from us, that which they would take from us is hid with Christ in God, and not one thing of that which was treasured in the bosom of our Mother Wisdom can ever be destroyed, seeing that those powers does not know what it is that you have been given in Christ, nor do they know, the Giver of it all.

The table thus furnished and every morsel on it is unknown to them that would, if they could, destroy it. This table at which Wisdom's children

dine is hid from ungodly men, and the taste and pleasant nourishment that the food gives is unknown as to source and effects that it produces to the recipients of it.

The ignorant would destroy that which feeds and causes prosperity in the kingdom of heaven if they knew what it was and where it could be encountered. Thus there is not any danger of this ignorant nation ever laying a hand on this table, nor of ever partaking of the riches the Wisdom has placed thereon for her little ones.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Bethel Church was constituted in 1937 and was built on the land given by Gedie and Ruth Blalock who were members there. The new and present building was built in 1980 at which time the name was changed from "New Home", the name used from the time it was constituted. Bethel is located between Steens, Miss. and Milport, Alabama and their meeting time is two o'clock

on the third Sunday of each month. Their present pastor is Elder H.C. Moon.

NOTE: To introduce your church, please send a snap shot (preferably black and white) along with brief history, Sunday of your meeting, geographic location and name of present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

When my husband and I got to Monticello Church the fifth Sunday in October where the West Country Line Union was being held, Elder Spangler was opening the service with song and prayer. He called on Brother Cleo Roberson first and though, he hasn't been speaking long, he was blessed to preach so sweetly from one verse that reads, "the Lord is our strength and a very present help in the time of trouble." I feel he has been called, surely, and the Lord will bless him to preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Elder Wray was asked to preach next and he used scripture from the old part of the Bible, Isaiah, and spoke to our comfort and what he was blessed to read and say was food for our, I hope hungry souls.

Elder Kenneth Key was called on then, and he read from Hebrews twelfth chapter, first and second verses. Now it was what he read and a dream I had early Sunday morning just before I woke up that I believe caused me to try to write these few words. I have always enjoyed hearing our pastor, but to me, and for me, he was blessed with this scripture to speak from so wonderfully well. I dreamed my dear mother, who has been dead for eight years, made the bed I slept in, and I walked in the room as she was finishing putting the bedspread on, stepped toward the bed and started to redo or fix the head and foot of the bed over, when she said, "is it not alright?" I couldn't touch it for I felt so strongly if I did, it would be wrong, so I said, "It will be alright", and we both walked out of the bedroom. I have a habit of doing things over that others do for me or asking them to do it a little better and it has condemned

me until I feel it has become a sin. I do lots of other sins that I wish I didn't, but this has been and still is one of my worst sins, I feel, too hard to please, about little trifle things. Brother Key did not dwell on what I felt was for me. In the first verse, "let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doeth so easily beset us" but he expounded on all the good things that are written in both verses. I wouldn't have been anywhere else and how I enjoyed every word he said. I think what I quoted was a reproof for me, from the first verse. He didn't know I received it that way but I was given to think later that day that the Lord showed me in the dream how wrong and sinful I was acting, and then gave Brother Key scripture that fitted my condition so well. With the Lord's help I am going to try to lay aside this sin, harder than I ever have.

After a bountiful lunch, the meeting continued. My husband asked that we have the next Union meeting which will be in January, at Moons Creek Church. Elder Leonard Key was blessed to preach about, a child of grace has to be hewed as a little piece of rock, cut off here and a little there, making them fit for the Kingdom, using the temple that Solomon built out of a special kind of wood and material, as an example, making it so easy to understand.

Elder Spangler spoke last and he said if he had a text it would be one word, "anoint". I think he must have read from Samuel. He said the Lord told Samuel to anoint Saul a king over Israel and when Saul refused to obey the words of the Lord, Samuel was told to go to Jesse's house to find a king. After seeing all his sons that Jesse thought were alright or qualified, Samuel asked, are here all thy children? And he said, there remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel

said unto Jesse, send and fetch him. And the Lord said arise and anoint him, for this is he. I'm sure we all enjoyed Brother Spangler's preaching.

I believe the Lord was in our midst and I hope all there, were spiritually fed.

In Hope,
EMA SARTIN

Topeka, Kanas

I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation, and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of "like precious faith," and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah XV: 22: "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." No doubt the connecting sentences have a deep significance, and I would love to read after the pen of some one who

is given understanding of them. As for me, if I attempt to search and find out God, I am apt to find that his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out, and can only speak of the things which are given and revealed to me, as I humbly hope, by his Spirit, and leave them to his elect, precious, to judge whether they are of him, or only the emanations of fleshly imagination. If it was not a token of remembrance from a compassionate, unchanging God, then I fear I have never received a seal of his love, as he sometimes allows me to dare hope he has given me. I was often made to reflect on the words, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." It seemed that in this the Lord quickened again my slothful, forgetful heart, and for a little while my troubles were put in the background and I was given a little surcease from the tempest raging in my mind, and instead thereof a season of refreshing from his very presence, which he made me feel was going with me.

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

*"When converts first begin to sing,
Their happy soul are on the wing;
Their theme is all redeeming love,
Fain would they be with Christ above."*

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us to "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethern) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sober dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

*"It is not long before they feel
Their feeble sould begin to reel;
They think their former hopes are
vain,
They're filled with sorrow, grief and
pain."*

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their

carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more? But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbelief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. "But the root of the righteous shall not be moved." The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. "I am the root and the offspring of David." This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee," but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit," which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

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

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams

forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," but the "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthy hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the lo heres and lo theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and

ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a "needs be" for it all, and we know that

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

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

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

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

*"When a few more days I've wasted,
When a few more scence are o'er,
When a few more griefs I've tasted,
I shall fall, to bloom no more."*

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

all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my change come.

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

of all saints. But in this our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But "as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

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

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the

people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
MARY ELLISON

EXPERIENCE

Danville, Virginia
June, 1926

To Elder W.R. Dodd:

It is with fear and trembling that I make this attempt to comply with your request that I write you my experience. It makes me indescribably humble that you should desire such a thing of poor insignificant me. You said if I had a mind. I have for a long time felt that I would love to leave behind me a written testimony of some of God's wonderful love, mercy, and tender care for me, a wretched hell-deserving sinner; yet, to this time I have never before ventured to try to pen any part of it, realizing that tongue nor pen can express what I have seen, felt, and handled of His goodness. I shrink from this attempt, feeling that those who know me best are ready to say (and truthfully) "She does not live up to her profession." Alas,

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,

I fear that I am not born again."

Yet, as I go back, as it were, to Bethel, and feel surely there has been some kind of change; since the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love; yet I don't know how to tell about it. When I can exclaim with the poet, "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see," the whole story is told.

In my nineteenth year I attended an association at Senaca meeting house in Campbell County, Virginia.

I was having quite a nice time with the young folks (according to my raising). When services began I would find a seat and listen to the preaching. I got a close seat in the afternoon on Sunday, and heard, as I had never heard before, the closing sermon delivered by Elder E.V. White. The text was "But it has happened unto them, according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." Oh! how plainly I could see that my profession at a Methodist Camp Meeting six years before was but filthy rags, and that I was a vile, helpless sinner. I found myself so miserable and undone. As they sung the last song and took the parting hand, I would have given all the world had it been mine, to have been one with them. Plainly did I see myself on the "left hand", with not one ray of hope. My sins, like mountains, rose before me, and I could see no way of escape from the justice of a sin-avenging God. I went home with a burdened heart, which seemed unbearable; but would not for anything have let my people know that I had had a serious thought.

I often read the Bible for my mother, always finding it a dull, tiresome task, and would feel much relieved when she would say, "Daughter, that will do for this time." But now I had a desire to read it in search of some promise for a vile, penitent wretch. I would steal my chance to read it after this manner: I kept a novel on the same table with the Bible; the novel I kept laying open, while I intently searched the Scriptures. But if I heard foot-steps down would go the closed Bible, and I would appear much interested in my novel. This searching continued almost three years; and instead of promises I found condemnation everywhere. The promises were there, but I could not claim them.

A few months after the association referred to above I was (in the absence of my mother) entertaining a Primitive friend. Elder Wright was having an appointment at Whitehorn, three miles from home. I really wanted her to want to go, so there would be no suspicion that I cared anything about it (it being in the week at a busy time). No arrangement could be made for us to ride so I casually suggested that if she cared to go I would be glad to walk with her (fearing that she would not go). But God gave her a mind to say, "Alright." There were just a few old brothers and sisters present; the preacher, an ordinary looking stranger, came forward, and to me preached a wonderful sermon along the line of experience. While he described conviction, I could but wonder how that stranger could tell exactly how I felt; but alas, when he began to describe deliverance I again saw myself "cut off." None of that fit my case. My burden of sin grew heavier all the time, as I journeyed on, trying to do something to induce God to be merciful to me.

But by and by the secret of my soul trouble leaked out, (It was in God's time). People would talk to me on the subject of religion and before I would hardly be aware of it, I would be preaching a sovereign God; that though He sent my soul to hell, His righteous law approved it well. In my poor heart there was a constant yearning that God would have mercy, and not mete out to me justice. I firmly believed that He had a chosen people; and that all for whom Christ died, would be everlastingly saved; but did He die for me? No not for so hell-deserving a sinner as me (words fail me here). Sinking, yes sinking into utter despair, there came into my mind a blessed hymn (I knew but little about singing, but this one line). I must have sung with the "Spirit and understanding." I sung as I had

never sung before, and have never sung since, - that pleading hymn, "Father, I stretch my hand to thee, etc." I did not finish all the words, for my soul burst forth in such rapturous adoration to Him, who I then felt had, for Christ's sake, heard and answered my fervent prayer. I could not see then, as it were by an eye of faith, how our dear Redeemer had (before I drew my breath) with His precious blood, paid all that justice claimed. In the place of despair, there sprang up in my breast a hope that has been an anchor to my poor tempest-tossed soul on to this present time. Many the times I have felt that the anchor was gone and the old vessel must sink, each time to find it still there, only down under the deep water just out of sight. On that memorable day, with my burden gone I knew not where or how, I enjoyed undisturbed bliss of mind for just a few hours. After which period God, for a purpose of His own, let the Devil say to me "You are deceived, there is nothing to it." Then doubts, yes doubts that have followed me on and on, sprang up within me. What? hope all the way and doubt all the way? yet not contradictory, but too deep for finite minds. Now when I read the Bible, I dare claim those sweet promises as mine too.

I soon was given a desire to follow my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism (the form of which I had never a doubt). To do this I must ask a home with the people of God. I dearly loved them, and desired to be with them; but the feeling of unworthiness that followed me I cannot describe; neither can I describe my longing to be with them.

It was in the month of July, 1886, that my hope of deliverance came. The third Saturday of that year I went before the church at White-thorne; could not tell them anything, only that I wanted to live with them,

but was too unworthy. Oh, how deeply I felt it. They received me, and I was baptised the next day, with a sister who had freely talked to the church before me. As our pastor, Elder G.W. Hundley, raised me from the watery grave, I strangled just a little, but gave it no thought in my happiness, for this happiness was to be mine for only a few minutes. As we went up from the water to the mill-house to change our clothing the other sister just behind me remarked (it was thoughtlessly, I am sure) to a friend: "I am so glad I did not strangle; I have always heard that it was a sign they were not changed." Dear old sister Hodnett, who walked beside, lovingly put her arm around me, saying, "Don't let that bother you." But alas, it had taken hold on my very heartstrings. I saw myself deceived; and I had a public manifestation of it to so large a crowd of people. I was a reproach to the Church of God; and many other similar things I felt. But there was a deep yearning of heart that God in Mercy would (in His own way) show me clearly if I was deceived, that I might have my name removed from the church book and turn back from it all. My eyes closed in slumber that night with that petition in my soul. God gave me a dream, (you see it is said we cannot get along without a dream) of a most beautiful baptism and I the candidate. I awoke with a feeling of satisfaction concerning my baptism. I might write on and on but half wuld not be told of how God, in His love and tender mercy, has brought me on these many years. Sometimes on the mountain-top, but more frequently deep down in the valley, sometimes the deeper down the more beautiful the Lily I see. I am still clinging to that little hope, be it imaginary, or be it real, it is mine for God gave it to me.

Pardon me. I have written too much. May God give you, and all the

household of faith a mantle of charity to cover my imperfection.

That means me.

BELLE NEAL

The above experience is of the mother of Brother Willie Neal ---The Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

August 1, 1898

But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Before beginning our remarks upon this sentence, we will call attention to the fact that the blessed Redeemer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, as referring to this narrative, and as enforcing his warnings to his disciples then, by the reference to it. In what we shall have to say concerning the text, we desire to also call attention to the use of it made by the Savior. We need not narrate the whole story recorded in this nineteenth chapter of Genesis, as it is familiar to all Bible readers, and as any one can turn to the narrative and read for themselves. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were devoted to destruction, for their great wickedness. Lot and his family dwelt in Sodom. Out of his divine compassion for them God had commanded Lot to depart from the devoted city, that he should not partake of her plagues, and her destruction. The righteous soul of Lot had been vexed at the wickedness of the city, as we are told elsewhere. Abraham, when told of the impending destruction of the city, had interceded for them before the Lord, and had received the promise that if ten righteous men could be found therein, the city should be spared. But

when the angels of God had come to the city and tried it, there were not found even ten righteous men. The condition of the city with regard to its wickedness is plainly discovered by what they tried to do to the two angels. Even the sons-in-law of Lot were involved in the general iniquity which abounded; and even Lot was of such a worldly mind that he and his wife and daughters lingered, loath to leave such a pleasant home in the plain. But the Lord had such compassion upon them, that the angels laid hold upon their hands, and drew them out in haste. How sad it is that not only the world loves wickedness, but that the people of God themselves, so much love the ease and pleasures of the world, that they are slow to leave the evil land, and would still linger there, and though vexed with the evil conduct of the wicked, yet would continue to live in intimate association with them, were it not that the Lord has more compassion upon them, than they have upon themselves, and lays hold upon them and draws them out.

Every believer has to confess with shame, his love of pleasure, and folly, and ease, and that nothing but sovereign grace has constrained him to go out from these things. Even though he can but vex his soul at all the wickedness of the world, yet he lingers near, finding that all the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, go after that which delights the wicked. Therefore he takes great shame to himself, and only praises grace which has saved him. Even when his face is Zionward, and he steadfastly is minded to go forward, with sorrow and shame he finds a deceitful heart inclined to all the evil when he would leave behind. If he does not look back indeed, he finds a law in his members which constantly would induce him to look back. And so he cries out against himself, "I cannot do the

good that it would." He feels that his best obedience is marred by the evil heart within him, which makes his service but partial, and nothing to be boasted of. While this is true of all the people of God, as they all will confess to their shame, and while each one feels to praise unfailing love and care, that they are still pressing on to the better land, and are still going out from the cities of the plain, to the mountains of God, yet it is sorrowfully true of some, that they are found, like Lot's wife, looking back.

First, we are told in the narrative that they lingered, even though that night they had had proof of how great the wickedness of the city was. That night Lot had interceded in vain for the safety of the guests whom the Lord had sent him. He had full proof that he had nothing in common with those among whom he dwelt. Yet his foolish heart was so enamored of the place, that he lingered. But let us not be found judging Lot, lest we judge also our own selves. We know that this world is not our home, that as believers we have nothing in common with it. It does not believe what we do; it does not love what we do; we have visitors which it does not, and for which it does not care, and it despises the heavenly guests, which have come to abide with us. O what a wretched heart that will still linger amid such senses. How little, after all, we are weaned from the world. How much we love it still. But by all this, how is the compassion and mercy of God toward us magnified. Surely there is nothing in us that can merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. Yet he loves us; he loves us without any reason that exists within ourselves. He loves us freely, and because he wills, there is, there can be no other reason. His is the only free love in the universe. How great was the

mercy that could pardon the lingering of Lot, and lay hold upon the hands of him, and his, and draw them out, and hasten their going.

Second, we are told in the narrative that Lot still so much loved the cities of the plain that he could not bear to think of going to the mountains, to which he had been bidden to flee. We recall that when the land was before Abraham and Lot, to choose between them, there was so much of a worldly spirit in Lot, and so little of that which possessed Abraham, that he chose the plain where there appeared to be a prospect of an easy life, rather than submit the choice to God, and that Abraham took that country which Lot had rejected. And now, in the time of the destruction of the city, we find his heart lingering around these same pleasures. So he asked of the angels of God that they would not send him out to the mountains, lest he should meet some evil and die. There was a little city called Zoar, near by, and he asked that instead of departing to the mountain, he might turn aside there and abide. His heart was much in the world of wickedness yet. He could not give up all, and dwell in the mountains which God had chosen for him. How slow we are to learn that God's way is best. How much, even the best of those who love and serve God, live in the world. We excuse many things upon the ground that "it is such a little one." We know and say that this world with all its glory, honor, fame, position and wealth, is doomed to destruction. At the best it can abide but for a little time. Still more we confess that its cares, and pleasures, and ambitions, keep us from the enjoyment of the best, the everlasting things. Yet we are so wedded to it, that when we are bidden to flee to the mountains, where we shall be carried above the plain of this world, and which is our

proper abode, we still cling to the world. We do not obey the injunction of the apostle in full measure when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." On the contrary, we do set our affection on things below, and grovel in the earth. O how great the mercy of God, that we are not left to perish in Sodom, but are hastened out.

Nothing describes the experience of us all, and the confession which we must make, better than the testimony of one who when asked, What part he had done in his salvation? said, "The Lord determined to save me, and I did all I could against it." There is not a foot of the road which has not witnessed a warfare. The flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. How many little cities of the plain we dwell in. How many worldly things claim our affection, and our attention. How loath we are to leave the world. We do not mean how loath we are to die, as we must when the end of life's journey is reached, but how loath we are to be separated from the world in our love, and in our life, day by day. How often the deceitful heart says, "Is it not a little one?" And yet Lot disobeyed God in this thing. The little city was of the plain, as much as was Sodom. Ah, wretched, vile, deceitful heart, that can still cling to what belongs to the world. In this city of the world, Lot found a snare, and through drunkenness was led into grievous sin with his daughters. And Moab and Ammon, deadly foes of Israel in all their history afterwards, were the fruits of this sin. Are not these things written for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world have come? O, that we might be shown the right way, and earnestly abide and walk in it.

In the third place, we are called to

contemplate a still more open violation of the word of the Lord. They have been forbidden to look behind them. Permission had been granted to the weakness of Lot to turn aside into the little city, but no permission had been granted to look behind. If still there is a lingering in the world for a little, there is not to be a looking back. To look back would show that the heart was not in the matter of escape from the sin of the world, with its destruction. Lingering and turning aside into the little city, is from the weakness of the flesh, which the Lord pities, as a father pities his children, because he knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust; but to look back, while the angels of God are hastening us away, is the result of willful perverseness. There is, according to the testimony of the apostle, such a thing as sinning willfully, after we know the truth, and this is an altogether different thing from being overtaken in a fault. For this willful sinning there remains no more sacrifice, but on the contrary, "A certain fearful looking for a judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." When Lot's wife looked back, it seems to us that her sin came under this head. There was no sacrifice for it. The chastisements must be inflicted, both to vindicate the commandments of God, and as a warning to his people during all ages. So the Lord himself said to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife." We believe that Lot's wife must represent one who truly belongs to the family of God, and it seems to us to be an undoubted truth that some of the Lord's own people do look back to the world of sin and folly from which they had escaped, and are engulfed in it, and become so much like the world, that the eye of man cannot tell the difference between them. But how glorious the consideration that, "The foundation of God

stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The Lord knows, if we do not.

Lot's wife, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. In other words, she became like the world around her. In all the plain of Sodom, there rained down fire and brimstone, and the plain was incrustated with elements, which would not suffer any green thing to grow, and where nothing could live, of bird, or beast, or fish. Salt is the sure destruction of all where it falls. We use it to preserve meat, and other things, but we must remember that it does so through the destruction of all life, which would feed upon that which we wish to preserve. It preserves one thing by destroying other things. It is therefore primarily the agent of death and destruction. The region of the Dead Sea is today desolate, by reason of the exceeding saltness of the sea, and of salt mingled in the land around. There is a solemn meaning then in the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. It signified that she had become filled with the elements of the world around her. She had so lived after the flesh that she had died. While she was so much of the world, no spiritual emotion or exercise could live in her. In the Bible sense of the word she was dead. She was identified with the world around her. She stood as a monument of the evil of looking back to the world, and living after the flesh. In all ages of the history of the church, some who have once loved God and his cause, have become enamored of the world so much that they have lost all spiritual interests in the things of the kingdom of God. They have wandered off so far as to never attend the ministry of the word, or upon the services of the sanctuary. They have lived in the company of carnal men, and have enjoyed the pleasures of the world, and have loved pleasure more than God. Some

are in our mind as we write, of whom we believe this to be true. They are pillars, but not pillars of the truth. They are monuments, but not monuments of grace, so far as their daily life is concerned. When they shall be awakened to the knowledge of their sins, and their backslidings shall be healed, as they shall be some day, they will mourn, and will feel that none are such monuments of grace as are they.

We may all, if the words of the Master are true, and of this we must not doubt, become pillars of salt. We may become monuments of God's anger against sin. We may sow to the world and reap corruption. We may so look back to the world that we shall become as the world, and none can see aught that differs from the world. The light within has not died, but it has become concealed. It has been put under a bushel. How terrible are the effects of sin. How much must Abraham have felt to praise that God who had given him such faith that he had not chosen the country of the plain. How great must have been his estimation of that grace which had kept him from looking back, when he was bidden to go out from his own country, and from his own kin, to a land which he did not know of then, but which should afterwards be shown him.

While Lot must have afterwards bemoaned his unbelief and half-heartedness, in the obedience which he had rendered to God. On the other hand, Abraham could not praise himself for his obedience, but must ever praise that grace which had wrought in him to the end that he might believe and render the obedience of faith. Sin has its wages, but obedience has no wages of eternal life, for this is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. If any of those who love and serve God, are now dwelling in the heavenly land that was

promised to them through Jesus Christ, and dwelling there in peace, they cannot say it is because of their obedience. They must and do praise the sovereign grace of God, in it. This we know by experience. We have never felt that we could attribute any spiritual blessing which we had received to any merit of ours; but we have ever felt when darkness and sorrow have been ours, we have deserved it all. We have had the wages of sin, but we have never found any wages of righteousness. Here all, all, is of grace. If we have in anything obeyed, while others have not, this we know is not to our credit, but to the praise of grace. From us then must all boasting be excluded. The peace and the obedience which leads to peace are alike to the praise of the glory of his grace. We repeat the words of the Savior, "Remember Lot's wife." We trust that in the hearts of many of our readers, he has spoken these words, and if not the very words themselves, yet the substance and meaning of them. It is noteworthy that when the Savior used these words, he was speaking also of destruction which should come upon the people, as it had come upon Sodom. The hearts of men are not changed with the advancing centuries. Men are no better now than when Sodom was consumed. It is still true that the hearts of disciples are deceitful, and cling to the world, and so the blessed Master implies, when he bids the disciples learn from Lot's wife. For ourselves, and our readers, we could desire nothing better than that the lessons of this narrative might abide with us. O, that our separation from the world might be more complete. O, that the disposition of heart which would lead us to look back, might be so bound, and kept in subjection, that we might be daily, monuments of the grace which teaches us that denying ungodliness,

and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world.

When we began this article, we expected to write but briefly upon this matter, but the subject had enlarged, and we have written as it has been opened to us. We shall be compelled to leave some other things, of which we expected to write at this time, until a later date. The subject has been to us a very solemn one. We trust that it may not be wholly without profit to others.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

At the request of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, near Delmar, Delaware, for the purpose of calling a pastor, Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church, Newark, Delaware, in the afternoon session on August 14, 1983 passed a motion to call a Presbytery consisting of the Deacons and Elders present who were in good standing at home and who were in fellowship with the churches involved. All present were considered to be qualified. The function of the Presbytery was to examine Brother Robert N. Lackey and, if found to be qualified in accordance with the written word of God to the satisfaction and discretion of its collective judgment, to ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The Presbytery was convened with Elder James F. Poole of Welsh Tract Church chosen moderator, Elder C. C. Morris of Saints Rest Church, Dallas, Texas, Deacons Clarence Huston of Little Creek Church, William S. Adkins, Willie A. Davis and Frank A. Holland, all of Snow Hill Church,

Snow Hill, Maryland, and Francis A. Adkins of Welsh Tract Church, the latter chosen clerk of the Presbytery. Welsh Tract Church, at Brother Lackey's request, had specifically asked Elder Morris to participate in the Presbytery.

Elder Poole noted that the Presbytery had no function or power but to carry out the wishes of the church and the existence of the Presbytery was only for the duration that the church was in conference.

After the candidate was presented to the Presbytery, on motion by Elder Morris, second by Brother Huston, Licentiate Lackey was asked to relate his experience and call to the ministry. The moderator asked that the qualifications of a minister in 2nd Timothy be read so Brother Lackey's experience and call could be judged. The Presbytery was satisfied with Brother Lackey's testimony.

The candidate was then examined concerning his doctrinal stand. In response to a question about the desire to speak, Brother Lackey stated that his desire was to be with the people of God, to be a part of them, and, if it be the Lord's will, to speak. He was asked if there was any conflict in that and the verse, "He that desireth the office of bishop desireth a good work". He stated that if the desire to speak is a good work, being placed there by the Almighty God, God makes it a good work.

Brother Lackey was asked by Elder Morris to express his feelings regarding "foot washing" and if it should be a test of fellowship. He replied that if the Lord would give him grace to say what he believes, it will never be made a test of fellowship.

Brother Lackey was asked if, when he goes out among the Baptist people and feels pledged to support the Articles of Faith of his church, Welsh Tract, there is any way in which he could compromise the article con-

cerning the decrees of God. He responded that before being excluded from the limited predestarians in Gore, Oklahoma, he had quoted Article IV of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which had been adopted by them. He further stated that he believed the article before he was a member a Welsh Tract and has since read nothing in the Scriptures which would change his mind.

From the questions and responses and prior knowledge of Brother Lackey's stand on issues, the Presbytery was satisfied with his doctrinal stand.

The Presbytery proceeded with the charge. Elder Morris delivered the charge using the following Scriptural references: Acts 20:28, Isaiah 40:1-2, Isaiah 58:1, and Jude 3-4. Elder Poole followed with additional comments using references from 2nd Timothy 4:1-5 and the 20th chapter of Acts.

Elder Morris and Elder Poole proceeded with the observance of "Laying on of Hands" with Elder Morris speaking in prayer.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted.

Brother Lackey was then returned to the church as a duly ordained Elder, the Presbytery recommending Elder Robert N. Lackey to the Church of God of the Old School, Absolute Predestinarian Primitive faith and order. The church approved the work of the Presbytery unaminously. Afterward, following the dissolving of the Presbytery, the brethern and friends of the church extended the Right Hand of Fellowship to Elder Lackey. The Afternoon session concluded with prayer by Elder Lackey.

By order of the Presbytery and the church,

FRANCIS A. ADKINS - Clerk
ELDER JAMES F. POOLE - Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution List For July 1983

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Mrs. William Griffith, NY | \$7.00 |
| Mrs. Nellie Bunn, VA | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Nellie Bunn, VA | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Susan H. Smith, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Havis Donaldson, AR | 1.00 |
| Cleavie M. Edwards, NC | 3.00 |
| Rufus L. Jacks, AL | 50.00 |
| Mrs. Mary H. Brooks, AL | 12.00 |
| James L. Howell, AL | 5.00 |
| Clyde M. Haynes, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. William L. Lee, VA | 7.00 |
| Irvin L. Slaughter, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Pattie B. Krewatch, DE | 23.00 |
| Mrs. W.N. Tilley, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Vick, TN | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Gladys Todd, MS | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Verdie Wheeler, NC | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Eliz. T. Barnes, OR | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Celeste Welch, NC | 2.00 |
| Mrs. E.S. Thompson, VA | 3.00 |
| Mrs. E.A. Collins, FL | 3.00 |

Contribution List For September 1983

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| B.F. Poindexter, VA | \$1.00 |
| J.J. Monroe, IL | 2.00 |
| J.D. Whaley, Sr., NC | 2.00 |
| Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Essie Bane, WV | 2.00 |
| F.L. Short, VA | 1.00 |
| Coy J. Whitfield, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Maude Spencer, VA | 3.00 |
| Mrs. S.G. Harrolson, KY | 3.00 |
| Hobart M. Stallard, KS | 2.00 |
| R.M. Burnette, NC | 3.00 |
| Jimmy & Sue Hamm, TX | 18.00 |
| Mrs. Jenny Osborne, MD | 7.00 |
| Paul W. Hopkins, NC | 3.00 |
| Mrs. Bertha Summers, NC | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Mamie Moran, VA | 1.00 |
| Ernest Dotson, Sr., TX | 3.00 |
| Aubrey Oakes, VA | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Maria Adams, VA | 12.00 |
| A.E. Moran, VA | 25.00 |

Mrs. Roma H.C. Smith, AL.....
 In memory of Mrs. Mable D. Hataway25.00
 Miss Willye Mae Warren, MD
 Bequeathed To
 Signs Of The Times 100.00
 George N. Lee, AL..... 1.00
 Mrs. Ernest Blair, VA 7.00
 Mrs. Ray Watson, AR..... 2.00
 C.I. Randolph, AL 5.00
 Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY 23.00
 Mrs. Clarence Baublitz, MD ... 7.00
 Miss Eva Hollar, NC 2.00
 Mrs. Thelma Dickerson, NC... 2.00
 Babs Lee Hagar, LA 87.00
 Jerry P. Cockman, NC..... 18.00
 A.J. Griffin, AL 3.00
 Mrs. Kelly Watson, NC..... 2.00
 Mrs. Audrey Dyer, VA 3.00
 William L. Midkiff, Sr., VA.... 2.00
 Mrs. Ester B. Cole, NC..... 1.00
 Mrs. W.J. Thompson, VA 3.00
 Mrs. Clyde Rhoades, TX 1.00

OBITUARIES

GARY E. AKERS

Brother Gary E. Akers, son of the late Samuel Henry Akers and Eliza Jane Akers, was born in Franklin County, Va., on July 18, 1894, and passed away in a Wilson, N.C., hospital on May 19, 1983. He was married to the former Bertha Cummings in 1912 and the Lord blessed them with a few months more than 66 years of marriage. Mrs. Bertha passed away on October 10, 1982. She was a very dedicated companion to Brother Gary, and although she was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, she attended the church faithfully with him. He was in the hospital at the time of her death and could not attend her funeral.

He is survived by one son, Fred Akers of Atlanta, Ga.; one daughter, Mrs. Judy Butner of Wilson, N.C. (in

whose home he spent the last few months of his life); one son died in infancy; four grandchildren; one brother, Auburn L. Akers of Roanoke, Va.; two sisters, Sister Pearl Law of Roanoke, Va. and Mrs Grace Waddell of Richmond, Va.

Brother Gary joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church on September 24, 1922 and was baptized by the late Elder George Dyer on October 1, 1922.

So much could be said about our brother in Christ, but words fail me. He loved to sing and was called so often to lead the singing at funerals of his brethren and friends and in the Church he attended. He will be long remembered for visiting the hospitals and the afflicted. He was highly esteemed because of his orderly walk here in this life, doing deeds of kindness, ever ready to help any when his services were needed.

It was more than a year before his passing that he was unable to attend his church, but when we visited him, he always enquired about the meetings. His faith in Christ was strong, which was manifested in his quiet, kind manner-he lived a full and rich life, one that his family can look back upon with pride.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys Funeral Home on May 21, 1983 by Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke so comforting to the many brethren, sisters and friends that filled the chapel, after which he was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery under a beautiful blanket of flowers, there to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, feeling surely our loss is his eternal gain.

At the request of Sister Law, this memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

MRS. L. C. (RLEE) HOUCHINS

HESTER HOLLAND VERNON

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church is sad at the passing of our dear sister in Christ, Hester Vernon at the age of eighty-five. She and her husband, Brother Holman Vernon were baptised the same day by their pastor Elder H.W. Wray over twenty years ago. He passed away in 1981. Sister Hester was a devoted member and attended her meetings regularly until two months before her death. We miss her very much. She was blessed with grace to endure all things to the end.

She was born in Patrick County, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late William L. and Sarah Lou Gilley Holland and had lived in Rockingham County most of her life. For some years they had made their home with a daughter, Mrs. Nancy Huchens, Greensboro, N.C. Surviving are daughters, Mrs. Janie Brown, Rt. 2 Madison, N.C., Billie Lee Vernon, Madison, N.C. Ten grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren.

Sister Vernon died May 4, 1983 in Moses Cone Hospital, Greensboro, N.C. Her funeral was held at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church May 6, 1983 by her pastor Elder H. W. Wray. Burial was in the church cemetery.

May the Lord comfort her dear family.

Written by RACHEL WRAY

SISTER MARY LOUISE TAYLOR EVERETT

The death of our dear sister, Louise Taylor Everett brings the painful duty of writing an obituary of her death. It was the mind of Flat Swamp Church to appoint me as this com-

mittee, but I feel so weak in attempting to write of one I feel was so humble and so strong in her faith.

Sister Louise was born September 24, 1905, the daughter of the late Gilbert and Betty Jones Taylor. She passed away August 2, 1983, in Martin General Hospital, making her stay on earth almost 78 years. She was married to William A. Everett on June 6, 1923, who died on October 28, 1973. She was laid to rest in Martin Memorial Gardens. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Reeves Smith and Elder J.T. Prescott.

Sister Louise and Brother Bill were blessed with four children: Elizabeth Bailey of Raleigh, Mary Louise White of Windsor, William Everett of Raleigh, and Maurice Everett of Winston-Salem.

Sister Louise was blessed to unite with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in July 1971, along with her husband, Brother Bill Everett. They were baptized by Elders J.T. Prescott and E.C. Harrison that same day.

Sister Louise was afflicted physically the years of her membership, but this never caused her to be slack in her duties to her church. She was always willing to do her part and push herself to do lots of things it looked as if she was not physically able to do. She was blessed to show the love she manifested for her church and the bretheren and sisters. She offered a home for her pastor and other members away from home and always made them feel welcome.

I was blessed to be with her on three occasions before she had surgery and I don't think I ever saw anyone with more faith and trust in their God. She always desired to have prayer and seemed so appreciative of what one was blessed to say and she would always add, "I feel that I know the Lord has been with me so far and He will continue

to be with me.”

Her four children were very attentive to her during her sickness. I know they will miss her, but they have no regrets that they did not do everything they could for her comfort.

We at Flat Swamp will miss her very much, but we feel she has gone to that rest prepared for her and all that love the Lord. Now she will sleep that peaceful sleep to await the words of her Savior saying, “Come inherit that everlasting home prepared for you before the foundation of the world.”

We express our deepest sympathy to her children and all who were near and dear to her. We extend to them a desire to have them visit us at Flat Swamp at any time.

Done by the order of conference first Sunday in August, 1983.

ELDER REEVES SMITH, Moderator
HASSEL ALLEN, Clerk
HASSEL ALLEN, Committee

FANNIE LESTER THOMASON

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Fannie Lester Thomason, August 13, 1983 in Southside Community Hospital in Farmville, Virginia.

She was the daughter of Rufus Lester and Lillie Thompson Lester. Her stepfather was Elder Lonnie Cummings. She was born April 2, 1899 making

her stay on earth 84 years, 4 months, and 10 days.

She is survived by one daughter, Virginia Thomason McGlynn; Kissimmee, Florida; one son, Ralph Thomason, Amelia, Virginia; four grandchildren; seven great grandchildren and one great great grandchild; one sister, Mrs. Randal Lester; Roanoke, Virginia; one brother Woodson Cummings; Pulaski, Virginia; a host of cousins and friends.

She united with Valley View Primitive Baptist Church May 16, 1948. She always attended Church when she was able. It was one of her greatest pleasures to entertain the Ministers, Bretheren and Friends in her home.

Sister Thomason truly demonstrated her unselfish love and devotion when she left her home and went to live with her son to help care for his three small boys. They loved her like a mother and she loved them like her own children.

About five years ago she became ill and was hospitalized several times with a bone deterioration of her spine. Her family was very protective of her after she became unable to do physical work. Her love and influence meant so much to them. She read her Bible faithfully and corresponded with her many friends and relatives.

She attended the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church as long as she was able. Elder Denver Simpson and wife visited her each First Sunday on their way to Church. She cherished their visits and prayers.

Her funeral was held August 15, 1983 at Richardson and Horn Funeral Home, Christiansbury, Virginia by Elder Roy Agee and Elder Denver Simpson. Her body was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetary, Christiansbury, Virginia beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.”

Written by one who loved her dearly,
FANNIE SUE LUCAS

EXTRA COPIES OF THE “SIGNS”

Available to you for \$1.00 per copy as long as supply last. Send your order with remittance to:

Signs Of The Times, Inc.
Rt. 1, Box 65
Keeling, Virginia 24566

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

John 10:27, 28

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

BOOK NOTICES

BOOKS AVAILABLE

Editorials by Elder Beebe Vol. 3 & 4
\$16.00 each plus \$2.00 for mailing.

The Priesthood Of The Son Of God,
\$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing.

Feast of Fat Things, \$5.00 each plus \$1.00 for mailing.

SEND ORDERS TO:

Elder James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Having been requested by different people, at different times to leave upon record my various experiences in the ministry for the last sixty years I am sending forth this book.

Included in the Book first, is my personal experiences among the churches, including baptizings, serving of churches, and the experiences of a number of people in being brought to the church.

Also, a number of editorials that I wrote for the Signs Of The Times years ago, on the subjects of the various practices of the old school Baptist, duty of deacons, and other subjects.

The book should be available by Jan. 1st, 1984. The price will be \$5.00 postpaid. All orders will be mailed in the order that they are received. It will be approximately 128 pages, paperback.

SEND ORDERS TO:
Rt. 6, Box 270
Danville, Va. 24541