

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1966

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LETTER FROM
SISTER UNDERWOOD

5 Gregory Street
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am so sorry not to have sent this letter to you before this. You will remember I mentioned sending it for publication in the *Signs*, when you were in London, Canada, in September. Perhaps readers of the *Signs* will remember Sister Mattie Underwood's letter in November, 1963, *Signs*: "A Mother's Concern That Truth Be Taught." It meant a lot to me at the time, and I looked up all of her references; and wrote to her. The enclosed is a typewritten copy of her reply to me. I did appreciate the letter; though strangers in the flesh, I felt a kindred spiritual love for her . . .

Your sister in a precious hope,
Verna Carscadden

209 Taylor Rd.
Collinsville, Va.
Feb. 26, 1964

Dear Sister Carscadden,

Your letter was read and highly appreciated. I will take great pleasure in writing you in reply.

You say you have been reading the *Signs* for quite a while and the editorials have been most precious to you now, and that Elder Ruston is your pastor, and associate editor. You also said that the November *Signs* seemed especially good. When reading my letter you felt I expressed your feelings, and you also looked up all my scripture references. You intimated that the *Signs* in quoting scripture seemed to you to be the nearest thing to the Bible of any book or monthly paper. This is very encouraging.

You also say you have a daughter, who hopes to graduate this year as a nurse, and who is interested in music: plays the piano and sings in a church choir. She is also still interested in Bible reading and did belong to Inter-school Christian Fellowship, and now to the Nurses' Christian Fellowship. She wants to go to Toronto Bible College, which claims to be interdenominational and you, like me have a mother's concern that truth be taught, and God be honoured. It is only through His Spirit that we can do anything good. You said you asked your daughter to read my letter, after which she said she would like to show it to her minister, feeling he would be interested.

You say you are quite concerned about her and wonder how to advise her, and that she feels the Lord will show her what to do. I am glad she is trusting in the Lord. We read in the scriptures: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalms 127:1) We also read: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (St. John 1:17)

In Hebrews 8:10-12 we see: "For this covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

In Hebrews 10:7-9, these words are written: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

I heard a precious Elder say on Sunday, "If it's not the will of God for His people to be saved, it would not mean anything to any of us, His people."

John 6:37-39 states: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 1:1-16 gives a beautiful picture of the will of God.

It is preached all over the world that God wants people to be saved, but they won't let Him; and resist God. Romans 9:20 and 13:2 speak of this. The latter says: "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall re-

ceive to themselves damnation."

In the Bible this is referred to as the "god of this world" and the doctrine of devils (see 2 Cor. 4). Note verse 4. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." This light shone around Paul when he was persecuting the church. I don't think God would have made anything that He could not control, even the devil, or he would have gotten all of His children, i.e. Satan. Paul was a Pharisee, but God made it manifest that he was one of his sheep; and he then preached the glorious gospel of Christ, and the power of God in the demonstration of the Spirit of God.

Some do not like the doctrine of salvation before the foundation of the world. Evidently it would leave the gods of this world out, and their salary. Some are deceived and don't know the truth. Christ did not sell Himself to the world, but gave His life for the sheep. He told Peter to feed His sheep and lambs; and the food was wholesome. 1 Peter 1:18-21 states: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

In Acts 8:20, we read: "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." And further in verses 21-23: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if

perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

We are commanded to keep ourselves from idols. In 1 John 5:21, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," is found. In 2 John 9-11, is written: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

We read in Ephesians 6:1-3: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." And in Ephesians 5:6: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

A dear Elder spoke well Sunday at Riverview Church, saying that there are many denominations in the world, but only two classes of people — one like the Pharisees and the other like the publicans. St. Luke 18:10-17 describes these: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be ex-

alted."

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Sister Carscadden, I too enjoy the editorials, written by Elders Lambert, Griffin, Wood, Spangler, and Ruston. Elder John Peter Helms is my pastor. He has been in Canada and you may have heard him preach. I am thankful for all the dear gifts of God that give Him the honor and glory. We read that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Some seem to think it takes money for the preachers to save souls, but Christ is the bread, his blood the drink. I have been a relative to the publican, and it's by the grace of God I am what I am.

This is getting rather lengthy, so I will close.

Yours with love and fellowship,
Mattie Underwood

P. S. You many send this to the *Signs* for publication if you wish. It may add length to the chain.

M. U.

ENJOYS THE *SIGNS*
MORE AND MORE

Titusville, New Jersey

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

It is time for another renewal of the good old *Signs*, which I enjoy more and more. It uplifts the troubled heart, for there is an unseen warfare in the human breast where two opposite forces meet — and where they seldom rest: the Spirit against the flesh. I pray that God will give me strength for each new

day, to guide my ways and guard my tongue, that I may not do an unkind thing, or say an unkind word to anyone.

Each month my strength is renewed when the *Signs* comes, for it is so edifying and uplifting to read, and see the beauty set forth by great writers and servants of God, who, having the gift that God has given them, can in turn give to uplift others less fortunate than themselves.

It is my sincere hope that each of you will always be blessed with new light and liberty, and that there may be days of enlightenment, days of comfort, and bright anticipations and rewarding visits among the brethren. May God be with you in your travels, and his divine blessings cheer you and strengthen you, and his love comfort you, that you may know that you are not laboring in vain, that each reader of the *Signs*, like myself, does find precious food to nourish a fainting hope, and comfort the troubled breast.

Brother Charles joins me in love and sweet fellowship,

Sister Mary Hellings

“YOU CANNOT GIVE
HIM ANYTHING”

Meadows of Dan, Va.

Dear Brethern in Christ Jesus:

I would like to write a few of my thoughts this morning, if it is the Lord's will, while I am in some kind of a spirit, with my mind on things that I hope the Lord has wrought in me; and I hope I was praising the Lord from whom all blessings flow.

If I could do what I would love to do today, no servant of the Lord, or lovely sister or brother, would have it — they would all say render all praise to our Heavenly Father, to whom all praise is due; and rightly so. As I was watering my flowers this morning, I thought, How I would love to place

them at my sisters' and brothers' feet, telling them of such a great love I have for them; and begging them to accept my feeble offering — from one that is imperfect, and asking them to overlook my shortcomings, which are many.

And then a thought came to me of the crown of thorns that was plaited and placed on our dear Saviour's head. Oh! the tears started falling; and this thought was presented to me: if I could only plait a crown of flowers for my dear Saviour's head, I would pick the most beautiful ones, the most perfect ones and place them in a crown for his head; and also at his feet. Then it came to me that this would not be enough — I would offer my body for a sacrifice. And suddenly it came: You cannot give him anything; and the first verse of the 24th Psalm was presented: “The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein.” Then how could we give Him anything? “The cattle on a thousand hills are his.”

Then all my feeble offerings vanished away, and this hymn came to me:

“Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands:
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and thou alone.

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

All the praise belongs to him, but we cannot praise him of ourselves. My sister-in-law said that a man asked her if she had given her heart to the Lord; and she answered, “How can I, when it is already his?”

May the Lord keep me ever humble, to give him all praise in all things, even afflictions which have befallen me lately: a broken ankle, which has not quite healed. Our afflictions are appointed just as our blessings are. As our dear pastor, Elder Hash, has prayed

in my presence: "If it takes affliction to keep us humble, then do not hold them back, O, Lord." If it takes broken bones, or any other afflictions to keep me humble, then I can say, O Lord, do not hold them back.

May he ever keep me humble and at my brethren's feet.

An unworthy one,
Pauline Spencer

ENJOYED THE NOVEMBER ISSUE

303 S. Daniel Creek Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Editors:

I have just received the November issue of the *Signs of the Times*; and after reading it through, I was moved to write.

Just a few hours before it arrived, my neighbor and sister, (Edith Brooks) and I were discussing the Sovereignty of God, and after reading the *Signs* through, I saw that our discussion on the subject was the same as that of the recording of the sermon of Elder Wood's at Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia. I went to my neighbor's house, and found she was reading her copy — so we rejoiced together in tears of gratitude. I told her this one issue was worth the price for many years to come: together with Elder Griffin's and Elder Beebe's, and others.

The morning of September 6th, I awoke hearing a whisper in my breast, saying that I was sanctified. The 25th of the same month I awoke communing, I hope, with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I was saying, "I was naked and you clothed me; I was hungry and you fed me." I was made to rejoice again. Recently, in a dream or vision, I was traveling a road and it was getting late in the evening. I saw a colored man approaching me, and I was afraid he would bother me, since I was all alone. Suddenly I was down in a valley beside a spring, kneeling in prayer to God for protection. The man passed on,

and I was back in the road again traveling, and came to the most beautiful place with a shining light; there was a man there dressed in the whitest white, and I loved him and he loved me. I was so happy when I awoke.

This could mean I am near my journey's end, and that it was an earnest of that which is to come. The beautiful place that I was carried to, was more beautiful than this world can afford.

Your little sister in a precious hope,
Mrs. D. M. Radford

Rt. 2,
Luverne, Ala.

Dear Brethren:

I see my subscription expires with the November issue, and I don't want to miss a copy of the good old *Signs*. Enclosed is a check for two more years.

I live alone, and look forward to every issue. Its so much comfort and enjoyment to me to read the editorials, the experiences of the gifted ministers and all the brethren and friends who contribute to the *Signs*.

Brother Lambert, we were so glad to have you visit us in August. You are a gifted minister, and were enjoyed by all who heard you. Visit us again soon.

May all both small and great be blessed to stand fast and unmoveable in the faith once delivered to the saints.

Yours in hope,
Audra Williamson

"THIS IS MEAT AND DRINK"

Mardella Springs, Md.

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed a check for \$5.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two years.

I hope I am thankful for the writers who submit their writing from time to time, expressing my convictions and feelings far better than I can. This is

meat and drink to one groping, and hungering for a few words of truth, which they hope they have seen and felt, and had revealed to them.

When down in the low ground of deep sorrow and despair, which, I might add, comes to all of us, it brings much joy and comfort to read some dear brother or sister's writing when they tell their like experiences, and yet found that it was for his good; and who gives thanks, and praise to the all-wise God for it.

I hope to receive this wonderful paper, the *Signs of the Times*, as long as I live; and I feel to give thanks and best wishes to the editors and writers, and, most of all, to God who gives the inspiration of the gospel truth, as I hope I, a poor, helpless sinner, see it. With love,

A little sister, if one I am,
Minnie E. Gambrill

3514 Oscar Ave.
Ft. Worth, Texas 76106

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find money order for a year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I have never subscribed before, but I got some copies from my uncle, Elder D. B. Wallace, and I really enjoyed reading them. If I am not deceived they contend for the things I believe; for I believe in salvation by grace, and that it is a gift of God, and not by any works I have done or might do.

I was received in the Holly Springs Church at Mantalla, Texas, August 22nd of this year. I don't know why they received a worm like me. I feel so inadequate, and they are the finest people in the world. I believe God has been merciful to me. If I am not deceived, I have a wonderful hope of eternal life.

Please accept my subscription, and count me as one of the very least, if one at all.

Your brother in hope,
U. V. Wallace

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand —" (Psalms 84-10).

"Lord from the closet in my heart
To-night I pray to Thee;
Forsake me not — do not depart,
But hear my feeble plea;
In darkness now I long have been,
By Satan cruelly mocked,
Tormented by indwelling sin
And doubts and fears have stalked.

Though blessed with earthly comforts, quite;
With food and raiment, too.
Yet, oft' I walk in darkest night —
My sins I can't subdue;
In Thee alone I put my trust,
Thou art my hope and stay;
And though I'm vanity and dust
Lord, turn me not away.

When I Thy fellowship can feel
I want naught else beside,
Then I can in my closet kneel —
To Thee my woes confide;
A brother's trespass, be it great,
I freely can forgive;
And though he in his heart me hate
I'll say unto him, *Live*.

My enemies I then can love —
Sincerely for them pray;
Can truly ask the Lord above
Their sins to take away;
Whatever else Thou me deny
Thy fellowship restore,
I all things else can then lay by —
I ask for nothing more!"

C. M. D.

Submitted by
C. B. Britt

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the CONTENTNEA UNION is to be held, the Lord willing, with Goose Creek Island Church, Pamlico County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966. The church is located near Hobucken, just off Highway 33.

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

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the **SKEWARKEY UNION** is appointed to be held with the Great Swamp Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966. The church is located on the corner of Tenth and Forbs Streets in Greenville, N. C. Elder M. E. Garner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

We wish to extend a cordial invitation to all brethren and friends to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **BLACK CREEK UNION** will be held with the church at White Oak, in the town of Saratoga, Wilson County, N. C., the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1966.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

**UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION
MEETING**

The next session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the church at Reidsville, N. C. on the 5th Sunday in January, 1966. Services to start at 10:30 A. M.

M. T. Smith, Acting Church Clerk

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND**

(To November 1, 1965)

A Friend, Ark.....	\$ 1.00
W. L. Crowley, Ala.....	2.00
W. D. Godwin, La.....	1.00
O. W. Parks, Tex.....	2.00
Dr. and Mrs. M. O. Slaughter, Tex.....	5.00
Mrs. Jesse H. Daniel, Tex.....	1.00
S. L. Midgett, N. C.....	4.00
Mrs. Ruby E. Parsons, Md.....	2.00
Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Tex.....	1.00
Elmer Hastings, Md.....	14.00

Danville, Virginia

January, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

EDITORIAL

BEGINNING OF OUR 134TH YEAR

We are glad to be able to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another New Year; and another volume of the *Signs of the Times* — the 134th. We trust that we are each profoundly aware that it has been the goodness of our God that has spared us and kept us for some purpose in the land of the living; and that his grace has been sufficient for us under every trial and circumstance.

We have reason to believe that the love that God has for his people, and the love his people have for the doctrine of God our Saviour, has been the sustaining power which has kept the *Signs of the Times* in continuous circulation for the many years since its inception. It is pleasant to meditate upon His sus-

taining grace which, against many difficulties as far as humans could see, has preserved his own Name and Glory in the pages of the paper: Which is to say that the doctrine of God our Saviour, as revealed in his Word and in the hearts of his people, is the only subject matter worthy of space in the *Signs*. We believe it to be self-evident that the Lord called and qualified Elder Gilbert Beebe and others, to sustain his Word before the people at a time when heresy was rife among many who were at least nominal members of the church. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," was used of the Lord to fight a battle in which His name and Doctrine were upheld among and by his people over a large portion of the country; and he has sustained it, we believe, for the same purpose these many years.

We thought it would be interesting to recall to our readers the names of those who have been closely associated in the publication of the *Signs* over the years:

Elder Gilbert Beebe was editor for fifty years — until his death in 1881; Elder William L. Beebe, his son, was editor from shortly after his father's death until August, 1894. Then Deacon Benton L. Beebe and Elder F. A. Chick were editors until Benton L. Beebe's death in 1904; when Elder H. C. Ker became editor with Elder Chick until Elder Chick died in 1914. Elder H. H. Lefferts then became editor with Elder Ker in 1914, and served until 1935. In 1923 Elders Dodson, Ruston and Vaughn became associated with the paper; and Elder Spangler in 1936; Elder Griffin in 1943; Elder Lambert in 1946; Elder Nash in 1950; and Elder Wood in 1951.

In 1949 Elder Dodson purchased the paper from Gilbert Beebe, grandson of the founder; and he soon afterwards formed a non-profit corporation with a seven member Board of Trustess: thus giving the paper to the brethren. Elder Dodson remained Managing Editor until his death in 1950, since when the pres-

ent editors and associates have been responsible for its publication.

There were others not mentioned in the above list who gave valuable services to the paper over the years, some of whom were: Elder Benton Jenkins, who worked in the office of the *Signs* for many years; and Deacon and Sister Cyrus Risler, who did much of the work in getting the paper out while Elder Dodson was the editor.

The present members of the Board of Trustees are: Elder D. V. Spangler, President; Elder John D. Wood, Elder Arthur R. Warren, Brother Victor D. Borst, Sister Gertrude Secor, and Sister S. L. Midgett. There is one vacancy since the death of Sister Elsie Loeffel.

We re-publish the original Prospectus on which the *Signs of the Times* was begun, as evidence that we remain upon these principles:

"Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the *Signs of the Times*, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. 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."
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect Only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. 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.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The Signs of the Times will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war on the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions."

Each one connected with the publication of the *Signs* is very much concerned that the paper shall continue to advocate these principles; and especially since some of these are often curiously spoken against by many though they say they believe that the Bible is the written word of God. However we know that the battle is not ours, but God's, and that he will fully vindicate his people in their faith in his own time and way.

We are aware of the pressing concern which most religious orders have about converting the world to their persuasion — or to Christ, as they say. We are not concerned about this: We are perfectly content not to try to do that which is impossible for us to do, for we are assured that it is the work of God that one believes on Him whom He has sent; and that flesh and blood cannot reveal the things of the Spirit unto alien sinners.

Many say they are comforted and edified by the writings in the *Signs*, and we believe this is the purpose the Lord has for the paper among his people. We do not for a moment fancy that anyone outside of the election of grace — those not taught of the Lord, will find any satisfaction in reading the paper. Yet we do not know to what end the Lord may use it in dealing with individual cases, since everything is in his hands, and accomplishes his purposes:

Should any reader begin to be deeply engrossed in the things presented in

our columns, and finds himself saying, "I believe that", though he may have many apprehensive feelings as to his standing before God, to such we would say that it is certain evidence that the Lord has at least begun a good work in you, and, having begun the work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. God has his own way and time of making known unto his people that they are *his people*, and bringing them into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

We desire to express our appreciation to all of our Associates, and to all the brethren and friends who have contributed in any way in helping us keep the paper coming out regularly. We are dependent upon their continued support as enabled by grace; and are dependent upon the renewing of subscriptions, and obtaining new subscribers. (Quite a number give subscriptions to the *Signs* as presents to friends.) We desire the brethren and friends to write for publication, and let others know of their experiences, and the dealings of the Lord with them. We cannot promise to publish all that we receive because of the lack of space; but we will do all we can for the interest of the paper, and the edifying of our readers.

As we enter upon another epoch of time in which we shall see the unfolding of many "new and strange" things, may we all be given grace to realize and be glad that everything continues to be the unfolding of God's purpose; and while rationalism will continue to be the mainspring of men's actions and devotions, yet the faith of God's elect, (which is the fruit of His Spirit in them,) and God's purpose in all things, shall continue to hold all things together until the full manifestation of all things being subdued which are enemies of the church; and until God's glory is made manifest in all things. Then shall Christ come again to conform all his brethren to his own image, and they shall be like him; for death shall be swallowed up in victory when this mor-

tal shall have put on immortality.

In the meantime, we are assured that God's love for his people does not cease; and that his grace is sufficient for each of them.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

At the beginning of the New Year there are several things we desire to call to the attention of our readers; and to request of them. These are important, and we feel that all will want to cooperate:

Should you move or change address, please notify us at once; and when possible notify us when a subscriber is deceased. It costs the Signs ten cents postage for each paper that is returned to us; which is more than ten times the amount it costs to mail a copy from our office.

Please do not order extra copies of the paper in advance of the publication of obituaries, etc., as we have no way set up to keep such records. Order them after the publication, and we will furnish them if possible.

Please do not ask us to cancel a subscription at a future date. We cannot properly care for these. If you desire to cancel, please notify us at the time of subscription expiration.

It has been our practice to mail a reminder to those who are behind with their subscriptions. These are usually considerably behind, so when we receive a reply paying for two years, the amount perhaps pays for the year behind and a year ahead. Hence the subscription expires earlier than the subscriber expects.

Notices of meetings should be mailed directly to Elder J. D. Wood, Box 186, Manassas, Va., so as to reach him at least six weeks before publication date. All remittances, articles for publication, etc., should be sent to the Signs of the Times, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane, Danville, Virginia.

We are receiving many obituaries for pub-

lication, and we are glad to publish them; but most of them are of local interest, except ministers, so we make special request that obituaries be held to not over two hundred words, if possible.

We thank you for your cooperation.

This is my thirteenth year of association with the Signs, either as an Associate Editor, or joint Editor with Elder J. D. Wood. I wish to express my appreciation for the wonderful cooperation of our readers. It is my opinion that no religious paper has ever been appreciated more by its readers than the Signs of the Times. We appreciate very much your expressions of support and adherence to the doctrine advocated by the paper. We have very, very few cancellations except by death; and though many of our subscribers have died since we became editors in 1951, our subscription list is larger than it was then.

The cost of publication continues to rise, yet we have endeavored to hold the price to \$3.00 per year, or \$5.00 for two years. This has been possible only because of the donations sent in with the subscriptions; and because of the income from gifts made to the paper. We appreciate this help very much. It enables us to send the paper to those unable to pay, and helps to defray our expenses, since the subscription price does not cover the cost of publication. We recently were notified of an \$19.00 per month increase in our costs.

Last, but not least, we hope God will put it into the minds of our readers to make bequests in their wills to the paper, for without the Endowment Fund income we could not meet our costs.

God has sustained this cause for one hundred thirty-three years, and we desire your prayers and support in every way, that the paper may continue to go forth as a medium of communication, notification, spiritual strength, and defense of the glorious Gospel of our Salvation.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

HEARING PAUL DECLARE
THE UNKNOWN GOD

Sometime ago, while in the pulpit with the Bible opened to the 17th chapter of Acts, I began to read at the 16th verse. When I had read through the 26th verse I was carried by the Spirit to Mars Hill in Athens, Greece; and became a live listener as Paul preached this mighty sermon on the text, THE UNKNOWN GOD. I was one who had helped erect the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. I had to stop reading as I began to experience extraordinary visions and wonderful meditations relative to the actual setting and circumstance of this memorable occasion. I was so astonished at the sight of Athens, Mars Hill, and the many altars and inscriptions and gods made of stone and wood; and the people who worshiped them; that I have done research since then to see if it was a true picture. G. Frederick Owens says, "Athens, one of the greatest cultural centers of Paul's day, grew up around a 520-foot-high rocky plateau called "the Acropolis". Here, on this elevated area, stood the many-columned Parthenon, far famed architectural wonder, and so many other sacred edifices that the place was called, "the many templed Acropolis". May God grant that you relate with me as I relate this.

I came to Athens because I had learned that the most wise of the earth were there. I had such a craving for wisdom because of my convictions that I was so ignorant and unlearned. I had itching ears to hear something that would satisfy my hunger for wisdom. I had a worshipful heart and a strange feeling that I must come to Athens in order to hear these great wise men talk of wisdom. I had a feeling that I would find unity there and that the wise men would all be agreed. I was disappointed upon my arrival when I found wise men in the Market Place disagreeing and quarreling. I learned

that the wise men spoke constantly on Mars Hill. I attended the lectures and found that they disagreed. I began to venture out and behold the many altars and the constant flow of people. Some went to one altar; others went to another; while others formed in companies to go to the various images. I followed one company to an altar and while the people were bowing before this image I read a long inscription about this god. They knew so much about their god; yet the inscription meant nothing to me. It was empty and meaningless. I thought of how foolish it was to fall down and worship something that couldn't see, feel, or even stretch forth his hands. I exclaimed in anguish, "Do all of you worship in reality this graven image whom you have to move and carry about?" Some raved against me, but a few walked to my side and one of them inquired, "Tell us about your god?" I answered, "I know nothing about a god, however, I feel there is but One — Who has more power than this god whom you worship." We agreed to investigate all of the other shrines and altars. We read each and every inscription printed on the banners at the many edifices and a few from each company joined us as we proceeded from one place to another.

After investigating all these long inscriptions of the many gods we concluded that we had not found any that suited the feelings and convictions of any of us. What could we do? We were all anxious to worship together THE GOD whom we could not define. We talked freely one with another and found a relationship with each other that we could not explain. We reasoned that there were so many altars that surely we could erect one and worship together. We found that we could not match the long inscriptions found on the other altars. We all confessed to one another that we wanted to worship the God whom we knew nothing about. We thought we must put up an inscrip-

tion as all of the others had. They wrote long inscriptions about their gods but we could write nothing because we all confessed our ignorance of Him. Finally we agreed on a short inscription of four little words: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. We did not know how to worship Him but we tried. How we wanted and wished that we could know more of Him.

One day a lone stranger passed our way and he paused long as he read the inscription. While he was standing there some men came hurriedly up and yanked him by the arm and said to him, "We are taking you before Areopagus that we may know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is." Something drew us to follow him as there was something magnetic in the expressions of his eyes and manner. It had such a drawing effect upon us that we began to wonder, IS HE A GOD? We kept as close to him as possible as arrangements were made for him to speak, and our company was clustered together as Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and began to speak. Other companies were there too in that throng of people. His words rang loud and clear in powerful tones as he began, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with the inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." I thought of all the inscriptions that he read he called attention only to ours. It seemed he was speaking only to us. Is he ridiculing us for being wholly given to idolatry? was the question that came to my mind as he paused in this sermon. As I was thinking, Are we worse than they?, I really heard his words, "Whom ye ignorantly worship." As he spoke, "Him declare I unto you", I thought He is making known to us the God that we do not know. Our God sent him to us.

I reasoned further that this man is

taking special notice of us who confess our ignorance. We know that we are ignorant of Him and that we do not know how to properly worship Him. This man is recognizing us as the ones who truly worship Him even though it is an ignorant worship. This God Whom Paul preached had properly tuned our ears to hear and our hearts to understand and our minds to receive as Paul thundered, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands". Again the speaker paused as my thoughts raced on. I thought, there is not a plurality of Gods each one having his own little dominion — JUST ONE! He is THE GOD! What a Being! One Supreme God! He IS sovereignly ruling NOW in both heaven and earth. All things are under His almighty supervision to such extent that He is Lord of all creatures. All things are held in the hollow of His hand instead of Him dwelling in temples made with men's hands. I heard Paul's voice become clearer as he continued, "Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to ALL life, and breath, and all things."

As Paul paused I experienced a multitude of comforting thoughts. Our God owns all things, controls all things, and works all things and does not need our power to assist Him. He does not need our wealth to make Him richer. He does not need our wisdom to inform Him, neither our political ability to advance His cause. I began to fear and tremble as I was swallowed up in thoughts of God's majesty and greatness. I felt His great hand swallow me and all the earth and fullness into its hollow with room to spare. I thought I had felt little but I had never felt so insignificant as this. Paul continued: "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." No nation could boast of

being better than other nations because God made them all of *ONE* blood. The same blood that coursed through the arteries, heart, veins, and capillaries of Adam and Eve had come in a continual flow through the generations to follow uninterrupted to the present time. Even though seas of blood have been shed, this blood has been made to grow in volume until now. No person can estimate its volume now.

No one could say so much in so few words unless he had been sent of God: a time to be born, die, plant, harvest, mourn, dance, laugh, cry; — all times of persons, nations, days, nights, and events were before determined. Not only *when* but *where* of all events were before appointed and determined by THE GOD of the Heaven and of the earth. The time and the prescribed place of all beings from the smallest insect to the greatest creature that ever existed, or will exist, were all before appointed and determined by Him. If all the plants were pens; if all the seas were ink; if all outer space were paper; and every creature were a ready writer, I venture to say, that God's sovereignty could never be fully told in this short duration of thousands of years of time . . . The subject becomes so great in its magnitude that I am lost in amazement and awe; while a multitude of thoughts flood my mind.

The question of WHY takes hold upon me as I hear Paul continue, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, AND FIND HIM, though He be not far from EVERY one of US." *Seeking* the Lord, *feeling* after Him, and *finding* Him: all this is the constant labor and glorious victory of every one whom God has touched with His eternal Spirit. Every one who knows his own weakness and dependence seeks the Lord, for they have found through sad experience that the wisdom of the world, the might of men, and the riches of the earth can never progress us one inch toward God nor satisfy our fainting

souls. I must seek His guidance in prayer without ceasing. I must *feel* after Him if I am so fortunate to be an object of His care and providence. *He* cares for me, is the sweetest feeling a poor worm of the dust ever felt. *He provides for me*, is a sublime feeling for poor beggars to feel. *He holds me in the hollow of His hand*, is the most protective feeling experienced when confronted with the powers that be, who would take us and kill us if they could. Finding that He helps us, undertakes for us, and fights our battles in our stead, all this gives ease of mind, comforts the heart, and restores the soul. A question enters my mind which startles me: Where can I go to find Him? Who can I send into the heavens or across the sea?

Paul continues, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring." It is because of Him that we live. Any time He should withdraw Himself from us we would die naturally. Even the natural life within us is GOD. It is through Him that we move a finger, foot, tongue, or eye. We could not naturally see without Him. We can not write, think, nor speak without Him. We cannot retain things in our memory without Him. We owe Him our lives for creating us and numbering our days, as well as providing all things necessary for our natural existence. He owns us. We can never repay Him with praise for what He is to us as natural human beings. *If He be in us ALL*, as surely He is, then, to partially understand ourselves is a lesson toward understanding God. I cannot analyze my mind, neither can I understand my thoughts. Even the study of my own physical anatomy becomes so complex, or complicated, that I cannot understand the functionings of my natural body. What makes my heart beat? What induces the thoughts that enter my mind? How is the food digested that I put into my mouth? How are these

digestive juices distributed to the various parts of the body? Surely I am a complicated mechanism that only God can run! Paul interrupts my thoughts again as he says: "Forasmuch then we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Such foolishness, I reasoned, that man who is so wonderfully made should want to worship something far less than he himself is. What folly to try to help God when man can't, without God, help himself? I thought, vain is the help of man. I vowed, Never again will I worship a creature but the ONE Who created all things.

Paul had stood so dignified and spoke with such power and authority until now that I was startled at the emotions that softened the tone of his voice as he made a step forward with a gesture of his hands and proclaimed; "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT". I thought, Paul is not commanding us to repent; he is telling us that *GOD* commands it. The fullness of the time of this ignorance had really come to its end. The time of this ignorance God winked at. This time of ignorance was included in the time before appointed. Of course He winked at it because it needs be that we go through this time of ignorance in order to teach us that we cannot be wise of our own volition; but that *ALL* wisdom comes down as a free gift from Him who made us. His command to repent from this ignorant worship is certainly effectual and will cause the least to turn from their own ignorant ways of worship and to praise Him rightly. This command which is *NOW* being proclaimed exercises the minds, hearts, and souls of each and every one of His people in every nation, kindred, and tongue under Heaven. I heard Paul proclaim it. I felt the power of it in my soul. I prayed, "Turn me, Lord, and I shall be turned." He

was turning me then. How anxious I was to hear the next words that Paul spoke: "Because He has APPOINTED a Day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He HATH ORDAINED: whereof HE hath given assurance unto *all men* in that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD." Paul gave the proper gesture that he had finished speaking and paused for a moment before leaving the rostrum. As he paused I thought, I want to know more about that *man whom God hath Ordained*; I want to know more about that *Appointed Day* in which He would judge the world in righteousness; and, I want to know more of this *Assurance given unto all men*. In short, I want to read over and over again this mighty heart-stirring sermon on the GREATNESS OF GOD.

By this time Paul was leaving the rostrum, and all of our company as well as some from other companies met together at the exit that we might be closer to the man, and say a word to him. I heard some say, "We will hear thee again on this matter." Some from out in the audience mocked him. I was one of those who clave to him. I said to Paul, I want a copy of this. He answered, "There is a man with me who wrote my sermon out word by word while I was speaking. I not only paused in order that the words have time to grow in your own minds, but another purpose was that the one who is preparing a treatise for Theophilus could have time to write every word of it. You shall have a copy to read over and over again." I thanked God for having led me to this place to hear this mighty sermon. I am awakening from my trance and have a few observations to make before closing this article. I have read all of the sermons and letters delivered and written by Paul as published in the New Testament; but none holds me more spellbound than the one delivered on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece. If I ever become doubtful of

God's sovereignty and almighty ruling and working of all things I turn to that sermon again to remove the doubts. When I question His right and authority to take vengeance and render severe judgments; I read again this sermon.

Paul reached the climax of this sermon in his last words, "Whereof He hath given assurance unto all men that HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD." Paul had disputed daily in the Market Place and had "Preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection". Dionysius, the Areopagite — a very wise man of literature was one who clave to Paul after hearing this sermon.

It would be a good idea when confronted with those who affirm the might of man and deny the sovereignty of God in all things, to just quote to them the full text of Paul on Mars Hill. If this will not shut the mouth of those who argue that God needs our help — nothing can be said that will close their mouths from speaking blasphemy. Dear reader: will you please turn again to the 17th chapter of ACTS and begin reading the 22nd verse, slowly read through the 31st verse as the conclusion of this article. Thanks.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Ramapo, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1859

Brother Beebe — Will you give your views on Rom. vi. 1 and 16? By so doing, you will oblige me. Yours, as ever,

WILLIAM SPRINGSTEEN

Reply. — The first verse proposed for consideration, reads thus: "What shall we then say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" The apostle had been dwelling on the reign of sin and death, and the redemption of the church of God from the dominion of both by the reign of grace through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord.

The entrance of sin into the world by Adam as the embodiment and representative of all his posterity, long before the law, or the Sinai Covenant was given to Israel, even as early as the transgression of Adam — and that the law is a detector of sin; moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound. That is, as we understand it, that sin might appear as it really is, exceedingly sinful. The law did not make us sinful, but showed that we were so — making our sins to abound, or exposing them to view in their true magnitude; and, so far as the church of God is concerned, the manifestation by the application of the law of the total depravity and just condemnation of those whom Christ came to redeem, shows the more vividly the superabounding of the grace of God. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Sin, enthroned in our carnal nature, reigned unto death; but now, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the principality of sin is spoiled; the strength of sin, which is the law, can no longer sustain the empire of sin; for, being dead to the law, by the body of Christ, they are no more under the law, but under grace, or under law to Christ. Grace now appears in regal majesty, erects her throne in the heart, and sways her sceptre with greater might, reigns, governs, and controls, unto the opposite issue, Life, Eternal Life. Sin's reign was unto death; but grace extends her reign unto Eternal Life, and never can possibly fall short of that result. As certainly as it is that sin is the sting of death, so certainly the gift, or grace of God, is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. None can fail of Eternal Life who are subjects of reigning Grace; nor can any fail of the wages of sin who are subjects of its reigning power.

This being the prominent doctrine of the inspired apostles and of the primitive disciples of Christ, their workmongrel opposers slanderously reported that they held, and avowed as

their doctrine, that they would sin, that grace might abound. But it was a false charge, and as slanderously said of the primitive saints as it is now reiterated against the old order of disciples, and upon the same ground. But the apostle pronounces it a slanderous report, and he says of those who propagate it that their damnation is just.

Again, the enemies of God and truth have always contended that the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, reigning, and saving grace is exceedingly dangerous leading to licentiousness; for they have no knowledge of that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Their religion depends on fear, animal excitement, terror, fire and brimstone, &c. But the operative principle of love, as an incentive to holy aspirations, is only found under the reign of grace, hence all will-worshippers are ignorant of it.

Paul could, and did confidently appeal to the subjects of grace in the language of our text, "What shall WE then say?" We know what our calumniators, and all arminians say on the subject; but, "What shall we say?" Can a subject of grace be found in heaven or in earth who will say, Let us sin that grace may abound? The very thought to them is abhorrent and repulsive; God forbid, is their language; for, How shall we that are dead to sin — slain to its love, dead to its dominion, and emancipated from its reign — how shall we live any longer therein? Baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being buried with him by baptism into death, crucified with him, dead to sin by his body, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and with him we are risen to newness of life; Christ now liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us. The body, or that which is born of the flesh, is dead because of sin, circumcised, or cut off, so that we are no longer known in the flesh, or after the flesh, but the Spirit; that which is born of the Spirit is life,

because of righteousness. It is the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Now, therefore, our element is no longer sin, but holiness. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." If we were crucified with him, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, and the body of sin destroyed; if with him God has raised us up together to a newness of life, then may we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then the admonition of the subject applies to us. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. The old mortal body is still of the earth earthy. Sin is still there striving to maintain a dominion over our members. But being legally released from his cruel dominion, we have a right to renounce his yoke, and refuse obedience to his wicked mandates. Sin will strive to reign over our members and to control them by stirring up our passions and lusts, and to press our members into its service. But here is the true ground of our confidence, that sin shall not have dominion over us; for we are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." We are frequently told by the votaries of free-will and human agency in salvation, that if they could be assured that they are not under the

law, or exposed to its penal wrath, they would not only sin, but give al loose to all their lusts, and take their fill of sin; thus proving that they still love sin as well as ever. They are not yet full; they want more, and are only restrained by a selfish fear of hell. Our case is quite different, if we are under the reign of grace; we have had our fill of sin long ago; we loath it now, we hate it, we detest it, and love holiness, for it is now our element.

We come now to the sixteenth verse of the chapter on which Brother Springsteen desired us to comment in connection with the first. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" This the saints ought to know, and to thoroughly understand. Here are two opposite dominions — the one, sin; the other righteousness; — and if we are under the dominion of the first of these, we shall obey it; in its lusts, yielding our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But if freed from the dominion of sin, and brought under the reign of grace, we shall obey the governing principles of grace, the law of grace, which teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly righteously, and godly in this present world. This law of grace is not written on tables of stone, but written on the tables of our hearts, according to the provisions of the New Covenant, or Covenant of Grace. "I will put my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. While a discrimination is here made between the slaves of sin and the subjects of reigning grace, we are taught to regard a love of holiness, a spirit of obedience to God, and a relish for the word of truth, the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, as a reliable evidence that we have passed from death unto life — from the dominion of sin to the reigning power of grace; and in the fulness

of our hearts, in the assurance of this evidence, we join the apostle in thanksgiving to God, that our service under the dominion of reigning sin, is among the things which were — that being now made free from sin, we became servants of righteousness.

The question may arise, Why, if I am thus made free from the reigning power of sin, am I so prone to wander, — so full of vain and wicked thoughts? Why do I the things which I ought not, and leave undone the things which I ought? The answer of this enquiry will be found in the words of our Redeemer, in connection with those of Paul. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing." All our disobedience and rebellion against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, arises from the flesh, which is and always has been at war with grace. It is no more that I do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin.

Here is the ground of the Christian warfare; two opposing laws, two opposite principles dwell in us, while we sojourn in the militant state. The flesh, or earthly depraved nature will never harmonize with the aspirations of the new man after holiness. The flesh is still a servant of sin, but the new man is the servant of Righteousness, and each zealous for its respective master. While the sin that dwelleth in us disputes and opposes every step of the reign of grace, so that we cannot do the things which we would; grace, on the other hand, or the immortal spirit of life, which is denominated the new man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth, and making war, uncompromising and determined, shall crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and shall assuredly triumph over all opposition

with, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle continues to dwell on this subject throughout this and the succeeding chapter, and shows that the saints are debtors not unto the flesh, to live after the flesh; if governed by the flesh, or if we walk after the flesh we shall die. Death hath passed on the flesh, and the flesh is dead because of sin; sin has defiled it, reigns in it, and his reign is unto death. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God; and to be carnally minded is death. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Much more might be written on this subject, the importance of which is demonstrated in the experience of all the saints, but we trust that what we have written will afford Brother Springsteen some idea of what are our views on the subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1859.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Elder John Peter Helms was born in Franklin County, Virginia, September 30, 1880, and departed this life September 29, 1965, making his age a few hours less than eighty-five. He died in a hospital after a stroke and fall at his home in Vinton, Virginia. He was the son of the late James W. Helms and Betty J. (Corn) Helms, and grandson of Elder Peter Corn, a long time moderator of the Pigg River Association.

On June 18, 1903, he was united in marriage to Clara Clifford Austin; and to this union ten children were born. Mrs. Helms died November 20, 1954. The following children survive: six daughters, Mrs. Nancy Perdue, Mrs. Tiny Flippen, Mrs. Hazel Bryant, Mrs. Lottie McMahan, Mrs. Dottie Terrell, and Mrs. Pearl Pendleton, all of Roanoke, Virginia; four sons, Charlie and Rowe, Vinton,

Virginia, and Rodney and Johnnie, of Roanoke. On May 8, 1956, Elder Helms was united in marriage to Sister Minnie Annie Dyer; who survives. Surviving also are two brothers: Charlie Helms, Red Wood, Virginia; and Silas Helms, Vinton, Virginia; and twenty grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

In 1914 Brother Helms received a hope in the Lord's mercies, and united with Republican Church, Franklin County, Virginia. He was baptized by the late Elder George Dyer. In 1917 he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and served his brethren ably for almost fifty years. At the time of his death he was pastor of the following churches: Republican, Pigg River, Basham, Little Creek, and Thompson's Grove. All the brethren and friends of these churches, as well as those of a wide area among whom he traveled, will greatly miss him.

He was plain spoken in his ministry, and left no one in doubt as to his understanding and belief of the doctrine of God our Saviour. His characteristic plainness caused his hearers to listen attentively, and many to rejoice with him; but whether all agreed with him, they highly respected him for his sincerity, and the humble recounting of his experience in being brought from nature to grace, and his call to the ministry. The writer was closely associated with Brother Helms and family for many years: we spent many hours in conversation; and traveled many hundreds of miles together during those years. He was wise in counsel, and of much comfort and encouragement in my early ministry. No one will miss his presence more than I.

Funeral services were held at Basham Meeting House, where he was pastor, and where many sorrowing ones were gathered to pay their final tribute of respect. They came from far and near, making the largest gathering we have seen on such an occasion; and the profusion of flowers from his friends bespoke their love. Many of his ministering brethren were present, and the following had part in the service: Elders John Wood, C. E. Turner, William Holland, Amos Hash, and D. V. Spangler. After which the deacons of the churches he served so faithfully carried him to his resting place in the family plot in the church cemetery; there to await the coming of his Lord to fulfill the promise that his people should be conformed to His image, when this mortal shall put on immortality. ". . . when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O' death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of

death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." These things Brother Helms believed and preached.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to his family, and to the brethren and friends he served so long.

John D. Wood

SISTER MATTIE EDWARDS

It is with a heavy heart that I comply with the request of the church to write about Sister Mattie Edwards' death. She was born January 11, 1878, in Franklin County, Virginia; married December 25, 1900, to Daniel K. Edwards; joined the church in 1904, and baptized by Elder G. F. Dyer; and died February 9, 1965.

Sister Edwards preached her own funeral here in this life by her walk, talk, deeds and thoughts, and she'll live on with us in sweet memory.

Elder C. N. Bunn, her pastor, conducted a very beautiful service: he spoke so very comforting to our souls, and made us feel all is well in life and death. His words had power, weight and deep rich meaning. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." He read Psalm 23; also her favorite hymn:

"Awake my soul, in joyful lays
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise:
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving kindness, O how free!"

Elder Bunn's heart had been made sad along with ours, because a precious one had been taken from our midst; but the spirit within made us all want to sing, "Loving kindness, O how sweet!" because she had been given a body just like Jesus. God crowned her with his loving kindness and tender mercy, which came down from heaven to her through the sufferings of God's blessed and only Son: His candle shined upon her head, and by his light one could see those Christian graces which would commend the faith which she possessed by the life which she led. When Elder Bunn would be blessed to preach the power, glory and love of God's everlasting and eternal truth so beautifully, and we would be blessed to hear him, we would say this is "Our little peace," which passeth all understanding. My husband and I have been taking her to church since the early twenties, along with four other dear widowed sisters; leaving one dear mother in Israel, namely Sister Shields.

My heart goes out to her dear family, brethren, neighbors and friends. She has just gone where the family circle will never be broken, and she will be robed in the robe of righteousness, because she was taught by the heavenly King, and heaven will be her home — the eternal city of God.

May God continue to shed his tender mercy and amazing love upon her dear family and especially to her son Edmond, and his wife Essie, with whom she lived. I don't feel that anyone could have been more kind and good to her than Essie, her faithful and loving daughter-in-law.

Some sweet day she will be brought into this glorious body by God's holy calling. God himself will come for her, and He himself will receive her unto himself in glory: the blessed Prince of Peace, blessed be his holy name; the same power that raised Jesus, will raise her. She will be like her Lord; she will see, know, and be satisfied, because He was a Saviour when He came. He suffered, bled, died, and rose a Saviour for her; and He is now sitting on the right hand of God making intercessions for us. (Oh, how I need intercessions!) The eternal God is our refuge and His everlasting arms are underneath, surely He bears our sorrows and carries our griefs. How can we sink with such a prop as our eternal God? May our hearts be tuned to one thing, "Thy will be done."

Written by one who loved her naturally and, I hope spiritually for Jesus' sake only.

Pearl Fickett

GROVER CLEVELAND SPINDLE

Brother Grover C. Spindle, a long time resident of Washington, D. C., was born in Centreville, Virginia, August 16, 1884, and died at his home March 3, 1965, after being confined to his home for several years. He was a son of Robert Leachman Spindle and Virginia (Rector) Spindle. On December 16, 1907, he was united in marriage to Miss Grace M. George; who survives. Surviving also is one nephew.

Brother Spindle united with Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, in 1912, and was baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. The brethren saw the gift of a deacon in him and he was set apart to this office, which he filled well as long as he was able to be active. Brother Spindle was of a very friendly and pleasant disposition, sound in the faith and a good conversationalist. These qualities endeared him to all with whom he came into contact. The brethren and friends were always glad when he would come out from Washington to spend the

night before meeting days. This he did for many years, never missing his meetings unless providentially hindered. He is greatly missed by the brethren and friends, and his memory will linger in their hearts.

His funeral was conducted at the Lee Funeral Home in Washington by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Addison Chapel Cemetery, Seat Pleasant, Maryland, to await the fullness of the Lord's promise to come again; until the redemption of His purchased possession.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Mrs. Spindle and all the brethren and friends who mourn his passing.

John D. Wood

CHURCH NOTICES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

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

H. C. MOON, Pastor

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

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

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

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

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

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

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

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

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

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

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

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

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

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

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

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

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

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with all day meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

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

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

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE, Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, Clerk

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

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

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

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

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

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

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor

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

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

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

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

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

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All lovers of Sovereign Grace Principles especially invited.

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

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

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

and

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

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

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

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

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

D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207,
Stuart, Va.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1966

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE GOSPEL PREACHER

How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill;
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal.

How charming is their voice,
How sweet the tidings are!
Zion, behold thy Saviour King:
He reigns and triumphs here.

How happy are our ears
That hear this joyful sound,
Which kings and prophets fear,
And sought but never found.

How blessed are our eyes
That see this heavenly light;
Prophets and kings desired it long,
But died without the sight.

The watchmen join their voice
And tuneful notes employ:
Jerusalem breaks forth in song
And deserts learn the joy.

The Lord makes bare his arm
Through all the earth abroad:
Let every nation now behold
Their Saviour and their God.

Ye little flock whom Jesus feeds,
Dismiss your anxious fears:
Look to the Shepherd of your souls
And smile away your fears.

Your Father will a kingdom give,
And give it with delight:
His feeblest child his love shall call,
To triumph in His sight.

— Watts

(Submitted in spiritual love, and pray that it might serve to lift a drooping mind, and to remind us to have a prayerful heart for our preaching brethren, who so ably bring fruit of the vine directly from the Throne.)

J. M. Bailey
Kenova, W. Va.

“IT OFTEN SEEMS TO ARRIVE AT
THE RIGHT TIME”

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is again time to send payment for our much loved paper, the **Signs of the Times**. It is a welcomed package of letters, editorials, and sermons from far and near, which often seems to arrive just at the right time — feeding our hungry soul, strengthening our feeble knees, and renewing our hope; and we find fresh courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

It is always my desire to send a few lines along with my remittance, hoping in some way to honor our God and to be of comfort to others. The experiences of our hearts and souls are too precious to be belittled. What a wonderful blessing it is to **believe**. Remember back when we didn't believe, but hoped someday we would; but with man it was impossible. And we then began to learn we could not believe, and became afraid it was not for us, for our sins had become exceedingly sinful. We suffered many strange experiences, and learning we could not keep our promise to God, but broke them all; and was falling into a more fearful condition. But, when it pleased the Lord to reveal his Son in our heart, that removed every sin and

fear, and caused us to rejoice and praise Him with all our being; and He enabled us to lay hold of the hope that was set before us. The effect of the heavenly breeze had been felt, the new birth had taken place; old things had vanished away and behold all things became new; and the comforting words came that no power, visible or invisible, should ever be able to separate us from His love. I felt for days I never would suffer again, but little did I know the wills and shalls of our God.

We heard a wonderful sermon today by Elder Paul Poyner of Murry, Kentucky, from the 19th Psalm. The entire chapter is so good; the twelfth verse begins a prayer that lives in the hearts of those who are exercised thereby according to the working of God's mighty power. If I know anything about it, it is of Him that we live, move and have our being; and from the depths of my heart I can feel the truth of these lines:

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

We desire to walk godly in this world, proving our love for Him in letting our light shine, that others may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. But, Oh, my soul, how to walk godly we do not find. If our light ever shines, we don't see it, and how to perform that which is good, we find not. Thus all our righteousness falls to the ground as filthy rags; and we seek comfort in such as, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." So our hope rests in what Jesus has done for us in his love and mercy, and power to save.

Don't let this crowd out better writing, for the Lord has been pleased to keep the **Signs** filled with such things as are good for us to read. Elder Helms' sermon in the December **Signs** is so rich; together with the other writings.

Some we have met, but love flows to them all, as they all tell of the same sweet doctrine of Salvation by Grace. . . Love to all the household of faith.

Carrie Campbell

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE
SALISBURY ASSOCIATION
1965

God is love, and God is light. (1 John 4:16; 1:9)

That God is everything to his people is an established fact; and at this time it is, He is Love, and He is the Light that I feel to write to you about. Where there is love and light, there is a family dwelling together in union. It will not do to ascribe the love and the light to the children of God. There are many that are ascribing both unto the unregenerated children of God, and that they by an act of their own, can come into the love of God, and walk in the light of his Spirit. Those who have been made free by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who is the truth, will know that such is not the true doctrine of God our Saviour.

In the chronology of the world, we are shown light first. There is every indication that we had day and night before we had the sun. As the love of God cannot be explained, just so the light of God cannot be explained. For us to talk about light and day before the sun was made, is to bring ridicule on ourselves before men, (that is, unregenerated men). To those that desire to learn from His written word, it is clear to see that the light that came as a result of God's command, was not the light that the sun gave when it was made. May the Lord bless us to remember that God is light: that He is the source of all light.

The love of God was bestowed upon his people in eternity. It did not have a beginning; God loved Israel from everlasting; Christ delighted in the sons of men from all eternity, and this de-

light could only be in those that he loved. Let it be said time and again that God has not loved sin. It was not his love of sin that moved him to send his Son in flesh, but his eternal love for his chosen people. This love moved him to make manifest his love by not imputing their sins to them, but to another, even Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners. The "manner" of God's love is made to shine forth unto perfection when we are called forth unto sonship. What a high title it is to be called the sons of God!

The manner in which this love of God is bestowed upon sinners, separates the Old School Baptists from all other people. Some would accuse us of taking too much honor here; of claiming too much among the denominations, even claiming that we do not have any right to a higher place than the children of God among others. That God has a people in every nation, (and denomination), is not denied, but to claim that the deluded children of God, those that are following sprinkling for baptism; men's forgiveness of sins instead of that which is in Jesus's name; men saving sinners instead of Christ; that they are not to be censored in anything; are to be invited to communion regardless to what they belong, this we can never affirm. The strongest tenet of faith of any of these nations and denominations is this: Sinners are brought into a knowledge of Christ and God *by first loving him*. The Old School Baptists teach and believe that each child of God is made to love Him because *God first loved them*. This writer, and the brethren that have authorized this Circular Letter, would not do violence to any man's religion; and, if our statement is wrong, we all, as one man, stand ready to retract it. But until it is proved by Holy Writ that we love God first, and then he loves us, we as a people must continue to rejoice in the grace of God, in the love of God which was bestowed upon us first.

As the love of God is eternal, and

moved him to send forth his Son, so it moves us. How false is the thought that, God being love — his love being the moving and spanning of the universe to his overshadowing the virgin to cause her conception, we are not moved to obey him. The love of God, which is God, being shed abroad in our hearts, is the manner of love that moves to humble, grateful obedience. Any confession of Christ that is not accompanied by the walk of obedience that identifies the children of God, is a confession and profession according to godliness (2 Timothy 2:5), but not according to possession (1 John 5:12); and anything that we may do or say, if not according to the love of God, is condemnatory to us instead of presenting us as recipients of this love.

This love of God, when shed abroad in our hearts, will produce the walk, or the fruits of the Spirit. Loud talking, strong criticisms of other orders of people, bold assertions that we are sound in the faith, are not enough to show this love. This love of God is best shown in action, not in a mere form of words.

We are commanded to let brotherly love continue. It is the love of God that is to continue. If we ever love our brethren, that love will be as lasting as the love of God for his people, because it is his love in us: it is certain that if we love God, we will love those begotten of God. There is not any uncertain sound to this. We will not, and we do not, and we cannot love God and hate one another.

As I write to you, and if it is your mind to accept this as your Circular Letter, by the grace of God I write for you, I would beseech you, and would desire grace from God that we might obey in deed and in truth this lovely mandate from God as given us by the writer of Hebrews.

The children of God are commanded not to be indebted to anyone, nor in any way, save to love one another. It is scriptural and Christlike to owe our

brethren, to be deeply indebted to them in love, but the commandment does not cease with this glorious indebtedness. It must be paid, if we are to receive the approval of our Saviour. This indebtedness begins when we have been delivered from our sins and are given Christ; and it will not end while here. Likewise the paying of this to one another is for all time; and how delightful it is to pay what we owe another. Herein is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:8, 10; Gal. 5:14)

If I am not mistaken in my calling, I love you all dearly.

W. D. Griffin

“THEN THERE IS WISDOM,
KNOWLEDGE, AND DEPTH”

Box 267,
Lincolnton, Ga. 30817

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is check for \$5.00, for which please renew my subscription for one year; the balance to help send the *Signs* to someone else.

I enjoy reading this good, sound Old Baptist paper. I wish I could say something to show you just how much I enjoy reading the good articles that appear in it: I read them more than once. It never fails to astound me to see the wisdom, knowledge, and depth of the articles — man alone is not capable of writing such. I know, because I hear men, and read their articles, and they do not satisfy me: They are shallow and hollow, and void of understanding. But when men are the mouthpiece of the Lord, then there is knowledge, wisdom and depth. That is why I love to read the *Signs*.

May the Lord continue to bless you and all the editors, to continue to put out a good paper, as it is now.

Gordon H. McGee

“THE SWEETNESS REMAINS”

Chestertown, Maryland

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

The past few days and weeks, my mind has been upon so many of the wonderful ways of God and His many ways of speaking and dealing with His little children. Perhaps my thoughts will be disconnected and hard to follow, but I will try to put them down as they come to me. I cannot find words to speak what I want to say and how I feel, but I can put it in writing, if the Lord will direct my pen. Of late, so many things have happened to put His wonderful ways of dealing with His people in my mind.

It has been several weeks since I attended the Associations in Virginia and at Salisbury, but many of the messages we heard those precious days return to me, as I lie in bed at night and the sweetness remains. “Faith” was the central theme of the whole. If we have not faith to believe in God and His whole creation; faith to believe that He was born, bled and died to save sinners; faith to believe that He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, promising to come again and gather all them that were His and carry them home to a place already prepared for them; if we have not this faith, what have we to live for? That is why it is so necessary for a child of God to have this God-given faith to live by, and to continue in it, from the beginning to the end. From the beginning believers lived by faith, and died faithful to their beliefs.

Even before Christ was born, the prophets were given the faith to look for His coming, and, being inspired of God, they lived, predicting the coming of One who would save them from their sins. The God of all creation had told them, and they believed. What great faith they had! They could not see God, but felt His power and heard His voice; so believed.

When the Babe was born, they knew He was the One sent of God. Just a tiny

Babe, born in a stable, in a little town; but they saw his star and came worshipping with gifts. But ordinary man could not see, nor understand, these things. Some, later, questioned why the Jews were the "chosen nation;" why Bethlehem was the place chosen of God for the birthplace of Jesus. God's ways are unpredictable and unexpected to the natural man. His plans and purposes are not revealed to everyone, just the chosen few; and if, at first, the Jews were the ones chosen to proclaim the truth, why should we question His ways? "To the Jew first, then unto the Gentile." The Jews cast Him out and would not recognize Him. The Lord of Life is full of surprises. In Isaiah, I believe, God says, "for as far as the heavens are above the earth, are my thoughts above your thoughts." In our natural condition, we tend to make two mistakes as we think of God. We are tempted to think that He thinks and acts as we do. Secondly, because we believe this, we imagine He is easily understood. Isaiah made no such error in his believing. All through the Bible, we read how people were amazed at the words and works of God. Stop and think for a moment just how unexpected He **does** work. Isaiah said, "He makes a way in the sea, and rivers in the desert." Or, think about the incarnation.

God reveals himself to man through a babe, born and laid in a manger in a small village. Yes, the Lord of Life is full of surprises. Instead of Christ overwhelming his enemies with a great army, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and died on a cross. Then, just when everyone thought Jesus was gone forever and all His work ended by the cruel action of the Romans, He arose, victorious over death and the grave! A few women and His disciples discovered an empty tomb. His ways, you see, are incredible to natural man. They shock and offend man, because they are not understood clearly. They jar our logic, stagger our commonsense and upset our assumptions concerning Him.

He, indeed, acts unexpectedly in un-

expected places and at unexpected times; but, He acts! Remember that. Then, think how unexpectedly He speaks. Paul did not expect Him to appear and speak to him on the road to Damascus, but He did; and what a wonderful change took place! The apostle had this insight into His divine nature when he wrote, "O, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord."

The world teaches that the aggressive get ahead, but Jesus says "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." He says the humble-minded shall receive the kingdom of God. We think the only intelligent way to deal with our enemies is to get rid of them, but Jesus says, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." We are lead to think that things we see and touch are what count most, but He says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." The world says "Grow up and be a man or woman." But our Lord says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

As one continues to hear God speak through prophets, priests and kings; through history and the Bible and through Jesus Christ himself, one is amazed at how wonderful are the values and purposes of life from God's viewpoint. How strange to the eye of natural man. He speaks so differently from the way we think He should speak. And, in fact, it is often difficult for man to comprehend, let alone believe. It is precisely because our Lord is not so obvious; not so easily understood; because He is so very different from ourselves, that it takes a spirit and mind in harmony with Him to hear Him speak, and to know His will. He says, "Be still and know that I am God", and "Stand still and see the salvation of

the Lord." With the mind all cluttered up with worldly thoughts and ideas, we seldom hear His voice. We are on the go, doing the things of the world, and do not have time to be still and "see" His great works. We must be made to pause with much soul searching and prayer, before we are in harmony with Him and hear His voice. It requires deep humility and a child-like faith, which reaches out to this Almighty God, whose arm is never too short to reach down and draw us up to Him from the lowest plane of life. To feel that, in spite of limited vision and understanding, means He loves us. Why do we love Him? Because He first loved us. Wonderful, isn't it? This Beautiful One, whose love has no beginning or ending, watches over and cares for us always, even though we are not aware of it.

Nowadays, there is pressure on all sides to deviate from the ways of God. The world says, "His ways are out of date, not worthy of concern." But this is not true. Only men change — God never does. "For I am God, and I change not." Man's laws change; God's never do. Right, like God, is eternal.

Oh, my precious brethren, we need to get down on our knees and beg God for mercy and forgiveness for neglecting to give Him all the praise, honor and glory; for keeping us in the way, as He most surely does, in this terribly mixed-up mass of humanity that is wandering around aimlessly today, looking for they know not what. We are so thankful He has given us a heart to believe and trust in Him, for if we had not this hope to keep us going, what would life be worth? Nothing at all! We do pray, but often we know not what to pray for, because our hearts are so full. We ask for what we think we want, in our natural condition, and hope we will receive it. But God knows our needs, even better than we do. He knows what is best for us. He answers our prayers in many ways, just as He speaks to us in divers manners. Sometimes, the answer is "no."

One thinks of the mother of Zebedee's

children (Matthew 20:21) She came to Jesus, asking that a certain wish be granted. He asked her, "What wilt thou?" She said, "Grant that my two sons might sit, one on thy right and one on thy left, in thy kingdom." Jesus answered, in part, "Ye know not what ye ask. Ye shall drink, indeed, of my cup, be baptised with the baptism I am baptised with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Jesus promised His disciples they would get whatever they asked for in **His name**. That meant whatever is the will of God, whatever is in harmony with the love, wisdom and justice of God.

As some of the dear pastors pointed out during our Association, God sees it all as a whole, not just in part. It is all spread out before Him as a great blueprint before the architect: The beginning, clear up to the end, for each of us. Therefore, He knows just what is before us, and, not knowing this ourselves, we are not prepared for the answer God gives us. In John 16:12, He told His disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." They were not ready yet to understand these things and He knew it. When the time came, they would be given the wisdom to see and understand. Then, as we do now, they saw as we do "through a glass darkly." Isn't it possibly the reason that, because we do see this way and pray with too much impatience for the end of poverty or for a peaceful world, that God must say to us, occasionally, "Not yet, my child, not yet." "Be still and know that I am God, I hold the whole world in my hand. I created and just so, I can destroy or I can save."

Then, God has still another way in which He answers us. He answers "yes", but not as we expect Him to. Remember the lame man lying at the gate of the temple called Beautiful? . . . Asking alms of Peter and John (Acts 3:6). And what was Peter's reply? "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have,

give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Did the lame man expect this answer? Of course not, but he received something far more precious than silver or gold. . . the ability to walk.

Then, once more, when Paul prayed to have the thorn removed from his flesh (2 Corinthians 12:8). Instead, God's promise to him was, "My Grace is sufficient to thee." Grace to supply all his needs. What a wonderful promise! And, with the needed grace, Paul was given faith to bear all his burdens and praise the Lord daily. We need to be mindful always that God answers prayers, but in His own way, not ours; which is for our best interest. What a joy it is to be given strength when we ask for it, be given renewed faith and hope when everything looks dark and hopeless. When we feel as though we have lost everything when a loved one passes on, and we pray for comfort, He always makes His presence felt. "For I will never forsake you." All our faith and hope comes from above, and our only strength is in Him. If we are truly God's children, and we hope we are, we need not be reminded that because He answers our prayers as we ask, it is not because we have persuaded God to do our will, or to change His mind. It is only because it is all in His purpose and will to deal with us as He does, for, all have been "purposed and written in His will".

We are told to pray without ceasing, not with many lip words, nor with public exhibitions or big words, but within the heart, wherever we are; and **from** the heart. I think the words "bowed down in prayer" do not simply mean to literally bow down, but to bow down in humility of spirit, as the publican. We can pray daily as we go about our work. We might suddenly have a desire to thank Him for some little kindness from someone, or perhaps feel a closeness with Him and want to thank Him for being near when needed. And, "Thanks, Father, for a lovely day" or "For keeping me in thy care through

the dangers of travel." Oh, so many things to thank Him for.

My prayer always will be for patience to wait upon Him and know that whatever happens, it is all as He purposed it to be. I pray for faith to trust Him in all things; to know and to do His will, for it is for our well being at all times; just to keep His holy laws and abide by them as far as human nature is able to, with His help.

Yours, in bonds of love in Christ, I hope.

Humbly, your sister
Ruth Lucht

41 Lovel Court, Apt. C,
Nutley, N. J. 07110

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find check to renew my *Signs* for another year; the balance to go to the Indigent Fund.

I look forward to receiving my paper from month to month, and would certainly be lost without it. I enjoy the splendid articles written by those who love and stand for this precious truth. As time passes, I feel the need more and more of spiritual food, and to be refreshed by the water of life from day to day.

Yesterday was our meeting day in New York, and although we are few in number, it is comforting and uplifting to meet with the brethren and hear the gospel word proclaimed.

A blessed holiday season to you and your dear ones.

Unworthily yours,
Myrtle Lefferts

IS THE DOOR LOCKED?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelations 3:20)

I hope the Lord will lead me in this

undertaking. First, I will say, John was commanded to write to a certain people. Those that might believe the door was locked, and that Jesus was helpless to enter in, should read the entire chapter again: there may be some things overlooked that are very important.

We will find that John was commanded to write to the angels of the churches named, and not to the world; which means, not to dead sinners. Those dead in sin cannot hear spiritually any more than the corporal dead can hear naturally — unless it pleases our heavenly Father to quicken the dead sinner into divine life, he will remain dead. “For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the son quickeneth whom he will.” (John 5:21)

Jesus holds not only the key of David, (Rev. 3:7), but the keys of hell and death, (Rev. 1:18), and certainly he is in possession of the key to his own kingdom; for He is the door of his sheep, and his sheep hear his voice, and they follow him: for they know his voice. “And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” (John 10:5) The Lord’s humble poor and afflicted know not the voice of the doctrine of men, who preach that the Lord Jesus is a beggar, and cannot enter in because *they*, the carnal nature of men, will not let him; and he has therefore utterly failed to accomplish the will of his Father who sent him.

In 1st Samuel 17:38, we find that Saul armed David that he should be prepared to meet the Philistine, and win the battle. But David could not go with such armour as a man could furnish. David know in whom he trusted: it was the same God that delivered him out of the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear, and, “He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.” The world today is still using Saul’s armour to convert and make so-called Christians. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither

can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14) But the poor and afflicted are trusting in the God who has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, for they are drawn by the Holy Spirit. I feel certain that the elect family of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, are drawn to Him through the Son and Spirit, not according to the will of man, but according to the will of God our Saviour. “Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:13)

We read in the 3rd chapter of Matthew how that Jerusalem and all Judea were baptized of John; but seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” Dearly beloved, I believe it is impossible even for God’s very elect to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, except it be by the working of the Holy Spirit; it being the work of God that they believe in Christ Jesus.

When one is pricked in the heart and wounded, he will certainly seek the great physician, and come truly and humbly confessing his sins to his God, and be made to trust in the Lord Jesus, who is the only one that can bind up his wounds, and give him a final resting place. These are the ones that truly bring forth fruits meet for repentance. In Matthew 5:20, we read, “Except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus comes to his bride, *the church*, because he loves her with an everlasting love; and through him the good news from a far country is brought: the Gospel. The bride looks for him: she loves him because he has loved her first, and has raised her up and paid the full redeeming price — his life, his

blood, that some day she shall rest from all her labor and dwell with him in that eternal kingdom forever. This is her precious hope.

Oh, how often He comes to her knocking at her very heart, and comforts her with that love that flows from heart to heart, and breast to breast; and the Spirit and the bride say come: so we can be sure that as often as Jesus visits his bride, the church, he prepares her to receive him. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) "He opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open." (Rev. 3:7)

How wonderful his love and power, that he comes and unfolds the beauty of his kingdom here on earth, to the precious ones who are the anointed, and called not according to their works, but according to his mercy and grace, and blesses them in sweet fellowship to meet together in that precious faith. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit . . ."

If we love the Lord, it is because he first loved us, and gave himself for us. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John 15:16) How wonderful it is when we are lifted up, to feel that blessed assurance of the precious hope abiding in us! yet we realize that we, as poor, helpless creatures, are dependent upon the Heavenly Father; and cannot always feel to be lifted above our many troubles here in this world of sin and sorrow. For there are many valleys of trials and afflictions — and when we are down in those places, only the dear Lord of heaven can lift us up: He hears the cry of his humble, poor and afflicted ones; and these are they who are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and brought by the power of God to be united with the Heavenly Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and

knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Dear kindred, have you not had a little feast along your journey, on just a few handfuls of purpose left for you, when you were blest to feel the very presence of a Saviour's love. Certainly this is when He is standing at the door and knocking within the heart of his beloved. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come . . . and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." This is a well of water springing up in you unto eternal life; for it is God that worketh in you of his own good pleasure. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:16)

Dearly beloved in the Lord, if you are crossing many valleys, and the journey becomes so uneven, and the streams almost dry, press onward, for the sweet promise of our Lord and Master is that he will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. How wonderful it is when we are given to rest in his sure promises, awaiting the coming of Jesus for his bride; with whom we hope to be united, to be with him in his likeness, and be forever satisfied.

In a precious hope,
(Elder) C. D. Turner,
Dunn, N. C.

Chowchilla, Calif.

Dear Brother Wood:

I have been thinking of writing you a few lines of what I believe to be the word of truth. May the Lord be my helper. If I were a preacher, I would use this as a text: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," as Paul wrote Timothy. What is the word of truth? the Bible; for Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable for doctrine, for re-proof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Jesus always had the poor in mind; for he said we always had the poor with us, but me ye have not always. And he said that if we give to someone that could give us in return, we haven't done anything.

When Jesus asked his apostles whom that men said that he the Son of man was, they said that some said that he was John the Baptist: some Elias, or one of the prophets: some said one thing and some another. But when Jesus asked them whom they said that he was, Peter answered and said that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Then Jesus said unto Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He did not build the church upon Peter, but the revelation of that Rock which cannot be broken or prevailed against . . .

Jesus also said heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. . .

Yours little brother in hope,
Wm. Echols

(Brother Echols mentioned that he was in his eighty-eighth year when he wrote. We regret the delay in publishing the above. — J. D. W.)

"PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS"

"Then Phillip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." (Acts 8:35)

Jesus and what He has done for his own people, (who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world,) is all there is to preach. We find that Jesus was prophesied of even in the

garden of Eden, and that all the prophets spoke of him. Isaiah said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

When the eunuch asked Phillip, ". . . of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man," then Phillip preached unto him Jesus.

When Mary was found to be with child before she and Joseph came together, he was minded to put her away privately; but while he thought on these things the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 2: 20, 21)

Then we have the testimony of Simeon when Jesus was brought to Jerusalem, to be presented before the Lord. Simeon had understood by revelation of the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple, and took the babe up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

And when it came time for Jesus to be baptized, John saw him coming, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." After John baptized him, he came out of the water, and the heavens were opened, and the Spirit like a dove descended upon him, and there came a voice from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Then Jesus chose his twelve disciples to bear record of the things he did and the things he said; and he performed many miracles, such as raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, as well as healing all manner of diseases, and casting out devils. He associated with publicans and sinners, and began his work among the lower classes who were despised by the proud hierarchy of the day. He made it plain that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; to give his life a ransom for those the Father gave him. After he had performed all that the Father had assigned him, even the fulfilling of the moral and legal law, (except laying down his life and giving the body his Father had prepared him — the one offering that would forever perfect them that are sanctified,) He lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and said, "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. . . I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. . . I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me."

Jesus was condemned by his own people: the Jews carried him before Pilate, who delivered him back to be crucified. He was crucified between two thieves; and when he had suffered all the pain and abuse that was His to suffer, the just for the unjust, he bowed his head, and said, "It is finished." The ransom price had been paid: the salvation of his people was then secured. He died for the offenses of his people, and arose for their justification. He was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and remained there three days and nights; then arose. Then, after being seen of his disciples forty days, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. And after he had spoken these things, and while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight; but they were given definite assurance that the same Jesus would come again.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the disciples all being present, the Holy Ghost from heaven came suddenly as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the whole house, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance: manifesting the assurance of the promise that Jesus had made to his disciples, saying, "It is needful that I go away, but I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter . . . he shall take the things of mine and shew them unto you." There were Jews dwelling at Jerusalem, devout men of every nation under heaven, who were amazed that they heard these Galileans speaking so that every man heard in his own tongue. But some mocked, saying that they were full of new wine. Then it was that Peter, in obedience to the command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," spoke, saying, "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and harken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose . . . But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." etc. And, having the keys of the kingdom, Peter began expounding unto them the sacred truths concerning Jesus: how that they according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, had taken and by wicked hands had crucified and slain, "Whom God hath raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Many were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of

you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And about three thousand gladly received his word and were baptized.

Later Peter, being commanded by the voice from heaven, went to the house of Cornelius a Gentile, and preached unto them the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ and him crucified; and that God raised him up the third day. And while Peter was speaking the Holy Ghost fell on all those which heard the word, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord.

Thus the infant church was established. And we find the Apostle Paul writing to the Ephesians, "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 has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And in the second chapter, he says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . ."

Before he went away. Jesus told his disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercessions for us; for in Him is our identification, our justification, and our hope. It gives us courage to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking for the coming of our Lord and Saviour: when we will enter into the full benefits of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time.

"Then Phillip opened his mouth and

began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus."

In the language of Paul, "And now, brethren, I commend you unto God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." Amen.

(Elder) J. A. Tew
Rt. 1, Box 268,
Dothan, Alabama

"AN APPOINTED TIME AND PLACE"

307 S. Daniel Creek Rd.,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Editors:

I feel to write this morning about the wonderful works of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: I believe he has an appointed time and place for everything. A year ago I would go to meetings, after I would feel so burdened during the week, and felt that I would surely offer to the church the next time I have opportunity; but that meeting time would come, and as usual, I would come back home just as before, with the same burden. I felt that I would certainly offer the fourth Sunday in May, 1965, at Riverview Church, Bassett, Virginia, but felt the same way, and couldn't go. But on the fifth Sunday in May, just one week later, I was blest to be at Bell Spur Church, a good way up in the mountains, and I was made to go — I couldn't have stayed back anymore than I could go before. I was lifted in the Spirit and didn't realize just how I got to Elder Jim Hollandsworth.

I was baptized the following Sunday with two other sisters in the faith. I was so high on the maintain top I hardly knew what I was doing. I feel a lot better at times; then at times I feel my Lord is completely gone. Oh, wouldn't it be awful if He were completely gone, and would never come

back? What would we poor, helpless creatures do?

Isn't it wonderful when we can feel His nearness and protection. I can't help speaking of my Lord as *mine*: He has given me this, just as he gave me the hope and trust in him that I have. He is so wonderful and good. I would rather be at meetings with his saints and the called elders than any place on this earth. I enjoy the preaching so much: yet, for some reason, when the services are over I feel good and nourished with spiritual food, but can't carry it back home with me to meditate upon, for the text and all just seem to go from me.

When I was twelve or thirteen, one of my great aunts died: her name was Fannie McCall; and a few days after she was buried, just after I had gone to bed and closed my eyes, she appeared beside my bed. I opened my eyes, thinking that I could see her plainer, but she disappeared. I can see her now as I did forty-five years ago, with her light gray dress, ankle length and long sleeves. I did not give it any thought then, but I now feel that the Lord was in the matter for some purpose.

Your little sister, I hope,
Edith Brooks

FROM BROTHER SMITH
IN GERMANY

P. O. Box 96,
A. P. O. New York 09757

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

It has been all too long since I wrote you last, and I have been made to feel the terrible shame for my negligence toward you, whom I love so dearly . . .

In a recent letter I remarked to a loved one of my trials and tribulations these past many months: how I am left so desolate and alone in the wilderness, as it were. Though I receive letters and the *Signs*, I find but little comfort, and that so short lived. I wrote that I read

the *Signs* and believe it to be the truth, yet joy did not come. Then this very day I received the December *Signs*, and was blessed with mixtures of joy and sorrow. What a marvelous God is our God! How wonderful is the revelation of Christ in a sinner's breast, when it appears that he is lifted out of the horrible pit! And how tasty a morsel is the new song placed in his mouth, even praise unto our God.

I felt much grief at the news of the passing of Sister Friess; and then my sorrow is turned to rejoicing, (even as it was also at the passing of my dear grandmother, Sister Sarah Jane Smith, sometime ago,) at the knowledge that it has pleased our Creator to deliver them out of bondage into the glorious liberty of Jesus Christ forever. I vividly remember the freshness of Sister Friess: of how she brought many moments of joy and great pleasure unto me. Though she suffered afflictions in the flesh, she was kept sound in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ; and was blessed to freely confess Him among men.

The articles and letters of the brethren in this December *Signs* were well received by this sinner, and, unless I am deceived, it appears there is a reviving, or newness found in my heart, which for so long has felt so dead. My thoughts after reading Brother Morton's dear letter, were the same as is found in the 133rd Psalm, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" When it has pleased God in his infinite power, presence, and wisdom, to call the brethren to sit down at the table prepared of Him, to sup together, it is a joyful and edifying experience.

I often think of how in the flesh we are so far removed from the presence of our brethren, that our labor is hard and our pain is great; yet, by His grace He calls us together in Spirit and in truth, to worship Him, and see Him as he is, if this lowly worm of the dust is not deceived. This wonderful

experience brings us to remember the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:5, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another."

Dearly loved ones, I surely am brought to much shame, and must confess the ignorance and weakness of which I am possessed. If we are ever led to speak of Christ and his greatness, we are ashamed of our inability; but not ashamed of that hope which is in us. Those that are led of Christ Jesus, stand in the face of the adversary, and proclaim His truths, even unto the death of the mortal body. I often think of the afflictions of the Apostles, and would marvel at their continuance in the faith, were it not that I am made mindful that He promised his children this, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20)

Dear kindred, my desire is that you should remember me to the brethren, and remind them that, although I have been long absent from them in the flesh and have been driven into the land of Egypt, as it were into much darkness, pestilence and desolation, my hope is that in mind I am continually with them.

I realize that my words are many, and at best, confusing; my desire is to convey the heartfelt love as is experienced in me; praying, the Lord willing, for your peace and comfort for Christ's sake. May His will be done forever. He receives all glory to himself, giving us the fulness of joy in the knowledge of it. With love and affection,

Your most unworthy little brother in hope, if one at all.

B. K. Smith

Danville, Virginia February, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

EDITORIAL

GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN

I am not sure that this title expresses what I want it to do. Perhaps a critic might make it mean something that I do not intend. However, I am willing to write what it means to me. The results I am willing to leave in the hands of God. To those that my title, as well as my remarks concerning it, brings them to object to what is implied in both, I leave them to write their views, assuring them that I will not feel offended.

If I felt in my heart that the editors of the **Signs of the Times** did not distinguish between the work of grace in the Lord's people and the work of the devil, I would sever my relations with the paper at once. I will not be a party to the promulgation of such things if I know it. I am sure that none of the present editorial staff, nor of those of

by gone days feel that way about God's attitude toward sin.

Let us say in the beginning that my experience, and the Bible from beginning to end, teaches the Absolute sovereignty of God. Some that I see marks of grace in, and that I have sweet fellowship for, will tolerate, if they do not accept, the expression, the absolute sovereignty of God. I confess that I am not able to see the difference. Of one thing I am sure, to wit, If God has ever come off second best; if he has ever had to retreat before Satan; if He has ever desired a thing, but because of the greater ability (or lack of it) of the creature, he has had to yield and take a lesser desire, then I say to you, God is not a sovereign. My conception of sovereignty is **sovereignty**.

If the **letting** of God's sovereignty to be, was predicated on the wisdom and judgment of men, how many men would allow God to be sovereign in all things? My answer to that is, None. Not the first man (and that includes all Old Baptists of whatever faction they may hail from, as well as all others) would be agreeable to God doing as he pleased in heaven and in earth. Sad to relate, but nevertheless true, the most of us would hail it with delight until it touched us. The line would be drawn then and there. If and when blessed of God, I am glad to bow in humble submission to his will being done in heaven and in earth. Otherwise, if I were sovereign, I would order my cause before him, if I could find him.

The truth is worth repeating often, a falsehood one time is too many. I have said it hundreds of times, I repeat it once again. God does his will in heaven and in earth. While it was Nebuchadnezzar that said so, I subscribe to it wholeheartedly, to wit, that God does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? What the army of heaven implies, I am not sure. It may mean among the disembodied spirits of the saints; it may mean

among the seraphims that wait and attend the Lord, or it may mean both. Unless Satan is there to hinder; unless the spirits of the saints carry some power of the flesh, I am sure that nothing prevents God doing his will there. Unless the devil is superior to God; unless some creature has more power than the Creator of the earth, I am sure that he does his will in the earth.

In my treatise on this subject, I want to inquire of the scriptures the extent of God's creation, the extent of what he has made. Did he create and make all things? I am not asking men, I am asking God, I am asking the scriptures. Does the Bible tell us the extent of God's creation? If it does, who is going to deny it? And if they do deny it, should we be concerned about whether they continue with us or not? "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." Col. 1: 16, 17. What kind of Bible objection will be advanced to this? God did create all things. Moreover, he did create them all for himself. O yes, I sometimes object to the use he puts some of these things, but above everything else I would beg the Lord to reconcile me to his use of what he created in this text. Each object was created for him. God created each object for himself. In this determining act of God, there was not an objector. Why? because God is before all things. This being before all things, means all the created things. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." Rom. II:36. I ask, is anything left out of this scripture? All is of him, all is through him, and all is to him, and in the whole he is one to be gloried in. Explain away one thing and the explainer becomes the one to whom glory is due. Banish the thought. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy

pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4: 11) If any objection is raised to one thing of these all things, then the objector is taking glory and honor and power from the Lord. Banish the thought.

God did create all things. God has not done anything in time that he did not determine in eternity to do. His creation of all things was his determining of all things. At the time of this determination, as well as at the time of this creation, and at all subsequent times, even in time of the Saviour, God has been before all things. If this means anything, it certainly does do away with an eternal devil. Many have been the opposers of the two seed doctrine, and that justly so, because it is not true. But some of the strongest opposers of that false theory have hesitated to say that God made the devil. I had as soon have the eternal-devil-theory, as to have the idea that he sprang up about the time of the creation of the world and its fulness. When I am asked, Who made the devil? I have access to three answers. 1st. I can use Bible language and say that God created him. 2nd. I can say that he is an eternal self existant devil. 3rd. I can say that he generated himself apart from God in every sense of the word. I know, and all Bible loving people believe that God created him. God created him a devil, and that is what he is now. God created him for himself. God created him to play and act the devil.

Not for one moment do I believe that God created the devil to play and act the devil, and then God take his job away from him. I do not accept the idea that God is the influence that causes us to sin. For me, God created the devil to play the devil; he cut out or determined the work that the devil would do before the world began. We must remember that what God created that it was for himself. No god, no creature, nothing at all, was considered in the creation of all things. All of it was created for him. If this is true (who will take the position that it is not true?), then it follows without question

or quibble that all of the devilish work that Satan will ever do was appointed him by his creator. If not, why? This being true, please do not tell me that God has to see to it that we sin; that He must coerce us into sinning. That is the devil's work. In the trial and crucifixion of our blessed Lord a devil was there. His being there was the direct result of his being chosen. His work was to betray the Saviour. He was a devil, chosen to do the work of one. The choice of the Saviour and the creation of Satan in the morning of time was for the same purpose — that the devil be played.

In the years gone by I have had to bear the insulting questions of those that would ask: How can God govern sin and not be the author of it? How can God predestinate sin, and not be the cause of his predestination? When these questions are hurled at the truth (for let it be remembered that they can never have any weight when hurled at the one who is declaring the truth), there is a smirking of the lips, a sarcastic grin, as though they had the speaker on the run. My God, it is not the speaker that is being run from the field, no, no, not that at all. If, when God declares a thing to be, He can be assailed, can be called in question, **can be answered**, then He, not men, is on the run from the creature. I do not have any apology to make for what God has said and done. If men cannot understand **how** that God has predestinated all things and yet is not the author of sin, let men raise the question with Him.

But has God predestinated sin? Across the vista of the last forty years among the Old School Baptist, I have read hundreds of times that God's predestination does not have anything to do with sin. When I first became interested in these things I did not know of the confusion that existed because of predestination. In those first years I read from the pen of humble, and, I believe, God-fearing men, who said that God predestinated all good things but never any evil thing, (and, let it be

remembered that this word evil applied only to sin). But not for long. That did not stand too long. Why? To declare that God predestinated all good things would be too much for the doctrine of conditional time salvation. So over the years there has been a shunning of even that much predestination. The affair has now reached the place to where God has not predestinated **events** at all. His predestination is now, in this the twentieth century, limited to the salvation of his people. **AND I SAY THE SAME THING. God's predestination is limited to the salvation of his people.** Did God have in mind an anterior purpose in the making of all things? In the order of time, in the unfolding of the mind of God, did it really **unfold**, or did he create without purpose? He made all things, and made them for himself. If God did not know why he made them, how could he make them for himself? If he did not have a mind towards what he was creating, it might be said that he created them for some other god, or for the devil. If God did have a mind towards **what** he was creating, if he **did** create them for himself, then he did have a mind about what he was about. And this mind was anterior to the work of creation. Thus God predestinated **what** would be done **by** the created object.

How did God **harden** Pharaoh's heart? **I do not know.** If you do not know, I have fellowship for you. But how any man could expect to have fellowship, when he denies that God did harden the king's heart, is more than I can understand. Telling **why** or **how** that God does things is poor preaching. Telling that God has done things; that he has done them for his glory, is, to me, mighty **sweet** and comforting preaching. God did raise up Pharaoh. What for? To worship God? No. To see if he could combine forces with the children of Israel? No. Then, **Why?** He raised him up, and he hardened his heart. Stop there. That is far enough. Let God tell **why** that it was done; let his ministers preach again and again that it is was that the name of God

might be shown **in** (not by) the raising up of Pharaoh, and (in addition to the power being shown) that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. That does not make God the author of sin. God raised up a wicked man; he hardened a wicked man's heart.

Did God have anything to do with sending Joseph into Egypt? How much part did he have in it? Did he send him according to purpose, or without purpose? Did he determine to save life **before** he sent Joseph? Did God determine to save much people alive **before** the lives of those same people were in jeopardy? "It was not you that sent me hither." They did not send Joseph into Egypt. Their predestination would not have saved anybody, including themselves. If they could have done **godly**, they would have perished. They could not have done **godly**, because they were not **godly**; their actions in the matter were the actions appointed unto the disobedient. (I Peter 2: 8) In my efforts to preach the unadulterated gospel of the Son of God, I have advocated that God sent Joseph down into Egypt; that each and every step in that journey was appointed to come to pass as it did, and by whom it did. I do not see any need for denying that at this late date. I have not found a new translation; I have not digged a new Bible; I do not have a new experience. The only experience that I have; the only Bible that I know, declares emphatically that the only object of the brethren was sin. They were sinners by nature, and their action in the matter showed us what sinners will do. The taking charge of the brethren, of Patiphar's wife, of each and every participant in the journey, did not make God the author of their sin. They were sinners before they contrived the evil work; God controlled them to send Joseph into Egypt. God's purpose was to preserve life; to save much people alive.

But did God predestinate sin? Is there one place in the Bible where God appointed or predestinated or purposed or fixed it so that sin would take place? In hundreds of places, from men among

all kinds of religious bodies, this has been denied. The finger of scorn has been pointed at our people because we said that God predestinated all things. It has been said time and again that the predestination of God does not cover anything except the salvation of His people. **I say the same thing.** The difference between my thoughts and those of the opponents of this blessed doctrine is this: In a most wonderful way everything between the beginning of what we call time and the ending of the same, there is a divine appointment to it all. If this is true, then God made all things; they were all made by him, and for him, and to him; they were and are created by him and for him. Now will someone that is wise above that which is written, rise up and tell me where **anything** else came from? And will **anyone** deny the tense in Revelation 4: 11? John, by the pen of a ready writer, to wit, the pen of inspiration, tells us: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power (why?): for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they **are** and **were** created." If language means anything (and it does), they **were** created in the beginning for the pleasure of God, and according to the chronology of Bible time (and all of the so-called scientific millions of years to the contrary notwithstanding, it is, to me, six thousand years since the morning of creation), better than four thousand years had transpired since all things were created for God's pleasure, and at that time John declared that they still were for his pleasure. I do not hesitate to say from the pulpit, over the radio, on the printed page, around the hearthstones of my brethren, that God created all things; that they **were** and **are** created for the pleasure of my God. What do you say?

For the last twenty years it has been said vehemently that the predestination of God pertained only to the salvation of God's people — that events were not predestinated. In order to prove this the eighth chapter of Romans and the first chapter of Ephesians have been

much quoted. As far as the words used by our translators this is true. Only in connection with the **whom** and not the **what** are the words "predestinate" and "predestinated" used. I have not found in the original language of the Bible where King James has a God-given commandment to translate the Bible; that we were obligated to take what **he and his appointees** said about it. I acknowledge that the King James translation is a good one. I am not sure that I want to say that it is the best one, but I do want to say that I do not feel under any Bible command to take what words they used promiscuously. To settle any matter that comes before us, we must go to the original Hebrew and Greek. The Holy Ghost spoke in those languages — certainly, not in English. What is the original word from which "predestinate" and "predestinated" is derived? Let it be remembered that I do know a word of Greek. All that I can do is to take the word of Greek scholars. According to Young's Analytical Concordance these two words come from the Greek word **proorizo**, and the word means, to mark off first or beforehand. Now. If that was the only place that this word was used, it would be foolish to raise any difference about predestination having to do with men and not with events. But it is not. I have raised my voice for a long number of years to those brethren that would continue to apply predestination only to men (children of God). What has been the result? They have been silent as the cemetery. In the Acts of the Apostles (which is the only authentic church history as to practice and doctrine) we have Peter preaching to the church in the days when they were in full accord. Let us listen at some of that sermon. "They lifted up their voice with one accord (not two, not five, but one), and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up (that was an event

wasn't it?), and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ (that was an event, wasn't it?), 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 (**proorizo**) before to be done." (Acts 4: 25, 28) This is a chain of events beginning with His arrival in Jerusalem. (Luke 18: 31, 32) If anybody can prove by the scriptures that God did not by his hand and counsel predestinate all that was done in the crucifixion of the blessed Saviour, I will spend the balance of my days trying to undo the damage that I have done by contending that God has predestinated all things. But I will not have to leave the Predestinarian Baptists for such a reason as that. In Romans 8: 29 and 30, it is whom (not what) that was predestinated; in Acts 4: 28 it is whatsoever (not whom) that is determined. The translators used different words, but the Holy Ghost used the same word. In the first place it had to do with the salvation of God's people to glory; in the second place it also had to do with the salvation of God's people to glory, for without the death of the Lord Jesus Christ there could never be a sinner saved.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Remarks on the Letter of Brother John S. Cox. — We are well pleased with the general tenor and argument of our brother, and, indeed, if we correctly understand him, we have no exception to make. We do not discover any proposition that we do not cordially receive. But we do believe there is a want of agreement among some of our brethren in regard to the doctrine of the new and heavenly birth, which arises from a misapprehension of each other's views

— each having his peculiar manner of expressing his views; for it cannot be that those who are the subjects of that spiritual birth, and have been led by the one Spirit, and in the same one hope of their calling, can very widely differ in the real sentiment of their hearts in regard to that subject.

Brother Cox, in the latter part of his able article, remarks, "So that I cannot avoid the conclusion that it was the same man that had been born of the flesh, that Jesus said must be born again, to enable him to see the kingdom of God. So that whilst his birth of the flesh elemented and adapted him to the enjoyment of earthly things, his heavenly birth elements and adapts him to the enjoyment of heavenly things," &c. Take this sentence in its connection with the other parts of the letter, and we know none of our brethren who would controvert his conclusion. It must be the same man who was or is first born of the flesh, that must be born again or he cannot see the kingdom of God. This declaration was made by our Lord to Nicodemus, who had been born of the flesh, and that too of Abraham's posterity, and had been religionized, and had graduated in the religious instructions taught by the Scribes and Pharisees, and stood pre-eminent among his brethren as a teacher in Israel and ruler of the Jews; and Jesus, in re-asserting the declaration, said to him, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." We have no intimation given us in the scriptures that any man had ever been born again of the Spirit, who had not antecedently been born of the flesh. The very term **man** or a **man**, in its most common and familiar application, signifies one who has been born. The seed of Adam, to be developed as men, must be born of the flesh; besides the term **again**, or **born again**, certainly implies a previous birth. This position, as it appears to us, will admit of no controversy. If, therefore, brother Cox, or any other brother, has understood us, or any of our correspondents, to controvert that conclusion, we think he has misapprehended our views; at

least we can speak confidently for ourselves; for while we have objected to the idea of a **part** of a man being born again, we have insisted on the precise words of Christ, "Except a man be born again," &c.

But let us compare our notes a little farther. Brother Cox has expressed our views in regard to both births, so far as he has pursued the subject in his letter. The first birth has developed our earthly nature, and has resulted from a time union with the earthly Adam, and he has well remarked that not a son or daughter of Adam could possibly have been born of the flesh that was not created in Adam; for if we were not created in Adam, we do not belong to his posterity, cannot be involved in the sin and guilt of his transgression, nor from him inherit a corrupt nature, nor die a natural death by that decree which has passed upon all men as a consequence of Adam's transgression, for how can we be involved in the consequence if we are not Adam's children according to the flesh? And farther, our fleshly birth has developed us in the flesh as the children of men. A fleshly birth has not made us manifest as the children of God, or it would not require that we should be born again in order to see the kingdom of God. But as brother Cox has very fitly said, our fleshly birth has elemented and adapted us for natural or fleshly things. And as the Master has said, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. As the fleshly birth cannot produce a spiritual life and immortality, so neither can a spiritual birth produce a fleshly man, a fleshly nature, a carnal, depraved, mortal existence; for, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." How wide the difference between the two **that's** which occur in the words of Christ to Nicodemus. **That** which is born of the flesh, and **that** which is born of the Spirit. The two **that's** differ in their paternity; the one is of the flesh, the other is of the Spirit; the one is of

corruptible, the other is of incorruptible seed; the one is born of a woman, the other is born of God; the one is in the course of natural generation of blood of the will of the flesh and of the will of man, the other is born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. The same difference is traced in the nature of the two **that's**. That which is born of the flesh is elemented and adapted to this world, and desires here to remain and enjoy the carnal pleasures of a sensual state. But that which is born of the Spirit desires spiritual, heavenly and divine things — to live by faith upon the Son of God, to eat that bread which cometh down from heaven; it desireth the sincere milk of the word and the hidden manna, which only the spiritual Israelites can feed upon. Well, what are the two **that's**? We think no Christian in his right mind would be willing to dispute the definition given by him who cannot err. One of these **that's**, Jesus says, is flesh. Well, what is the other **that**? Is it also flesh? Is it renovated, refined, spiritualized, born over again flesh? But stop — can we answer any one of these interrogatives affirmatively without rejecting the interpretation given by our Lord himself? If we may say that which is born of the flesh is Spirit, and that which is born of the Spirit is flesh, and these two **that's** are essentially the same, how can we reconcile such views with the express declaration, that the one is flesh and the other is Spirit? But if we mistake not there is still more difficulty to be encountered in the support of such an identity. It not only denies what Truth himself has said, but if the spiritual birth has reproduced the fleshly man, that man in his reproduction is no longer flesh but Spirit; for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. It is no longer sinful and sinning, for whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. It is no longer corruptible, for it is born of incorruptible seed. It cannot be mortal, for it liveth and abideth forever. It cannot be captivated by the world, for that which is born of God overcometh the world. But is it

so? Is there a subject of regeneration to be found who does not feel constrained to say with Paul, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing?" Is there one who does not find a law or governing principle in his flesh that wars against the law of his mind, bring him into captivity to the law of sin which reigns in his mortal body? If so we will only say he differs from us.

If any child of God feels perplexed upon this subject, we commend to his attention the text, Songs vi. 13: "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee." And it will be well to take a good look and consider the lesson well. "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." The flesh lusting against the spirit. What flesh? That which is born of the flesh. This flesh in the same Shulamite can not war or lust against the spirit, if that spirit be not there. "And the spirit warreth against the flesh, and these two are — identically the same? by no means; the one is contrary to the other; and those who, like the Shulamite, find them both, like two belligerent armies struggling within them for the mastery are commanded to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to follow after the other.

Opposite as these two parties are, a man cannot be a Christian who has not both. The Christian was first born of the flesh; this made him manifest as a member of the human family, involved in guilt and ruin, and standing in need of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The other birth has made him manifest as a child of God, a member of Christ and an heir of glory.

But perhaps brother Cox has sufficiently identified the production of the two births, the one as the **new man** — the **inner man**, which is renewed day by day; the other as the old man, the outer man that perishes, that grows old — is subject to corruption, mortality — to death. But how cheering the prospect brought to view in the closing paragraph of brother Cox's letter. Although this flesh is not now spiritual, incor-

ruptible nor immortal, it shall be when death shall be swallowed up of life. Though it goes down to the grave a mortal body, it is raised a spiritual, holy, immortal, imperishable body, changed, fashioned and made like unto the glorious body of our risen Redeemer. "For whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Even "now is Christ risen indeed, and become the first fruits of them that slept;" and as the heavens have received him, so he has given his poor tried saints the divine assurance that where he is there shall they be also, that they may behold him in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.

Brother Cox, we feel persuaded, will not consider us as criticising or controverting his views, but rather as attempting to show that there is a harmony of sentiment on this subject, that the same heir of immortal glory is brought forth into manifestation by two distinct births, and these are both provided for him, and in each he is passive, in neither has he himself had any power to aid or prevent; all is of God, and with grateful hearts let us together sing —

"His decrees, who form'd the earth,
Has fix'd my first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1861. The importance of the subject of the New Birth, and the clearness of Elder Beebe's expressions on the subject, will make this article welcome to our readers. The reference to Brother Cox is self-explanatory. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES AUBREY SHELTON

James Aubrey Shelton was born July 12, 1889, and passed away April 15, 1965, making his stay here on earth 76 years, 9 months. He was the son of the late Rufus Shelton and Susan E. Stone Shelton.

He leaves to mourn his devoted wife Susie Clark Shelton of the home; two sons: Melvin D. Shelton and Alvis L. Shelton, both of Stuart, Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Toncie Stone, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Gladys Martin, Colinsville, Va.; Mrs. Nick Martin, Stuart, Va.;

and Mrs. Glenford Sigmon, Stuart, Va.; and one sister: Mrs. Posey Whitlow, Bassett, Va.

Brother Shelton joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1954, on Saturday and was baptized the next day by the late Elder E. R. Bryant.

Brother Shelton was ordained as Deacon at Union Church the fourth Saturday in April, 1958, and held that office until his death. He was widely known and had many friends. We at Union will miss him very much. Our prayers and our sympathy go out to Sister Shelton and the family.

We bow in submission to our Heavenly Father who does all things well.

His funeral was conducted at Union Church by Elder Leonard Brammer and assisted by Elder R. A. May. A large crowd attended.

His body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by his Pastor.

Leonard J. Brammer

JAMES F. JORDAN

It becomes my sad duty to write a memorial of a departed brother in Christ: It is a burdensome duty, for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

He was born in Clayton County, near Rex, Georgia, August 26, 1875; and was married to Miss Lee Ola Wade on November 21, 1909. He joined Nancy Creek Church in 1917. Brother Jordan passed away March 13, 1965, in triumph of the faith in the Saviour whom he loved and served; and was faithful to his church, being clerk for some years. We miss him, but feel assured that he is at rest, and we would not want him back; for to come back would be to continue to suffer.

His survivors are, his wife, one daughter and two sons: Mrs. H. F. Hembree, Mr. James W. Jordan, Marietta, Ga., and Mr. Frank Jordan, Pine Lake, Ga. Surviving also are a sister, Mrs. J. P. Ball, Atlanta, Ga., and a brother Mr. E. M. Jordan, Dunwoody, Ga.

His funeral was held at Roswell Funeral Chapel, with his pastor, Elder O. J. Croker, officiating. Interment was at Dunwoody.

I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power, but this must come from God; which he does in a variety of ways, — either directly by his presence, or through blessing a few words from a friend. We do not weep as those who have no hope; but there is a joy in our hope, even in the worst trials, that we will soon be gathered home to be together forever, singing his praise as we can never do as we desire in this vale of sorrow.

May God abundantly bless all his needy

ones, for Christ's sake.

By one who knows your sorrows,
George W. Jackson

MATTIE OAKES PAYNE

God saw fit to call from our midst our beloved sister, Mattie Payne. She was born February 27, 1896, the daughter of Elder Nancy T. Oakes and Sister Nora Jones Oakes. She died April 3, 1965, in the Western State Hospital.

In June, 1909, she was married to Edward F. Payne, who died in 1964; and to this union one son was born: Edward Lee Payne, of Texas. Surviving also are two brothers and two sisters: Daniel Oakes, Washington State; Wyatt J. Oakes, Blairs, Virginia; Annie O. Lewis, Blairs; and Pansy O. Bishop, Roanoke, Virginia.

Sister Payne joined Danville Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1921. She loved her church, and was always ready to help in any way she could for the welfare of the church and the brethren and sisters. She went far and near to hear the doctrine of salvation by grace preached, for that was what she loved so much. We believe she is sleeping that peaceful sleep, waiting for the second coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be carried home where there will be no more sickness or death; but where there will be peace and happiness forever.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Dry Fork, Virginia.

One copy of this is to be put in our church book; one to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by Danville Church in conference August 8, 1965.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

GEORGE W. HILL

God, in his infinite wisdom, saw fit to remove from our midst our dearly beloved and highly esteemed Brother, George W. Hill. He was born April 17, 1882, and passed from this life December 8, 1964. He was preceded in death nineteen and one-half years by his wife, the former Daisy Anderson. Of this union one son survives; also four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Brother George was ill for several months prior to his death. At the beginning of this illness he spent many days in the hospital, where he was so very ill that we thought sure-

ly death would be the result, despite all that loving hands or medicine could do; but God in his love and mercy raised him from his sick bed and enabled him once again to attend church for a few months. Brother Hill was a quiet man, as meek and humble as a little child — a true attribute of a Christian. He was a loving father and husband, a true friend and a wonderful neighbor: an honor to his church, to his family and his community.

He was a strong believer in the faith of salvation by grace. On August 17, 1958, he united with the church at Hancocks, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn. It gave us great pleasure to behold the radiant face of Brother George, manifesting the deep love he held for his brethren, and to see the joy mirrored there at being in their presence. He was a true and faithful member as long as he lived, and always attended church when he was able.

We miss him, but bow in humble submission to the all wise God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. May He bless and sustain the bereaved family, is our prayer.

Done by order of conference.

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

MEMORIAL

Sister Bettie Shelton Jones was born March 7, 1878, the daughter of Jackson F. Shelton and Harriett Hines Shelton. She departed this life December 31, 1964. In November, 1904, she was united in marriage to Charlie J. Jones, who died in August, 1929. Surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Havana Dalton and Mrs. Louisa Edwards, of Danville, Virginia. Sister Jones died in an Altavista, Va. nursing home, where she had been a patient for several years.

She united with Whitethorn Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1919, and was baptized in August; and later moved her membership to Danville Church, where she remained a faithful member until death. She was a lovely sister, and a strong believer in salvation by grace. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Townes Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray; and she was laid to rest in Chatham Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

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

Done by Danville Church in conference August 8, 1965.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
FOR

DEACON GROVER C. SPINDLE

Since it was the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother and deacon, Grover C. Spindle, since we last met; and since he was a member and highly esteemed by each of us for many years, being loved for his amiable disposition and his soundness in the faith; and though unable to attend his meetings for many months, he is greatly missed from our assemblies. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of our Brother Spindle amongst us, and for his qualification of a deacon, and for the many pleasant hours he spent in our homes conversing on the things with which the Lord has blessed his people. And be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend to Mrs. Spindle our deep sympathy in the loss of her companion; that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our Minutes; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the members of the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session October 13, 14, 1965.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Leslie D. Duke, Clerk
Deacon Arthur L. Carter, Asst. Clerk
Sister Mildred Duke, Asst. Clerk

MRS. ANNIE SANDERS PATE

The Lord has been pleased to manifest His sovereign power by coming into the home of Brother W. E. Pate and claiming his devoted wife of many years. This visit of His has not produced a spirit of irreconciliation, although the church and the family miss our dear one so much, but we all would bow in submission to the workings of Israel's God, knowing of a surety that, since He spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for all of the chosen vessels of mercy, He will in mercy give or take such things as will produce harmony and consistency and work for the ultimate good of the little ones and the glory of God.

Our sister was born March 30, 1895, and died April 26, 1965, making her slightly over seventy years of age. In early life she was married to Brother William Earnest Pate. Our sister was the mother of four children, to wit, two daughters, Mrs. James Dunnam of Birmingham, Alabama, Mrs. Virgil Kaufman of St. Louis, Missouri; two sons, Nathaniel of Nashville, Tennessee, and Jordan of Bessemer, Alabama. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Mattie Pate of Tuscaloosa,

Alabama, and two brothers, C. L., and Lathum Jordan, together with our dear brother in Christ, Brother Pate.

Our dear sister, with Brother Pate, was baptized into the fellowship of the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Pratt City, Alabama, on the 4th Sunday in August, 1951 by the writer. How delighted that she was to meet with the children of God. She did not believe in works for her salvation, but God wrought good things in her life, showing that her faith and her works were of God.

Our dear sister died in the full triumphs of a living faith. Her funeral was conducted by her pastors, Elders H. C. Moon and Claude Hand, burial following in the Elm Wood Cemetery.

W. D. G.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
FOR
ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Since it has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from this life, bringing to a close the labors of his servant Elder John P. Helms, we desire to record our high esteem for him, and our appreciation of his ministry among us and the brethren of our correspondence.

Brother Helms was sound in the faith, and was blessed to earnestly contend for the faith for almost fifty years. His manner was plain and simple, yet forceful. He was uncompromising in doctrine, but tender in presenting its experimental application to the brethren. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the churches of The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, desire to thank our God for the gift of his servant among us, and for his visits with us in our Meetings and churches over the years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to Sister Helms and the family; and that a copy of these resolutions be spread in our Minutes; and that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the Churches of The Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session October 13 and 14, 1965.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Deacon Leslie D. Duke, Clerk
Deacon Arthur L. Carter, Asst. Clerk
Sister Mildred Duke, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL
TO
ELDER J. P. HELMS

Since it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from the stage of the Christian

ministry our beloved Elder J. P. Helms, who often visited the Salisbury Association, and

Since his visits have proven profitable and comforting to the saints in this vicinity, having endeared himself to one and all by his boldness in defending the doctrine of God our Saviour, as well as walking in humbleness in the presence of his God and his loved ones in the Lord, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to our sister churches, and to his widow, our beloved Sister Helms, and to his family, in this time of loss and mourning. We would assure the churches that their loss is our loss, for in this day of faltering among many, it was our delight to hear him proclaim the riches of God's reigning grace. However, our note of his passing is not without hope; our God is too wise to err and too merciful to be unkind. We do not know what to say by way of comfort, except to say that the God of Israel will not leave us comfortless; He will come to us in our distress and comfort one and all with the comfort of His love. The evidence left behind is so fraught with glad tidings that, while all our loss is great indeed, his has been a wonderful exchange from this poor life to that which awaits all of the Lord's people. Further, be it

RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be sent to our sister in the Lord, his beloved wife and companion for many years; that a copy be published in the *Signs of the Times*, and that it be recorded in our minutes.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude Laws, Honorary Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
William A. Davis, Ass't Clerk

November 17, 1965

MEMORIAL

Whereas it has pleased God to call to his eternal home our beloved Elder J. P. Helms, we, The Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, wish to publicly acknowledge God's right to remove him from the sphere of his services in many churches.

He visited us over many years, and his labours were much blessed and appreciated by both church and congregation, but we desire to bow in submission to God's will.

We authorize our church clerk to enter this memorial in our church book, to send a copy to the bereaved family, and a copy to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by direction of the Church, and adopted by the same.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Eldon Gilbert, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1966

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Whitefield Church August 21 and 22, 1965, sends greetings and brotherly love to our churches and associations.

Dear Brethren:

We are privileged to meet in our association at Whitefield, Maine, once more. We rejoice that, though our Heavenly Father has taken our older members one by one to their eternal home, and has not seen fit to bring new members to our two churches, we still are able to gather in love and fellowship.

We feel greatly blessed to have our beloved pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, from Berlin, Maryland, and another well loved elder, Elder Ira Connor, from Virginia, declare the truths written in the Bible, not as the world tells us, but in such manner that our hungry souls are fed precious food, which we are made to know is the truth as God reveals it to them and to us.

Sometimes our hope and faith falter, without reassurance from elders and brethren of like faith because of the distance between our members, and especially between our churches and our elders. But in the words of the poet:

"A friend there is — your voices join,
Ye saints, to praise his name;
Whose truth and kindness are divine,
Whose love's a constant flame.

When most we need his helping hand,
This Friend is always near;
With heaven and earth at his command,
He waits to answer prayer."

We hope that we might be likened unto the children of Israel, though we are unworthy, who were fed with manna from heaven, as told in Exodus, chapter 17. After long, lonely travels in the wilderness of spiritual darkness, we rest, and, like the children of Israel, see the miracle of the manna, which they knew could only come from heaven.

Thus we live the year through and hope that we are God's children, though many days are dark, and many months barren, we come once more to rejoice in the love of God, and the knowledge that our little churches and small association, are still alive and in good order, we hope. All praise to God who doeth all things well.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

Written by Sister Ruth Clark
Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Asso-

ciation in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 21 and 22, 1965:

Dear Brethren:

Through the love and mercy of God we have been able to meet in an association. Elder Arthur Warren and Elder Ira Connor came to us, giving testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving us renewed hope and joy in feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst: the love and the fellowship of the brethren.

In the man who is born again two natures appear. One is born of God and yields the fruits of the Spirit in Christ: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness and charity; a love for holiness and hatred of sin, a love to the saints and a desire to be in company and communion with them: They glory in the Lord in that which God has done for them.

The other nature is born of the flesh, full of lust, warring against the Spirit, and in opposition to holiness. In our flesh dwells no good thing. I realize I am a sinner and vile, and can only pray for help.

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

The next meeting of the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, the fourth Sunday in August, 1966, and Saturday preceeding. There will be a notice in the **Signs of the Times**.

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

BELIEVES GOD IS SOVEREIGN

243 Baker Street,
Warren, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the **Signs**:

Enclosed please find remittance for renewing my subscription.

I believe in a sovereign God who does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say What doest thou? If I did not believe this, it seems to me that I would be the most miserable creature on earth.

Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Just think, dear brethren and sisters, this is not the will of a man, but the will of God, that made the earth by his power; established the world by his wisdom; and stretched heaven by his understanding. That is the one whose will Jesus came to do, and all power in heaven and earth was given to him. What was there to hinder him from doing the will of his Father?

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come," (what hour? the hour that his Father appointed before the world was,) "glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Will they all know him? Yes! because it is God's will: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Why? because, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many are coming to Christ? all that the Father gave him; and no more. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." How many are coming? all that the Father hath given him shall come.

It would be ignorance to say He wanted them to come, and they would not. "He calleth his sheep by name and leadeth them out, and He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." He leads them by his power and love. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them (the sheep) out of my hand. My Father which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

I do not believe there will be one soul in heaven contrary to God's will; neither do I believe there will be one soul in hell contrary to God's will. No, no! Paul writes, "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8:10,11) Just how many are going to know him? all those whose names were written in the will that God made before the world was, and sent Jesus his Son into the world to fulfill. When Jesus died on the cross, he cried, "It is finished," and there is where our redemption took place.

God, in his own good time and way — not too soon, nor too late — reveals himself to his sheep by opening their blind eyes, giving them ears to hear, and takes away the hard and stony heart, giving them a heart of flesh, love and understanding.

I do not doubt the doctrine the Old Baptists believe and preach, but my question is, Am I his, or am I not? I've never worried over accepting him: my worry is, will He accept me, one of the lowest worms on this earth? If I am one, I did nothing to become one; and if I am not one of his, I cannot do anything to become one now. Solomon said, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it."

May God continue to bless you in feeding the flock through the dear old **Signs**. I lost my beloved companion last April, and I live by myself. God has been most merciful unto me: he gives me grace and courage to carry on. I find great comfort and joy in the **Signs**, reading the writings and experiences of the dear brethren and sisters. I would love to see and hear you preach sometime.

Yours in bonds,
Mrs. Charlie Harrod

Rt. 4, Box 73
Lebanon, Mo.

To the Editors of Our Family Paper:

I write with fear that I might be wrong, but I live in a town where there is a lot of telling what man must do; but I know he is a helpless creature. I do not write thinking I am something, but what I want is truth.

The prophet Joel, is he not dealing with the future also? if so is it yet to come? (Joel 1:4) Taken in a natural sense, all of Israel's sustenance was gone. In the 14th chapter of Isaiah, 12th to 22nd verses, is not the weakened man boasting of his great power; and has not free moral agency spread to every nation under the sun? Is there not a time when the "worms" will almost swallow up the truth, as mentioned in Revelation 13:7?

Where is the truth today? it is only in a few: the "worms" have eaten up the truth with false doctrine. Is there anything worse in the church than false doctrine? When the sheep had strayed, in the parable, it took the good shepherd to bring him. Did the shepherd ask the sheep if he was ready to come? Did he drive the sheep? No, he was too precious — he carried the sheep to the fold.

This is not for publication, but if I have touched around the truth, please let me know through the family paper.

As ever, I hope a brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

(Brother Kenoly has suggested several things which give much food for thought. — J. D. W.)

REQUEST FOR VIEWS

924 First St. S. W.
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Elder Wood:

In the Acts Chapter 19, verse 12, we read "So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Could you please tell me the interpretation or meaning of the handkerchiefs or aprons, what did they have to do with the healing or the going out of the evil spirits?

If you have time I shall appreciate you writing me on the above subject.

In humble hope,
Myrtle Gillette

(See Editorial Reply)

"AS THERE ARE GODS MANY,
AND LORDS MANY"

(I CORINTHIANS 8:5)

Dear Editors, and Household of Faith:

A writer of a recent article in the *Signs* touched briefly on the subject of the gods that the unregenerated see in their mind's eye, which seem as real to them as does the God worshipped by His own chosen disciples, appear to them. It set me to meditating, and the words of the Apostle Paul came to me in such a forceful manner that I was want to study and seek out some of the scriptural writings about the various gods. If the God that I hope and believe I know, by and through the revelations he has shown me, will direct my mind in writing on this subject, then I shall be able

to set forth something of interest to those of like knowledge.

The Apostle begins the chapter with wise words about eating the offering of meats to idols, or things offered in sacrifice to idols. He further stated that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but **one**. Then in verse 5 he wrote, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many.)" In verse 6, he reiterates that there is but **one God**. And we must note that in this verse he says there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ; which I believe identifies the many gods spoken of; and I believe that many other gods of various types have sprung up since his time, and that he was given to include all of them from the beginning to the end of this time world: by Pagans, Mohammedans, Moslems, and others.

Then we must note that the Apostle branded the idols as gods, in that men offered to them; and he immediately followed by saying that there is but **one God**, and none other. It is further shown that this was his mind when he wrote in Phillipians 3:18,19, that certain people were enemies to the cross of Christ, "Whose end is destruction and whose god is their belly." It seems clear that in those days anything of material or earthly nature, particularly riches which men worshipped, was in effect a type of god to them. Note the words of the Saviour in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters," and, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Did he not consider mammon (riches) as a substitute for him; or actually a god claiming the attention of those following thereafter?

Now in our present day, how many such people have we that worship their wealth; their great political power and prestige. And how many millions worship some society, secret order, or worldly institution? living solely for them, and glorying in them to their dying day. Are they not seeking after

strange gods or god's many, as the Apostle had in mind? Should we try to enumerate the various gods as worshipped by the world at large, particularly a type of **spiritual diety or divine being** as conjured up by hundreds of denominations, sects, creeds, and individuals, time and space would not permit it.

Since we have all the various and sundry gods being worshipped in this modern day, can we wonder that the primitive tribes of ages past, (and some yet existing,) had certain gods they feared, such as gods that lived in the Volcanic Mountain, who belched forth fire when they angered him; as well as many other types of gods.

In the Old Testament we find many references to gods of various types. In Joshua 24:15, there is a reference to, "The gods of the Amorites." In Deuteronomy 32:16, we see that the people provoked Moses to anger and jealousy "with strange gods." In 1st Kings 11:23, several gods are named that were being worshipped. And in chapter 18:24-28, Elijah asked those about him to "Call on the name of your gods," and they called on Baal without effect. Finally in 2 Corinthians, it is recorded that, "The god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

Yes, it is true that the Apostle wrote with an inspired mind, when he said, "As there are gods many and lords many;" which was for the guidance of all those to follow after him, who would be beset on all sides with various and sundry gods. We hear and read daily of those around us who have a god they can lay hold of, and take to others here and abroad. "Come with us, and let us share Christ with you," is a common statement today. They tell of a god without power to overcome ones he wants to save, who refuse to accept him. Surely such a god is "man-made", in that man's natural, unregenerated mind has created him, and fashioned him to suit their taste. They are keen in their mind in that they keep him subservient to them in many ways; and they are also keen in fashioning him after the

true and holy eternal god, which the scriptures clearly record.

Then, how comforting it is for us to turn to the Scriptures and see the one and only God we worship. Isaiah 45:22, records, "I am God and there is none else." We can witness with David in the 111th Psalm which is devotedly praise and reverence to the God we know through the work of the Holy Spirit. How comforting it is to hear preaching by inspired Elders of our Church, and to read the sermons and writings in the **Signs of the Times**, setting forth truth and gospel as preached by the Apostles!

We are given strength that we need to carry on in this "wilderness of sin", and in a world that is so often shaken and disturbed by the power of God; and so engrossed in terrible conflict between nations. I am mindful of the verse of the old hymn my father sang:

"How long, how long, Oh, Lord, how long
Have we on earth to stay?
Roll on, roll on, ye wheels of time
And bring that joyful day."

Concluding, may I say that were it not for the undeserved grace and love of the **one and only God** before the world was, I would be out there among the multitudes, following after "gods many and lords many" that have captivated the millions and billions over the world. How precious and priceless are the experiences and evidences thus far received, that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

In hope of eternal life,

Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

"A GLORIOUS CHANGE"

Rt. 4, Box 479
Bassett, Va. 24055

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare

grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." (1 Cor. 15:36, 37)

We read in verse 37, "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be . . ." This means to me that the body will not be raised with the same nature that it was sown in. Verse 43 reads, "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."

In Genesis 3:19, we read, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And in Ecclesiastes 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

I believe that in as much as God made the first man Adam out of the dust of the earth, he will take the same dust in the resurrection, and make it to be a heavenly body; and this change will be more glorious than anyone could imagine — more glorious than anything that has ever been revealed to anyone. "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known." (1 Cor. 13:12) So I believe all earthly ties will be done away, and we will have no other mind but the mind of Christ; and there will be no confusion in heaven.

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) I believe we shall be glorified with him: Yes, with the Father before the world was.

Elder Wood, you asked that I write sometime, so here are some of my thoughts on the resurrection of the dead; which I believe to be true.

Hope you and Sister Wood are well.

In sweet fellowship,
(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth

GOOD NEWS

Rt. 2, Box 518,
Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I have truly enjoyed reading the dear old *Signs of the Times*. The "Voices of the Past" are so good to read: it all comes to me laden with good news from a far country — from our blessed Lord, who gives his dear little ones the heart and mind to write of his goodness and mercy, from time to time.

I enjoyed so much dear Elder J. P. Helm's good and wonderful sermon published in the December, 1965, issue. I am so pleased that we poor needy ones are blessed with the sweet pleasure of reading the *Signs*, and to feast on the good letters of God's little ones: they tell my experiences much better than I can.

May God in his loving mercy bless the dear editors to continue to publish the truth, as he has all these years; and all to his praise and honor, is my desire.

With love and sweet fellowship in our blessed Lord, and in hope of his mercy.

Callie I. Clark

Princeton, W. Va.

Mrs. S. J. Priddy
Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Sister Priddy:

In hope of the life that now is, and that which is to come where there will be no more tears. Last night, for a little while, I felt that peace that surpasses all understanding; and I didn't care whether I went to sleep or not. My health has not been good, as you know.

I have been so rebellious in my suffering; but during this last affliction I have thought how sweet it would be to be with those spirits that have been

released from this body of corruption. But I hope the Lord will give me submission, to await my appointed time until my change comes. I know that in my flesh there dwells no good thing; and I don't want to follow on with those that believe that of the flesh we can live as we list.

If we give anything with the expectation of something in return, what thanks have we? I have felt for many years to be so vile. I was blessed I hope this morning to give something that I thought was necessary, and felt to be blessed in the giving. I've been made to hate the other doctrine.

The older I get the more vanities of this world I see; but, Oh, that the dear Lord will keep my heart and mind through Him, and give divine patience to still run the race that is before me, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher, I hope, of my faith; and give me strength to be more submissive to my lot here.

The dear Lord said that in this world his people should have tribulation: He is our only peace. We certainly can't reach out and get the crumbs, for I have laid in bed at night and tried to search for Him whom my soul loveth, but found him not. But sometimes I feel He has caused me to feed on that hidden manna with which he feeds his people.

Hoping the Lord will give you a groan for me when all natural streams are dried . . . I just thought I would write some of my poor thoughts.

Your sister in tribulation and patience,

Mrs. Tiney C. Pritchett

(The above was a letter of the late Sister Pritchett to Sister S. J. Priddy in 1961, and was recently sent to us by Mr. Pritchett. — J. D. W.)

PSALM 103:1,2

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Brethren, as I undertake this writing, I trust that it is with you in mind. I have been shut in now for almost three weeks, with only one church service in that time; and, as it is snowing now, my thoughts have been on the above passage of scripture.

The Psalmist, I am sure, had an eye single to the glory of God when he wrote this. For one to glorify God as David was doing on this occasion, he must be moved by the power of God.

God, who rules in the hearts of his people, is not worshipped from the surface, but from the heart. It matters not how hard one may try to reach Him, he cannot; but when the time appointed of the Lord comes for his children to praise his name, Satan and all his hosts must stand aside. No wonder David could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." No wonder he could say, "The Lord is my shepherd . . ."; and that Mary could cry, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Yet, with all the wonderful things that have been said, it has only been hinted at; for, as I write this, my soul leaps for joy.

Throughout the world the Lord has taken care of his people, and He has made it known to them in his own way. Therefore David could declare in the last part of the text, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

What are some of these benefits? First, and the most outstanding one, is the coming of Christ into the world to deliver his people from their sins. You dear people know what a joy it is to be delivered from your sins; and, as it were, to be snatched from a devil's hell. How can we forget his benefits? Dear brethren, as I write this and think of the many, many things Christ did for his people, my heart seems to be floating in a sea of love. Now I can say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name . . ., and forget not all his benefits."

Another of the wonderful benefits of the Lord through his Son, is to see those whom the Lord has delivered and

called, coming to the church; also the sweet fellowship that none but the redeemed of the Lord know. Another is, to realize how greatly we love our brethren: to know this love is to feel it flow from breast to breast. How good it is, children of the most high God, to meet together in this love, and talk of the benefits of our Saviour!

Referring again to those coming to the church, as one of the benefits of the Lord, on December 13, 1965, being the second Sunday, and our meeting time at Chestnut Church, in Franklin County, Virginia, at the conclusion of the preaching service, the writer published an open door for the reception of members, and as we began to sing, "Jesus grant us all a blessing," Sister Carolyn Plybon came forward asking for a home with the church; which was granted. Sister Carolyn is seventeen years old and a high school senior, the daughter of Mr. Calvin and Sister Juanita Plybon. At this meeting the house was almost filled to capacity. Seldom do we see a greater outpouring of the love of God than we saw that day. From that day until now the writer has never experienced more joy in the benefits of our Lord.

On the second Sunday in January, 1966, at ten o'clock, I led the dear young sister into the water and baptized her in the presence of a throng of people. There was some concern about us going into the water because it was so cold, but I had such blessed assurance that the Lord would take care of every detail regardless of how remote, that when I raised her from the water, she didn't shiver. Oh, such love! With such benefits as these, how can we forget the benefits of the Lord?

As we were going into the water, I saw a bright illumination that cannot be fully described. We have heard many that were there say that she looked like an angel. The reason the writer makes mention of this baptism, is because there were so many living witnesses to this, and many other wonderful benefits of the Lord we hope not to forget. On Tuesday evening following

the baptism, my wife and I stopped at the Plybon home to see how Sister Carolyn was doing. We found her to be one of the happiest persons we have ever seen. She has done very little eating or sleeping. As David said, so say the people of God. These are some of the benefits we trust not to forget.

The climax of all these benefits will be when the whole church of God shall see Him in his full glory.

Finally brethren, may we all say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I realize that the depth of the subject has not been touched, but a hint to the wise is sufficient: I had a strong feeling to write my thoughts.

May the loving kindness and tender mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the dear family of God, is our prayer for Christ sake.

Humbly submitted,
(Elder) Cecil E. Turner,
Rt. 3, Box 115,
Bassett, Virginia, 24055

3347 Tutwiler Ave.,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am sending a letter for your consideration of publishing it. Our travels in this world are for the trial of our faith; so often we feel that we are all alone, and that surely there are none like us; and then it is good to know that others have these trials, and we find renewed hope that they are the dealings of the Lord with us. We cannot see the hearts of our brethren, as God does; but He knows us altogether, and his mercy overshadows all our sins.

We are told that all things work together for those who love him, to those who are the called according to His purpose. We do not want to crowd out good letters or writings, so we leave it to your judgement.

In hope of eternal life,
Carrie Campbell

"I SURELY HAVE TO BE KEPT"

Rt. 1,
Martin, Tenn. 38237

Mrs. Carrie Campbell, --
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister Carrie:

I have just finished reading your most appreciated letter, and was sitting here wondering just why one I esteem so much above myself, should take time to write a rebel as I.

Oh, so much I have meditated upon lately, and become so confused with these thoughts, that I just lay everything aside, feeling that likely they are just imaginations of mine; and then have to go grieving with woe. I tell you, dear sister, that I am as the thief and the robber, trying with all that's in me to enter some other way than by the door. I go continually trying to seek a way to escape the trials and persecutions, and all that hurts this old flesh. His child is not promised anything in this life except tribulations, for Christ said he has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction.

Ah, when we are made to see by the working of God's mighty power, how helpless and undone we are; and indeed, if I am one that was chosen in the furnace, I am not fit to even look toward heaven and beg the great I Am, who knows all about me. Yet I am so glad that it is recorded that God is merciful to his children's unrighteousness; and that all that is in man is unrighteousness. As you said, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. It is indeed a sad affair to see so much vain teaching going on. I try sometimes to pluck the tares from the wheat; and in such a state, I am no more than the tares.

Isn't it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God? I humbly hope that it is of Him that I am so fearful. I believe I learn by experiences that the God of heaven and earth, and all deep places, has never needed poor wretched man's hands to help him. I read that God hath chosen the foolish things of

the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. This old world is being shaken by the deceitfulness of mighty men, as far as man can see; and it is in every manner that the human mind can conceive of. I wonder if the wailing and gnashing of teeth is not yet to come, which we read about.

"Wherefore, seeing that we also are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This verse tells us the only way such can be done, is looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. How wise the Lord is! He knows what you need, and when you need Him, before he ever makes you a beggar. I wonder if I have ever become a little child. Unless I have, I can't even sit together with you in heavenly places.

I hope that while I have to stay here, it is God's will to keep me where I belong, for I surely have to be kept. Knowing my sinful nature, without that great protecting power there is no telling where I would run. I am as a cake unturned; but when it is pleasing to the Lord to turn me, then I am turned. There is no one who knows these things except the Lord, for he knows all things; and all things are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are called according to his purpose.

Is it often with you that you have an ear to hear what the Spirit says? Ah, it seems my soul goes groaning day and night for some evidence that my Redeemer lives. There is one thing sure, if he is my Redeemer, he is a living Redeemer. I have had experiences that I

have spoken to you about more than anyone; and I have had sweet meditations. As I grow older though, the way gets so dark that I have to go stumbling along; I have sought every way, and find the end of the ways that seem right to me, are the ways of death. I have no desire to go the way of man, but it seems that is the only way I go. There must be a rest somewhere for the weary. Wasn't Ananias told of the Lord that Paul was a chosen vessel, and that he would show him how great things he must suffer for His name's sake. Do you think that Paul was ever beyond hope that his sufferings were for Christ's sake?

Ah, we are just worms of the dust, and His children are babes in Christ, living on that pure water that flows from the throne of God. He is all the little trembling sinner needs; and He does supply all their need. When He looks on you, no wonder you weep bitterly. Oh, do I know these things I humbly hope I am not deceived. I am so weak, unlearned and undone; but entreat me not from following after you; where you go, I want to go, and where you are buried, I want to be buried. Your God, I hope, is my God.

I was so glad to get another letter from you. Our correspondence has been close to forty years, and I still cherish getting your letters.

In hope,
Mrs. Earl (Asenith) Jones

How greatly varied are the experiences of the children of God! Hart wrote of them:

"How strange is the course that Christians must steer;

How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,

And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
'Til he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured

Of the total remission of sins;

When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,

From that moment his conflict begins."

And Paul wrote of them: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." |2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

How greatly blessed are those who can testify of such things! — J. D. W.)

THE EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS

Elizabeth City, N. C.

My experience (of grace I do hope),
The Lord willing, I'll poetize,
And I hope it will be of interest
To those unto salvation wise.

In the days of my childhood,
About the age of ten,
It was then, as I remember,
My sorrows did begin.

I would go and tell my mother
That something bothered me,
But wasn't taught to say a prayer
At my dear mother's knee.

Now to begin to be a better boy,
Different times I did set,
But the more I tried to do so,
The worse I seemed to get.

I would dream of the end of time,
And view it with alarm;
I could see great storms arise,
That would my body harm.

These terrible dreams frightened me,
And did make me fear to die,
But again, in due time I planned to
Prepare for a home on high.

About the age of fourteen I dreamt
I saw myself lying dead;
And in later dreams I saw the One
I hope died in my stead.

Also about this age I remember I read
The New Testament nearly through,
And I resented the rejection of Jesus
By the unbelieving, hating Jew.

In my traveling at different times,
Calm feelings came over me;
It seemed that I was in the Spirit,
And was free from misery.

Then again, "I'm a misery to myself,"
In tears to my father, I said,
Long before sweetly drawn to Christ,
The church's blessed Head.

Papa said that I would find Him
At the end of the law,
"Our schoolmaster . . . unto Christ,"
Whose own He doth draw.

Now about the age of seventeen,
I found my sorrows doubled;
I had never dreamed that I
Would ever be thus troubled.

I recalled that when quite young,
About age seven or eight,
A luminous and celestial body,
I was left to imprecate.

And looking upward, I was tempted
By the devil to blaspheme.
But tightly closing my vile lips,
I resisted his foul scheme.

Now I frowned at the Son of man,
But He later smiled on me,
In my slumberings upon the bed,
Laying on of hands gently.

Saul of Tarsus, whilst a Pharisee,
Was an actual blasphemer,
But he obtained mercy at the hands
Of the precious Redeemer.

And reading the experience of Bunyan,
Who consented Christ to sell,
I found that he was given repentance,
And saved from eternal hell.

I desired "unbounded" repentance
Might be granted to me,
But I was such a wretched sinner
I doubted it would be.

"I dread the day that I must die,"
I remember that I said,
When burdened with a sense of guilt,
And not a tear could shed.

I mourned and groaned in my plight,
In my unhappy state;
I was annoyed by impious thoughts,
Which would not abate.

When I was twenty years of age,
I left home for the city,
But my troubles did not leave me,
And might the Lord show pity.

I wrote my father about my sorrows,
About my guilt and fears,
And when spoken of on visiting him,
I was melted down in tears.

Afterward I was sorry I wrote him
About my sorrowful case,
For I thought he would mention it,
On seeing him face to face.

(To be Continued)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To January 1, 1966)

Memorial to Mrs. Levetta Beasley from Mrs. C. W. Perry, N. C.....	\$ 5.00
A. B. Moore, Ala.....	10.00
Gordon H. McGee, Ga.....	2.00
Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.....	2.00
Catherine A. Houchins, Va.....	2.00
Eliza Turner, Va.....	1.00
Jack G. Lindsey, Ariz.....	2.00
Durwood H. Bradley, Tex.....	25.00
W. J. Collier, N. C.....	2.00
Myrtle Lefferts, N. J.....	5.00
W. H. Dean, Ala.....	1.00
Mrs. E. Hodgins, Can.....	2.00
Mrs. David P. Farmer, Md.....	2.00
Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich.....	2.00
Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.....	3.00
Effie Parks, Wash.....	1.00
J. Fred Clark, Ala.....	2.50
E. T. Bellamy, S. C.....	3.00
F. M. Morgan, Tenn.....	5.00
Wm. O. Hall, Wash.....	2.00
Edith Brooks, Va.....	1.00
Mrs. Robert L. Fickett, Va.....	5.00
A Friend, Calif.....	10.00
E. E. McKimmey, Va.....	5.00

Danville, Virginia March, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware
Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas
Elder George Ruston
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

*All letters for this paper should be ad-
dressed and remittances made payable*

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

CORRECTION

Please note in Elder Spangler's "A Special Message To Our Readers" in the January issue, where it is stated that, "This is my thirteenth year of association with the *Signs*," it should read, "This is my thirtieth year of association with the *Signs*," he having become associated in 1936. — J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

I CORINTHIANS 15:29

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

The above Scripture has caused much discussion since the days of the apostles, and some very strange and fanciful ideas have been brought down to us by men who have given their own and other men's views, without duly considering the subject matter under consideration by the apostle. We have been requested to give our views of the above Scripture, and it is after much hesitation we have decided to do so.

In Paul's writings we find that he speaks more about the resurrection than the other writers of the New Testament, and because of this he is called by some the Apostle of the Resurrection; yet if we look into the Acts of the Apostles, we find that Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty) and in addressing them, he referred to the judgment that had fallen upon Judas, fulfilling the words found in Psalm 109, and suggesting to them that they set aside one to take Judas' place, one who had been with them from the baptism of John unto the day when Jesus was taken up to heaven — that one of them should be ordained to be a witness with them of his resurrection.

We see that after the descent of the Holy Ghost, they went out and boldly preached Jesus and the resurrection, their testimony being carried into the

hearts of those who heard, so that "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then we see the first apostolic miracle, the lame man healed, and again the glorious theme of Jesus and the resurrection brought grief to the rulers of the people, but joy and rejoicing to the saints of God. It is said in Acts 4:33, "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." One man who saw these things was so enraged by them that he was determined to destroy the cause of Christ, for he was sure that Jesus was an imposter. Of him we read in Acts 9, "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." These things are so recorded to show to us poor sinners today of a God who works at both ends, if there is a Saul there is also an Ananias, if there is a eunuch there is also a Philip, for there can be no uncertainty in the perfect work of God. Saul goes to Damascus to carry believers bound to Jerusalem, instead he found companions in the disciples, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

It was this same Jesus of Nazareth whom Saul tried to destroy, who, by his almighty power, turned him so completely around, that he began to preach Jesus and the resurrection; and when the brethren in Jerusalem heard of it,

they glorified God in him. (Galatians I: 24)

Coming now to the subject matter of our text, we find that the gospel of the resurrection was preached by the apostles and by Paul, who speaks of himself as the least of the apostles, yet he could assert that Jesus of Nazareth was seen of him, as one born out of due time. "Therefore," saith he, "whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (I Corinthians 15:11-18)

From there on the apostle shows the order of the resurrection, culminating in Christ delivering up the kingdom of grace to the Father, "when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." When our Lord gives up the kingdom to the Father, then shall come to pass what Jesus taught his disciples to pray for, "THY KINGDOM COME." The apostle then returns to the subject under consideration from verses 12-19: In verse 29 comes our text, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" We have seen that the apostles all preached this gospel of the resurrection; and Paul had preached it and the Corinthians had believed it, but some had crept in unawares who did not believe it, and Paul showed their faith to be vain. The apostles and the Prim-

itive Church all believed in believer's baptism, which meant in that day that they had died to any hope of salvation by the works of the law and had come, through the Spirit's teaching, to know that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And what do they believe? They, through the Spirit's work in them, believe that God laid upon Jesus the iniquity of a number that no man can number, whom God chose in Christ Jesus before the world began. (Isaiah 53: 6) The apostle had preached the same gospel to the Corinthians as he did to the Romans. "That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9) All such, when they submit to believer's baptism, set forth death, burial and resurrection, believing that their Lord will come again as the angels told the apostles who saw Jesus ascend into heaven. "Ye men of Galilee why stand ye gazing up into heaven? THIS SAME JESUS which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts I:II) It has been said by those who are Greek scholars that the dead in our text is in the plural, we fully agree, for as Eve was in Adam in the creation, so Paul tells the Ephesians that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Hymn 60 in Durand and Lester comes to our mind, the 5th verse reads: —

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when triumph'd o'er his foes.
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat."

Yes, they are baptized, BELIEVING WHAT HAS BEEN BEFORE STATED, that he died for their sins and rose again for their justification. Those who denied the resurrection of Jesus had no hope for a life to come. No wonder that Paul asserted, "If in this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable." Years ago, when the writer was worried over the resurrection of the

body as taught by the apostles, we knew that Jesus' body being holy, was free from sin, except by imputation, he could and did die for our sins, but he saw no corruption. As we read Acts 13:30-37 we saw that he whom God raised up saw no corruption, and that David, who prophesied of this in Psalm 16:10, served his generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers and saw corruption. In Romans 8:21 we are told that the creature **SHALL BE** (yet to come) delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:15-16) Our Lord Jesus took on himself a body like ours, sin excepted, that one day our bodies shall be like his, free from sin. Paul also states, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:22-23) In our text therefore Paul is exposing the error of those, who were then among the Corinthian believers, who denied the resurrection of the body. If Christ's body did not rise, then why do we face a frowning world? or as Paul himself said in the verses following our text, "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? . . . If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." We do not allow for a moment that Paul, a servant of God, countenanced error in the least, while he asserted the truth. Was he not raised up for the defense of the Gospel? (Philippians I:17)

It has been suggested by some that those who were baptized for the dead, were those who saw Christians die, and by an unscriptural use of baptism were baptized to fill the ranks left vacant by those who had died. That is not true,

for no one can take another's place, he or she takes the place prepared for them; and they, by the Holy Spirit, are prepared for the place they shall take in the Church of God. It is true that baptism, administered by a servant of God, walking in the truth and order of God's house, admits one into the fellowship of a gospel church, but as God's word says it should be an answer of a good conscience toward God. On one occasion the writer was listening to a man of this world. As he was about to dip a person under water he said, "I baptize thee INTO the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Poor puny man cannot do that. Our beloved Paul in Romans 6:3, says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized INTO Jesus Christ were baptized INTO his death?" He is speaking here of the Spirit's work in convincing us that we are poor lost sinners, dead without the power to do or will. All who belong to God must be taught of his Spirit, it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (I Corinthians 12:12-13) Jesus said in John 16:13-14, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Thus it is the Spirit's work to bring us down where we feel and know that we are dead, that both sinful self and righteous self are so under condemnation that it makes a poor sinner loath his own life. Ask such an one to be baptized and join the church, when he feels unfit to live and unfit to die! To such the Holy Ghost will reveal Jesus who died for sinners and was raised again for their justification, and as the Spirit applies the word, faith springs up in their souls, strengthening their desires and hope in a risen Lord, con-

fessing him as their all, they are fit subjects for baptism by water, for they, by one Spirit, have been baptized into one body, and in their measure they will bear about in their body the marks of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. Had not Christ risen from the dead we would always be under condemnation, but Christ did rise again for our justification, so, through a God-given faith, we can say with Paul, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. . . . Therefore brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The world will not know them, but those of like precious faith will see that they have been with Jesus and learnt of him. We hope that many who read this can say with the writer,

"That Christ is God I can avouch,
And for his people cares.
Since I have prayed to him as such,
And he has heard my prayers."

Such can say with Job, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself and MINE EYES (plural) shall behold and not another." True, Job, with his EYE, (of faith) saw God, for in chapter 42:5-6, he declares, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine EYE seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." When Job's faith and our faith is lost in sight then our EYES (plural) shall see Him as He is and be like Him.

G. R.

EDITORIAL

(Acts 19:11,12)

In complying with Sister Gillette's request that we write on the subject stated in her letter, we call attention to the fact that it is necessary to read and consider the preceeding verse in connection with the one quoted. Else, as is often done with scriptures, almost any fanciful legend may be built upon an isolated passage. The meaning of no other writings have been so distorted, by using portions out of their context, as have the scriptures. Almost any doctrine may be, and often has been, based upon such methods.

We quote both the eleventh and twelfth verses: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Thus we are told that **God wrought special miracles** by the hands of Paul, and that by reason of the miracles wrought by God, the handkerchiefs or aprons when brought from the body of Paul, had the effect of causing the diseases to depart from the sick, and the evil spirits go out of them. This was not at all by Paul himself, as though he had some inherent power to do these things; but rather by the power of God working the miracles at Paul's hands. Again we read in the fifth chapter of Acts, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people."

It is not to be questioned but that these were accomplished by the special working of the power of God in the apostles, to show that they were His servants; to show that Jesus whom they preached, was the Christ; and that the kingdom of heaven was not only at hand, but was then manifest in the world as the church of God.

It is undeniable that anything that is done or accomplished which is above and beyond the realm of "the spirit of man", (1 Corinthians 2:11), must be done by a power greater than is native

to man. It seems right, therefore, to say that there are many wonderful and strange things done in nature, yet they are all done according to the "laws of nature", and that there are no real miracles done in nature by natural causes. There are many things hard to be understood, of course, but all according to natural laws.

It follows, therefore, that anything that is a true miracle, though wrought within the realm of nature, is not by the skill of that nature; but rather is alone by His power who established those laws, and who is able to set them aside to accomplish his will and pleasure. This is what God does in performing miracles, or caused his servants to perform them throughout the ages; and this is what was done in the case of the handkerchiefs or aprons from the body of Paul; or the shadow of Peter overshadowing some of them. (Acts 5: 15)

There is an account of Simon who desired to do what Philip did when he beheld the miracles and signs, who had before bewitched the people with sorcery, and who, it is said, believed and was baptized; yet he desired of Peter and John the same power, and offered money for it. "But Peter said unto him, thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." etc. And notice the failure of those exorcists in the verses following the text, thought they called the name of the Lord Jesus. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

So far as we remember there is no indication in the scriptures that this power should ever be given to anyone after the days of the apostles; and we are more than skeptical when we hear of any claiming to be faith healers, etc.; and especially when it is connected with requests for money to carry on "the work".

But the days of God's miracles are not finished, as many can testify, for

everytime one is born of the spirit — brought out of darkness which he did not know he was in, and God shines in his heart — that is a miracle: it is not a product of nature, but the work of God. And we expect such miracles to continue to be performed until the last of the children are brought into the kingdom.

The science of healing in its many branches belongs in the realm of nature, and has its good and proper place; but so-called faith healing, carried on by men nowadays, who say that anyone can be healed if they just have faith, belongs with other contrary doctrines, being false. So-called holy places, relics, etc., serve to satisfy a natural religious desire of many people, but have no attractions for those who truly know the grace of God; for to these such things belong to superstitious customs.

No one who knows the power of God as has been manifested in himself in the miracle of being born of the Spirit, will for a moment deny that God does his will in all things today the same as he has ever done; and that He gives his people faith as the fruit of the Spirit, and the spirit of prayer, so that He works his will in and for them: and they pray His will to be done in all things.

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23)

These are very solemn and awful words. The circumstances attending their utterance by Moses were these, Israel had now finished their journey in the wilderness. They were about to enter into their inheritance in the promised land, but the land was full of enemies who must be conquered and driven out before them. A sore warfare awaited them. Now, as they stand upon the

borders of the promised land, soon to cross over Jordan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, seeing that the land upon this side of Jordan was good for pasturage for their flocks and herds, came to Moses asking that they might have their inheritance here, and not on the other side of the river. Moses replied, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here. This land was already conquered by the arms of all the tribes. Should they now sit down here, and leave the rest of their brethren to still fight for the possession which should be theirs on the other side of the river? He also reminds them that to do so would be to discourage those who should go over to the conflict. He reminds them that thus did their fathers when from Kadesh Barnea he sent them to see the land. They brought back such a report as discouraged the people, and the anger of the Lord was therefore kindled against them, and he swore that none of those who came out of Egypt should ever enter the land, who were from twenty years old and upward. He goes on to recount that the Lord made them wander forty years in the wilderness. And now, he says, Ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel; for, if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people. Then they came to him, and promised they would go over with the rest and help them until their enemies were conquered, and then they would return and dwell in this place. Moses gave them this permission, but said that if they did not fulfill this promise, they should have sinned against God, "and be sure your sin will find you out." This is the narrative in brief of the event which gave rise to these words.

The truth taught here is in no wise different from that which is taught all through the Scriptures. In Genesis iv. the Lord said to Cain, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is, your sin is ever ready to meet you. It shall, like a wild beast, leap upon you

at any time. It is the same truth, that Paul taught in the following words, "What a man sows, that shall he reap. If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption." The sin of the brethren of Joseph met them when they were face to face with him in their distress in Egypt. Judah said, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." There is no truth more clear than this. In some way, sin always finds out the sinner, and he reaps his reward. There are some things in the text, and in its connection, to which we wish to call attention.

First. Moses said that in doing as he had said, that is, in neglecting to aid their brethren, they should sin against God. It was not in the judgment of Moses, against their brethren that they should sin, but against God. All sin is against God. Thus David felt, when he had been brought to a conviction of his sin, in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. In response to the searching words of the prophet of the Lord, "Thou art the man," he said, "I have sinned." And in that wonderful confession in the fifty-first Psalm he said, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in their sight." He did not, under the sense of the enormity of his guilt, say, I have sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, or against my fellow-man, in any way, but against thee. The anguish of his soul was deeper in this view of the matter by far, than it could have been had he thought only of the harm done to his faithful captain and his wife. The vice in which he had engaged, and the crime of which he was guilty, was all swallowed up by the force of the far greater thing, sin against God. So Moses, in the text, and in the connection, does not lay stress upon the wrong which their brethren might suffer at their hands, but solely upon the sin against God. The wrong which we do to our fellow-man may be made good again, but we cannot make our sin good. Thanks be to God, there is one who has paid even that debt, the sin against God. But there are some reflections concerning this, which we

wish to present. The whole testimony of the Scripture, and of our own experience, is to this effect, the one who suffers the wrong is not to be pitied so much as the one who willfully does the wrong. Sin is a far more fearful thing than any other thing can be. He that observes lying vanities, forsakes his own mercies. The man who does his brother wrong, injures himself still more. Thus the Savior said, that it were better that one should be drowned in the midst of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones which believed in him. His care was not so much for the little ones who believed in him, and who suffered the wrong, as for that disciple, who might be led under the dictates of the flesh, to do his brother wrong. Such an one should find that it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Thus David felt when he made his confession. We may be sure that the wrong against his faithful captain seemed none the less, because the sin against God seemed so great. He who fears to sin against God, will fear to wrong his fellow-man. It is impossible that he should do the one without the other. The wrong against our fellow-man may endure but for a moment, but who shall limit the duration of the sin against God? The one may be measured by a little time, or by the bounds of its results against the man who is injured, or we may make reparation, but who shall atone for his sin against God? As love to God must always be accompanied by love to our fellow-men, so an abhorrence of sin will be accompanied by an abhorrence of wrong against our fellow-men. The one is not and cannot be without the other. There is also another side to this matter, which is most important. He who suffers the wrong, will be helped by remembering this fact that all sin is against God. It will serve to make him patient and submissive, and prevent him from revenging himself, since the wrong-doer must appear before the Judge of all, against whom he has sinned. The heavenly Father may, and

will, make up to him who has suffered the wrong, in other ways, more than he has lost, yea, he may make the very wrong itself the medium of still greater blessings. Out of it he may cause to grow, more patience, and trust, and faith, and more of the spirit of forgiveness, but for him who has done the wrong, and so sinned against God, there remains the rod of his displeasure. There also is this in it, viz: the wrong rebounds to the hurt of his own soul. He reaps the very thing he has sown. He has sown the wind, and he shall reap the whirlwind. A child in a family stronger than his brother, may rob him of some gift which his father has bestowed upon him, but the child must not seek revenge; he must not take the case into his own hand. The father will settle all that. He who has robbed his brother, has sinned against the common father. He must settle the whole matter. He can make up to the weaker brother more than he has lost, but who shall make up to the wrong-doer the smiles of his father, which he has for a time lost? O! if we, when we feel we are wronged by another, could but remember that God sees it all, and that he will visit the transgression with the rod, while he will bind up the heart that is broken, should we not feel very different from what we sometimes do? Where, in view of these things, would be room for any spirit of revenge, or malice, or resentment? Would not all this be swallowed up by the greatness of our pity for the one who has done the wrong, seeing that he has fallen into the hands of the living God, on account of his sin?

Thus Moses would put the matter upon the high ground of sin against God. If this reflection will not avail to prevent a man from doing the wrong, surely nothing else will. In this view of the matter, both he who has done the wrong, and he who has suffered the wrong, must fall at the feet of the Lord of all, and leave themselves with him. How quickly would strife cease between brethren everywhere, could this be remembered. Thus Jesus, our Lord and life, and example, committed himself to

him who judgeth righteously. And he was heard in that he feared. The whole spirit of what we have been trying to say, is summed up in the prayer, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Also in the prayer of the first martyr, Stephen, "Lord Jesus lay not his sin to their charge." A second thing which seems to us to be taught in the text is this, no man can live to himself. The people of God cannot withdraw themselves to themselves, and think alone of their own interests, without committing sin against God. The tribes of Israel were taught that they must stand together in mutual love, and helpfulness. They were one people. It is true to-day, that if one member suffers, all suffer in their measure, with that member. So if one member be wrapped up in himself, so that he has ease and prosperity, and it matters little about how others fare, the harm will not only fall upon him, but upon all the body. Because of the false report of a few, who brought back discouraging news of the land to which the tribes were journeying, all Israel suffered in the wilderness. And so here, Moses tells them that if they do not go over to the battle with the rest, they all will be discouraged, and the anger of God will fall upon them. How close is the union which our God has established among his people. It is compared to the union between the members of the body. The church at Laodicea was in this condition. She said that she was rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, and as she needed nothing, it is evident that she also cared little for the love and fellowship and help of her kindred in Christ; and that help which she needed not, in her estimation, she would not bestow upon her brethren in their need. And the Lord said that he would spue them out of his mouth. This is as true to-day as it has ever been. It is a sin against God, when we do not feel a readiness to bear each other's burdens. To bear each other's burdens, is to fulfill the law of Christ. This law is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. If we do not as churches, and as individuals,

find our hearts going out to our brethren in their need; if when we are well supplied for instance with the word of the gospel, we do not think of those who are destitute of such privileges, and stand ready to minister help to them, we are guilty of sin against God. Love for God, and for each other, will solve all this, and solve it upon the right side. If we love enough, the rest will follow. It would be no task for these two tribes to go over and help the rest in their warfare, if they loved God and the rest of the tribes, as well as they did themselves.

Moses accompanies the word of commandment, with a word of warning. If they should not do this, then they might be sure that their sin should find them out. Its results should be sure. All sin reacts upon the guilty one. We cannot hide from the consequences of our sins. That which is evil, indulged in and followed, will be found to eat into one's own soul, as does a canker. It will abide there, and lead to still more ungodliness. We may forget the sin, but it has not forgotten us, and will lie in wait for us, and meet us at our own door. We have often thought of the peculiarity of the language of the apostle: What a man sows, that very thing he shall reap. He may reap sorrow for his sins. It is sure to be so, and it is well when it is so, but he shall reap more than this, he shall reap just what he has sown. From sowing the wind; the reaping shall be the whirlwind. The evil that we do fastens itself upon our own hearts. The little foxes that seem so small, soon grow to be large foxes. If we are careless toward our brethren, in their need in any way, we shall grow poor in soul. Our sin will find us out, in poverty, and leanness and barrenness. Who has not found it so in his own experience? Ungodliness leads to more ungodliness. One begins to neglect his privileges in the house of God. How rapidly this grows, and how many companion evils come into that soul, and abide there. The sin has found them out. This comes in the way of that discipline which the Lord holds in his own hand, and which he

visits upon the disobedient. This is the rod, and these are the stripes, with which he visits them. It is their sin finding them out. Such discipline is good for the disobedient child, but he has this also for his strength, that he be not overborne with sorrow. His redemption is secure. Though he has the rod, yet it is the rod of love. The blood of Jesus Christ has put away all sin: therefore his loving-kindness he will not take away from him, nor from any in him. Their sin shall indeed find them out, but so shall redemption find them out, yea, it has already found them out, and none can perish who are embraced in this everlasting covenant. We will leave the subject. The field is very broad; we have but glanced at it.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick May 15, 1898)

HEBREWS X. 26

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter six, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained further sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour — what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ

has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a Christian under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1855.

The importance of the matters presented by Elders Chick and Beebe in the above editorials should not be overlooked by any of us. They are included in: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," spoken by Jesus shortly before his ascension." — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

ELDER JAMES BERTIE MURRAY

Though I should write all day, I could never tell how much his life meant to me: He lived every day as I would like to. He was born June 30, 1881, and died May 25, 1965. He was united in marriage to Pennettie S. Everette January 6, 1904; and to this union four girls and two boys were born. His wife and one son preceded him in death.

Papa and Mama united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Lower Black Creek, and were baptized by Elder J. C. Hooks in October, 1912. For convenience they moved their membership by letter to Sandy Grove Church in May, 1920. He was ordained a deacon July 31, 1920, and served faithfully. He was liberated to preach November 1, 1933, and November 31, 1936, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

After the death of his first wife, he was later married to Kiva Powell, who was also a member of Sandy Grove Church; and to this union one girl was born. His doors were always open to the brethren and friends; and I feel that he was loved by all who knew him. His pleasures were in visiting among the churches and his friends, and was faithful as long as he was able to go. I feel that, though he could not speak for weeks before his death, he would have said with the hymn writer:

"I now depart, I leave you here,
I leave you with the Lord;
And may we all henceforth appear
To be of one accord.
And if we part to meet no more
While on earth we remain,
O may we meet on Canaan's shore
And never part again."

Written by his daughter, who loved him.

Rachel Murray Wiggs

SISTER EMMA COLLINS

Sister Emma Collins united with the Black River Primitive Baptist Church at Dunn, N. C., on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in December, 1931, and was baptized by the late Elder E. C. Jones, who was pastor at that time. Sister Collins was born October 27, 1884, in Columbus County, and passed from this life August 17, 1965. She was married to the late Joseph C. M. Collins, January 17, 1921; and to this union was born a son, Charles Collins, who resides in Dothan, Alabama, and a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott, who resides in Lumberton, N. C. Sister Collins made her home with her daughter after her husband's death in 1960. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Dr. Hyuck of Lumberton, and her body was laid to rest in the Meadow Brooks Cemetery in Lumberton, N. C.

Sister Collins was a loving and faithful member, believing in the truth as it is in Christ, Salvation by Grace and Grace alone; one whose life was so sweetly devoted to her church. Though for the many years she was afflicted and deprived of the privilege of attending the services, yet she often made inquiry as to the welfare of the members; and as long as she lived was prompt to give for any cause that might arise for the upkeep of the church. She was faithful to every duty in life, rearing her children in a way that made them love her and do everything they could to comfort their mother.

We, the Black River Church at Dunn, feel a great loss of a mother in Israel. "There has not been found no greater faith, no not in Israel." We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who was pleased to call her from our midst to that Heavenly Bliss, to await the morning of the Resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from the graves, and will behold His face in righteousness and shall be satisfied when they awake in His likeness. Therefore

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

Done by order of the Black River Church at Dunn, N. C. the fourth week end in August. Written by request by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner.

Elder David Godwin, Moderator Pro Tem
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

BROTHER BUNYAN LINVILLE SNYDER

The Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch, Henry County, Va., while in conference, asked that this weak one write the obituary of our departed Brother Bunyan Linville Snyder, who passed away February 26, 1965. Brother Snyder was born near Jackson Creek in Randolph County, N. C. May 12, 1884. He was the son of the late Elder and Mrs. Richard Wright Snyder.

Brother Snyder was married to Loula Florence Coltrane May 17, 1905, and to this union were born four children — two of which have passed away. He is survived by his companion, who is an invalid and bedfast, and two children: Geraldine Florence Beeson and Richard Gardner Snyder, both of Martinsville, Va.; also by five grandchildren.

Deep in our hearts we praise God for the orderly walk of our brother. Mere words cannot express what we feel: they appear empty in comparison with how we miss his presence, and the warm handclasp, and his singing among us, which was rich in spirit; his voice sounded full of grace and truth. We miss his smile which was an encouragement to press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of our God. We feel deeply the loss of our brother who had been a member of Camp Branch for several years, but we know his toils and trials are now over, and that he has fallen asleep in Jesus, to await his second coming when he shall gather his jewels home to praise him forever in the world that has no end. Brother Snyder was in bad health for several years, and a patient in the hospital several weeks before his death; where he bore his sufferings well.

His funeral was held at McKee's Funeral Home, Martinsville, by his pastor Elder Rufus Brown, with burial in Roselawn Cemetery under a number of beautiful floral tributes.

We desire a copy of this writing be given to his companion; one to be placed on the pages of our church book; and one sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by one who loved him and felt to be in his fellowship though less than the least of all saints in hope of God's mercy.

Elder Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MINNIE LEE WHITFIELD

"Well done thou good and faithful servant." St. Matthew 25:21.

The above quotation is a very fitting expression of the life of Sister Minnie Lee Whitfield, a devoted and faithful member of Nashville Primitive Baptist Church who fulfilled her humble and appointed mission on

this earth and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus April 27, 1965.

Sister Whitfield was born January 2, 1892, her parents, Jessie and Rhoda Turner Robbins.

She was married September 25, 1910, to J. W. Whitfield, to which union were born three children, Mrs. Nannie Wiggins, Mrs. Lillie Mae Cobb, and Floyd Whitfield, all of Rocky Mount, N. C., and who survive, together with her husband, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Sister Whitfield united with the church at Nashville, N. C., Saturday before the fourth Sunday in February, 1914, and was baptized the following Sunday by her pastor, Elder M. B. Williford.

Sister Whitfield's life was exemplified by an orderly walk and a godly conversation. Her tender love for the church, her family, and the community gives all of us who knew her every reason to believe her precious soul now rests in the Paradise of God waiting for the general resurrection when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible and undefiled, fashioned like unto His glorious body and eternally satisfied.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. Burial was in Forest Hill Cemetery, Nashville, N. C.

Elder W. E. Turner

J. S. MOFFETT

Mr. J. S. Moffett, Sr., was born April 26, 1892, and passed away December 30, 1964. He was a resident of Shreveport, Louisiana.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Sister Moffett, and two sons and four daughters: J. S. Moffett, Jr., Monroe, La.; E. S. Moffett, Tyler, Texas; Mrs. Leesie Hines and Mrs. Led Smith, of Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Bill Rue, Oklahoma City, and Mrs. Joe Lynn Monday, Vivian, La.; and eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

I would say to those left behind, weep not as those who have no hope. The fruit that Mr. Moffett brought forth while here on this earth, gave great evidence of a child of God: surely he could not have brought forth fruit of himself. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) He was a great lover of the truth and went far and near to hear it. He had a good report of those within the church, and of those without.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. W. Taylor and the writer, Loyd Wall. May the riches of God's mercy be upon his family.

Loyd Wall

MARY E. CARTLEDGE

Sister Cartledge was the widow of a lovely member of the Primitive Baptist Church; and though she was not actually a member, she leaves plenty of evidence that she loved the doctrine and the brethren very much. She entertained many of them in her home, and she associated with them regularly at the meetings as long as she was able. She loved the doctrine of God's sovereign and saving grace.

She was born November 16, 1871, near Rayville, La., and passed away November 7, 1965. Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. L. Smith, at Kilpatric Funeral Home in West Monroe, La. She was buried at Gwynn Cemetery, Mangrem, La. There was a good and attentive congregation, and many flowers, thus showing the tender respect in which she was held by those who knew her.

She is survived by six sons: Rube, of Point, La.; M. B., of Downsville, La.; J. D., of Start, La.; Joe of Delhigh, La.; Albert, of Eastland, Texas; and Jessie, of Rayville, La.; and by three daughters: Miss Pearl Cartledge, of Rayville, La.; Mrs. Ovada Rashal, of Rayville; and Mrs. Essie Smith, of Marion, La. Surviving also are twenty-three grandchildren; eight step-grandchildren; fifty great grandchildren, and nine great great grandchildren.

May the Lord bless and comfort her dear family, and all who mourn her passing. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Yours in very sincere and deep sympathy, and in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

SISTER ALTA McLEOD

Sister McLeod was born December 22, 1882, and passed away October 31, 1965. She was a life long resident of Union County, Arkansas, living in Eldorado. She was first married to Brother Thomas Goodwin; and after his death she later married Brother Arthur McLeod, who was originally from Atlanta, Texas, and who died about two years ago at our association of a heart attack.

Sister McLeod was a beloved member of Rehoboth Primitive Baptist Church near Eldorado. She was a very friendly and likeable person and the brethren often visited in her home; and she was privileged to visit other churches and associations and was widely known and loved by our brethren.

Sister McLeod is survived by seven sons and one daughter: O. D. Goodwin, Clifford Goodwin, Isaac Goodwin, Thomas Goodwin, and

Hilton Goodwin, all of Eldorado; Curtis Goodwin, Louis, Miss.; Elmer Goodwin, Warren, Arkansas; and Mrs. Cora Smith, Eldorado. Also surviving are, one sister, Mrs. John F. Burton, Sr., Eldorado; eight grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted the 5th Sunday in October at Rehoboth in the presence of a large congregation. We are very sad at her passing, which is a great loss to us, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord bless and comfort all the dear bereaved ones. The writer conducted the services, assisted by Elder W. A. Speer.

R. W. Rhodes

GENEVA GASKINS CORBITT

With a sad and heavy heart I attempt to write the passing of my beloved mother, Geneva Gaskins Corbitt, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Tom Gaskins, Tarboro, N. C. She was born May 24, 1894, and died June 13, 1965.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her devoted husband, George T. Corbitt, two daughters, Mrs. Alton G. Bibb, Portsmouth, Va. and Mrs. Glenn Hardee, Greenville, N. C.; one son, Vernon B. Corbitt, Portsmouth, Va.; three sisters, seven grandchildren, and one great grandchild. Mother and Daddy were married March 3, 1912: living together fifty-three years.

Mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Red Banks in April, 1958, and was baptized by Elder A. L. McKenny and Elder A. P. Mewborn.

Her afflictions were great but she bore them with great patience. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor — always deeming others better than herself. Her left leg was amputated five years before her death, and she lost her speech about a year before her passing, but she was a patient sufferer, and would smile and wave when company came in. To know her was to love her.

Her funeral was held at Wilkerson Chapel June 15th, conducted by Elder Joe Sawyer and Mr. John Blue; and her body was laid to rest in Pinewood Memorial Park under a mound of flowers, to await the resurrection morning.

Mrs. Glenn Hardee, daughter

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom removed from our midst Sister Eva Garner who was born

June 9, 1879, and calmly fell asleep in Jesus, April 23, 1965. She left three noble sons: Alvin and Vernon "Ted" of Morehead City; Owen Kenneth of Bridgeton, and one daughter, Mrs. Thelma Thompson of Newport, N. C., and seven grandchildren besides many friends and relatives. She was devoted to her family and made every sacrifice possible for them and they and the inlaws tried in every way they could to administer to her every need. She had the best medical attention obtainable together with skillful nurses while at the hospital but let us remember that earthly wisdom and loving care cannot stay the hand of death.

We, the members of Newport Primitive Baptist Church, miss her very much as she was so faithful to attend her meetings, always greeting us with a pleasant smile. Sister Eva united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Newport, N. C., more than fifty years ago and was faithful to the Cause she so much loved until relieved by death.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him Who doeth all things well; and may we feel to say "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done." We do know that "though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil for God will be with us, His Rod and Staff will comfort us." There nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, no other one is worthy of our trust.

Funeral services were conducted in the church of her membership by her pastor, Elder M. L. Simmons and Mr. Cook, Methodist minister, after which her body was laid to rest beside her devoted husband who preceded her in death a few years, to await the second coming of our Lord when these bodies that are sown in weakness will be praised in power and see the Great King in his Glory, be like him and be satisfied.

Done by order of the Newport Primitive Baptist Church while in conference, June meeting, 1965.

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

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since our last meeting of this Association it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst four of our members, and we trust to bow in humble submission to the will of our God. They are as follows: Sisters Bertie Dryden and Annie Fields of the Salisbury Church, Sister Ethel Covington of the Nassaongo Church and Brother Aquila (Bunk) Evans of the Rewastico Church.

Though we miss them very much we feel that they had spent their appointed time here and that God, who doeth all things well, was pleased to take them away from the toils and cares of this world to a better land.

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body express their deep sorrow to the members of the families of the departed ones; also that this memorial be printed in our minutes, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by order of the Salisbury Association being held with the Salisbury Church October 20, 21, 1965.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst by death within two months, another of our little flock, Sister Lettie Evans Haymore, Oct. 27, 1965, at the age of 84.

We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel the loss of another humble, kind and faithful member, who joined this church in the early twenties and was baptized by the late Elder C. O. Boaze. Ill health prevented Sister Haymore from attending regular in her late years. Her daughter, Mrs. Cora Underwood, was faithful to bring her mother to her meetings whenever she was able to come; and did all she could for her pleasure and comfort. Sister Haymore was a good wife and mother. She was known to but few but was prized as far as known.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel, Danville, Va., by her pastor Elder R. S. Payne. Mr. Billy Hamlett, one of the daughter's pastor also was present. The remains were laid to rest in Schoolfield Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers; there to await the coming of her Saviour.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the holy will of God who makes no mistake. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. And

RESOLVED, That the church extend her love and sympathy to the bereaved family. May God's blessings be upon all that mourn her passing.

RESOLVED AGAIN, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference Nov. 6, 1965.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1966

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

THE POET'S PRAYER (Common Meter)

True poetry by God is writ
Within the poet's mind;
The poet merely copies it,
Then gives it to mankind.

When thus inspired a spring of life
Flows through each word and line;
The poet — less, this inspired light
Writes nought but empty rhyme.

Dear Lord, if I a poet be;
If thou hast me impressed
In lines of verse to honor thee,
And comfort thy distressed,

Then let Thy Spirit through me flow —
Let it with me abide:
Forbid I anything shall know,
Save Jesus crucified.

Let me this precious truth defend;
And should I stray aside,
God grant I cannot find my pen;
Also my paper hide.

But when I to myself take heed —
From flesh and nature free,
Then let me, Lord, thy children feed
In verse — true poetry!

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
Eldorado, Ark. 71730

(Please note that the poetry on page 6 of the January issue, was composed by Brother Britt, and should not have been run as a quotation — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED

ELDER C. D. TURNER'S VISIT

15514 South Brentwood,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Elder Spangler:

I awoke at four A. M. January the 3rd, 1966, with an impression to write to the household of faith through the medium of the **Signs of the Times**.

By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Elder C. D. Turner and wife, of Dunn, N. C., visited the Shepherd Fold Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, January 1, 1966, after leaving their home to visit a son and family in Houston. Little did they know the purpose our God had in the matter. Elder Turner found the church through the **Signs**. He told his wife that he was not going to expose himself as an Elder, but planned to just listen and sing. But God had it otherwise: our minister, Elder Haygood, was impressed to inquire of this, and it was brought to light. The brethren tread fearfully when asked of their hope or position among God's humble poor. "Boasting is excluded;" and one of the fruits of the Spirit is meekness.

Elder Turner came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit, preaching the gospel, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus: declaring the whole counsel of God; the name of the Lord was magnified, and we had all things in common. There were many tears of joy manifested as we sang, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus?" and gave the right hand of fellowship. Elder Turner's text was taken from Luke 13:11-16.

We were also blessed to have Elder Malcolm Burkhalter and Elder Jerald Shipman and wife from San Antonio, on

Sunday; two able ministers by the grace of God. We here at Shepherd Fold were made glad, and strengthened in hope, as evidence was given us that the same Lord Jesus Christ preached here in the South, is also preached in the North-eastern part of these United States.

Dearly beloved, if any of you should pass by this way at any time, we would be most glad to have you in our homes, and to attend our meetings on the first Sundays and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M. We are wonderfully blessed to have Elder C. M. Haygood to serve us in a pastoral capacity. He and his dear wife drive some four hundred miles one way, to serve us. He also serves his home church at Lawn, Texas; one at Justiceburg; one at Earth; and one at Altus, Oklahoma — driving some two thousand miles a month. He also holds down a public job. He has a nice family of four children: two boys and two girls. Dearly beloved, I do not mean to eulogize the man, or boast, but rather praise the Lord for this servant fellow yoke bearer.

I feel impressed now to quote the Apostle Paul's address to the elders at Ephesus, Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In bonds of love and hope,
Jimmy Lindsey

343 E. Pine Street,
Lodi, California 95242

Dear Editors of the Signs:

The year has gone by, and it is time to renew for the **Signs** another year. I look forward to getting it each month. The three editorials in the January issue, also the **Voices of the Past**, are all so good. Also I will mention the sermon by Elder Helms in the December issue: it is wonderful. I met Elder Helms at an association in Virginia while on an extended trip. All other articles I love to

read and meditate on. I read other articles in Old Baptist Papers which I enjoy.

I read the **Signs of the Times** a lot while in my teens, and am still reading it. In three months I will be seventy-six years old. The last four years I have been located where I have enjoyed good meetings. I hope I praise the dear Lord as I ought for the sweet benefits to this poor sinner, always craving more and more of the heavenly manna, which God alone can give through his true ambassadors. On May 12th I will have been a member in the church fifty-four years; and my love for the true church has never faltered. My thought is, "Am I his, or am I not?"

May you be blessed to press on in your work.

Unworthily,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

"IT IS THE WORK OF GOD"

P. O. Box 625,
Spearsville, La.
Feb. 25, 1964

Mrs. Ruby Brandon,
Rt. 4,
Murray, Ky.

Dear Sister in Christ:

I have just mailed the three New Testaments and Psalms, and hope you receive them in good shape.

I greatly appreciate your good letter, and it is very clear that the Lord has taught and revealed his precious truth to you by his Spirit. Jesus says in Matthew 11:25,26, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." We can readily see from this, that there is no power, teacher or instructor, that can show these sacred truths to any one from whom God has hid them. Jesus says in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing."

Jesus also says, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." So we can very easily tell who's work it is for anyone to believe on Jesus Christ, whom God has sent. It is the work of God, not the work of men, or the sinner. No, indeed, because the creature is the one to whom Jesus said, "For without me ye can do nothing."

On the subject of men teaching men to know the Lord, this is utterly contrary to the New Covenant, which we are under in this Gospel Day. Read Hebrews 8:10-12: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

So, dear sister, God said that he is the one who is to write his laws in their hearts and mind; and he lovingly said, "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." And then said that every man should not teach his neighbor and brother to know the Lord. Here is the precious evidence for the understanding of those in whose hearts God has written his laws: They know that from this time they cannot teach anyone to know the Lord; as most religious sects say they can.

It is written in 2 Timothy 4:3,4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap unto themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Now who are heaping to themselves many teachers this day and time? why those who have not had God's laws written in their hearts and mind: they have a greater number of

religious teachers now than they ever had before. They are teaching erroneous things, turning ears away from the truth unto fables. Dear sister, would we not much rather hope and trust in God who writes his laws in our hearts, than to trust in human teachers of today?

The modern teaching that God gives all men a chance to accept him, so he can save them, is a humbug against God's sovereign grace and truth. We find some plain teaching in Luke 10:31-35. It shows that this poor man who fell among thieves, was robbed, beaten and stripped, and left half-dead; and that by chance a priest passed by on the other side, and did not help him at all. Then likewise a Levite passed on the other side: and neither of these so called chances did him any good. But then a certain Samaritan journeyed that way; and came to him and poured in the oil and wine, and put him on his own beast and carried him to the inn. This certain Samaritan was Jesus Christ. It was prophesied where he should be born — there was no chance about him. The angel said to Joseph, "Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife. for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." There is no chance here, for **"He shall save his people from their sins."**

Jesus also said in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." So, again, there is no chance about it. Truly their salvation was sure and certain: and we find that their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. In Ephesians 1:4, it says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." . . .

Dear sister, I feel I have said enough, and cited Bible teaching enough, to show the difference between the genuine salvation of God to his people, and that so-called salvation which people believe

and teach: that it comes by what the creature does with what they call their chance of salvation. I hope I have been taught these things by the same light from heaven which shined about Paul, when Jesus Christ spoke to him; and Paul fell to the ground and desired the Lord to tell him what he would have him to do. We find there is no chance about it, but that salvation is accomplished unto all of God's chosen and elect people, through saving grace and abundant mercy, and the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.

I hope I have not worried you with this great and extensive subject; and I humbly hope and trust that God in his mercy and grace, has written his effective laws in our hearts and minds. If so, then all is well, because whatsoever God does is done forever, and nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be taken away from it. In Malachi 3:6 God says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Read Daniel 4:35, which shows that God deals with things in a certain manner, and none can stay his hand; and he does his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: So there is no chance about it. In another place we are told, ". . . for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God is almighty, eternal, self existant, and changes not at all from the way he thought and purposed all things. Isaiah wrote, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

May God bless you and all yours, together with all the dear household of faith everywhere.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

SOMEONE SENDS HER THE SIGNS

Crab Orchard, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

This note is in regard to some one sending me the **Signs of the Times**. I don't know who it was, not the least idea, but I surely thank whoever it was, for I appreciate it. It was kind and thoughtful, and I have no words to express what is in my heart. It was someone who knows that I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

I have been a member of the Primitive Baptists for nearly fifty years, but am now more or less a shut-in, due to age and sickness, and seldom am able to attend church as I did when I was younger; so I find much good reading in the **Signs** by the many good writers and able ministers of the true gospel, as I understand it.

If not asking too much, I would like for you to print this note in the **Signs**. I enclose \$1.00 for your fund.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. Pearl Martin

"IN WHOM WE LIVE, MOVE, AND
HAVE OUR BEING"

Rt. 2, Box 240

Snyder, Texas, 79549

Dear Editors:

It has come time to renew my subscription to the dear **Signs**, so I am enclosing check to pay for same. I always look forward to the coming of each issue, knowing it will be laden with good news about our blessed Lord; who is able to save to the uttermost. I desire to be so very thankful to Him for all the rich blessings that are mine to enjoy from day to day, but feel so unworthy to receive them. I wonder daily why the dear Lord is so mindful of such a sinner as I know myself to be.

The world seems to be in such a turmoil and state of confusion, with one big question on everyone's mind: "Will man ever land on the moon?" Some have asked my opinion, and I am quick to state that if God has a purpose in such an event, he will certainly land one there; and if not, that all of men's efforts will be in vain. I for one am willing to leave the matter in His power. We are taught by inspiration that He is an all wise, all powerful God, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work. I am made happy when I am blessed to shut all vain and evil thoughts out of my mind, and can feel the sweet presence of such a powerful, loving heavenly Father.

May God richly bless you editors, together with all of the Lord's people everywhere, is my prayer. I hope to be able to read the **Signs** for many years to come. Praise the dear Lord in whom we live, move and have our being, and who holds my destiny in his hand.

A little sister in a sweet hope,
Mrs. J. P. Madding

"THEY DO NOT MAKE HIM FEEL SO
GOOD EITHER"

P. O. Box 207,
Weatherford, Texas

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed \$5.00 for extension of my subscription to the good old **Signs of the Times**.

I guess I don't make others feel so good when I discriminate between the faith of God's elect, and those that are not of the faith of God's elect. But they don't make me feel so good when they contend that Christ is the Saviour, if you will do your part; and your main part is to accept him. A lady told my wife a bit ago that Jesus was to be accepted just like something upon a platter: you could accept or reject him as you would a plate of food that was offered you. Another lady told me the other day that Jesus died for everybody, if

they would accept him. I very much balked when she said that; and I said, "Mrs. H., Jesus said you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "I know, she said, "but we have to accept him."

I do not mention this just to speak of anyone as a liar, but in John 2:22, we read, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." We have no choice in the matter: we must acknowledge Jesus as being the Saviour entirely, completely, and altogether, or be classed as antichrist. I contend that we are in the Faith of God's elect, and cannot at the same time be antichrist.

The Scripture says that Paul was a pattern of all that should afterward believe on Jesus' name. When Paul went to Damascus, did he make the first move towards God? was he forward in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ? Bible readers know that Jesus began the work in purifying Paul's heart by faith: with one big stroke, he gave Paul a blow that let him know who was God. Paul asked, "Who art thou Lord?" Up until that time, he didn't know or care who he was.

I often introduce two parties; and the custom is to acknowledge each other, and they often say, "I am glad to know you." It's true they know each other by name, but do they have an experimental knowledge of each other? No, not at all. Paul knew something about this Lord experimentally, and afterwards he never got through telling about his experience in meeting the Lord. It was by the grace of God he was what he was. It could not have been by good works, because he had none. Again, let us note that Jesus told him, "Thou art a chosen vessel unto me" So, according to God's own purpose and grace, he chose Paul that he should bear his name among the Gentiles. Paul afterwards preached, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." But he didn't get anywhere with anybody except the ones that had faith toward the Lord Jesus

Christ. Therefore, it was revealed from faith to faith. Stephen was stoned to death in Paul's presence, preaching while he was dying; but Paul at that time had no faith, so nothing was revealed to him: It must be from faith to faith. I contend that it must be from the faith of God's elect, to the faith of God's elect. All the treasures of both knowledge and wisdom are hidden in Him. If they are hidden in him, how can we of ourselves get any of these treasures?

Brother Wood, or whoever reads this, I am a rambling writer. May God bless and keep you all.

A little brother, I hope,
W. C. Purdy

(Ramble on, Brother Purdy; we like this kind of rambling. — J. D. W.)

"REFRESHING TO FEED ON THE CRUMBS"

476 Williams Street,
Cumberland, Md. 21502

Elder and Sister Wood,
Precious Ones in Hope:

It was wonderful to hear from you, and so glad that Sister Wood is somewhat improved. I trust that this finds you both in fair health. I had hoped to be given something spiritual to write, but, alas, I feel so destitute; and unless given understanding from the three that bear record in heaven, my feeble effort will be as sounding brass and a tinkling symbol.

You and the others are blessed to write so many wonderful edifying truths, which cause the readers to praise God in their hearts for such gifts to mortal men. It surely refreshes the reader's hearts to feed on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table and drink from that fountain that never runs dry. How wonderful to know that the great Shepherd has enclosed his sheep within that luscious green pasture of his undying love. "He will cover

them with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust;" and they shall be taught of him, from the least to the greatest, to know and to heed the commands of their Redeemer. I find some comfort in reading his promises, and considering his great salvation, hoping against hope that one like me could be of that number.

"On such love my soul still ponders,
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, while lost in holy wonder,
Why, O Lord, such love for me?"

I believe the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, and hope in his mercy. Their souls wait for the Lord, and he is their help and shield. The little the righteous man has, is better than the riches of many wicked. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I would not exchange the little hope I have for all the glamour and wealth this world holds. He has promised to give his angels charge over the ones he redeemed.

We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, or traditions received from our fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ. He is our rock and refuge: his children are his portion; and as the apple of his eye he waters the garden of his love every day with the refining dew of his great love. And when the tender plants are refreshed

"The Lord into his garden comes,
Well pleased to smell their poor perfume;
And leads them to a feast divine,
Sweeter than honey, milk or wine."

He has promised to be with them through six troubles, and not forsake them in the seventh. A mother may forsake her child, but God never forgets one of his for whom Christ died: They will all be drawn by his Spirit to come unto him; and he will in no wise cast them off. His grace will always be sufficient for all their needs; and they are all taught that:

"God is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade:
Before we can offer our complaints,
Behold Him present with his aid."

"The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." The steps of the redeemed are ordered of the Lord, and though at times they are cast down, the Lord upholds them with his everlasting arms, and will supply all their needs in due season. He is their shield against all the fiery darts of Satan. O, may we be given strength to stagger not at his promises.

"Faith, 'tis a precious gift,
Where'er it is bestowed:
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God."

He chose his children away back in eternity; and also prepared a sacrifice to redeem them. Man had no choice or part in his own redemption, or purification, or sanctification, nor can he by any means redeem his brother, or give God a ransom for him. (Psalm 49:7) Only now that God has opened their eyes to spiritual understanding, are they enabled by him to lift up their feeble heads, and give all glory to him. Then

"Why should we a drop bemoan,
Who has a fountain near:
A fountain which will ever run
With waters sweet and clear."

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalm 33:12) My hope is that we are among that number.

I too have been saddened at the passing of many-gifted soldiers of the cross; yet we thank God for the shining footprints they left behind. And we are somewhat comforted in the knowledge that God will never leave himself without a witness. There are still a few who love the truth, and have not bowed to the image of Baal; and who are called according to His purpose.

May the angel of the Lord abundantly abide with you and yours.

From the very least, if one at all,
Hester B. Thompson

THE SIGNS IS VALUABLE TO HER

27124 Perkins Road,
Madera, Calif. 93637

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I see it is time to renew my subscription for the dear old paper I love so much. I get so much out of it: I can be very low in the valley, and when I read the writings of the dear sisters and brothers, I get such a lift it is worth its weight in gold to me; and I would rather have it than the gold, for gold would not help me any; but the wonderful words of encouragement that the dear Old Baptist folks give me do. I agree with them one hundred percent.

I think that the writings of Mrs. Mattie Underwood, Elder Lambert, Elder Hudson, Elder Wood, Elder Spangler, and many others are so wonderful: I am so grateful that I am blessed to have the **Signs** in my home, for it is a comfort to my poor grieved heart. I hope I am never without it, or unable to read it, for there is no meeting place near me. I went on a trip last fall and heard Elder W. W. Taylor and Elder Loyd Wall in Dallas. They both were wonderful — God blessed them both to speak the truth.

May God richly bless all you dear folks to keep up the good work. Please remember this worm of the dust when at the throne of grace, when led of the Holy Spirit to do so.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. R. E. McPherson

"OFTEN CANNOT BE EXPLAINED"

Rt. 1, Box 111,
Gustine, Texas 76455

Dear Editors of the Signs.

You will find enclosed a check for which please renew my subscription one year; the balance may be used as a contribution to the Indigent Fund; or in any way you think best.

I have been blessed to read the **Signs** for a number of years, and have many

times been cheered and comforted by the letters from the editors and the other writers. Often to me only one article would be worth more than a lifetime subscription to the paper. It contains that which we have experienced: that can neither be bought or sold; and often cannot be explained.

For the past two or more years I have been able to attend church but a few times because of my age and its many infirmities. So the articles I read in the pages of the *Signs* seem even of more comfort and more value than ever before. It has occurred to me that the writers are possessed of a more or deeper spiritual understanding, or a greater gift of the Holy Spirit in their writings; however, the re-prints of articles written long ago, are both enlightening, comforting, and encouraging. I enjoy reading them over many times.

May the dear Lord continue to bless the writers and editors in the years ahead, as he has in the past, to carry on for many years in like manner as they are now doing; and may I add, I believe He will. If I could but know I am one of the least, I would be satisfied.

To one and all I bid adieu for this time; and may the Holy Spirit ever abide with you as you continue on life's ofttimes rugged way.

Ida Bowers

5840-Court O, C. P.
Birmingham, Alabama

Elder W. D. Griffin,

Dearly Beloved in the Lord;

"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." (Prov. 16:9.)

In our pilgrimage in this life we find this statement brought forcibly to our mind; and it seems to me, since we must concede it's true, that there could never be any comfort in any form of doctrine that embraces the thought that we are master of our own destiny. We must

occupy the place of secondary power, for there is no power but of God, even the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. 13:I); and we are indeed subject to the higher power. This world would say, when our hopes and desires are not fulfilled, that it is some satanic force has intervened against us; but I would rather believe that the hand of the Lord has established his purpose and voided any plans of man to alter in any degree his will.

We wanted so much to be with you over the week-end, and meet with all the brethren where meetings had been arranged, and we made many plans to that end. How fragile we are, and how feeble are our efforts to bring such things about. How many times we must bow to Him, even though disappointing to the flesh. We were blessed so wonderfully, I think, with the short visit we had in our home and in our church here. We learn in these things that man not only fails in devising his way in natural things, but it is also true regarding his abilities to accomplish his own salvation. In our best state we are altogether vanity; and the way that seems right unto man, we find it is the way unto death. O, how helpless we are! how dependent we are on the mercy and grace of God! How wonderful it is that poor sinners have an intercessor, one who feels the infirmities of his brethren, one who knows their shortcomings and lack of knowledge.

Notwithstanding all of this frailness, He has loved his people with such a manner of love that he gave his own life for them, that they be fellow-heirs with him in that eternal inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away. What a Surety God's people have in this, for they rest in the keeping power of God. This rest is in faith, — he that keeps them, gives them the faith. This God-given faith keeps them unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. What a wonderful thing it is to think upon this complete surety, for how forcibly we know that there is not anything as help-

less in this time world, as is the church of Jesus Christ. In her relationship with this world she stands vulnerable before it, for she does not have an earthly defense; she does not possess the food to feed her young. As we see her viewed by wisdom, she does not have any breast. (S. S. 8:8) The question is asked, "What shall we do for our sister when she is spoken for?" She is to be spoken for, we may rest assured. Let us speak of that wisdom that we might find out what is to be done for her. Not one thing will we do for her; for we find that she has breasts like unto towers, and in His eyes she is as one that found favor.

This wisdom is looked upon as prevailing, for it delivered Queen Esther. All foes are brought under subjection; and we hear the words of the king as he intervenes in her behalf, saying, "Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse." (Esther 8:8) Here are the people of God; here is their security; here is their salvation; these are the wonderful things that rejoice the hearts of God's people in all their tribulations here in this life. Thanks be unto God, sin only reigned until death came to us all, but grace will reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

The Lord willing, we will come your way in June when the children get out of school. Our hope is that God will bless us to that end.

Come our way again soon, and let us hear from you.

Our love to both of you,
Claude and Irene Hand

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we

the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3)

This is the season of the year when everyone is talking of brotherly love, and peace on earth and good will to all men. The world says that God's love is to all men everywhere; and that the only thing that is required of them, is that they accept it. This is not the love of God that is set forth in the above scripture; and is not the kind of love that says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

I believe that one of the things that all of God's children have in common, is a heartfelt love for such scriptures as the one above, because their experiences teach them these truths. They may have many and varied experiences as they travel in this life: the Lord leads them in the way that pleases him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

They may have been brought thru heavy trials, sorrows and heartaches; or He may have revealed himself to them in a sudden mysterious revelation of his love, mercy and grace, in a way they themselves can't explain. There is one thing sure, however, it will be in a way and manner that will cause them to realize that it was performed by the sovereign work of God; and not the result of any works performed by the creature. They will begin immediately to search the Scriptures; and they love to hear of the grace and mercy of an all wise, all powerful, omnipotent God, who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

They are made to acknowledge God in all their ways, and will no longer claim to be directing their own steps; or performing the works of God. They realize that they never would have chosen

Christ as their Lord and Saviour since they did not even know that he existed until he made himself known to them. They now feel to know what the writers are speaking of in the scriptures, because the scriptures agree with their own experiences.

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." Or they read, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us;" and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

Their walk, their talk, and their whole life has been transformed within them. It is not visible to the world at large, but it is readily visible to those who have been along the same path. The individual may think that he is doing a pretty good job of hiding it, but this is the lamp that is not set under a bushel. It is seen by those who have been given an eye to see. The individual feels to be one alone at this time, for he desires to be accepted among the beloved; and yet he feels too unworthy to be counted among the children of God. These feel to be getting worse, instead of better. Their sincerest desire is to be kept from doing anything that would bring harm to the church, or to this precious truth, which is now their whole life. Oh, if they could only know the love and longing, reaching out to them from those who have seen the evidence manifested in their careful, fearful walk.

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise;

and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreordination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love one another with the same love where-with they themselves are loved. It causes them to have all things in common, and each to prefer his brother above himself. It causes them to desire to be found at their brethren's feet in humble submission to that bond of love that unites their hearts and minds in prayer to God, for the manifold bles-

sings which they have received from His bountiful hand, and his loving kindness towards them.

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)." The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The scriptures teach that "God is love," and, "We love him because he first loved us." Therefore, God in the riches of his mercy and grace, has given a little of himself to every one of his children; and this is sufficient for time and eternity, assuring all the heirs of promise an everlasting abode with him. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God."

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glows.

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

Herein lies their hope and prayer that this is the love that passeth all natural understanding, and that this is the seal wherewith their hope with Christ in God, is sealed.

May God bless the truth and seal it to his children to their joy and salvation for time and eternity.

Richard H. Campbell,
2761 Cochese Cove.,
Memphis, Tenn.

"I WAS JUDGED IN A FEW MOMENTS"

Rt. 1, Box 45
Bearden, Arkansas

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

My mind has been carried back to the Summer of 1938, and I will try to relate some of the things that took place. I have been impressed to write for many years, but couldn't.

To my great surprise, late in the afternoon I was coming into the back yard of our home, and all at once a voice seemed to speak to me; and I was judged in a few moments. I felt that it came from the Lord of heaven, and with a great force. He did not tell me that my deeds were received; but declared to me that I was going to die and was going to Hell, for my sins had overtaken me. Never before had I realized what I was: my worldly pleasure had come to a close. Those who have experienced this, know that I didn't have one word to say; only to beg for mercy. Christ said unto Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (St. John 3:7)

All that I thought to do, was to go; and I took across the field and went into the woods. If I ever prayed, it took place then. Those who have been there, know what it is. I tell you I didn't help in saving a poor sinner: it was, "Have mercy, O Lord." What else could I have said, for I realized that I was in the hands of a sovereign God, who does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. (Daniel 4:35)

I believe the Lord came and delivered me, for I was condemned. The only thing I could do was to beg the Lord to forgive my sins. "For I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." (Romans 7:9) This is the way we find out what we are: If I am not deceived, I tasted death. Christ said, "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste

death till they see the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:27)

I made many promises, and broke all except one: I would get busy, get married, and live right the best I could. The 15th of January that Winter, I was married to Miss Nuel Chambers. One Sunday afternoon my daddy and one of my brothers were talking on the Bible, and I stood off a few feet and listened. When the conversation was over, I went home; and after supper I got my Bible and began reading. I would read every night, sometimes until twelve or one o'clock. When I finished reading the Bible through, I was condemned; and I knew that all that could do me any good was the mercy of the Lord; and I continued trying to pray.

The third Sunday in August, 1942, Dorsie, one of my sisters, was baptized. After then we went to Pilgrims Rest Church. At the closing of the meeting, they offered an opportunity for members. There came something that filled my poor soul, and I am persuaded it was the Spirit of God; and I was taken into the church. My little hope gets so dim it is almost gone; but I am persuaded that what God does, it shall be forever. The promise I made that was kept, the Lord kept it for me, which gives me a hope that he answered my prayer. “And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” (Matthew 21:22)

The second Sunday in September, 1942, I was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor; where later my dear father and mother were baptized by Elder J. T. Everett. Later doubts and fears seemed to overtake me. One night I dreamed or saw in a vision, that I was knelt by a pit; and my thought was, here is my doom. I was in such great distress, I don't believe I could have stood it very long. But before I could be dumped into the pit, there came a man I believe was my Saviour, who took hold of my arm and pulled me back. The pit vanished and the smoke disappeared. The next morning I awoke with great joy of relief. “I waited patiently for the Lord;

and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay . . .” (Psalms 40:1,2) This is most precious to me, for he takes care of his children night and day. “For he keepeth back his soul from the pit . . .” (Job 33:18) I cannot say that I have been born again: I only live in hope.

One day during the time I was trying to “live right,” the dark clouds of woe and misery were all that I could see. I went across the field seeking rest, and laid down on the ground, and said, Lord here I am. I couldn't hear a sound, and could say no more. We find in the 107th Psalm, “They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.” I searched but could not find; yet I tried with all my might. I hear some say that they are on their way to heaven; but I know that I cannot go myself: I will have to be carried. I was on my way until I was taught differently. But, O, the time when the Lord reached down, as I hope, and carried me into that City I had longed to dwell in; it is precious to me. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” (John 5:25) They will hear, for the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. (Hebrews 4:12)

The mercies of the Lord are most precious when our cup begins to run over, as David said in the 23rd Psalm. The tears flow from my eyes sometimes, when that precious hope is revived; and my cup runneth over. I have a hope that Jesus the head of his Church, his body, died for my sins, . . . who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification.” (Romans 4:25) This is steadfast forever, for a bone of him shall not be broken. “He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.” (Psalm 24:20)

It makes no difference what any may say, think, or do against this little body: it will be for their good. I just have a

little hope that I am one of them. I feel bad to think of the past when I was trying to live right: when I thought things were well with me. I would get mad, beat my mule, run the chickens out of the yard; and my wife asked me to draw a bucket of water, throw a fit too bad to mention. Then I would try to do better, but went right back and did the same things again. I knew that Hell would be my doom. We read in Psalm 107:14, "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands asunder." And we read in John 6:44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Sometime in the elect's life they are taught that they are justly condemned; but then later, in a moment, they are taught that they are saved by grace, and not by works." . . . as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48) They will receive their inheritance — it is a free gift. "He shall choose our inheritance for us . . ." (Psalm 47:4)

When we have supped from the cup, or eaten the crumbs from the Master's table, we know it is a foretaste of heaven here below. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. 2:9-10) The elect shall be taught, and great shall be their peace. They look to the Lord, and him only. We find it is written in John 6:45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God." "A remnant shall be saved." (Romans 9:27) And Christ said in Matthew 24:25, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." So then, the way is fixed, and the time is set, and the place secure.

On the 24th of October, 1963, I was paralyzed with a stroke in my left side. I feel that the Lord had a purpose in it; and he is able to reconcile me to rejoice and be contented. I hope to be thankful. I hope that the brother I read about in

the *Signs* who suffered the stroke, is much better. I can walk a little without a cane.

"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." Dear little ones of the most high God, that is sufficient, for Jesus is coming back as a King. "Then shall he say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) He will carry the blessed into the kingdom, where all heartaches, pains, troubles, sorrows and afflictions shall be no more; to rejoice forevermore.

H. L. Gardner

HYMNS SHOULD ALWAYS EXPRESS TRUTH

Rt. 2,
Pine Hill Nursing Home,
Quitman, La.

Dear Brethren:

That is, I hope to be a brother of the saints, and in the doctrine set forth in the *Signs of the Times*. It is the only doctrine that can save a sinner like me; but sometimes my hope gets so small that I am down in the valley almost without hope.

I love such hymns as, "Amazing Grace," and "How Firm a Foundation." Our prayers and sermons are based on the same principles. The preachers often express their weakness and inability, not feeling able to go forward and preach; but I sometimes feel that for the preachers to express such, is preaching too, for we all feel that way.

I lack less than two months of being eighty-two years of age, so I now write with a pencil. When I read the poetry in the January number, starting, "Lord from the closet in my heart," I felt that I had heard a good sermon. Also, the poetry in the November number, starting, "I am weary of straying," was excellent. A brother and I sang it to a tune in the Lloyd's book.

In 1913 or 1914, I wrote a short piece on the subject of "Deliverance Through Prayer," which was published in the *Signs*. I was traveling the road alone at the time of that prayer, and it seemed that I was praying before I had thought of doing so.

I enclose \$3.00 to renew my subscription. In hope of a better home over there; if so, it will be by free grace alone.

W. A. Chandler

158 E. 17th Street,
Hialeah, Fla. 33010

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Please accept this \$3.00 for another year of the dear *Signs*. I do look forward for each copy, and read its pages with joy and much comfort.

I don't know you in the flesh, but I do feel to know you in the Spirit. We don't hear or read much in these times that comforts or feeds our souls, and how hungry we get sometimes for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

May God see fit to keep the paper coming even to the day of our Saviour's return. Sometimes I find myself yearning for His return. Men's hearts are failing them for the things that are coming to pass. Surely the signs point to his return, and soon. Man seems to have come to his bounds. I would like for you editors to write something on this subject.

God bless you; and pray for me as God gives you utterance.

In hope,
Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS
(Continued from March)

I went on with a disturbed mind
Until I was twenty-two;
At sundry times I was so uneasy
I knew not what to do.

But on my way to work one day,
How changed was my condition!
A flood of tears did fill my eyes,
I hope in deep contrition.

About this time I dreamed a dream,
The import of which was sealed,
But joy and gladness filled my heart
When later it was revealed.

Thinking little about the dream then,
I sought after worldly pleasure,
Which lasted for a season, then
Came anguish in great measure.

Coupled with nervous disorder now,
While the War raged overseas,
My conflict within grew bitter
I went down on my knees.

The piercing thought of being lost,
Of course, overwhelmed me,
But a fit subject for destruction,
I did really feel to be.

Thoughts of self-destruction I had,
I do hesitate to say,
But then I find that even good men
Are tempted this way.

Now for a time I was not exercised;
No tears my eyes bedewed,
And in experience, mine iniquities
Had not yet been subdued.

At age thirty-three I had a dream,
Through which I was revived,
And when I heard the joyful sound,
In tears, I comfort derived

In this dream, I viewed a spring
Of water crystal clear,
And as I did drink of this water
How pure it did appear!

As I stood and did freely drink
At this rockbound spring,
From the depth of my heart I felt
Like praising Zion's King.

I hope the water was typical of
The blood of the Lamb,
A spiritual Rock of which drank
The seed of Abraham.

At age thirty-seven, these words
Came to me in a dream:
"To God and to the Lamb, I'll sing,"
And may I join the theme.

I was returning from the far West
On a fast western train,
And on the following morning,
From singing I could hardly refrain.

I did have such sweet meditations,
While the train sped along,
But owing to my manner of travel,
I could not sing a song.

Providentially, at the age of forty,
To a great city I did go,
Never dreaming that on this visit,
A sudden change I'd know.

I walked the streets of this city,
 Seeking rest and recreation;
 Tired and rebellious I wandered about
 Without the joys of salvation.

I sat down near a thoroughfare,
 With tall buildings surrounded,
 And when I arose to continue on,
 I confess I was astounded.

My departure seemed to be at hand;
 I could not draw my breath,
 Momentarily expecting to drop dead,
 While unfit to meet death.

In the brightness of the noonday sun,
 I proceeded toward Broadway,
 But there was darkness in my soul,
 And I began to pray.

I begged the Lord to let me live,
 Even to be good to me,
 And while death seemed imminent,
 He heard my urgent plea.

(To be Concluded)

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 28 and 29, 1966. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10 A. M.

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

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
 110 Harrison Court
 Huntington, W. Va. 25707
 Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
 1046 Cedarcrest Drive
 Huntington, W. Va. 25705

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
 INDIGENT FUND

(To February 1, 1966)

Mrs. W. J. Johnson, Tex.....	\$1.00
J. B. Blaylock, N. C.....	3.00
Mrs. J. O. Morrow, Tex.....	2.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Va.....	1.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Del.....	2.00
Mrs. Ada Bond, Va.....	9.00
Winfrey Parsons, Va.....	2.00
Mrs. M. D. Merrill, Tex.....	2.00
Mrs. J. O. Scott, N. C.....	3.00
Mrs. Mary L. Messick, Ala.....	1.00
Ida J. Bowers, Tex.....	2.00
Miss Ethel Carter, Va.....	2.00

Danville, Virginia April, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539

Beechwood Lane

Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

PLEASANT WORDS

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God’s love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God’s sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace;

all have a peculiar sweetness which the un-regenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."

According to Proverbs 16:21 — "The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning." Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body; you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: "PEACE be to this house." Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, "Peace be unto this house." Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

Pleasant words are as an HONEY-COMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nuggets of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is — , Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits this honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom, words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee is especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather,

properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church

dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand — : preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is **not** rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is **not** rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of

His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not

harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said **God is love**. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: **Thou shalt love**. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings. AMEN. E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREDESTINATION

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." (Psalm 97:1)

There is much dissension in what is called the religious world, about the amount of government held in the hands of God over the beings and events of this world; and if these contentions were confined to the children of Ashdod and Moab, we would have cause neither for astonishment nor regret; but it is sorrowful indeed to know that many who on other points seem to be sound and experimental, deny the universality of God's providential government.

War has been waged in a multitude of forms against the absolute predesti-

nation of all things. Some have virtually denied the government of God altogether in reference to the conduct and destiny of mankind, by asserting what they call the free agency of men. If men as agents are truly free to act as they please, they cannot be accountable for their actions. Accountability is restriction; and if either men or devils are free, they are subject to no restriction; and if restricted in their course, they are not free agents, but they are bound by the laws and penalties, and by the direct providence of God. God has said that they are restricted. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." Do the advocates of free agency believe what God has said upon this subject? Or do they only mean that in the committing of sin they act voluntarily? If this be their meaning we will not dispute the point, for experience demonstrates the position; but this does not constitute man a free agent: it only makes him, in acting out the deep corruption of his depraved nature, a voluntary actor, so far as he goes in sin; but if unrestrained by the overruling government and providence of God, they would go much farther in crime and wickedness than they do, for they are frequently prevented from acting out their abominable designs by manifest interposition of the government of God: as when the patriarchs would have murdered Joseph, when Saul would have slain David, or when the high priests would have prevented the resurrection of Christ from the dead. If Jezebel had been a free agent, Elijah would not have been translated to heaven in a fiery chariot; and, indeed, no man's life would be one moment secure from the murderous hand of his fellow man.

A mere superficial view of the subject brings convincing evidence that God restrains the wicked actions of men, and that men are not therefore free agents, or actors.

But we have another view to present: we allude to what God has said on the subject. When the Son of God stood be-

fore the bar of Pilate, he was interrogated thus by the conceited Judge, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except if it were given thee from above." (John 19:10,11) Who is prepared to dispute the decision as to the amount of Pilate's free agency in this matter? Like the claims of all other pretending free willers and free agents, he could have no power at all in the matter, of which he claimed to have all power, except it had been given him; and that, too, from above. Neither Herod, Pilate, the men of Israel, nor the Gentiles, could do more or less in the case than what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done. Will any man dare to dispute this position? If so, let him tell what more or what less they had power to do. And here let it not be overlooked or forgotten that He was by the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God, delivered up to be crucified and slain by wicked hands. The death and sufferings of the blessed Saviour were not accidental; thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise again the third day.

Another class of disputers of the divine government, as though quite willing to compromise the crown and sceptre of Jehovah's power with the Arminians, admit that all these things were foreknown of God; but they would make his foreknowledge depend on something short of his own determinate counsel. Of such we demand, what could be foreknown that was not determined? If God foreknew that Christ should suffer and die in the manner, at the time, and by the hands, that he suffered, was it, at the same time that God foreknew it, undetermined whether it should or should not be? If it was determined, and the certain knowledge of God was based on that settled determination, by whom was it determined? If by any other than God himself, then his independence is impaired, and he is dependent on another for his prescience, or foreknowledge.

Before God created the heavens and the earth, he either did certainly know, or he did not certainly know, all events of time, all the actions of wicked men and devils. If he did not certainly know all this, then he was deficient in knowledge. If he did know all beforehand, he either knew it independently, or was dependent on another for his knowledge. To foreknow that which was undetermined, and consequently unsettled, is absurd and ridiculous; and to know from information or from the determination of another, is no less wild and absurd; and a denial of his determinate counsel, or absolute decision, or predestination, is equivalent to a denial of his government; for the government of God is not embraced in his foreknowing simply, but in his determining whether things shall or shall not be. We, as creatures, foreknow that we must die; but in this matter we have no government; our mortality rests not on our decision, but on the decision of him who said, "Dust thou are, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The objections commonly urged against the predestinating government of God over all beings, all worlds, and all events, are seldom attempted to be drawn from the Scriptures. There is nothing in the testimony of the Bible to limit the power, sovereignty or government of God, but everything to sustain it. The opposers of the doctrine are compelled to look elsewhere for argument. "It is fatalism," one says. "It makes God the author of sin," says another. "It conflicts with the volition and free agency of man," says a third. While by far the greater portion put the matter to rest by saying, "I do not believe the doctrine." To meet all these objections, and make the doctrine clear and plain, and palatable and pleasant, to the natural sense and feelings of men, is not by any means our province; but to believe it, confide in it, and rejoice in it with joy unspeakable and full of glory, we trust God has graciously made our privilege.

The frightful images drawn by arch-

opposers of the truth have beyond all doubt alarmed many of the timid saints of God; and the apprehension that the doctrine reflects on the character or perfections of God, very naturally leads them to fear to investigate it; but they do not perceive that on the other hand those who deny it assail the independence and limit (if not deny) the government of God.

With us it is no easy matter to comprehend what they mean by "author of sin." If they mean to charge that the doctrine represents sin as originating in God, and emanating from him to corrupt the human family, or that the Spirit of God moves men to sin, the charge cannot be sustained in truth. If such inference could in truth be drawn from the fact that God has predestinated all things in general, then the positive declarations of God himself that he predestinated the sufferings and death, as well as the resurrection and glory of Christ, would involve the same consequences. If raising up Pharaoh and hardening his heart, to make his power known; his choosing the delusions on enemies, sending a lying spirit to persuade Ahab to go and fall at Ramoth Gilead; and creating the waster to destroy, makes God the author of sin, then his foreknowledge and determinate counsel, delivering Christ to be crucified by wicked hands, can involve nothing less. If the rule be a true and correct one, it will apply in all cases alike. But we deny the theory, and with our Bible in hand confront the whole Arminian world, and boldly assert that God has made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Let cavilers paint all their frightful conceptions of the doctrine that ascribes to God the right of universal rule; that asserts that he works all things after the counsel of his own will; and that he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him and are called according to his purpose; and then let them show the beauties of the doctrine which hinges God's government

on contingencies, that makes his foreknowledge (if indeed they admit that he foreknows all things) depend on something other than his own determinate counsel; let them feast upon the notion that God did not create the wicked for the day of evil, that his hand and counsel did not determine before hand what the wicked Jews and Romans should do in crucifying the Lord of life and glory; that an evil spirit was not sent from him to trouble Saul, nor to be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets; that he does not send strong delusions, that they may believe a lie that they all may be damned, who have pleasure in unrighteousness and believe not the truth; and that he has no absolute control over the events of the world; but be it ours to rejoice that the Lord reigns, and that

"Death and hell can do no more
Than what our Father please."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, November 15, 1847)

(We believe the above by Elder Beebe presents the subject faithfully according to the Scriptures; which we hold to be the only established principle for testing the truth or untruth of any point of doctrine. We are always glad to re-publish such for the confirmation of where we stand and what we believe. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. BERNICE CANADA SUMMERS

Bernice Canada Summers, a sister in hope of eternal life through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, fell asleep in Jesus early Sunday morning, January 2, 1966, at Murry Calloway Hospital, where she was taken several hours before.

Sister Bernice was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David and Georgia Canada, born August 17, 1894, in Henry County, Tennessee. She was married to Mr. A. H. Summers July 24, 1910; and to this union were born two sons, Desmond and Gene Summers. Desmond preceded her in death a few years ago.

Sister Bernice and her husband were baptized into the New Providence Primitive Baptist Church, the third Sunday in June, 1937; where she was a faithful member, ready always to give a reason of her hope, and to aid the church and the Baptists as a whole in any way she could. The church will feel a great loss in her passing, as will the other

Primitive Baptists who visited the Union meetings and Associations of the churches which compose the Soldier Creek Association.

Sister Summers' funeral was preached by Elder R. L. Biggs, of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., and her pastor, Elder Paul Poyner, of Murray. Many comforting words of truth were spoken regarding the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God, and the finished work of the Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord. These truths were the meat and drink of this dear sister. The funeral was held at the Churchill Funeral Parlor at Murray, and the body was laid to rest in the Murray Cemetery; there to await the day when the saints of God will arise in the likeness of their Saviour.

Survivors are her husband, A. H. Summers; her son, Gene; seven grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and two sisters.

Written at the request of her husband.

Effie Bowden

FLOYD W. WILLIAMS

It is in sorrow, but in sweet hope and humble submission, that we as a church, feel to express our deep appreciation for the pleasant association and fellowship that we have enjoyed with our departed brother. Floyd was born December 16, 1919, the oldest son of Louis and Sister Mamie Williams. He died November 5, 1965.

Our brother joined Macedonia Church Saturday before the 1st Sunday in June, 1937, and was baptized the next morning by Elder W. D. Griffin, being the first person that Elder Griffin baptized. He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, and ably defended his belief in the finished work of Christ our Saviour. This was much to the comfort and edification of his brethren. He was liberated to speak in public in 1962. He was so humble and so faithful to attend the church he loved dearly. How much he will be missed, only the Lord knows, as he was assistant moderator of his home church and the Buttahatchie association. His absence will be felt in the church and community, but most of all will it be felt by our sister, Mary, and the children, in the home.

In 1946 he was married to Miss Mary Peoples, who is left to mourn a devoted husband, together with eight children, five boys and three girls. He is also survived by his mother and father, Mr. Louis and Sister Mamie Williams, Rock Island, Ill.; three brothers, Purvey, Ira, and Arnold, of Rock Island, Ill., and two sisters there, Mrs. Ida Newton and Mrs. Nettie Ingvall, and a sister at Aberdeen, Miss., Mrs. Bettie Morris.

While we feel our loss deeply, it is in much

rejoicing that we think upon his eternal gain, because Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also." May God in his goodness and mercy give us reconciliation to his will, knowing that he doeth all things according to his own will and purpose.

Funeral services were held at Pleasant Ridge Church by Elder H. C. Moon and H. R. Prince, the latter being his pastor. The many brethren, sisters and friends attending the services; the many beautiful flowers all attested the high esteem in which our brother was held by all who knew him.

Macedonia Church, now being in conference, does hereby

RESOLVE, That we bow in humble submission to the all abounding providence of God, desiring to say with one of old "that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be the name of the Lord." We desire that our clerk be authorized to make three copies of this resolution; one to be spread on our church book; one copy to his companion and children and one copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done by order of the church while in conference on the 1st Sunday in December, 1965.

Elder Eulie McCool, Moderator
Houston Pitts, Clerk

RUTH WATSON REDMAN

Ruth Watson Redman, of Route 4, Bessemer, Alabama, (formerly of Loganville, Georgia) was born March 19, 1921; and was united in marriage to Ercy Redman, October 19, 1940. To this union was born five children, viz., Russel, Michael, Kenneth, Debe Lynne, and Dale. Sister Redman joined Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, on the 4th Sunday in December, 1944, and, with her husband, was baptized by Elder W. D. Griffin.

Sister Redman was a very devoted member of the church until her death. She was always concerned about the welfare of her home brethren and sisters, as well as keeping an open house for those that came visiting from a distance. She was blessed with a wonderful knowledge of the Scriptures, having a deep understanding seldom known among us in this day. The spiritual atmosphere of their home made it a warm place in which the saints often met for spiritual enjoyment.

Sister Redman is survived by her husband, five children, two grandchildren, and her mother, our precious sister in Christ, Ela (Wilson) Watson; one brother, John Watson; four half brothers: W. D., Harris, Woodrow, and Claude Watson; and one half sister, Mrs.

Berry Lee Bentley. Her children surviving are the above named five.

Our sister left us for that blessed country wherein dwelleth righteousness, on June 27, 1964. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Moon, assisted by Elder Claude Hand. Interment was in Highland Memorial Gardens, Bessemer, Alabama, there to await that glorious morning when the subjugation of death will have been made complete.

(Elder) Claude Hand

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved sister, Sister Ludie Corey Lilley, on June 8, 1965, making her stay upon this earth 89 years, 5 months, and 23 days. Sister Lilley was born December 15, 1875, the daughter of the late Harry and Cindy Griffin Corey.

Our dear sister held membership among the Primitive Baptists for approximately 65 years. She first united with the church at Smithwick Creek, moved her membership to the Jamesville Church in 1914, and was received by letter in our little flock in March, 1933, thus holding membership at Skewarky Church for a period of 32 years. Although due to afflictions our dear sister was unable to attend her meetings regularly in the last several years, it was indeed an inspiration to visit her in her home. She was blessed to bear her afflictions with as much patience as anyone I ever saw. Her conversation in expressing her physical feelings always ended with a manifestation of strong faith and hope, and she never failed to express her gratefulness to her Lord for his mercies and goodness to an unworthy sinner, rejoicing in the fact that life was as well as it was.

The church at Skewarky grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was abiding in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation wrought by the spilling of the blood of his glorious son, Jesus Christ. A salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundations of the world.

Sister Lilley was the widow of the late Joseph M. Lilley who died in 1936. Surviving

are one son, Elmer D. Lilley; a foster son, Wendell Peele; eight grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren; and two brothers, two half-brothers, and one half-sister. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Chapel of Biggs' Funeral Home. Interment was in the Tice Community Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a wonderful evidence of the esteem in which she was held by her many friends.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, *The Old Faith Contender*, *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in June, 1965.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The members composing the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who called from our midst our beloved Sister, Nora Dean Taylor Knox Grimes, on May 27, 1965, making her stay upon this earth 79 years, 9 months, and 7 days. Sister Grimes was born on August 10, 1885, the daughter of the late Nancy Elizabeth Rawls Taylor and James Nathaniel Taylor. She spent most of her life as a resident of Martin County.

Sister Grimes united with the church at Spring Green during her early twenties and held membership with the same until the time of her departure, a period of approximately 55 years. It was indeed a privilege to have known this dear sister and to have had the opportunity to observe the manifestation of God's love within her heart and soul as she was so ably blessed to express in her everyday walk, conversation, and daily activities.

We are grateful that we can say our departed sister was a faithful mother to her children, a faithful grandmother, and a kind, tender and loving friend to all who knew her. And what is most comforting to us, the church at Spring Green, is that she was faithful to her God, her brethren and sisters, and her church insofar as we could be blessed to see and understand from the fruits she bore.

The church at Spring Green grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was rest-

ing in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation; salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

Sister Grimes was first married to Coy D. Knox. There were no children born to this union. Her second marriage was to George David Grimes. To this union were born six children. Surviving are three sons, two daughters, twelve grandchildren, four great grandchildren, three half brothers, and two half sisters. To the family, we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

Her funeral was conducted in the Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church by Elders W. E. Grimes and E. C. Harrison. Interment was in the Spring Green Church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by orders of a conference fourth Saturday in June, 1965.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER O. W. PERKINS

With heavy hearts a large host of Baptists, family and friends gathered at Byrn Funeral Home, to pay last respects to a dear Elder and Brother, O. W. Perkins; whom God saw fit to call home from this walk of life here on earth, so quickly and quietly December 26, 1965; which made his stay here 72 years, 1 month and 22 days.

Elder Perkins joined Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Mayfield, Kentucky, the first Saturday in April, 1917; and he was ordained to the full work of the ministry of the gospel, the first Saturday in February, 1919, at Zion Church. This cause he stood firmly for until the end: always preaching Salvation by Grace; and giving praises to the all wise God. He was still serving as pastor and moderator at Zion, and North Mt. Zion Churches, and moderator of the Soldier Creek Union, when death came.

He is survived by his devoted and faithful wife, Cordie L. McIntosh Perkins, whom he married October 27, 1918. To this union were born two sons: Forrest Perkins, Mayfield, Ky., and Clifton Perkins, Meas, Arizona, who sur-

vive; along with four grandchildren, and one great grandchild. One brother also survives, together with a large group of Christian brothers, sisters and friends.

Services were conducted by Elders Paul Poyner, R. L. Biggs, Hubert Prince, and J. N. Darnell. He was laid to rest in North Mt. Zion Cemetery, to await the coming of Jesus — the one he preached so beautifully. Then may he dwell with Him amid those beautiful hills of Galilee.

Zion Church resolved while in conference, that a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one sent to the family; and a copy recorded in the church book.

Dorothy Fryor, Zion Church Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER E. D. GAFFORD

In the year of our Lord 1922, a young farm boy was called out from the world to be a shepherd, to lead the flock of God's children in the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Association: he led them as God led him and gave him grace. The doctrine of Salvation by the grace of God, and God alone, is what he not only stood for, but is what he lived. He was a living sermon walking around while he was on this earth. The children of the church felt their burdens were lighter when they were in his presence. He, however, was always humble, and esteemed everyone above himself. He not only had the love and admiration of the church people, he was loved by everyone who knew him. The great things I could say about this Elder would fill many books; but he wrote his own biography in the way he lived.

I want to add a personal note about this our beloved Elder and Friend. I knew him all my life. He was the pastor of Sweetwater Church when I joined in 1955, and he baptized me. To know him was an inspiration to a poor sinner like me. He was so wise, and was never in too big a hurry to listen when I needed his advice. I heard him say many times when a child of God passed away, "Our loss is his eternal gain." I feel that that statement is true of him.

May we all join him some day in that Home where there are no more tears or death, but all is peace and love.

A sister, I hope,
Eleanor Dixon

(The above letter was read in conference at one of Brother Gafford's churches. I asked for a copy, and got it; with permission to send it to the *Signs* for publication. I thought it was good about a great man. — C. B. Carter, Troy, Alabama.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1966

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FROM SISTER DAVENPORT

809 Sycamore Street,
Mineola, Texas

Eld. C. B. Britt,
Eldorado, Ark.

Dear Brother and family:

Received your card, which was appreciated so much.

I miss my dear husband in so many ways. If I got confused in anything in the Scriptures, I would ask him, and he would take delight in explaining it to me.

I know that nothing short of the power of God could have wrought a wonderful change in me. There was a time in my life I hated the Primitive Baptist doctrine; and I made it hard on my husband. I can look back now and say, Oh, why was I so hard against such doctrine that is so comforting to me now? I want to tell you, dear brother, how weak I am. We lost a dear daughter by her own hand. We were not at home when it happened, and a neighbor met us in yard and told us what had happened. Before I had time to think, I could not control my mind, and I said, "God was unjust to allow that to happen." But after getting into the house I wanted to fall on my knees and beg forgiveness; which I did.

Dear brother, you asked me to write something of my past life. If you will turn to hymn 384 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, it will describe my life. In July of 1963, I lost the last brother I had; in October the last sister; and in December my husband. You can't realize what I went through with; but I know it was all God's will, and I was content to know that God never does anything wrong, for he is a perfect God.

I read in the Bible, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." But I often wonder if He loves me. He never forgets his children, but I am so negligent of him. When I am in trouble, I call upon him for help. Dear brother, you know what a wonderful voice my husband had for singing; but he got to where he could not sing, and would sit and read and repeat the words of hymn 322 in Lloyd's.

. . . Whenever you feel in your heart to pray, remember me, a poor lonesome sinner.

Mrs. S. C. Davenport

DEDICATED TO
SISTER S. C. DAVENPORT
A "WIDOW INDEED" IN ISRAEL

To she who lonely is and sad,
I would to God I could make glad;
That I could give thee sweet relief,
And joys exchange for your great grief.

Thy loneliness I'd take away
And make thee trouble free and gay:
I would bind up thy broken heart,
And of thy burdens bear a part.

Thy youth again I would restore —
Grant your requests, and even more;
I would turn back the clock of time,
And in your wounds pour oil and wine.

I would restore thy head and stay,
Whom God, of late, did take away,
And let you live your lives again
All free from sorrow, toil and pain.

But He who all things did ordain,
Saw fit to send thee grief and pain;
So Sister rest in His decree,
Since all things worketh good for thee.

Since all your heartaches, toils and pains
Were felt by Him who them ordains,
He left a portion here for thee,
That thou his fellowship should see.

Thy past, o'er which thou dost complain,
Which gives thee sorrow, grief and pain,
In which thou didst the Lord condemn,
Eternally was known to Him.

And for this sin of thine He gave
His only Son thy soul to save:
E'er time began He did decree
That He should thy salvation be.

In weakness thou didst Him arraign,
And of His judgments didst complain;
But when He turned His eyes on thee,
Like Peter, thou wept bitterly.

'Tis thus we learn by sorrows great,
That we, by nature, God do hate;
And He in mercy, lets us see
The depths of our depravity.

Like Job's cruel wife, when evil comes
We God would curse — forget the sums
Of blessings past: how foolish we,
Save for the power of God, would be.

So Sister, o'er the past grieve not,
Since it will be thy happy lot
With Daniel, in the end of days,
Eternally thy God to praise.

(Composed at the request of Sister S. C. Davenport, 809 Sycamore Street, Mineolo, Texas, whose husband, Elder S. C. Davenport, passed away about three years ago. Sister Davenport is an excellent singer, and this is set to long meter, so she writes that she enjoys singing it. If any parts of it suit the case of any widow in Israel, she can sing it to any long meter tune.)

Elder Davenport was a wonderful man, and a gifted minister for many years. He died December 3, 1963. May God comfort Sister Davenport, as well as all the "widows indeed" in Israel, is the prayer of this unworthy sinner, and "Country poet.")

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
El Dorado, Ark. 71730

DESIRES TO GO HOME TO HER FRIENDS

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane, Wash.

Dear Editors:

It is past time for re-newing my subscription, and I am sending money for renewing my mother's subscription, as well as mine.

I received the March *Signs* today, and have already read nearly all of it. The *Signs* is always good, but it seems as though the last three or four issues have been exceptionally good. I especially enjoyed the article by Elder Helms in the December issue, and the poem by C. B. Britt, and the editorial by Elder Wood in the January issue. I have been again reading the New Testament, and have been uplifted by nearly all that I have read.

Whenever I am filled with concern about man and his professed works, as many teach today, then I am blessed to search the Scriptures, and am assured again that man is nothing, and that God is all powerful, and has control of all things.

Pity the poor people in the world who believe in a God who hasn't power enough to save man without man's help: that man has to accept him before He can do anything. I thank God I don't believe in him thus. I know full well that if I am not saved by grace, then I am lost; for, "how to perform that which is good, I find not," and have been made to pray, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we who 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." (Galatians 2:16)

I am made to glory in a God who predestinated all things; a God, who,

“Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” (Isaiah 46:10)

I believe that God has an elect people — chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But there are many false teachers going around trying to save them that are lost, and claiming to be doing God’s work; but in Romans 11:5-7, we read, “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant *according to the election of grace*. And if by grace, then it is no more works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election hath obtained it*, and *the rest were blinded*.”

My uncle, Jack Eckard, passed away on February 19th. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Eckard, about nineteen months. It doesn’t seem possible they are both gone; and yet I know there are far happier now than they were in this life.

Elder Attebery came up from Hermiton, Oregon, and conducted the funeral services. We held meeting that same evening at the home of Sister Blanch Brown, of Chatteroy, Washington. The singing and talk were wonderful indeed.

. . . Well, this has been longer than I intended; but sometimes I desire to “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” And desiring this in Spirit, I seem to fall so short of glorifying God the way he so richly deserves, and the way I would like to be able to. I am made to feel it in my heart, (I hope and believe,) but am not able to express it on paper.

“Now unto him that is able to be exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be

glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20, 21)

With hope in God,
Unworthily,
Caroline Martin

“BUT TO THIS MAN WILL I LOOK”

Rt. 6,
Hopkinsville, Ky.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

My subscription is past due so I enclose check for renewal of one year, the balance to be used as you see best.

I appreciate receiving the *Signs* for it is a great comfort to read the experiences of others, who sometimes seem to be able to give my experience better than I can myself. In the 66th chapter of Isaiah, 2nd verse, we find these words recorded, “. . . *but to this man will I look*.” After this man of God had written sixty-five chapters of instructions to the house of Israel, in regard to the trials of this life, he said in this chapter, in the conclusion of his instructions, “But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”

Though He was poor so far as the possession of natural things were concerned, He was rich in that he was blessed with the fullness of the wisdom of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, so that he could administer a sufficiency of the Spirit to succor every little child that comes to him by the drawing power of the Father; who draws them with the love wherewith he loved them even when they were dead in sins. As I look at myself, as many times I do, as the chief of sinners, I wonder if I am deceived; yet I cannot doubt altogether the little hope I have. Although there is nothing good in me, yet *I look to this man*, and hope that in this fear might be the wisdom of God implanted in this stony heart of

mine. I desire above all things that precious gift that God promised by the mouth of this same prophet, when he declared in 9:6, "Unto us a son is given."

This is a blessed gift indeed, in love and in truth: given to bear the sins and iniquity of His people, the church; for, "the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful." It is good when we are made to look at self; and then given to think upon this wonderful gift, and see the wonderfulness of his power when he opened the eyes of one born blind, opened the deaf ears, caused the lame to walk, and healed all sickness: the one great physician who had power to do all these things according to the Father's will.

I know that in time past my eyes were blind, and my ears deaf to the things pertaining to godliness; for I had no fear, but felt that I was doing God's service. But when I was given to see the wonderfulness of His work who is our Counselor, I was made to fear that I might be left out. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But I must say that I cannot believe that any other than the child of God knows anything of falling, or of fearing. He is brought before the mercy seat of God, and mourns his trespasses; and is given a desire to walk in the steps of the glorified Redeemer. We cannot walk in that perfection, but, if in truth we have been born of the Spirit, we have that desire. When we stray, he hedges up our way with thorns (tribulations) so that we cannot find our way; but in our trials of sorrow and suffering, he leads us in this wilderness of sin, and comforts us to the extent that we never fail to look to him for comfort. The Saviour said, "All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me." He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace: nothing can ever pluck one of them out of his hand.

Please cast a mantle of charity over this.

In a sweet hope,
(Elder) W. Y. Chandler

GOD'S CONTROL OF ALL THINGS

"In whom we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

I understand that we obtained the inheritance through the blood of Christ, in as much as our natural inheritance comes through the natural blood, then it is definite that our spiritual inheritance came through spiritual blood, and this blood was not given according to obedience of the law, nor the act of the creature. It was according to the purpose of God, even in Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will; and I understand He meant all things just as written.

We find this same apostle writing in the book of Romans, saying, and "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." In as much as He worketh all things, He also predestinated all things. Paul writes "God made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth, and determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." I believe that from eternity He determined and appointed their times and peculiar location, properly sifted, and planted them on the face of the earth by way of accomplishing His purpose in their creation. We don't understand that man is justified or innocent in his wicked acts, but in all they fulfill the very purpose of God. Shimei, in cursing David, and throwing stones at his mighty men, was not innocent though God had bidden him to do it. We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure if

God has not the undivided government of the whole in all things; and He has today the full control. Had He not the same control yesterday and for ever, and if He does not have control today, is there any certainty He will have tomorrow or at any time? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His will, then we must admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity; but to deny His universal control of all things, we would have to deny His eternal power and God-head.

We will submit these remarks to the consideration of our brethren and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the Scripture, and received only so far as they are sustained by the Word of God.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

Elder John Wilder
Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

(The above was written as a Circular Letter, and sent to us recently. It expresses what the Scriptures teach on the subject.—J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE OF C. W. VASS

(Concluded)

I was now subdued and humbled,
And I sat down to rest;
The terrible ordeal was now over,
And I was not distressed.

But impressed to go to the church,
Trusting in Jesus' blood alone,
His precious blood for sinners shed,
Which for their sins did atone.

After my experience in the great city,
I read a sermon on justification,
And on the Sunday I read the same,
I had a righteous revelation.

I saw that the robe of righteousness,
Wrought by the Saviour dear,
Was the obedience of the Holy One,
Which He rendered here.

This robe was from eternity designed
All of the saints to cover,
And He who came to clothe His bride,
Did from everlasting love her.

Now a dream was brought to mind,
In which I was covered
With a typical robe by the Saviour,
As about Him I hovered.

He solemnly dipped the vesture,
Ere He round me it placed;
O blessed hope that graciously I
Was in His love embraced!

The meaning of my dream was confirmed
In reading church history;
Its significance now seemed so clear
As to leave no mystery.

For the coats of skins in Holy Writ,
Placed around Adam and Eve,
Figured the robe of righteousness,
The robe that Christ did weave.

That memorable Sunday, a day of rest,
This is how I really behaved:
I walked the floor with tearful eyes,
And happily said, "I'm saved!"

Many years before I wished that I
Could say these very words,
When I did feel condemned for sin,
Envyng the innocent birds.

But now heavenly and divine things
Engaged my changed mind;
In hearing, reading, and meditating
Much comfort I did find.

I felt to know a Saviour's love,
And be with Him in union;
There's nothing sweeter here below
Than with Him communion.

He is the Beloved and my hope;
I love His very name;
How great to feel His presence
And joy a sweet frame!

At forty-one, I went to the church,
And my experience told,
But was not in the frame desired,
When added to the fold.

Now when I was buried in baptism,
I experienced sweet relief;
I could smile in good conscience,
And gone was mine unbelief.

I went on my way quietly rejoicing,
My doubts and fears removed,
And all of this gave me to believe
That my baptism was approved.

But I still have profane thoughts;
I can't control my mind;
Like in the experience of others,
A warfare within I find.

But according to the Scriptures,
 Christ accomplished our warfare;
 O may I appear with Him in glory,
 And a crown of righteousness wear.

One night after I joined the church,
 Sitting with my hymnal in hand,
 I wondered if my sins were forgiven,
 Whether forgiven I did stand.

I desired, if my sins were forgiven,
 That I might open at a song
 Relating to the forgiveness of sin,
 For now I might be wrong.

Now the following verse of a song
 Was first to greet my eyes,
 When I immediately opened the book,
 And this verse I did prize:

"Blessed with the pardon of her sin,
 My soul beneath thy shade would lie,
 And sing the love that took me in,
 While others sank in sin to die."*

I felt this did not occur by chance,
 And I retired with solid joy,
 Trusting that it was a foretaste of
 Unending bliss without alloy.

My sorrows, joys, and hope of heaven,
 In verse, I will now review,
 And may my hope ripen into fruition,
 When I bid this world adieu.

(*No. 924 Gadsby's Hymns)

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Mill Branch Church, which is located near Sharpsburg, Nash County, North Carolina, about three miles west of 301.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk
 Fremont, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
 INDIGENT FUND

(To March 1, 1966)

Summers Family, Ky.....	\$ 2.00
Bernice P. Dailey, Va.....	1.00
A Sister in Hope, Md.....	10.00
Mrs. Verda Machesney, Kan.....	5.00
Otto Brittain, Tex.....	5.00
Mrs. V. C. Farley, Tex.....	2.00
Miss Mary Hellings, N. J.....	2.00

A. C. Carter, Ala.....	1.00
Mrs. Ray Hawlings, Va.....	5.00
W. H. Thomas, Calif.....	3.00
Richard H. Campbell, Tenn.....	5.00
Miss Helen Jones, Calif.....	15.00
Mrs. Pearl Martin, W. Va.....	1.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.....	10.00
Mrs. Ora Cockran, Calif.....	2.00
M. J. Bird, W. Va.....	1.00
M. S. Thomas, Va.....	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. Burt H. Knox, Wash.....	5.00
A Sister, N. Y.....	10.00
Mrs. Asa Wells, Va.....	1.00
J. A. Owen, Sr., Ala.....	2.00
Mabel Schliesmayer, Wash.....	3.00
L. B. Hill, N. C.....	2.00
Mrs. J. B. Collier, Tenn.....	2.00
H. L. Collier, Tenn.....	2.00
Lois E. Cloud, Nebr.....	5.00
Mrs. Oscar Lilliard, N. C.....	5.00
Mrs. H. M. Bennett, Md.....	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Joe MacKenzie, Can.....	4.00
Mrs. Pearl Lee, Tex.....	1.00

Danville, Virginia **May, 1966**

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler
 R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
 Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood
 P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
 39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware
 Elder E. J. Lambert
 306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas
 Elder George Ruston
 Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with Tarboro Church, Tarboro, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1966. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder I. S. Connor, alternate.

We cordially invite the brethren and friends to come and worship with us.

Elden B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

EDITORIAL

AT OUR WIT'S END
(Psalms 107:27)

How often have you heard the expression, "He is living by his wits"? Have you heard of people that profess to be children of God, even Old School Baptists, that claim that they are living by their wits? If you hear of these, you may know that they have not made this trip down to sea. These people had their wits when they went down to sea. If they had been left alone they would have made a lovely voyage, and when they returned from it, they would have praised their skill as a pilot, and you would have never quit hearing about the prize ship that they were sailing.

Once upon a time there was a family of twelve brethren. They were not harmonious with one another. Ten of the brethren were jealous of their younger brother. They lived by their wits. At first they schemed together to slay their brother, and thus rid themselves of the dismal prospect of ever having to pay obeisance to him; but then it seemed profitable to sell him instead. However, they had to be witty about it because they knew that there had to be a falsehood told so as to have a plausible (witty) excuse for his disappearance. Their wits suggested a wild beast devouring the lad.

The fruits of their wit went along fine for a long time. There is not any doubt (when we read the history, as given by their father) about them

gloating from time to time about how well their wits had payed off. As time has a way of doing, it brought about events that their wits were not a match for. As it is in every case, so it was in this case, that a lesson had to be taught these brethren that they could not live by their wits. If there are among my readers any that profess the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they think that they are living the life of a child of God by their wits, I desire to warn you, (Colossians 1:28), that the time will come when you will come to your wit's end. Seemingly, the growing of a corn (wheat) crop would have little to do with them losing their wits, or coming to their wit's end. How little, how insignificant, are some of the things that the Lord has used to bring us to the end of our strength. Crop failure after crop failure came their way. The bread coffers all got bare. The need for bread became greater. Their wits did not avail anything. The hunger cravings got more intense. They could not whet themselves to face the man in Egypt, but hunger forced them to go. If wits had served them, as they thought that they had served them in the beginning, they would not have gone. They were at their wit's end.

In the long ago the Lord had a servant. As to how faithful he had been previous to this experience, we do not know. We do know that he was a called prophet to prophesy to Israel; to go forth in the kingdom proclaiming to a nation that had set in darkness, that One drew near who would deliver them. No one takes this honor unto himself save he that was called of God, as was Aaron. (Hebrews 5:4) His wits came to the forefront, and he put them into use. The command of God to go to Nineveh fell on rebellious ears, and on a man that had money. He paid his fare for another city. His wits were taking right nice care of him. But, as it is with every called man of God, there were things that his wits could not

control. A storm came up. It did not come by chance. The Lord alone has the wind in his fists (Proverbs 30:4), and it is the Lord that brings and controls the wind. (Psalms 107:25; 147:18; 148:8) This was God's work in sending out this great wind, and it began a series of events that caused the prophet to come to his wit's end.

It is useless for anyone to tell us what ought to have been; also, it is useless to tell us what they would have done. I know what they would have done. When they came to their wit's end, as he came to his, and as all men will come when they set themselves in array against the Almighty and Holy One of Israel, they will do the best they can. Standing on the side lines and telling what a poor sinner ought to do; or telling, after a thing is over, what you would have done; or sitting in smug complacency and criticizing a sinner for what he did do, shows as little understanding of the nature of men as anything that could be done or said. Too, it shows as little mercy as a judge can show.

If my readers have ever one time come to the end of their wits, they will appreciate what happened to Jonah. I challenge any man to say that he could have done better under the same circumstances. O suppose someone would say, "Well, he got what was coming to him." Now let us turn that statement back. Have you always obeyed? Suppose that you get what is coming to you? At least this time, Jonah disobeyed. But God was with him. Do you mean to say that God was with him? O yes, I mean to say that again and again. Talk to me about saving ourselves; it is not logical, to say nothing about what is scriptural, to talk about a man saving himself when he is already lost as far as his wits are concerned. I would like to see the man's face that would say he could have saved himself out of this predicament. What is the result? God had gone before and prepared the great fish, and

He either moved it to the right place, or it happened by chance to be at the right place. I pity the man that says it happened by chance to be right where the ship crew threw Jonah overboard. Down into the sea he went. Where were his wits? Could he have saved himself? Could he have escaped his sea prison? At the end of his wits, he attributed his present salvation to the Lord. At any time we do not do that, we are still in possession of our wits; and being thus rich, salvation is still in our hands.

I look yonder across the vista of the ages at a nation that has come to the end of their wits. Stop me if you have only heard this. If you have experienced it, it will be as new as it was in the beginning. People that have not seen this, and experienced this, do not know anything about coming to the end of their wits. If this is your condition, you will make sport of the people that all the time talk about the great deliverance at the Red Sea. To go on with this nation: They represent us today; that is, they do if we have come to the end of our wits. They are at the pass down to the sea. Behind them is the Pharaonic army. The mountain is on each side of them. What would you do? Do you think that you could have managed this set of circumstances and have gotten to the other side? Do you think, yea, would you dare say, that your wits would have pulled you through this predicament? And no sooner than you say it, you know better.

What did take place? Who did rescue them? What part, if any, did their wits play in the rescue? Isn't it the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that they had come to the end of their wits? Who acted? Who made the first move? As far as the Israelites doing something, what could they do? What did they do? They came to the place that DEATH was staring them in the face. They came to the end of their strength, and they would have

all perished had it not been for the Lord.

In the long ago, there was a man that had plenty of wits about him. He had made history because he had not a problem that he had not been able to solve. This was an envious record. The fame of this man had spread among those that had lost their wits. On a certain occasion he was about to spread havoc among those that had lost their wits. His wits were so active that he was going to put on a great display this time. His success had spread far, but he was not yet satisfied about the name that he had built for himself. He went to the authorities and got their blessing on what he was doing. His wits were active and watching for new glory and new conquests. Let us travel with him. As he had been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church so long, it is not to be wondered that as he travelled, he was still doing that. He was still in command of all his wits, and was certainly going to Damascus to further his conquest of the church of Jesus Christ. If a thing happens suddenly, but few people have the ability to be prepared for it and to withstand the fury of that first attack. As he journeyed, he suddenly lost his wits; he suddenly came to the end of his knowledge and ability. What then did he do? Since the power that was in the voice and the lights brought him to earth, he did not do anything. He fell. His wits were gone; he had come to the end of doing that which he pleased.

From that moment forward he became a beggar, living on the bounties of Him that brought him to the earth. From that day until the day he died, he did not live by his wits. He lived by the grace of God. From that day forward he could not perform that which he desired. That which he desired to leave off, he found himself doing it. Before he lost his wits he led a happy, joyous life, going where he pleased, when he pleased, regardless of

whose blood he shed, who he caused to blaspheme, what church he laid waste. After he lost his wits, he lived by the given faith of the Son of God; his laborings were not the work of one that lived by his wits, but they were by the grace of God. Before he came to the end of his wits, he caused much sorrow among the saints of God because he only had the mind to persecute, and did not have any hindering him in it. After he came to the end of his wits, he saw another law in his members warring against his mind and bringing him into captivity. After the losing of his wits, he was led captive, and the nature that had lived by its wits became in bondage and servitude to the stronger that had overpowered him. After losing his wits, there was a warfare set up within him, and he was not able to do as he had before — he could no longer live by his wits.

My father had to span a continent in order to meet my mother. I do not know of any other way that I could have been. Do you? If so, your telling me about it would make interesting reading, although I would not believe a word of what you said. I did not come into the natural world by my wits. Did you? At just past the age of twenty my world came to an end. Sometimes I fear to say what brought it to an end; at other times I am fearless in saying that it was the work of God. This I do say, In all of these past forty-one years, things have never been like they were before that spectacular time in December, 1923. I can say of a truth that I thought that I was master of all that I surveyed. My destiny was in my hands. I am sure that I thought that, and believed that as much as Saul of Tarsus did. (Romans 7:10) At the outset I did not think too much about religion, and yet I had not calculated outside its domain. I first intended getting a place in the world, and *after that* a place in religion. I think that I was a good example of those that go

down to sea to set sail in ships of our own design and workmanship. Nothing common or little would get any attention from me. (Acts 10:14) I was rocked in the proverbial Old Baptist cradle, but I am sure that there has never been one brought from the rank-est Arminian cradle that knew as little about what Old Baptists believed, as I did. I could have built a world as easy as I could have told that.

This December, 1923, was the coldest and bleakest time that I have ever passed through. I lost all sense of direction; I lost all of the ambitions that I had put so much stock in; I lost all of the ability to think, much less do, those things that had been my life line, for I assure you that to live was to see these things realized. The things that had been so important to me that I thought I knew something about, were removed from me as the ruling passion of my life, but the power that I hope was ending my wits seemed to teach me that I knew less than nothing about it.

The only thing that I knew to do was cry and beg. This crying and begging was not a part of the life that I had formerly lived, for in that life I did not cry on anybody's shoulder. I had gone out and got what I wanted, or I had consigned what I could not get as being sour grapes and not worthy of my talents. The reason that I cried was because I was at my wit's end. I could not do anything; I could not reason out what to do. I had lost what I once had, and had not been given anything new. Do you know what I am saying? I came to my wit's end, but I did not gain new wits. The only thing that I had was lost, and I was lost with it. One wave would toss me fro; another wave would toss me to. This tossing wore me out.

It is my hope that I, too, was delivered across the Red Sea; that my wits came to an end, but that God delivered me in birth. I suppose that this is what people call eternal salvation. I have read about it and the more

I read about eternal salvation being of God but time salvation being by works, the more disgusted I become. I travelled with the children from that great deliverance at the Red Sea. O the happiness we knew! O the joy and freedom from want and sin! We sang the song of Moses and the children of Israel. (Exodus 15) We expected to have flowery beds of ease to heaven's open door. How soon we latched hold on our crucified wits. The first thing that we knew there was Marah. Three days in the wilderness and then Marah. Will our resurrected wits overcome this? Will conditional time salvation suffice here? No, once more we come to the end of our wits. It was God that supplied the drink. Three days from the Red Sea, and conditional time salvation failed. They were well watered for a number of days by the God of all grace. Then they begin to travel again. This time it was food instead of water. This is somewhere about forty-five days from eternal salvation, but twice already their wits have failed them. Salvation by the acts (wits) of the creature did not give them water and it did not give them food. (Exodus 16)

I look back and I see Isaiah and Jeremiah prepared for the service of God, (not by their wits, but) by the grace and power and mercy of God; I see Samuel choosing David as king, (not because of his wits, but) because it was God's direct command; I see all of the deliverances of Peter, and I am amazed that any could ever say that he delivered himself by his wits; I see Paul and Silas delivered from the jail; from the Jews by a basket; from the shipwreck; from every conceivable enemy, and all of these deliverances, (not by his wits, but) by the providential power of God. Then as Paul goes forward in the kingdom he tells us that we walk, (not by our wits, but) by the faith given us. So much does the scriptures teach this, so much is my experience, (if I walk at all), that I feel

to say boldly that there is not a man living that can produce a conditional faith in the Bible. Then he further tells us that, "As you have received him, so walk ye in him." This would say, if you have received him by your wits, then walk according to your wits. Too, it would say, If you have received him by the grace of God, then walk in him by the grace of God. Now if it does not mean that, what does it mean? If those that live by their wits can tell us, I, for one, am all ears to hear it. Then as a capstone to his Christian experience he tells us, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace was not bestowed upon me in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Cor. 15:10) This kind of grace is sufficient; this kind of grace saves; this kind of grace will take care when we have all come to our wit's end.

W. D. G.

EDITORIAL

THE VISION OF THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Sometime ago we received a request from Sister J. C. Boyd, of Texas, to write on the above subject; but feeling to know so little about it, we dismissed the thought of complying. Yet the subject kept presenting itself until we tried to speak concerning it; and it has continued with us, until we now try to write some of our impressions.

No doubt we have all read and talked about Ezekiel's visions and prophecies, but we have realized that we need the Spirit to open them up to us, and give us understanding; and withal to make a personal application of the subject before us in our experience, else it will not seem of much importance to us.

The text reads: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which

was full of bones, and cause me to pass them round about: and, behold there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

"Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

"So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

"Then he said unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

"And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken

it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

This is quite a lengthy quotation, but it is all contained in the vision which was given Ezekiel. There can be no question as to whom the vision pertained, since the Lord said, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts."

Under the guidance of the Spirit, we will find wonderful things portrayed here: First, the terrible condition Israel was in as a nation; and second, the mercy and long-suffering that the Lord had towards them, in reviving them and bringing them out of captivity back into their own land. And then, see at least some of the spiritual meaning as it applies to the Lord's people.

Ezekiel was a priest; and also a prophet, since he was commanded to prophesy upon the dry bones, and say unto them, "Hear ye the word of the Lord." If the Lord does not speak to us directly in our hearts, or through one of his prophets, to hear His word, the things we hear, believe, or practice will be vain and foolish. It is so evident that there are many ill-considered and unwarranted things practiced in the name of the Lord — things which have no sanction from the Lord, which neither he nor his Apostles taught; and yet which have high priority among multitudes of people: simply because they seem right to them.

Thus, it is important to, "Hear the word of the Lord." It matters not how much other things may be loved, or seem right, or how much they may satisfy those who practice them, if they have not a "Thus saith the Lord," they are wrong, and it is wrong to practice them in the attempt to worship God. They are wrong, because they come from a source other than the Lord. It is therefore obvious that they come from the same one that beguiled Eve, when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." She did not hear the word of the Lord, but rather what the serpent said; and

we all know and feel the result in ourselves today.

We cannot but believe that all the contrary things practiced in the name of Christian worship, come from the same source. It cannot but be so — there is but one source of right, and one source of wrong. Is the Bible God's revelation to us of his will and purpose? was it given by inspiration, "And is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Then we too should cry, "Hear the word of the Lord."

It cannot be "just as well" for men to feel that their way is as good as any; or that the most important thing is to be sincere and faithful in what we do. God is not mocked: his doctrine is not subject to substitution. Those who think so will be brought to judgment as those who know not the true and living God. The history of God's own people, Israel, testifies that God will not be mocked.

How simple is the true worship of God. After Christ fulfilled all things that were written of him — all things that the types displayed of his office and work, the worship by his people is in spirit and in truth. We remember that the Apostle was concerned on an occasion lest the brethren be removed from the "simplicity that is in Christ;" that their minds should be corrupted from this simplicity by some means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety. Surely multitudes of men are turned away; nay, I should not use the expression turned away, for multitudes have never known the truth as it is in Jesus; so they believe and practice things the Lord has not taught.

But, to the text. First, we must be aware of the condition of Israel, which led to the vision which God gave Ezekiel. God has always demanded obedience to his commandments; but Israel continually broke them. What the Lord said unto Solomon in 1st Kings 9:6-9, will establish the reason for Israel be-

ing captive in Babylon: "But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: then I will cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people."

For disobeying the letter and the spirit of the above, Israel was now suffering the penalty, and were in such condition in their manifest relation to the Lord, they are described as a valley of dry bones; very dry, with bones separated and without life.

This was shown Ezekiel in this vision; and he was shown much more. He was among the captives in a strange land, yet was a priest and prophet of the Lord. He testified to the many things he was shown, and which are related in the book of Ezekiel. All will agree that there are many things "hard to be understood," for there are figures of speech used, and typical things presented, which require more than just natural imagination to understand. Ezekiel saw not only the dead and dry state of Israel, but he saw also their deliverance.

Ezekiel was shown first of all a grim sight, a valley full of bones. He had a good look at them in the open valley, since he was caused to pass by them round about; they were very dry, separated and scattered. Then the Lord said to him, "Son of man, can these bones live?" How unlikely would one say, Yes, these bones can live. The answer was, "O Lord God, thou knowest." (It seems that he was saying, Lord, thou canst, if thou wilt.) Then the Lord told him to prophesy upon the bones, and say unto them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord, . . . Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring

flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

What a sight it was when he prophesied! there was a noise, and a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone; and sinews and flesh came upon them; but there was no breath in them. Then Ezekiel was told to prophesy unto the wind . . . Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live; . . . and the breath came unto them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

It is to be remembered that this is the whole house of Israel in captivity, banished from their homeland; but Ezekiel saw what the Lord was about to do for them. "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I will place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

When all the things which were shown Ezekiel were fully and actually accomplished, it was a quickening, and restoring of Israel to their rightful home again. The whole narration shows that it was purely the mercy of God alone which brought them from their figurative graves, and not for some redeeming features which they themselves possessed. It has been thus in all the dealings of the Lord with *his people*. It is a mercy that He does not deal with them as they often deal with each other. If he had dealt with Adam and Eve in the morning of time, as they deserved, would He not have just turned them loose, so to speak, and left them without promise or hope of redemption? But what he did was to

give them the promise of the seed of the woman; and what her seed should do.

The Lord has always been merciful and long-suffering to *his people*, yet chastising them for their disobedience. Have you thought what long-suffering means in this sense? that, though he executes his judgments upon his people, instead of renouncing them entirely, he grants them repentance, and shows mercy. While, on the other hand, his people have characteristically forgotten him and his mercies, and turned away from him. Is this not experimental with us? But does not the mercy and long-suffering of the Lord stand out as the most prominent feature in all his dealings with us. How greatly he loves his people! Yet it is not to be forgotten that in thus dealing with them, he does it in a way that *they are not to forget that he is the Lord*: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

We have touched upon the terrible condition that Israel was in, and upon the merciful dealing of the Lord with them, now let us think about the experimental fulfillment that is given the Lord's people. The things we have been considering, as wonderful as they are, will seem as long past and empty narrations, if all we perceive in them is the mere fact that the Lord did them for Israel centuries ago. But they have an application in every spiritual Israelite, and become a present mercy to each of them.

The Apostle Paul, in the second chapter of Ephesians, presents the case of each of them, when he wrote, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince

of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: . . . and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." etc.

Everyone who has experienced the beginning of a good work in himself, realizes that it began when he was dead in sins; and that he was first made aware of his condition when there was a quickening to the realization of it, by a mighty power that convicted him, and laid him low. It could not be otherwise, for there is nothing in the dead, either spiritual or naturally, that can ever bring them to life. So, it must be, "*You hath He quickened, who were dead.*" This is the way all the children of God are brought, though they are by nature the children of wrath, as are all others. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) And Isaiah wrote of the Lord, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

Being dead in trespasses and sins, is comparable to the **very dry bones** which Ezekiel saw. No one is more able to bring himself to life than those bones were. Yet, as Ezekiel's vision pertained to the whole house of Israel, so does the quickening pertain to the full number of those of whom it is written, ". . . 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." For God has so arranged for

their being chosen by him, with his Son to redeem them, and his Spirit to call them, that, though dead and unworthy as far as they themselves are concerned, they have all the power of God arrayed for them; and, "If God be for us, who can be against us," wrote the Apostle to the Romans.

We close by making the following observations of what we believe to be some of the spiritual applications of the vision:

It is noted that the dry bones constituted the whole house of Israel, a great many of them; and there were no foreign bones among them. This sets forth the election of grace.

These slain and the very dry bones set forth the condition of all the children of God in their nature, they being dead and helpless in themselves.

To hear the word of the Lord, sets forth the power and authority of the Lord to do his will, and that nothing else has any authority.

The noise and shaking speaks of the effect of the Spirit of God in his people when he speaks in them, causing great and marvelous things to take place with them.

The breathing upon the slain, speaks of the Lord's people being born of the Spirit of God; a necessity in the established order of God's dealing with them.

The coming out of their graves speaks of the deliverance of all the Lord's people from the bondage of corruption; a deliverance from great darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God.

The being placed in their own land speaks of their receiving all those things that God has prepared for them, from being sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance, to their adoption, which is the redemption of their bodies.

All these things open up a tremendous view, even as seen through a glass darkly, of the wonderful things that God has prepared for them that love him. May he give us grace to run with patience the race that is set before us,

and to ever look unto him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

STATEMENT TO OUR READERS

In the January issue of the *Signs* we published the original Prospectus upon which the *Signs of the Times* was founded. This has been re-published several times through the years, and was included again that all may know that the *Signs* continues upon the same principles.

Following this statement we are re-publishing the last article written by Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the *Signs*, on the subject of ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS. This was first published October 1, 1880 — eighty-six years ago; and we stand today upon the same principles set forth in this article. The subject is fully covered and clearly presented; and we fully endorse the article.

Hassell's History was published by Elder G. Beebe's sons, and at their request this article was inserted in the History; beginning on page 943. Elder Sylvester Hassell, author and compiler of Hassell's History, had this to say about the article: "These views are, in general, substantially the same as those expressed in the Third Chapter of the Old Philadelphia and London Confessions of Faith." (See pages 670 and 671 of the History.)

EDITORS

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing — published in the *Signs* October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definite-

ly identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author of sin*. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

"The vain race of flesh and blood
Contend with their Creator, God;
When mortal man presumes to be
More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity*, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government

with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." — Eph. i. 11. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." — Isa. xlvi. 10.

In this connection he says, "I am God, and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." — Rev. iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." — Romans xi. 33-36.

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any other than his own will to dictate what, how, or for what purpose anything should be

created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." — Rom. ix. 21-23. Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, "Hell is naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" — Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the

crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and "given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment," (Prov. viii. 29,) and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

"Pains and deaths around us fly —
Till he bids us we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of heaven sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, or of his actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest in-

sect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." — Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God

are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," (Romans viii 29); but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God. Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." — Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against thy holy child of 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. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated.

Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by his determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is his absolute government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." — Rom. iii. 10-12. We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his works, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain his throne.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confess'd
That what he does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should

fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, "God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharoah and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharoah until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharoah and his host in the Red Sea. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" — Romans ix. 17-22.

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice

or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, and know that he is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined

in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe — October 1, 1880.)

OBITUARIES IN MEMORY OF BRUCE MCINTOSH

"A devotee of the Old School Baptist faith, Mr. McIntosh seldom missed an opportunity to be in his church," reported a Leesburg, Virginia, paper in announcing the death of Mr. Bruce McIntosh. This correctly expressed his devotion to the cause he loved, and his conviction concerning the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The brethren and friends of the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting were greatly saddened at the passing of Mr. McIntosh at his home in Leesburg, Virginia, for they had lost a friend and fellow-worshipper whom they had greeted and loved for many years. Nor were these the only ones who mourned his death, for he stood as high in the esteem of his fellow citizens as a man could be held.

Mr. McIntosh was born at Lovettsville, Loudoun County, Virginia, February 11, 1874; and died January 12, 1966: making his age almost ninety-two years. He was the son of James Logan and Mary Elizabeth Wenner McIntosh, of families deeprooted in Loudoun County. On October 20, 1897, he was united in marriage to Daisey Pleasant Titus; and to this union one son and one daughter were born: James Logan McIntosh and Mrs. Hannah Brown di Zeriga, both of Leesburg. His wife, Sister McIntosh, died in 1958. Surviving are his son and daughter, two grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Mr. McIntosh was long identified with the business affairs of his community. He was actively associated with the Peoples National Bank of Leesburg for seventy years, and its president for thirty-seven years. He retired two years before his death, but was re-elected president emeritus the day before his passing.

There was not a more faithful member of

the congregations of the churches within his reach; and he was always ready to help in any manner he could in matters pertaining to the churches. He will long be remembered for his quiet, unassuming manner in which his presence was always felt at the meetings; and for his earnestness and depth in speaking of his convictions in the things pertaining to the gospel of Christ. It was a great pleasure to visit in his home, and to enjoy the gracious hospitality of his family; and to converse with them on subjects of mutual interest.

Funeral services were held at his home in Leesburg, conducted by the writer, where many friends were gathered to manifest their high regard for their neighbor and friend; to express their sympathy for those immediately bereaved; to pay their last tributes of respect and love; and to give the last tender attentions he could receive in this world. Their many beautiful flowers seemed to quietly whisper what their grieved hearts could not express. Interment was in the family plot in Union Cemetery in Leesburg: there to await the returning of his Saviour, and the fullness of his inheritance in the redemption of the purchased possession of Christ.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to each one who mourns the death of this loved one.

John D. Wood

ELDER JOHN W. SHIPMAN
SISTER MAY (FREEMAN) SHIPMAN

Sister Shipman was born in Arkansas April 20, 1891, and passed away June 27, 1965. She was survived by her husband for a few months, when the dear Lord in mercy called him from the toils and sorrows of this world. I shall make this a joint notice of Sister May and Elder John W. Shipman.

Their children who survive are: Mrs. Melvin Jeffcoat, Lamesa, Texas; Mrs. Oscar Jeffcoat, Cisco, Texas; Roy L. Shipman, Odessa, Texas; J. E. Shipman, Crystal City, Texas; David Shipman, Kermit, Texas; Oren L. Shipman and Elder Gerald Shipman, San Antonio, Texas; and Vestal Shipman, Waynesboro, Tenn. One son, Lawrence, passed away a few years ago; and two sons died in infancy. Surviving also are thirty-five grandchildren, and twenty-seven great grandchildren.

Brother Shipman was born near Dallas, Texas, November 8, 1884, and passed away December 23, 1965. He and his wife united with County Line Church, in Scurry County, Texas, Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1911, and were baptized by Elder J. A. Bean at their May meeting. Elder Shipman was ordained to the full work of the gospel

ministry Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1915. So it was not long before he was about his Father's business, going to all the churches he could, and declaring the whole counsel of God. Sister May was a helpmate indeed to him, helping in every way she could; and raised a big family under, what is to us now, pioneer conditions on the Texas Plains. Their delight was in the law of the Lord, loving the brethren and sisters; and laboring for their comfort and edification, and for peace and unity among the churches.

Written by one who loved them for the Lord's sake, I hope.

Lela Culpepper

MISS MINNIE HOPKINS

Miss Minnie Hopkins was born May 24, 1888, and departed this life February 8, 1965, making her stay on earth nearly seventy-seven years. She received a good hope in early life, and was received into the fellowship of Charity Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, Virginia, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1947; and was baptized the following Sunday by her pastor, the late Elder J. G. L. Hash.

Sister Minnie was afflicted all of her life; but she bore her afflictions with patience. She loved the church with all her heart, and looked forward from one meeting to the next, hoping to be able to go. She filled her seat as often as her health would permit. She enjoyed the preaching and singing. One of her favorite hymns was, "When I can read my title clear," with the chorus, "I want to live a Christian here." Her life, through her afflictions, will be an outstanding monument to her memory.

She made her home, in her later years, with her sister, Bedie Craddock, who did everything she could for her comfort; and to make life as pleasant as possible for her. All was done that kind and skillful hands could do; and when the time came for her passing, she seemed to just fall asleep. "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

Written in behalf of the church.

Elder R. A. May, Moderator
Myrtle T. Wood, Clerk

JAMES JEFFERSON GRIFFITH

Deacon James J. Griffith was born in Raleigh County, W. Va., February 20, 1876, and departed this life November 15, 1965; making his stay on earth nearly ninety years.

The Lord blessed Brother Griffith with a sweet hope early in life, and he, together with

his wife, were received into the fellowship of the church at Charity, Patrick County, Va., in the Smith River Association, on April 9, 1921. He was soon thereafter ordained a deacon, and served in that capacity well and faithfully. He became unable to attend his meetings when he suffered a broken hip. He always had the welfare of the church first and foremost in his life, and bore a major part of its support. He was loved and respected by all who knew him, for his steadfast loyalty to the church, and his Christian life and character.

Brother Griffith was united in marriage to Miss Ella Bennett September 8, 1907, and to this union three children were born: Mrs. Orea Rakes, Woolwine, Va., and Thelma and Clifford Griffith, Rt. 2, Stuart, Virginia.

Brother Griffith is and will be sadly missed in the home, in the community and church. Still at his passing, we had to bow our heads and hearts in humble submission to the hand of Providence, and say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed is the name of the Lord."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder R. A. May, assisted by Elders Amos Hash and Peter Turner, midst a host of relatives and friends; and his body was laid to rest to await the resurrection, to meet Jesus in the air, and, as it is written, "to be like him, and be satisfied."

Written in behalf of the church and his family.

Elder R. A. May, Moderator
Myrtle T. Wood, Clerk

EUGENIA ALTIZER AKERS

On Friday, November 20, 1964, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dear beloved Sister Genia from our midst. She had been in poor health for some years, having suffered a stroke, but her death was attributed to a coronary attack.

Dear Genia was born February 28, 1892, in Montgomery County, Va. She was one of eleven children born to the late James Merritt and Callie Cummings Altizer. She grew up in the community where she was born, attended the little country school known as "Laurel Fork" and later qualified for a teacher's certificate at the Willis Normal School. She taught several schools before her marriage to the late Luther D. Akers, a young man of a nearby community, September 28, 1911. He preceded her in death by some seventeen years. To this union four daughters were born. The first-born, named Virginia Evans, died in infancy, and the second-born, Ollie Mae (Mrs. Roscoe Chafin), died in childbirth. Two daughters, Ruth (Mrs. Eugene Chafin),

and Edna (Mrs. J. Edwin Keith), survive. Sister Genia was "Mother" to Ollie Mae's daughter Shirley (Mrs. Frank Quesenberry), who also survives and whom she loved as her very own. She also leaves four other grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, six sisters and one brother.

Sister Genia united with the Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1914. She often testified to her rich, personal experience and love of her Saviour. She loved her church dearly and was a faithful member until the end. She loved the fellowship with the other brethren, and attended the services whenever she was able. In the community in which she lived she was affectionately known as "Mrs. Genia," and the night was never too dark or she was never too busy to offer a helping hand to her neighbors. The many wonderful expressions of love and sorrow at her passing gave evidence of the high esteem in which her relatives, friends and neighbors held her.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder B. O. Thompson, assisted by Mr. A. W. Nichols, at the Richardson Funeral Home, Christiansburg, Va. Interment was in the Westview Cemetery, Radford.

We all miss Dear Genia so very, very much, but we feel assured our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her sisters,
Glenna Yeatts and Mrs. Asa Wells

ANNIE STOCKS WILLIAMS

It is with a sad heart that I write of the death of our highly esteemed and dearly beloved sister, Mrs. Annie Stocks Williams, who passed from this life May 12, 1965, at the age of eighty. She had been in declining health for several months. She was preceded in death by her husband, the late Ernest Williams.

She was a loving and devoted mother, and a wonderful neighbor. Sister Annie was gracious, loving, and kind, and possessed a warm out-going personality which endeared her to all who knew her.

She was a devout person, and led an exemplary life, and a firm believer in salvation by grace. Great was her pleasure in hearing the gospel proclaimed. She united with the church at Hancocks in March, 1928, and was a true and faithful member until death. We miss this dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

May God bless and comfort her bereaved family, is our prayer.

Written by order of the church while in conference in regular session.

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

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER AND SISTER J. W. SHIPMAN

We, the Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, wish to record a few lines in memory of our late brother and sister in Christ, Elder J. W. (John) Shipman and his wife Sister May Shipman. This lovely brother and sister came here looking for the church several years ago; and we fell in love with them at once for the truth's sake, and the many endearing graces with which we felt the dear Lord had blessed them. They were a tower of strength to us from that time on as long as they lived. It was a real love feast to be with Brother and Sister Shipman.

Brother John was assistant pastor of Mt. Olive Church with Elder E. B. Ault, until he and Sister May moved to Cisco, Texas. Here they and others constituted Martha Grace Church at Justiceburg, Texas, where he served as pastor until the time of his death. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we have lost a precious brother and sister, whose place will be hard to fill; but be it further

RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will: thanking him for all that is past, and trusting him for all that is to come; and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Elder and Sister Shipman and give them a copy of these Resolutions; enter one on our church records; and send one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Approved by Mt. Olive Church while in conference the second Sunday in February, 1966.

Elder W. W. Fleet, Moderator pro tem
Lela Culpepper, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Brother Bradley McLamb, son of Mr. Isham McLamb, was born May 17, 1894, in Johnson County, N. C., and died November 10, 1965, in Johnson Memorial Hospital after an extended illness.

He was married to Mahala (Sissie) McLamb, who survives. Surviving also are one son, Tenyson Utley (Dick), and three grandsons.

For a long time Brother McLamb was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptist faith. He united with Liberty Primitive Baptist Church while in the hospital, but was not able to be baptized. We, the church, and a host of friends, sadly miss him. We loved him, but God loved him best, and called him home to be with him in his fold.

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

Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in December, 1965.

Brother James G. Young
Sister Liddie Tart
Sister Lovie Young
Committee

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER JOHN P. HELMS

Our church is now in mourning
For a loved one God has taken;
But He will send another —
He'll not leave his own forsaken.

In his own time and purpose,
A servant of the Lord shall stand
In the place our brother stood,
When God shall give his command.

We recall what he told us
When yet with us he was still here:
He said to look to Jesus
For all things we surely hold dear.

He told us he soon would go:
Now he knew it would be our loss;
But I feel it was his gain,
For he the last river has crossed.

He is resting in Jesus —
For unto this end he was born.
We all hope to meet him there
On the last resurrection morn.

Now we've a faithful servant
Who has been taking up the reins;
Because he loves the brethren,
And not for personal gain.

He has always been faithful
To help his pastor, as he should;
I'm sure God has a purpose,
And all is working for our good.

God knows who the church shall call:
He has already fixed and sealed;
But there's nothing we can know
Until it is fully revealed.

Let us bow in submission
To his righteous and holy will,
Looking to the coming day
When He again our pulpit fills.

Ethel Myers

(Since the above was written Elder William Holland has been called as pastor of this church, which is Little Creek Church, Franklin County, Virginia. He is the one referred to by Sister Myers — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1966

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRIBUTE TO A PASTOR'S WIFE

"In the shadow of the church
Stands a figure oft obscure:
Just behind the faithful pastor
Is his wife, devout and pure.

She is with him every moment,
Helping make his work progress;
And you can't discount her portion
In his measure of success.

Oft behind the scene of action,
Often never seen or heard,
Yet she stands forever ready
Just to give a helping hand.

With her home forever open,
And her work quite nicely done,
She is ever his faithful helper
In the battle fought and won.

It is not in active service
That her worth is really shown,
But in bearing heavy burdens
That to others are unknown.

With encouragement and vision,
She must urge God's servant on
When the shadows are the darkest,
And his courage almost gone.

Don't forget the pastor's partner
When you measure up his life:
All too often he is honoured,
And forgotten stands his wife.

So, while passing out the laurels,
And when giving honor due,
Give a share to one who helps him
Through his trials to be true."

Selected

(Submitted by Elder A. J. Slauson)

THE BRINK

Never once did I think
That I stood so near the brink,
Till God showed me where I stood,
And whispered to me that I could
Stand with Him on solid ground;
And it was then that I found
Peace on earth, reposing mind:
His arms around me entwined
I embraced His love divine,
His promise sure is ever mine.

I shall never seek again
The silly path of temporal sin,
Nor look to folly paths wherein
Lurk the luring worldly din.
If today God should decree
That I from worldly things go free,
And serenely flit away
To rest with Him eternally,
I am wholly sure that at His feet
I'll dwell with Him, His love replete.

J. M. Bailey, Sr.
1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W. Va. 25530

PRAYER

Hopewell, N. J.
May, 1898

Elder F. A. Chick
Dear Brother:

— My nephew, Kendrick Hill, while studying shorthand, took a stenographic copy of a prayer offered by Elder Purington. He afterwards wrote it out and sent it to me. This accounts for my having the reproduction of it, which I esteem as a relic. Thinking it too good to be kept under a bushel, and having the consent of Sister Purington, I send it to you for publication in the *Signs*.

Hannah M. Drake

A prayer offered by Elder Wm. J. Purington, Sunday morning, March 8, 1885, at Hopewell, New Jersey.

Thou prayer-hearing, prayer-answering, and sin pardoning God — May we be enabled to now approach thee in the all prevailing name of the once humiliated and crucified, and now risen, exalted and glorified, Redeemer. Grant unto us this morning, if it be thy holy pleasure, the true spirit of supplication and thanksgiving. Lord, we would acknowledge, not with a mere form of words only, but from feeling hearts, that thy loving kindness, and thy tender mercies, have continued to us all our pilgrimage until the present moment; and while the shafts of death have been taking our fellow mortals upon the right hand and the left, these frail lives of ours are still spared. We are still the objects of thy compassion here in that state of existence where thou canst give life and immortality to the vilest of the vile, if in harmony with thy will, and if such are embraced in the covenant of redemption. And while we would this morning breathe forth unto thee thanksgiving for past mercies and present favors, and openly implore a continuation of the same upon us, we would be filled with filial love, and reverential awe, to thee, that we have the hope of a blissful immortality beyond this time state; a hope that is to thy dear people at times, truly an anchor to the soul, while billow upon billow dashes upon them. While sin and confusion is abroad in the earth may they rest assured that the Lord God omnipotent reigns, and that every event is ordered by thy wisdom; that the wickedness of the present can only go as far as thy purpose is. We are informed in thy written word that the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath, thou wilt restrain. O dear God, suffer us not to dwell upon what we have to say with indifference. And we feel to say in heart, all will be well, whether I am interested or not. O God! may our

prayer be this morning like David of old! O Lord, revive us. O, revive thy work in the midst of these years. Grant unto us quickening grace, and may we feel to appreciate the great blessings of which we are the recipients, and may our church privileges be made brighter, more endearing, more strong; and enable us by thy grace to be more faithful in the discharge of duty bound upon us. Remember that thy goodness extends not to us alone, but unto the excellent in all the earth, wherein is thy delight. Nothing can be added to thy glory, and nothing taken from it. But thy purpose, thy glory, thy majesty, and thy power, are manifested in thy church here upon thy footstool.

O, that in our hearts this morning, the undying song of praise might ascend unto thee, that our hearts might be attuned to praise thee in deed, and in truth. We remember that all our springs are in thee, both temporal, and spiritual. And as thou art calling away thy true, tried and faithful servants, who have long been in thy militant church, may we who remain be filled with holy ardor to fill our places in the same, as the same may be made to appear unto us, fearless of the frowns of man, and regardless of his applause. And when we are criminated for the truth, and for strict adherence to thy written word, O heavenly lover, keep us from recrimination. May we remember that thou hast said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. We would therefore bow in sweet submission to thy holy will, bearing the trials and toils of this life as becometh soldiers of the cross. May we remember that but a few more years at the most, shall have passed away, when we shall be dismissed from the warfare, and enter the glorious state of existence where the shafts of the enemy shall no more reach, where our vile, depraved natures can no more annoy, but where joys perpetual, and praise everlasting, await the ransomed church. O dear God, according to thy will remember

all the families of affliction, where the angel of sorrow has recently mantled them in gloom. Great God, be unto them a present help, enabling them to realize that thou hast done it, and to remember that thou art too wise to err, too good to be unkind. And we implore thee, according to thy will, to be with, uphold and sustain, thy true, tried, called and faithful servants in this day of idealism, in this hour of delusion.

May their bow abide in strength, and the arms of their hands be made strong by the hand of thee, the Mighty God of Jacob. And now enable us to commit our all into thy faithful care. Be our God and guide, not only through the literal day, but through life's appointed journey, and when done with the scenes of earth, and we are called to exchange worlds, in the moment of expiring nature enable us to say, Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

(Those who were accustomed to hearing Elder Purington, will remember well with what solemn awe and earnestness he would address the God whom he held in reverence, and loved. All we believe will read the above with solemn reverence. Prayer, with him, was not a mere form of words put together to catch the attention of men, and please their ears, but a solemn presentation before the Lord of the true feeling and desires of the heart. He could not approach to God with flippancy of expression, but felt that he stood on holy ground. Only the most solemn and sublime words, seemed to him appropriate at such a time. This was also true of his preaching. No one ever heard from his lips that which could bring a blush of shame to the face of any one. **He believed that the profound and awful mysteries of the faith should be handled in a solemn manner.** Whether in prayer, or in preaching, he felt that he stood before the Lord, rather than man, and he spoke

as one who realized the divine presence. — Ed.)

(We were greatly impressed both by the wording of the prayer and the comments of Elder Chick when we read the above in the August 1, 1898, *Signs*. We hope others may enjoy this as we did. — J. D. W.)

843 Glendale Avenue,
South Charleston, W. Va. 25303

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing \$3.00 for renewal of my subscription. I enjoy reading the editorials and the letters from the dear brethren so much.

I am amazed sometimes when I read their experiences which describe my feelings exactly. Then I am made to know that it is all through the power of our God, which draws us together with his love and wisdom.

I recall meeting a sister a few years ago whom I had never seen before. We looked at each other; and she began to push her way through the crowd: and we were embracing and weeping, with a love that only He could instill within our hearts. Later I was meditating about this, and this little poem came to my mind:

I looked across a crowded church,
And saw my sister's face:
In a moment God sealed our love,
That can never be erased.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Lester Haning

THANKFUL TO BE AMONG
THE POOR AND AFFLICTED

Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Dear Brother Spangler:

I had a dream, or had a vision of myself preparing to go to church somewhere, or to some kind of a meeting. After getting ready, I was lifted with great wings of love, and carried to a mountain side. There were two groups

of people there; and I looked on one group, and saw they were dressed in the finest of fashion, and all were in perfect health, and they were singing a song I did not know.

I looked on the other group of people, and they were all a poor and much afflicted people. Some were dressed in patched and tattered clothing; some with only one arm, some on their knees and could not walk, and some with only one eye: and, O, praise the Lord, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, I was placed with the poor and afflicted group, and handed a song book, and we all sang, "Ye pilgrims of Zion and chosen of God," all the way through. I looked to see if I could see the other group, but to my astonishment, they had vanished off of the face of the mountain; and the poor and afflicted people stood unmoved — as solid as a great rock, and were rejoicing in our Lord.

When I awoke, I was also praising my Lord for placing me in the poor and afflicted group. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and a poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zepaniah 3:12) And the 14th verse reads, "Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." And the remainder of this chapter is very precious to read and meditate upon.

This dream has been very precious to me in my afflictions along life's pathway, and was given me not many days after I was led in the crystal clear waters of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and baptized by a precious saint, Elder Sam Terry, who was like a father to me. This is so fresh in my memory today, until I was made to rejoice once more in a Saviour's love. Although this is but part of my experience, I hope it was presented to me, to help me bear my afflictions which were appointed me before the foundation of the world.

Somehow this was a burden to me to write it to you, Elder Spangler, along

with my renewal of the *Signs of the Times*. May God bless you is my feeble prayer: I feel too unworthy to ask an interest in your prayers.

An unworthy one,
Pauline Spencer

P. S. The enclosure is for two year's renewal, with the rest to use as you see fit.

EXPERIENCE

Dallas County Hospital,
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742

At the request of my dear precious mother, and many others, I am making the attempt to write some of my travels through life, and call to the ministry, if indeed I have that call and experience.

It really began when I was a very small boy talking with my little sister in our old home. It began like this: She asked me, saying, "John do you know there is a God?" and something down in me said, "Yes." Let me say that there had been something of an inquiry as to, Who or what made this big world, and all the trees, and all the fullness of all things; so I said, Yes, to the question: "Did you know there is a God, and he hears all we say, and sees us all the time; and knows what we are doing, and why, all the time?"

"The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace until the stronger than he cometh upon him." Now all this came upon me and spoiled all my goods, and tore all my palaces to shreds, and left me homeless. But there finally came a time with me which wrought a great change in my life. I had always thought that when a man gets ready to change his sinful life and live holy, all he had to do was to tell the Lord, "I'm ready"; and this I decided to do at a certain memorial day. I remember I was with my little brother in a wagon, and I sang and danced until I was exhausted. I went

along for a long while, forgetting all about it.

But there came a time when I was plowing in a field, and I was laying the corn by, and I got mad at my horse because he was biting the tops out of the corn. I did not want to muzzle him, so I began cursing and fighting him, and picked up a pine knot and threw it at him, and hit him on the head. He fell to the ground dead, I thought. He stretched his legs and quivered as if he were dying. I tried to lift his head, but could not; but as I stepped back, he raised his head and sprang to his feet. This relieved me, but I turned and looked at myself, and something said, "The horse is OK, but how about you?"

O, here came something hard to explain . . . anyway, after I had used so many shameful curse words, something took place inside me, asking, "Why are you so much interested in all this Jesus?" I saw a light like a funnel from where I stood between the plow handles; and I cried out, "Oh! Lord." My horse thought I said, "Whoa," and stopped. The plow handles braced me, and seemed to keep me from falling into eternal hell. Right here I was made to say, "Glory to God in the highest: Jesus is my Saviour."

I had always felt like I would have to preach when I became a man, and was ordained in 1925. These are some of the things I have experienced. To all who may read this, I ask an interest in your prayers. This is a poor description, but I have done the best I could.

Yours in a precious hope of life beyond the grave,

Elder J. T. Everitt

(Elder Everitt is now in the Dallas County Nursing Home, Fordyce, Arkansas, and we hope he is getting along well. — Editors)

"DEAR OLD FAMILY PAPER"

Whitefield, Maine 04362

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for which please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years; the balance is for the Indigent Fund, or for use any way you desire for the good of the household of faith.

We both, husband and I, do enjoy the good old paper very much. In each issue we find comfort in the experiences of the brethren, for they all relate the same travel in this time world. Many times we have read an experience of some brother or sister which tells our own travels in this life better than we could tell it ourselves.

The Editorials and articles of *The Voices of the Past*, we enjoy so much: all speaking the same truth; all declaring the same God, who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

We remember well the dear old *Signs* that came into our home in the large folded paper — newspaper style. By the writings in the *Voices of the Past*, we find no wavering from the truth now preached by the Old School Baptists from that preached many years ago. The same gospel truth as it is in Christ preached by those servants of God years ago, is declared in our churches today. "I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no God beside me."

How blessed we are to have a dear old family paper, telling of the love, mercy and goodness of our God, to such helpless and dependent people as we Old Baptists feel to be.

May it be God's will that the publishing of the *Signs* may continue for years to come, and the publishers be blessed to carry on the good work which brings comfort to our people through the length and breadth of this land.

Our love and fellowship to the household of faith.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Merigold

"THE LAW OF THE LORD IS
PERFECT, CONVERTING
THE SOUL."
Psalms 19:7

Dear Followers of the Lamb:

This Scripture has held much interest for me in recent years, and lately it has been on my mind to the point where I am inclined to write something about it. I hope that the Lord of Hosts will enlighten me to bring forth something of interest to those who may read this.

It seems in order to examine this Scripture word by word, to get at the "meat" to be found therein. Thus we find first the *law* to deal with. Now in this instance we are not to treat on a ceremonial law, or what might come under the general meaning of the word law, but with the *will of God*. David's mind was definitely on God's glory, power, omnipotence and righteousness in this 19th Chapter. To all these, we can add His perfectness. Note that he wrote, — "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Then he says, "The statutes of the Lord are right," etc. He continues to set forth truths as to the Lord's judgments being true and righteous, — a most wonderful appraisal of God's law or *His Spirit as put into his own heart*. Note this reference throughout the Psalms as to his delight in the *law of the Lord*. Psalm 119:70 says, "The Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

Who was this *law* of, or by? It was of the Lord; and it is so plain that man had nothing whatever to do with its origin; nor would man ever have anything to add to it in time to come. I speak of *God's Divine Commandment* or manner in which He decreed that the soul of man was to be changed, having in mind that puny man long ago did set out to do this changing. More will be said of that later on.

We come now to the word *perfect*. As used here, it means a complete and

flawless work or *application of the power of God*; and since He was, before the advent of man or beginning of this time world, the very essence of perfectness (and has never changed,) could anything else come from Him but *perfect commandments and laws*, as we have in mind here? Matthew 5:48, says, "Be ye perfect as your Father." Many other references can be found that bear this out.

In the word *converting*, we have to accept it as definitely meaning to *change* something from its present form or shape or being. In this instance we have a *changing of the soul of man*. Again it is plainly seen that puny man is ruled out of this work for he cannot change anything the Lord God Almighty has decreed to be *his own divine law* or work. He cannot see or definitely determine just what his own soul actually is, nor where it is. He cannot reach another's inward unseen soul by any means at his command. Other than by talking or writing a man cannot get into the minds of his fellow man and bring from them their emotions and words that they have been converted; and so on.

Now to the word *soul*, or that which is a deep mystery indeed. In Genesis 2:7, we find where God brought into existence *the soul of man*. ". . . and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul," as it is written. That same living soul has been transmitted on to each and every human born of Adam and all his posterity to this time; and until the end of this time world. It is within man's body, yet has any surgeon who has operated on man's body and gone into the brain and into the heart, and all areas thereabouts, ever found any *living soul* or substance that could be said to be such? Then let us consider that if man himself cannot find anything within our bodies that can be held to be a living soul, how can any man say that he can CONVERT OR CHANGE THE SOUL of his fellow

man? O, foolish man that says he does this. How they long to do the work the Lord of Heaven did before the world was.

David surely left good record that "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Never did he question its perfectness. He wrote in the 139th Psalm what he was given to see by Divine inspiration and revelation, saying (verse 6), "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high. I cannot attain unto it." In verse 14, he wrote, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and *that my soul knoweth right well.* Here he indicated that his soul was contained in, and a part of, his knowledge, or within his brain and mind. All his writings were after the changing or converting of his soul, and he said, "*Marvelous are thy works,*" which means only that the *Law of the Lord is perfect*, and his works are flawless.

The changing or converting of the soul of man, I believe, comes at the time of the new birth, and the soul is not removed from man and made over or altered, but the entrance of the HOLY GHOST or HOLY SPIRIT into the soul, does change it from a mortal, unregenerated man's soul into one wherein dwells the HOLY SPIRIT which can and does overpower it — and sets up the warfare that exists from then on, between the two occupants, the carnal nature and the Spiritual one. This converting or changing of the soul IS PERFECT. We have the praise of all the Old Prophets and of the later Apostles for the work God wrought upon them. And, too, do we not have our very own experience to verify that it was a PERFECT work? Did it not accomplish perfectly what God designed? As to man's efforts to take over and do this changing or converting of men's souls, we have only to look about us on every side and see the fallacy thereof. How thankful then are those whose conversion has been

made PERFECT. No wonder we find so much pleasure in meeting with those of like mind and give much time to "telling what great things the Lord has done for us."

Concluding, I will mention a recent local event that fits into this writing. A church in our valley was featured in our local paper, with picture of several youths of "teenage," and considerable explanation of the work done in "bringing them up to know Christ and to walk in His love and footsteps," etc. The minister asked his own question, "Are we accomplishing this work fully?" He answered it by saying, "We are doing it IMPERFECTLY." I asked him by letter to qualify what he meant by imperfectly. He replied promptly, "Our exemplification of the Gospel is imperfect to our youth. Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect. Their apprehension of the Gospel is less than perfect." There we have an example of what goes on the world over, though but few break down and admit that man's attempt to perform the Lord's work is a failure *and full of imperfection.* It is written, "If the blind lead the blind, they both surely fall in the ditch." What joy and bliss to know by and through the perfect conversion of our souls that we will not be found *imperfect* when this life ends; and that in time we stand before the *One* who decreed by His righteous and holy law that our conversion would be *perfect*; and this before the world was. I hope and pray so much of the time that I am included in this group.

A sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

My mind has been on the 23rd Psalm. I have used it as a text several times in my sixty-five years in the ministry:

but never with the weight that it seems today.

Now, where did Jesus find his people? We do not entertain the thought that any were lost to Jesus; but it is written that Jacob was found in a waste howling wilderness, and the Lord led him about and instructed him. Likewise Daniel, who would not fall on his knees and worship the idol of King Nebuchadnezzar, when he worshipped only the true God, he was thrown into the den of lions, but he was not alone, for the Lord was with him. Also, when the three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace, which was so hot that it consumed those that cast them in, they were not alone: one watcher, the king, looked in and saw four people. "Did we not cast in three men . . . Lo, I see four men loose . . . the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." When Jonah was ordered to go to Nineveh and to cry unto her that within forty days the city would be destroyed, he went the wrong way: he took passage on the wrong boat; and there came up a terrible storm. The sailors were sore afraid; then Jonah confessed that he was the cause: "Cast me into the sea;" and they did. But the Lord had prepared a great fish, and it swallowed Jonah. For three days and three nights Jonah prayed. He learned a great lesson: "Salvation is of the Lord." He learned this in the belly of Hell. Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah on dry land; and Jonah started at once to Nineveh, and preached that in forty days the city would be destroyed. Jonah learned something in the belly of the fish that he could not have learned in forty years in any college of men. He learned that salvation is purely the work of the Spirit; that it cannot be purchased of men; it cannot be bought with silver or gold. It is the work of grace through faith,

not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God.

The Bible records these things, to show God's power in all things. I do not want to talk to those who have not a hearing ear, nor to those who are "sure of heaven," but to the many dear ones who come asking, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." Not to those who are so self-righteous in their thoughts, but to those who have been in the fiery furnace with Jesus as a partner, and whose thoughts are about the Trinity, God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Remember, dear brethren, God the Father is the "powerhouse"; Jesus Christ the Son and the sacrifice; and the Holy Spirit the Comforter of those who are born of the Spirit. And remember that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me: a stranger they will not follow." Concerning the one led like a sheep to slaughter, was what the Ethiopian eunuch was muddled about; and Philip was sent to straighten him out: not to make a Christian, for he was already that. He was coming home from Jerusalem where he had been to worship. He was reading Isaiah, but did not understand what he was reading: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth." He asked Philip whom Isaiah was talking about, was it of himself or some other man. Philip did not answer him directly, but began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus — to the satisfaction of the Eunuch. And as they rode along, they came to water, and the Eunuch said, "Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip answered, "If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest." And the Eunuch said, "I be-

lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then they both went into the water, and Philip baptized him, and they came up out of the water; and Philip was caught away of the Spirit, and the Eunuch went on his way rejoicing.

I have preached many funerals of non-members, and I had as good a hope for them as for anyone. My own dear father was never baptized by man, but gave a good evidence that he had been baptized of the Holy Ghost; and he was a great help to me when I began to preach. The old Elder who baptized me, when he led me out of the water said, "Here is a preacher for you." I hoped that nobody heard it; but it seemed they all felt the same way. Within a year I was licensed to preach. I was baptized on "ground-hog day," February 2, 1896; and ordained January 10, 1900, to the full work of the ministry. And here I am in my 93rd year, still proclaiming that "the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I thought when I first started out, for I was rather timid, that after I preached a year or two, I would get over it, but in this I was sadly disappointed. After about 70 years, my knees shake and my heart throbs when it is announced that Elder Weaver will follow so and so on the stand. But I will say this, that of late, be there a dozen or five hundred, it is all the same to me; for I know none will hear me, except those who have been born again. The Lord has told me that his staff and his rod would comfort me. Many times the rod is used: I am yet a man, and when the Lord "looks at me," then I remember, and go out and weep.

The Lord has been good to me. His charity, which is love greater than faith and hope that abides in us, reminds me that I am still in the flesh. The Lord has showed us many things, and the prophet truly said, "There is nothing too hard for the Lord." The sun, moon and the stars that he placed in the heavens show his handiwork. In

the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things, and pronounced them good, and very good. He knows all things: to him all is an open book. One star that I used to watch when the sky was clear, was an exception to me: the Pole or North Star. No matter where I was day or night, it was always North. It is located by the two stars in the Big Dipper always pointing to it. The sailors of old used this star for guidance, until the compass pointing to the North took its place. Truly it is said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

"The Lord is my shepherd," not a shepherd, but *my shepherd*. He is speaking to me; and I shall not want. He is speaking to all his chosen people. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." He talks to his sheep, and they hear his voice, and follow him. They know not the voice of strangers. One thing I learned about sheep when I was a boy on the farm: I was their shepherd, and they were not afraid of me or my dog. We usually had twenty-five or thirty little lambs, and they all played together. At nightfall I would call them, and they would follow me into a big shed. Sometimes one would run away from the flock, and I would tell the dog to bring him in; and sometimes he would have quite a time. Here I learned that sheep would not drink running water, but go to the still water.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." What

more do I want!

To my numerous brothers and sisters, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. May he lift up his countenance upon thee, and give you peace.

Your unworthy brother,
Elder George L. Weaver,
3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights 20, Ohio 44120

(The above is from a recording sent by Elder Weaver since his eyesight is bad for reading or writing. We were glad to receive it, and have edited it for publication. — J. D. W.)

THE HOLY TRINITY

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." (1 John 5:8, 9)

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by who are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6) "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18) "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (Romans 5:1)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Father,) full of grace and truth," (John 1:1 and 14) Under

the law of Moses there were burnt offerings made: "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified by these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:23 and 28) "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14)

There are many verses of Scripture the world accepts as invitations, but rather they are commands to a chosen people. In the gospel according to John we find, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you . . . the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." (John 14:15-17; 26)

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 4) I feel I have been comforted many times by the kindness of my brethren, and I hope by the Holy Comforter; though I know I have failed to be a comfort to the people I hope I love.

I have spent many sleepless hours thinking of the little ones in trouble; and often I try to pray that the Lord comfort them in their afflictions; yet by our own experience we do believe that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. "Furthermore, we have had fathers in our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence."

"Blessed by the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . . who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory: that your faith and hope might be in God, . . . being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Peter 1:3; 20; 23) "For through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Ephesians 2:18)

I know that my flesh profiteth nothing, yet by the way of remembrance my mind is stirred up, (I hope the pure mind,) for oftentimes I feel that surely I have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Many times I am made content with such things as I have; for He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and he is the same yesterday, today and forever. And I believe he comforts those for whom he died, in dreams and visions.

I have had many dreams that are precious to me. Not long ago I spent some time in the hospital. My brethren, friends and loved ones put forth every effort for my welfare and comfort; for which I hope I am grateful, as unworthy as I am. My pastor uttered many comforting words in prayer, which continually linger with this poor mortal. Yet none of these things which I cherish so much, relieved the fear of an operation. While waiting for a surgeon to come from another city, I believe I sought the Great Physician diligently with tears, saying, Lord help me; and in my sleep I was given a most precious dream. I most surely believe that there is a living Spirit, and when the body returns to the dust, the Spirit returns to God from whence it came; and that the one and only Holy Spirit that comforted our fathers, comforts us in our tribulations.

I dreamed my father in the flesh, who passed from this time world more than fourteen years ago, came in the hospital: it was as plain as if I had seen him with my natural eyes; as he turned towards my room, I heard a nurse ask where he was going, and he said he was going to be with his son: he is in trouble. When I awoke, it seemed I could feel his presence with me, and I wet my pillow with tears. That day the stone passed from my kidney, and I believe I was made to joy in the God of my salvation, from which cometh my help; and the whole earth seemed to praise his glorious name.

I promised myself I would never try to write again, but for some reason I have tried to put together a few portions of scripture with what I feel has comforted me; that I might tell you that your Redeemer liveth; though you need not be told of man, for the Lord is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.

We find recorded in the Book of Job, ". . . my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high; . . . when a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." (Job 16:19; 22) "The flower of the grass falleth away; . . . but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you;" (1 Peter 1:24, 25) of which you are not ashamed. The gospel comes, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost; through which we have access to the Father by the Word; the Holy Trinity that liveth and abideth forever.

May the gracious Heavenly Father direct our steps, that we may walk in fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Clifton Robertson,
Rt. 1,
Reidsville, N. C.

CONSOLATIONS ALONG THE WAY

Rt. 3, Box 288,
Dunn, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

At about the age of thirteen I dreamed of being up among the stars, and it was such a pretty place: they were all the same size and the same brightness, not one bigger or brighter than another; and I wondered what it could mean.

I was reared in a Primitive Baptist home; my grandfather, being a member in the horse and buggy days, had right many of the brethren to spend the night with him; and I enjoyed hearing them talk of the dealings of the Lord with them. I was reared to go to the Primitive Baptist Church, but was not taught the doctrine in my home. In November, 1900, I was married; and while my children were small I did not get to go to meetings so much, since we had much sickness with them. I went when I could; and the more I went, the more I wanted to go, for I had a great love for the church. I can't tell as some can, when the change took place, if, indeed, a change did take place. But one thing I do know, the things I once loved, I don't care for now.

I dreamed of the church often, and wanted to be a member. I dreamed once of being baptized, and of helping preparing the communion basket. At another time I saw in a dream the prettiest tree, and it was full of beautiful fruit. Elder W. E. Turner, who was just a lad at that time, and I were trying to get the fruit with sticks, but could not. His father, Elder W. G. Turner, reached up, and it was no trouble for him to get it. Once, while in the hospital in Raleigh, seemingly at the point of death, I saw my whole body soaring upward until it went out of sight. I was not asleep when I saw this.

Once, while attending to a sick baby, and my husband and children were asleep, I was thinking, if my husband should be taken away, what would become of me and the children: at that moment across the room in front of me, appeared a man in a long white robe; then disappeared in seconds. This

gave me some consolation.

On Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1918, I asked a home with the church, and was received and baptized the next day by Elder J. T. Coats. It was a day to be remembered. It has not all been on flowery beds of ease since then, but has not been the same burden and trouble as before. I have feared that I am deceived, being reared in a Primitive Baptist home; but this did not make me one, for if I am one, it is by the grace of God, and for nothing good that I have done. After reading Elder Beebe's article of June 15, 1866, I felt encouraged, because I cannot tell of some great event that took place at a certain time, as some can.

Before I was received into the church, Elder Coats had pneumonia, and my husband said that Brother Coats was going to die; and I told him, "Not now, for he will baptize me before he dies." He did baptize me: it seems I was given faith to believe that he would. I have had many sore trials in my life. I lost by death three babies under two years of age; and in June, 1934, lost a son twenty-one years of age with blood poison; and in March, 1959, my husband was taken by death, but I was given strength to bear it. Then in December, 1959, I had a stroke, and can get around but little with a walker and help. If I live until February 2, 1966, I will be eighty-seven years old. I am kept here for some reason, but I know not what. I miss going to church so much, and being with the brethren and sisters. I need the prayers of God's people.

Mrs. G. M. Stewart

HAPPY IN HER BAPTISM

Rt. 1

Rocky Mt., Va. 24151

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In reference to what Elder Cecil E. Turner sent to the *Signs of the Times*,

I would like to say, I have never been happier in my life than the day of my baptism. The night before my baptism I had imagined many things to go wrong. But all this worry was really a blessing, because when I arrived at Jones' Lake, the second Sunday in January, a calmness came over me that never once faltered me from the time I stepped into the water to be baptized, until the time I stepped out. This reassured me that God was near. After my baptism my parents said that they sang, "O how happy are they, who their Savior obey . . .," but I was rejoicing so that I didn't even hear it.

Now when I think back on this baptism, I can't help but cry. It was all so wonderful and it seemed like a dream. For years I had wanted to join the church and be baptized but I never thought I would. I was ashamed to cry in church and I felt so little and unworthy compared to the elders and members, and also I felt I was too young to even think of joining the church. Ever since November of 1961, I have realized that this world is no wonderful place to live in.

I have had two days that were outstanding to me. Those are, the day I joined the church, and the day I was baptized. Both days were a hope and dream come true. For the last few years it had broken me down every time the Elders had announced an "open door." I had wanted to go up so very badly, but yet I didn't feel like I deserved to be with them. For when I looked back over the life I had led, I couldn't see anything that would assure me a home in heaven. Oh, brethren, isn't *grace* wonderful? All of us would be eternally lost, if it wasn't for grace. For He surely doesn't need our help in anything. He has all power in both heaven and earth. And Oh, how small we are in his sight!

This past Christmas eve, I went to bed very restless. I had been very concerned over my grandfather, Elder Posey L. Plybon. About 3:30 A. M. I

awoke, and still lying in my bed, I saw a vision of my grandfather. He was in a long white robe, and he was smiling.

The next day was Christmas. I couldn't get this out of my mind. We spent the day with my grandparents, and every time I looked at him I saw this image of him in my mind as it had been the previous night. I took this as a foreboding that my grandfather wouldn't be with us next Christmas. But after I talked with Elder Turner about it, I gained some relief. He informed me that my vision might just be relating to me that grandfather was a child of God. Oh dear brethren, I do hope with all my heart that he is a child of God, for I love him both spiritually and earthly.

But no one will ever know what joining the church has meant to me. You can't imagine before you join the church what it will be like, it's impossible. I would like to thank all of the brethren for being so wonderful and understanding of my problems.

An unworthy sister in hope,
Miss Carolyn Plybon

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To April 1, 1966)

Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	\$ 1.00
Mrs. W. W. Lillard, N. C.....	2.00
Elder and Mrs. Wade Chandler, Ky.....	7.00
A Friend, Mich.....	15.00
Mrs. Jay MacTavish, Can.....	15.00
Mrs. Leroy C. Jones, Tex.....	1.00
Mrs. L. B. Haneline, Ky.....	2.00
Pauline Spencer, Va.....	2.00
Elmer Lock, Mich.....	1.00
Mrs. H. T. Hardee, N. C.....	1.00
A Friend, Cumberland, Md.....	10.00

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder R. W. Rhodes requests that we mention that his address is changed from Spearsville, Louisiana, to 334 South Alyette Street, Fayette, Alabama. Zip Code 35555, where he wishes his correspondents to address him.

Elder Rhodes also requests that orders for his book, *The Second Coming of Christ*, be sent to his new address. The price is \$2.00 postpaid.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Lower Town Creek Church, Edgecombe County, just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C., the fifth Sunday in May and Saturday before.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia June, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

IMPORTANT REQUESTS

All correspondence with the Signs of the Times should contain your Zip Code number. Please do not forget this when sending renewals, etc.

All notices of meetings should be mailed at least six weeks before publication date, and addressed to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. Otherwise, many of them are received too late to be published at the proper time.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

PROVERBS 14:4

"Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox."

It is written that Solomon was given wisdom above all the wisdom of Egypt. (1 Kings 4:30) And we like the expression of Newton, who wrote

"If Solomon for wisdom prayed,
The Lord before had made him wise;
Else he another choice had made,
And ask for what the worldlings prize."

In this God given wisdom he gathered together in order sayings that apply to the earthly conditions of both wise and foolish among the sons of men. Many years ago, when the writer was a student away from home, his father wrote, "George, read the Scriptures, especially Proverbs, the Psalms, and the New Testament." Such advice is good for young and old today, for the world seems to be given over to folly, and how few there seem to be whom the Word of God is, "a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path." (Psalm 119:105)

How true Paul's statement is today, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:13) Wherever one may see with their eyes or listen with their ears, the earth from pole to pole seems overrun with error of every kind. God, who created all things and upholdeth them all, whose word will stand, seems not to be in all their thoughts; yet there are a few now, as in every age, a number which no man can number, who believe that God has fixed the bounds of their habitation, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." They, in humility and God given patience, are as Paul said, "Made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men." (1 Corinthians 4:9)

From an early age oxen were used by men to plough the ground and turn

under any growth of no value, along with the thorns and thistles which the earth brought forth because of man's disobedience. The ox, when brought into the service of his master, had to wear a yoke that his master put on him, to which the plough was attached. We do not read of the ox having anything to hold him in but the word of his master. David in Psalm 32:8, 9, says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."

Coming to our subject, "Where no oxen are, the crib is clean." A crib was usually built with bars where the fodder was stored, which was the food of the oxen, therefore an empty crib is spoken of here as a clean crib; and where there was a clean crib, it was an evident sign that there were no oxen. Israel in Egypt were yoked together in bondage, and it was God alone that broke the bands of their yoke. (Leviticus 26:13) The world at large is yoked together by Satan so completely that only Almighty God is able to break the bands of his yoke. From the words of our Lord Jesus Christ as he spake to the two disciples who were on the Emmaus road, Luke 24:13-32, we see that he clearly shows us that God had yoked Moses and all the prophets as oxen in the work they did, and they testified in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. How cutting were the judgments they pronounced upon Israel and her enemies; yet, where they ploughed, seed was sown. God placed them in that land, and not all that they produced was for the Israelites; they were a wicked and rebellious people, and most of their princes were no better; in fact, they encouraged their people to err; and how shamefully they treated those upon whom God had placed his yoke!

Stephen, the first martyr, shows their

children to be the same. In Acts 7:51, 52, he said, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." The Word of God which they testified by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, was the fodder or straw that was used to be the food of God's servants today, as it was theirs when they testified it; and until He came, upon whom the Spirit of the Lord should rest, Isaiah 11:2, there was to be as Ezekiel 21:27 says, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it to him."

True, there were a few when he came, who had been told they should not see death until they had seen the Lord's Christ. How wonderfully Simeon, who had been waiting for the consolation of Israel, led of the Spirit, could say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: *A light to lighten the Gentiles*, and the glory of thy people Israel." At this time the Jews still had a prophet, John the Baptist, who was slain by Herod; and soon our Lord was to say to them, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." As they had rejected and slain the prophets and messengers until John, they were now to reject the Lord himself, and cry, "Crucify him, Crucify him." The judgments of Moses, who had led their forefathers from Egypt to the promised land, were now to come upon them, and as Hosea 9:17 says, so it was done: "My God will cast them away, because they did not harken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations." No more prophets sent with a "thus saith the Lord," *no oxen, the crib is clean*; "But much increase is by the strength of the

ox."

The prophets who had, like oxen, been yoked together, who were moved by the Holy Ghost, whose testimony was of Jesus, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow, could say, like Moses in his prayer, Psalm 90:17, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." Had not Jesus come, their testimony, like fingerposts pointing the way, would have had no meaning. How good that John could say, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

In the four Gospels He is set forth by Matthew as having the face of a lion, their king; by Mark, as having the face of an ox; and by Luke as having the face of a man; by John, as having the face of an eagle. In this article we shall confine ourselves to the *Ox*, whose strength brought such an increase as to fill the crib. Our first parent, Eve, was tempted of the devil and fell, and the whole family of man has been yoked in that transgression; therefore it is right that our Lord, before he began his public ministry, should be subjected to temptation. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." (Matthew 4:1) Luke tells us, "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Being forty days tempted of the devil." (Luke 4:1, 2) Mark, setting forth Jesus as an Ox who had come to do his Master's will, says, "And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him." (Mark 1:12, 13)

In Mark there is no genealogy: who would expect one of a servant? Jesus, doing his Father's will, brings into fulfilment all that was written of him:

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:4, 5) David in Psalm 40:6-8, says, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." O, how blest David was to tell of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. My subject would fill too many pages should I go on to tell of what Jesus did, and of what he is to his dear people. His strength has *filled the crib* from Genesis to Revelation, and though he humbled himself to be as lowly as an ox; yes, to be as a worm and no man, despised of the people, yet was it not he who said to John in Revelation 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Not only has He filled the crib, but he who became least in the kingdom of heaven, declared himself to be greater than Solomon. (Luke 11:31) He was prophesied of in all Scripture; and when he came he was alone, and of all the people there were none with him. He trod the wine press alone. Yet in Isaiah 52:7, it says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *Him* that bringeth good tidings." After he, our Lord and Saviour, had finished his work, Peter could write, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath *begotten us again unto a lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Peter 1:3) So this blessed servant not only filled the crib, but one, Isaiah 60:22, "a little one, has become a thousand;" and Paul therefore was right in quoting from Isaiah 52:7, in Romans 10:15: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *them* that preach the gospel

of peace." Thus our Lord, who humbled himself and was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, has not only filled the crib with "clean provender which has been winnowed with the shovel and the fan," (Isaiah 30:24), but has by his strength brought forth men to whom he hath given his word, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."

Left to themselves, who would desire to turn their backs on the world? How could they, when Satan has them under his sway? But there is an appointed time. He who humbled himself, hath God highly exalted, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess him Lord of all, to the glory of the Father. John the Baptist said of him, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:11, 12) How true even today is Proverbs 13:7, "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." Yes, "A portion worth more than the Indies of gold, which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold." Our Lord is "the Rock, his work is perfect." and those he sends forth go at his word, like oxen, and find that it is so: it cannot be added to nor taken from. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His apostles all put the crown on his head: they desired to be nothing that Christ might be "All in all."

The ministry is not something that one can take on himself. After Isaiah had seen the Lord high and lifted up, and was so humbled and unclean in his own feelings, the Lord sent a live coal from off the altar and touched his lips. He was then made willing, and said,

"Send me." Yes, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." When our Lord Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," we do not look on this as an invitation, but a command, for "where the word of a king is, there is power." We find Saul suddenly turned around from persecuting to preaching, and what he had been in the past made him feel so humble and unworthy, with the knowledge of what the Lord Jesus had done for him that he was a true yokefellow to the other apostles, and when they saw what the Lord had done, they glorified God in him. We find our Lord telling Ananias in a vision about Saul. Ananias thought he knew what Saul was, but the Lord knew better than he, and said to him, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15, 16) No body of men sent Saul; God put the yoke on him. The Gentiles had been left in ignorance; as far as they were concerned the crib was empty, and God was sending this man Saul to tread out the corn; yes, if need be, to plough; for he it was who declared that the law, which was ministration of death, was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Now had come the day of the words of Isaiah 11, when David's Son, who was David's Lord, would with righteousness judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, who was to smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips would slay the wicked. A day when, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw as the ox." Straw sets forth the Word of God, which carries "the finest

of the wheat." (Psalm 147:14)

The example of our Lord is his humiliation should still be manifest in those who are his servants today. The disciples were taught by our Lord that "whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." How final that is! None of the apostles had the least desire to be looked up to, or to be put on a pedestal; but to be in service as lowly as oxen to do their master's bidding. From the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, God's sent servants have gone forward yoked together by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in them, as humble and lowly as oxen, not taking credit for what they did. See Peter in Acts 3, when the lame man was healed: he boldly declared it was not their own power or holiness that had made that man to walk, but that it was the faith in Jesus' name that had made the man strong. Those who are yoked together in this ministry, down from the apostles to the present time, have gone forth — yes, often driven by the Spirit, and they can say as Paul did in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (Read the rest at your leisure.)

To approve of anything that has not a "thus saith the Lord" for it, would bring God's servants under his reproof; for our brother Paul said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14) They have preached the Word down to this present day by the Holy Ghost sent down at Pentecost, which was the beginning of the gospel harvest; and they all desire still, as those who have gone before, to place the crown on the head of their Lord; and they would ever confess their nothingness, and that Christ Jesus is their All in All.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

EPHESIANS 2:10

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The epistle in which our text is found is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," and embraces all those of every name and locality, of every kindred, and throughout all time, which were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto God, and made acceptable in the Beloved. With these the apostle includes and identifies himself in the pronoun we. "For we are his workmanship."

As well in the apostle's day, as at the present time, men were found contending for salvation by works; and those who expected to be justified by the deeds of the law, and accepted according to their own righteousness. In branding this heresy, and to settle this matter forever, the holy apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, has said in the preceding connection of our subject, most emphatically, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." And then follow the words from our text, "For we are his workmanship," &c. Being the workmanship of God, we cannot be our own workmanship, nor the workmanship of men or of angels. This workmanship embraces and includes all the work, from first to last, that has any bearing on our salvation, or the good works which he has before ordained that his people shall walk in. The creation, formation, man-

ifestation, as well as the inscription of the names of all the saints in the Lamb's book of life before the world began, must necessarily have been the work of God himself. Therefore he says, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; and thou art mine." The workmanship of God plainly appears in their creation and formation, and also in their redemption, "For I have redeemed thee." Their Redeemer is the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth. The whole arrangement of the covenant of grace and salvation was the work of God alone. He loved them with an everlasting love. He elected them, as he has declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was his work alone to "Bless them 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." "He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

In all this the exclusive workmanship of God is indisputable. Nor is this all, their regeneration and heavenly birth are also the work of God. Of his own will begat he them; and they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Hence the men of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, most devoutly ac-

knowledged that God has wrought all our works in us, that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can come unto God but by Christ, and no man can come unto Christ except the Father draws him. No man knoweth the Son, but he unto whom the Father shall reveal him. Simon Bar-jona was blessed in this, that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Son of God, but the Father which is in heaven. And Paul also testifies the same. When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood. Again, God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Each of these Scriptures, separately considered, prove beyond all successful controversy that the saints are exclusively the workmanship of God, and all of them collectively confirm the same important truth. Of this truth every one that is born of God and taught by his Spirit, has a witness in his own experience, and as soon as he is born of the Spirit, he begins to lisp it forth in language like this: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul; he hath taken me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and he hath established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth," &c. The workmanship of God is inimitable. Neither men nor angels can create within us a clean heart, nor renew within us a right spirit. When men attempt to convert sinners, make ministers, direct the course of the gospel, or to protect the church, they make wretched work; their base imitations may be received by the world, but they are easily detected by those who are taught of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty." Truly he is a wonder-working God. "All

his works are perfect." But none of the works of men are perfect. And this is the work of God, saith Jesus, that ye believe on me, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is the gift of God.

"Created in Christ Jesus." As our natural creation was in Adam, so our spiritual creation is in Christ. What we understand by our creation in Adam is, that God gave us an existence in the person of Adam, which was to be developed in the proper time, by ordinary or natural generation; and so it is our understanding of the Scriptures on this subject, that God gave his people their original spiritual life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam and the Lord from heaven, and that all spiritual blessings were given to the church in him, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And as the apostle John has said, And this is the record, (or divine testimony) that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The Son of God is the life of his people, as it is written, When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. The life given to the church is called eternal life, and that which is eternal is without beginning of time or end of duration; yet it is spoken of as a creation in our text. What then are we to understand by the term, in its application to the spiritual existence of the church of God in Christ Jesus the Lord? To help our infirmities, we being finite creatures, God has in his word pointed us to natural things, as figures of things which are spiritual. Thus the natural creation of the world is illustrative of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But while we trace the instruction given in the figure, we should be careful to observe that the figure is natural, but the things signified are spiritual. As, for instance, in the new birth, allusion is made to a

natural birth, but not to signify that the new birth is a natural birth, but as in the natural, a new production or manifestation of natural life is developed, so in the second birth, a new and spiritual life is brought forth and made manifest. All we know of the natural creation of the world is, that God spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. All things were spoken into existence, which did not previously exist, and this calling things into existence was called creation; formation is another thing. But in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and all the years that fill up the space from the creation to the great burning day, are required for the development of what was in the beginning created.

The spiritual existence of the church is also attributed to the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. And it is thus set forth, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him." That is, by the word, which was with God, and which was God." "And without him was not anything made that was made." "In him" (that is, in the Word which was with God, and which was God) "was life, and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John bore witness of him, and cried, saying, "This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Thus as the existence of the natural world was embraced in the word of God's power, and sprung forth into development when that word of power was spoken, so the spiritual existence of the church, or the life of the church of God, was in the Word, which was with God, and the Word

which was God. This Word in which was life, and grace, and truth, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory was seen by the saints as that of the only begotten of the Father. The relative appellation of Son, applying to Christ in his mediatorial position, is based on his being the only begotten of the Father, and begotten full of grace and truth. His being the begotten Son of the Father, shows that his existence was in the Father, and one with him, and that his being set up as the mediatorial Head and life of his people, in eternity, is what we understand to be expressed by the terms begotten, set up, brought forth, sent, &c., together with every other term implying derivation or subordination, which is in the Scriptures applied to him, except such as apply to the flesh which he assumed, or was made, when made of a woman, and when he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of. Thus, as in the creation of the natural world, God spake all things into existence by the word of his power; so, in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, he spake the word and it stood fast. He spake, and said of Christ, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon the promise which God, who cannot lie, made before the world began. And hence it is affirmed that God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The third and last point to be considered is, Unto what end were we created in Christ Jesus? Our text informs us that they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Many portions of the Scriptures ex-

press substantially the same thing. Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The psalmist whose words we have quoted, says, "A seed shall serve him," &c. "They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." The good works in which God has ordained that his people shall walk are also ordained of God. God has said, they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness, and to this end were they created in Christ Jesus, and to secure this end he has not only taken them up out of the horrible pit, but he has established, or before ordained, their goings, and put a new song in their mouths. It is not in them that walk to direct their own steps, for God has before ordained that he will lead them in a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known, and put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. This people he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise, for he has before ordained it. No works are good in his sight, but such as he has before ordained for them to walk in, and of these the New Testament is replete with instruction, and the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All works which he has not ordained are evil. In no other works than those which he has ordained can we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

In our fleshly nature we are fallen and depraved, and the whole fountain of our carnal hearts and minds are polluted and wicked, and "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not

one. From our creation in Adam we have a nature which is totally depraved, in which there dwelleth no good thing. In that nature, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But in our spiritual creation in Christ, we are constituted members of him. His Spirit is put within us; his law is written within our inward parts, and we are redeemed from the law, and become dead to it by the body of Christ, that we should be married unto another, even to him that is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. By vital union with Christ we have our fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, neither can we bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, except we abide in Christ; for he is the true vine, and we are the branches.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe April 15, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

ROBERT VERNON DUDLEY

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear brother, Robert Vernon Dudley. He was born in Franklin County, Virginia, March 12, 1900, and departed this life October 5, 1965, at the age of sixty-five.

He was the son of the late Davis J. Dudley and Milia Holland Dudley. Brother Vernon was married March 4, 1927, to Goldie Marie Barnhardt, and is survived by his wife, four daughters and two sons: Mrs. Dorothy Shelar, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Jean McGuire, Vinton, Va.; Mrs. Lois McGuire and Mrs. Betty Booth, Hardy, Va.; Buford Dudley, Vinton, Va.; and James Dudley, Hardy, Va. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren; three sisters: Mrs. Blanche Brumfield, Reidsville, N. C.; Mrs. Eva Brumfield, and Mrs. Florence Maxey, Roanoke, Va.; and five brothers: Alphonso Dudley, Staunton, Va.; Henry Dudley, Salem, Va.; Rufus Dudley, Hardy, Va.; and DeWitt Dudley, Rocky Mount, Va.

The Lord gave him an experience of grace, and he was received into the church at Roanoke September 6, 1936, and baptized the

same day by Elder J. F. Stegall. He was strong in the faith that eternal salvation comes to God's children by His abundant mercy alone. He was a devoted companion, a loving father; and a meek and humble brother in Christ.

His funeral was conducted at the Roanoke Church by Elders Cecil E. Turner and Leonard J. Brammer; and his body was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by his sister,
Florence Dudley Maxey

ANNIE E. (DOLLY) BEACHAM

Mrs. Annie E. (Dolly) Beacham, a daughter of the late Dempsy and Belinda Tillett Perry, was born May 28, 1874, and died August 23, 1965, at the age of 91 years. She was the widow of the late Decatur Beacham, Jr., who preceded her in death by 34 years. She was the mother of four sons, Shelton B., Eldridge E., Dexter A., and Grady A. Beacham, all of which survive her except Grady A., who died in December of 1948. She is also survived by two daughters, Mrs. Blanche Midgett and Mrs. Zola Tillett; 14 grandchildren (one of whom she took at the age of three days and reared as her own); and 30 great grandchildren.

A native and life-long resident of Kitty Hawk, N. C., Mrs. Beacham united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in July of 1898, being baptized by the pastor, the late Elder Avery J. Austin. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and Grace Alone, and was faithful to her church as long as she was physically able, and ever ready to entertain members and friends of her church throughout the many years of her stay on earth.

Inasmuch as God has seen fit to remove her from our midst, may we be blessed to bow in humble submission to His will, and to give thanks for the privilege of having witnessed the reflection of our Saviour in her daily walk and conversation.

The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder George G. Trevathan, at the graveside on August 25, 1965, and her body laid to rest beside that of her husband in the Austin Cemetery at Kitty Hawk.

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

Done by order of conference, February 5, 1966.

Elder George G. Trevathan, Moderator
Eldridge E. Beacham, Clerk

COBB GORDON FISHER

Cobb Gordon Fisher, after a brief illness, departed this life August 4, 1965, to be with the one in whom he expressed hope to see and be like some day. Mr. Fisher, whose stay in this life was sixty-eight years, was the son of the late Joseph and Sara Fisher. He is survived by two sisters, Birdie and Annie, and a brother, Jim.

Mr. Fisher served in the United States Army in 1918 and 1919, and was given an honorable discharge with an excellent conduct award. He was a man who was loved and respected by those who knew him.

Though he was never blessed to join the Old Baptist Church, he was faithful to attend and was always ready and willing to defend the cause of truth. It was his pleasure to assist the church and brethren in any way he could. The Lord blessed him with a soft spoken voice and he was always finding good in all, never being quick to judge.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. T. Brown, Sam Jones, and D. B. Stokes, after which he was laid to rest, beside his parents, in the family cemetery near Verona, North Carolina, to await the morning of the resurrection when Christ shall come to call and gather His children home.

It is the writer's desire and prayer that God will reconcile his sisters and brother to their loss, making them to feel it's his eternal gain. May the God of all grace grant them peace and comfort in Him, through the Holy Spirit, which He has promised to His people, both now and forever. Amen.

D. B. Stokes, Jr.

IN MEMORY OF A FAITHFUL FRIEND
CAPTAIN E. E. SMITH

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform and we are often made to wonder at his handiwork; but surely God knows best in all things — yea, even on the afternoon of February 19, 1965, when he visited the quietness of the home of Captain E. E. Smith and called the beloved Captain away.

Captain Smith was born January 1, 1907, at Hope, Arkansas. On April 12, 1927, he was united in marriage with Miss Myrtle Inez Stunkard at Horton, Texas, and became a resident of Greenville, Texas, two years later, living there until his death.

Captain Smith served the City of Greenville as a Police Officer 27 years. Twenty of those years were served as a Captain, where he gained the love and respect of his fellow workers, the citizens of the Town, including those whom he had to arrest, and peace officers throughout the State.

As a peace officer he was unsurpassed, not one time was he known to fail in discharging his duties.

During World War II Captain Smith served a short time in the Armed Forces of his country. After his death his widow was given a Citation in his behalf for his unselfish service to his fellow man.

Captain Smith believed in salvation by grace, and trusted fully, in a sovereign God. He was a faithful friend to Mt. Zion Church, where he regularly attended services, and was always ready to assist with whatever needed to be done for the building, the grounds, and the people. He was truly a friend to man.

Captain Smith will long be remembered as a loyal and kind neighbor, a good and faithful husband, and as the standard bearer of the Greenville Police Department; also as a believer in Christ.

The beloved Captain is survived by his widow, Sister Myrtle Smith, and one niece whom they reared from a small child, together with a host of friends.

The funeral services were conducted at the Funeral Chapel in Greenville, Texas, by Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer, who also held a short graveside service at the Good Hope Cemetery in Franklin County, Texas, where the body was laid to rest beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await the resurrection morning, when we hope to meet him again on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, and forever be with the Lord in Glory. Amen.

W. W. Taylor

THOMAS JACKSON SMITH

Our father, the late Elder W. K. Smith, was married three times, and had a total of eleven children. The subject of this notice was the oldest by the second wife, Mahala Head. He was born in Union County, Arkansas, October 5, 1881; and passed away March 10, 1966, at the age of more than eighty-four years. At the age of fourteen he moved with his parents to near Spearsville, Louisiana, and the remainder of his seventy years were spent in this vicinity. He was married to Edna Breazeal November 27, 1906; and she preceded him in death about eight years. To this union five children were born: Ruby (Mrs. Cisco Barron), Spearsville; Clifton, Minden, La.; Frank, Monroe, La.; Graydon R., Minden; and Mrs. Glen Haynes, Junction City, Arkansas. All of these survive, together with twelve grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Surviving also are three brothers and three sisters: Harmon, Spearsville; Woody C., Eldorado, Ark.; Elder John Lee Smith, Spears-

ville; Mrs. Lizzie Williams, Dubach, La.; Mrs. Nannie Ogden, Spearsville; and Mrs. Irene Risinger, Spearsville.

He united with New Hope Church nearby May 4, 1918, and was baptized by his father. On May 1, 1921, he was ordained a deacon, which office he filled with fidelity for nearly forty-five years. His character in the church, as well as in the community was above reproach. Several years following Tom, his noble, lovely wife, Edna, came into the church. The Old Baptists always found a warm welcome in their home when they visited them; as did their relatives, friends and neighbors.

I would be cautious not to over-praise the man, but rather would I render all praise to the God of his salvation, who made him what he was: a true, faithful, meek, humble, and unassuming saint of God. He was always unswerving and uncompromising where he felt that truth and righteousness were at stake. He had an above average understanding of the Scriptures, and loved to converse upon eternal things. While he was unyielding in his belief, he was not dogmatic. Few, if any, times did he fail to attend his church's services, unless providentially hindered; and he found great delight in going far and near to be with the saints in their various meetings.

Elders R. W. Rhodes and W. W. Hudson, Jr., were blessed to conduct a lovely service at the home church, after which his mortal remains were placed in the Spearsville Cemetery by his wife.

Thus he is gone from us to his God, a subject of divine mercy, we have every reason to believe. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)

This is written at the request of his oldest daughter, Mrs. Cisco Barron, by his youngest brother,

Elder John Lee Smith
Spearsville, La.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Since it has pleased our God to remove from our midst our dear friend and fellow worshiper, Mr. Bruce McIntosh, on January 12, 1966, who was a constant attendant at our meetings, and always ready to assist the church in any way he possibly could;

And since he had served as Treasurer of the church for many years, handling this part of the business of the church in a most efficient manner;

And since we sorely miss him in our assemblings, be it

RESOLVED, That we give thanks to the God of all grace for giving us such a friend, and for sincerity in which he was blessed

to maintain the doctrine of God our Saviour; and be it

RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy to all the family, praying that the Lord may reconcile them in their bereavement; and that a copy of these Resolutions be given the family; one spread on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the New Valley Church in conference March 20, 1966.

John D. Wood, Moderator
Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Myrtle Keith Rhoades, born April 11, 1907, was called from this earth December 31, 1965, age 58. Her husband, Jimmie Rhoades, Mt. Vernon, Texas; one son, Derrell Rhoades, of Dallas; five sisters: Inez Hewett, Winnsboro; Mollie Walker and Florence Shofner, Mt. Pleasant; Katie Malton, Bogata; and Dora Shofner; three grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends all mourn her passing. She became a member of Good Hope Church, Franklin County, Texas, at the age of 32 years and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy of Dallas, Texas.

Sister Myrtle Rhoades was blessed with a great degree of faith, humility, patience, meekness, and love. She passed through great tribulations which worked patience, experience, and submission to the will of God. She loved those of like precious faith, her family, Bible, and *Signs of the Times*. We thank God for her life.

Elder W. W. Taylor and I conducted her funeral services at Good Hope Church on January 1, 1966. Her body was buried in Good Hope Cemetery to await the resurrection of the body.

A letter which was written to Elder Hardy on the third day after her baptism was published in the *Signs of the Times* of February, 1940. I quote a few statements from this letter: "I am so happy, it seems my spirit soars to heights unknown, and I have been led in paths I have not known; there is a song in my heart I cannot sing." (page 33) "I feel so unworthy of all the good things I have received. I want to tell everyone about how wonderful the Saviour is, but I just keep quiet and rejoice within." Sister Myrtle thought she was keeping quiet; yet, she was then writing wonderful testimonies of this Saviour which would be read by thousands. She felt she could not sing this song; yet, God graced her to sing it in her conversation, walk, and writings.

Written by her Pastor,
Elder E. J. Lambert

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1966

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

'Tis there within those pearly gates
Her crown of righteousness awaits;
No more a widow, there to be,
But Jesus' Bride, Eternally.

C. B. Britt

(Dedicated to Sister S. C. Davenport, and
to all true widows indeed in Israel. Can be
sung to long meter.)

"FLOWERS WHILE LIVING"

This poem I will dedicate
Unto a widow, wise and great;
One that indeed has filled her place
Prescribed by Paul — an heir of grace.

The wife of one great man she was,
A helpmate true — obeyed his laws;
And where things worse or better were
She never failed to persevere.

She bore his sons, his daughters too,
And to her family was true.
She cooked their meals, and washed their
clothes
And hardships suffered: no one knows.

She through them all did not despair,
But made her family her care;
Through cold and heat; through toil and pain,
She always worked, their good to gain.

In Proverbs thirty-one and ten —
And in this chapter to the end;
Her many virtues that excel
Wise Solomon does us them tell.

She often weary strangers lodged
And hardships never shunned nor dodged;
She also washed the feet of Saints
And ministered to their complaints.

She now for fourscore years and more
The good and bad of life has bore;
A good fight fought — has kept the Faith,
And shunned all save — "The Lord thus
saith."

Since her departure now is nigh,
She for a better world doth sigh;
And in herself doth grieve and groan,
And long for Heav'n, her future home.

"BACK TO ETERNITY"

"Now reader go along with me
Away back to eternity:
Go back beyond the days of youth
Where everything that was, was truth,

Beyond the sorrow and the tears;
Beyond the sufferings and the fears;
Beyond the anguish and the gloom;
Beyond the shadow of the tomb;

Beyond all trouble and all pain;
Beyond all losses and all gain;
Beyond all sobs and bitter sighs;
Beyond the limits of the skies:

Before there was a ray of light;
Before there was a day or night;
Before a prayer was ever prayed;
Before the world was ever made;

Before there was a moon or sun;
Before old time itself begun;
Before there was a now or then;
Before there was a where or when;

Before there was a here or there,
Or anything or any where:
Go back a hundred thousand years,
And farther still though filled with fears;

Go back until within the past
You fail to find the place at last,
Where the beginning you can see
At one end of eternity;

Go back until there's not a trace
Of anything but God and space;
Go all around, below, above,
Unlimited in power and love.

Away back there removed from sight,
Where everything that was, was right:
Away back there removed from sin,
Is where my Hope does begin."

— Selected

(Submitted by Elder J. N. Darnall.)

"RICHEST OF THEM ALL"

3347 Tutwiler,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

. . . We all would be glad if you are given a mind to visit us here in Memphis again. We are few in number here in this great city of over half a million people, but we feel to be the richest of them all, for we feel to have the gift of God's love: and thereby receive all the benefits of His grace, as it pleases Him to bless us along life's way. We believe, though the road gets rough and thorny, and the darkness gets severe, it is all according to his good pleasure in leading us about and instructing us of his loving kindness, and power to save. In due season he causes us to look unto the hills from whence our strength comes. An elder once asked us, (who were gathered in my home to listen to him, as we did at Elder Brown's home when you and Sister Wood were in his home,) "What are the treasures of darkness?" It sank deep into my heart and soul as to the answer.

I am not able to explain my feelings and thoughts as some can; but the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Some of my neighbors don't like the expression of "fearing God," for they say He is a loving God, and is willing and waiting to save you, if you will let him. But when Jesus comes into our heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit, we find our heart full of love to the overflowing; and are in amazement at the beauties around us. And when we look for the burden that was within us, it is gone. Faith has

come in and we feel the smiles of our Saviour in the forgiveness of our sins that we had never been able to feel before. When we would read Jesus' own words, "Ye must be born again," it was such a mysterious thing, we were afraid it would never come to us; and we knew of no way to be born again.

We tried the law to reform our ways, only to find we grew worse in the trying. So after so many efforts to bring ourselves in favor with the Lord, we felt our entire helplessness; and fully realized we knew not the way.

While I watched my friends join the various churches, and walk along in ease, I could not follow. I looked all around me, and there was no where for me to go. I went with my parents to the Old Baptist Church, and they were saying "Ye must be born again." It was all a dark mystery to me. But, by and by, suddenly my heart was filled to overflowing with sweet salvation. I had just found out, so to speak, that I was one of the redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and the time had come for him to make it known to me. How happy I was, no one can know except those of like precious faith, who have also been born again. I then felt all my troubles were gone, and life would be so sweet while I waited here for my time to leave this world. But, Oh, how little I knew of the ways of the Lord, who said that you are not only given to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his name's sake.

When in my weakness I went astray, He used the rod; and I learned to say with David, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Yes, we learn that it is in great tribulations and trials and sufferings that we learn obedience; and that we are still too weak to walk in obedience. Whom the Lord loveth he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receiveth; and to those who are exercised thereby, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruits of righteousness.

Now I must close; I had not intended to write so much, but hope it is in

line with the truth. Our minister says that he is not ashamed of the gospel, but is ashamed of himself; and that fits me. Give my love to Sister Wood; and come see us again sometime.

In a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

Delmar, Delaware 19940

Dear Editors:

I find that I have allowed by subscription to the paper to become overdue, and am enclosing a check for \$5.00 to renew another two years.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much, and I don't want to miss a single copy. It is full of good, and what I believe to be the truth. If you editors have a mind to write on the following Scripture: Revelation 6:6, I would be glad to read either directly from you, or through the columns of the *Signs of the Times*.

I am eighty years old and my eyesight is not too good; but I hope to be blessed to receive and read the dear old paper as long as I live.

An unworthy one,
Mrs. George (Estella) Jones

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."

(*Matthew 5:14*)

The above scripture has been on my mind, I trust, in answer to prayer for the purpose of writing an article for the *Signs*. This, Elder Ruston requested me to do. I am persuaded that the Lord knoweth the hearts and needs of His people and rightly feel totally inadequate to choose a scripture or interpret its meaning or convey its beauty without divine guidance.

The above scripture was spoken by Jesus to His disciples on the mount. There is much weighty matter for consideration in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 where we find the "sermon on the mount."

In our Lord's days there was a remarkable proverb, "Nothing is more useful than sun and salt." Sun dispelled darkness and salt prevented corruption. In the scripture under consideration (vs. 14) light is the key. I feel that it is advisable for me to dwell mainly on the latter part of the verse which reads "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

In the beginning of the 5th chapter it is said that Jesus *taught* them (meaning his disciples). When it says that Jesus *taught* them we know that they *learned* because there really is no teaching until there is learning. Jesus used a sound basic principle of teaching, namely, "to proceed from the known to the unknown." Jesus used the plain simple statement, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." to convey a truth which is as far reaching as time and so deep that man (by nature) cannot comprehend it. It conveys a truth of such magnitude that a number that no man can number, a number taken from every kindred and tongue, and every people and nation is under consideration.

In the simple statement, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," the indefinite article "a" gives the idea of any city. In the depth of the scripture we think of the definite article "the" referring to the city of God, eternal in the heavens, a particular city which is called "The Lord is there." (Ezekiel 48:35) When we consider a city being placed or built by man on a hill or high place we are reminded of the city of God which is not made with hands eternal in the heavens. When we think of the words "cannot be hid" which conveys the idea of "is not able to be hidden," we think of Zion the city of God which all that belong to Zion *must* behold. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, where-by we *must* be saved." (Acts 4:12)

We are reminded to think of the natural mind and the natural eye with

which we could behold the natural city. But please realize we could not see the natural city unless we had eyes which were open and there was light, either light to shine on the city or the city was giving off light. Light is really the key to this situation. When we consider the heavenly city we cannot behold it unless we have a spiritual mind and the spiritual eye (eye of faith). We cannot behold it unless we have spiritual eyes which are opened and there is spiritual light. Through experience I feel persuaded that with the natural mind I can comprehend the natural city, but I feel further persuaded that with the natural mind man cannot or ever will be able to comprehend the heavenly city. The key to the matter is the simple fact that there is no seeing without eyes to see and without light to manifest that which is to be seen. Further, there is natural light (the sun) and spiritual light (the Christ).

Jesus is spoken of as "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:32) "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:4-5) So it is that man walks in darkness until such time as his eyes are opened or the scales fall from his eyes as they did from Paul's eyes. Jesus said, "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) Paul spoke of Jesus as follows: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting." (I Timothy 6:16) In John it reads "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29) We do well to consider these things, as one such as John was given to see into the depths of the truth.

When the scales fell from my eyes the first thing I saw was that I was

a sinful (meaning full of sin) man, and that my heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I could see (in myself) no hope of anything here are hereafter. When light shines it makes manifest that which is already there, just as the light shows up that which is in the room. It was comforting to find that such as David, Paul and many others had similar experiences and were made to look to him for things natural and spiritual.

Another thing which the light from above shows, is that we do not have a continuing city here but we are made to look for that city which is above. We are caused to behold it by faith and you know faith is the gift of God.

As David says, "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." (Psalm 36:9) We are caused in this light to have a hope of dwelling in the eternal city through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The same light that showed Paul that his righteousness was as filthy rags also showed Paul that he had a hope (hope that is seen is not hope) in the righteousness of Christ and he was further persuaded that nothing shall separate the people of God (read Romans 8:38-39) from the fulfillment of that hope, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6:19-20) The above quotation sweetly expresses the significance of the hope in Jesus.

You know in this Jesus, whom to know is life eternal, there is life and light and the one cannot be separated from the other. If ever we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, if ever He has shone upon us then are we children of God and will dwell forever with him.

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?

Then Jesus is forever mine."

Just as natural plantings are ever drawn toward the natural sun, so are the plantings of the Lord ever growing and being drawn toward the Son of righteousness.

“Jesus draws the chosen race
By his sweet, resistless grace;
Causing them to hear his call,
And before his power to fall.”

The plantings of the Lord travelling on the way toward that light often give evidence of being children of God by crying unto him to show them the way and to keep them in the way. No words can express it better than the selection “Lead Kindly, Light.”

In the same fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus says, “Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel (a modius which contains nearly a peck), but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.” So, I am persuaded that the light of the city of God gives light unto all that belong to Zion in all ages. Now when we are made to consider further, we believe (not with the natural mind) with the spiritual mind that the people which must dwell in the new Jerusalem were chosen in Christ Jesus (who is the light) before the foundation of the world. “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will.” (Ephesians 1:4-5) The plain and simple fact of the matter is this that Zion cannot be hid from the whole Church of God because Jesus finished the work that his father gave him to do and is at the right hand of his father expecting until all of his enemies be made his footstool. The light of the city which is called “The Lord is there” must be given to all that he died for or his name could not be Jesus, because it says in Matthew 1:21, “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name Jesus: for he *shall*

save his people from their sins.” You see sometimes my friends I see it so clearly and so simply, and yet I realize that it is the greatest secret of all time as far as man is concerned; and in fact it is such a secret that man by all his searching will never find it out because these things are spiritually discerned.

What is the crux of the matter for you and for me, dear reader? Isn't it the simple question as to whether or not we have been enlightened with the true light? Have you ever thought of the result if the light that is in us be darkness? Oh how great that darkness! No wonder again and again we desire evidence that we are in the right way.

When we consider the city of God eternal in the heavens we are told in his holy word that it is a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. This scripture alone should be sufficient to show that man has nothing to do with the building of this city. The new covenant as found in Jeremiah 31:31-34, further proves that it is all the work of God. You know my dear friends it is a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and make no mistake the Lord knoweth them that are his, and made sure by his death on the cross that they shall dwell in Zion. Through Christ salvation is come for his people. No one that Christ died for will be left out of Zion, and it is just as true that there will not be one in Zion whom he did not die for. Friends this is a solemn matter but I believe that the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation inclusive bear record that it is true.

When we consider our loved ones and are made to think of the end of their natural lives, we feel to commit their way unto the Lord in this life, and how much more for a life to come. How we long sometimes to see some evidence of our prayers being answered, that in them we might see some evidence that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him. Consider the beauty of

the words in the 53rd Paraphrase which we sing.

“Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
in Jesus fall asleep;
Their better being never ends;
why then dejected weep?
Why inconsolable, as those
to whom no hope is giv’n?
Death is the messenger of peace,
and calls the soul to heav’n.”

One of the beauties of this truth is that his truth at all times firmly stood and shall from age to age endure. In this life we are given sweet foretastes of the king in his beauty. Too, we enjoy the sweet fellowship of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

“Midst scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints.”

Sometimes we are made to feel this love for those who are not members of the church. Sometimes we see it in the countenance, or in the tear-filled eye, or feel it in the grasp of the hand. How thankful we ought to be if we have reason to believe that the root of the matter be found in us. If it is we shall sing the song of the redeemed because the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Oh friends there is so much in the scripture, “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid,” that surely it is true the half has never been told.

Pray for me and mine. Pray for me as a licentiate who needs the true light to rightly divide the word of truth.

D. A. McColl,
594 Cayley Drive,
London, Ontario,
Canada

(It was my privilege to be present when our dear Brother D. A. McColl was received into the fellowship of the church in Canada in 1963. And I was blessed to hear him speak last Fall while in Canada, to the honor of God and the comfort of his people.

It affords us much pleasure to publish this letter, and hope God will continue to bless him to both speak and write to the praise, honor

and glory of God, and to the edification of His people. — D. V. S.)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1, Box 108
Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

Dear Elder Thompson,

For sometime I have had the desire to tell someone of some of my spiritual experience, but felt that I could not do it as I would like. I have an admiration for people who can express themselves so beautifully, for this I have never been able to do. I have wanted so much to try to write it that it has almost possessed me, as I think about it all during the day and wake up at night trying to write it in my mind.

I have decided that it must be to you, as you seem to want so much to hear someone else’s experience. “Go home to thy friends and tell what great things the Lord hath done for thee,” I seem to keep hearing you say. I think I know something of how the man felt when Jesus spoke these words to him.

Well, I told you when I asked for a home with you dear people, that I had been attending other churches in our community, but had not been satisfied. It had been my desire for many years to go home to my friends, but I couldn’t find the way. It seemed that the sign in front of one of the churches bothered me terribly. “Get Right With God,” it says. How, I wondered was this possible when I felt so helpless. It seemed that the other church said it was up to me to make “My decision.” This I felt I could never do because again I felt so helpless. As I read my Bible I found one line that seemed to mean so much to me, “It is good to wait upon the Lord.” This I knew was what I had to do for there was no other way for me.

During this waiting, one day while working, a sickness came over me and wanting so much to finish my day’s work I begged the Lord to please give

me strength. Immediately the sickness went away and my heart filled with gladness and thanksgiving. Only this sickness kept coming back, and each day I would beg for strength to work. It seemed that I kept telling my friends how much I was enjoying my summer, not realizing at the time that to enjoy one's work was a gift of God. I have never enjoyed a summer before as much as I enjoyed this past one, even though I felt so tired and weary most of the time. To my amazement, my garden was harvested and I had all of my work done when I became too ill to work.

One night before becoming very ill I had a dream; and at this time I was visiting a doctor in Radford. In this vision, I was standing in the road at my childhood home talking to my mother and daddy who stood just beside of the road. Hearing something, I turned and there was my bother Bob in a car. I ran to greet him, hugging and kissing him and my heart was bursting with joy. But mother and daddy didn't come and it seemed to bother me for a second, but then I was so happy that I told him that I was coming to see him. His eyes were shining and he looked so sweet to me, but he told me that he didn't stay home any more because it cost him his ——. Then I woke up. Trying to finish this line I filled in "life," as he did lose his life. (I think that the joy exceeded this dream the morning of my baptizing and I saw so many sweet faces and shining eyes.)

This dream bothered me terribly and I seemed to feel it had a meaning. I then tried to interpret it. I decided that I was going to die, as that was the only way for me to go to see my brother. He was in a car, so I thought that I would have a wreck and die. Each time I went to visit my doctor I thought that this would be the day; but as I neared home, I'd say "Well not today." It seemed that I was completely satisfied and ready to die for I thought

it would be wonderful to be as happy as I was in that dream. It seemed that I was so tired, weary, full of sin, a terrible mother and far from a good wife; and that perhaps this was God's way of giving my family someone better than me.

Then one night I had another vision, and this time I was very sick. I didn't want to be sick, but I was almost sure I was going to be before dying. Then I began to beg God to please help me.

Now this is the sweetest part of all! One day while sorting the fresh clean laundry, I reached for my stack of clothing to put into my drawer, and there on the very top piece was a long, narrow stain. I picked it up examining it to see what it was, and wondering why I hadn't seen it when I hung it on the clothes line to dry. The stain I decided was a blood stain but there was no way it could have gotten there! Suddenly the funniest feeling came over me, I cannot describe, and a question came to me, "What was God telling me?" I felt frightened and began to think of everything. Little did I know that I would visit another doctor in a few days and find that I needed surgery. The mark I would think, represented my surgery; but God had placed it on the left side and the surgery was to be on the right side.

After visiting my doctor a few days later, and arriving home, I laid down to rest. Suddenly I remembered, and thought, "This is what God was telling me," but he had put the stain on the opposite side of the surgery. Then realizing that maybe the garment was on the wrong side, this would place the stain on the right side. Immediately I arose and went to search for the garment, but "I did not find it at all." To me this showed God's almighty power here on this earth. I begged Him to please help me, and my heart filled with love, and I trembled to think that He had finally visited me in such a wonderful mysterious way. Then it seemed that I thought that I would feel so

much better if only I could get to the church just a few steps away. I planned to attend all three days of the association. I wanted to take in every minute of it, but things kept getting in my way and I would try to rearrange them so I could go. When the time came I was too sick to get there, so I begged God all the next week to please let me go to church on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday morning came and I got up feeling better, but so afraid a sick spell would hit me and I wouldn't get to go. As the time neared, I began to get ready, hoping I could go. Well Brother Thompson, as I sat there listening to you, it seemed that you wouldn't say a word that I could understand and my heart and soul began to cry. Suddenly it seemed that you couldn't speak the words fast enough. You said it wasn't what we got from our Bible every time, but it was how God led us from day to day; and I thought this meant so much to me that I could hardly keep my feet in place until you opened the door for anyone who wanted a home. I think that you know the rest, except that I'm not completely satisfied, but God has given me a wonderful hope, and what more could I ask for? He does everything so perfectly.

The fresh clean garment was old and full of holes. I feel that this represented me and my many sins. I think that the blood stain on the garment represented the blood of our dear Saviour when they pierced His side, while God only used the surgery to send me in search of the garment. Jesus came and with his precious blood, washed my sins clean away! Isn't that the sweetest and most perfect gift of God? Oh, how my heart does rejoice when I think upon such a wonderful gift given to such an unworthy me.

Signed and sealed with a sister's love,
I hope.

Mary C. Poff

“LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND”

“*And the Lord God said, Behold, the*

man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.”

(Genesis 3:22)

I hope and trust that I am given a desire to write a few lines about this for no other reason than to give glory and honor to our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ whom He has sent. I am mindful that if the writing of this is only the putting forth of my hand and natural mind, it will go no further than the flames and wrath of God that consumes all efforts and works of carnality. “For our God is a consuming fire.” (Hebrews 12:29)

We read further, “*So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*” (Genesis 3:24)

To me, this flaming sword represents the wrath of God which was placed between God and all men after the fall of Adam. Man was driven out, and it was so fixed that he could never approach unto God on his own: for this flaming sword turns every way to keep the way. There is no way left open to find *the way* by searching or studying. Man cannot of himself put forth, or have any fruitful thoughts concerning this way. God's ways and thoughts are as high above man's as the heavens are above the earth. (Isaiah 55:9) “His ways are past finding out.”

I believe that all men have at least a limited knowledge of good and evil, and sense in a measure that they are under the sentence of death as far as this natural life is concerned. With a fear for the unknown, they try to devise their own method or way of escape. John called such characters, “a generation of vipers,” and asked who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come. These have not been drawn into the flaming sword, and killed to the things of this world. Therefore they know nothing of the fruits that are

meet for repentance: a godly repentance.

So man was driven out, and the way of the Tree of Life was closed in so that man could never put forth his hand — the works of his hands; or his heart: as is the popular saying, "Give your heart to God."

To me the tree of life is the knowledge of God — the true God, who is ruling over, and carrying out all things as He wills: A just and holy God, demanding complete obedience to his laws: and giving us Jesus to fulfill the demand of his laws. Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

Before the foundation of the world God had a people, a people chosen in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 1:4) They all fell in Adam along with all mankind; and found themselves in a lost condition when they could not put forth their hand. But God put forth his arm, "Therefore his arm brought salvation to him." (Isaiah 59:16) He sent forth his only Son Jesus into this sin cursed world, to be crucified; to pass through the flaming sword: to bleed and die, and rise again, to make a way of escape: an highway that shall be called "The way of holiness." (Isaiah 35:8) Jesus came forth to do the will of the Father. (John 6:39) Power was given him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. (John 17:2) It was the Father's will also that none could come — put forth his hand — to Jesus, except He draw them. (John 6:44)

Now, one, when he begins to see himself as he really is, would not and could not go to God: He would not walk into this flaming sword, this wrath of God; but if, possible, would flee from it. But it was God's purpose from all eternity, to bring back, to redeem the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whith-

er I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath. And I will bring them unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely." (Jeremiah 32:37)

So, the child of God, as he is drawn, and his eyes are opened, becomes alarmed as he sees he is approaching the wrath of God; and he begins to try to protect himself, or to put forth something that will quench the flames; *but it is all consumed*. Just when he sinks down, expecting to be completely destroyed, Jesus appears: "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43:2) Yes, Jesus causes them to dwell safely.

Now the natural man, the earthen vessel, must stop here, dead to God's holy law because of sin; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But the new creature is lifted up in the arms of Jesus, and taken over on this highway where only the redeemed shall walk, and given a glimpse, a little foretaste of what God has prepared for them that love him: and this for only a short season now and then, as it pleases God as long as the man is in this world. Jesus said his sheep go in and out and find pasture; and Paul said that he died daily. So, as long as we are in this earthly tabernacle, we must die to the things of this world, each and every time we are given to feast on heavenly things.

I believe this flaming sword is still right there where God placed it in the beginning; and will remain until the end of time for this present evil world, when it shall move forward to destroy all things in its path, with a fervent heat. (2 Peter 3:7-10) But not before "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever

be with the Lord." (Thessalonians 4:16, 17)

So, Jesus is coming again to gather these bodies that must be changed before they can travel the highway of the redeemed; where they shall approach the pure river of water of life, (a pure river — no more through a glass darkly) where in the midst and on either side is the tree of life. Then they will be able to put forth their hand and eat of the tree of the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ their Redeemer, and live forever in a meeting that will never end. They shall see his face, and be satisfied.

"He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20)

Paul Morton,
2402 N. Main Street,
High Point, N. C.

FROM ELDER HAND

5840 Court O. C. P.
Birmingham 28, Ala.

Dear Brother Wood:

Your Editorial on Ezekiel 37:1-14, in May issue of the *Signs* was such a feast to me that I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed it. You seem to share my views on it exactly.

. . . I see in this scripture, as all others in the Old Testament, a natural representation of the experiences of the Child of Grace in a spiritual way. I believe I have seen myself as Ezekiel saw those dry bones; and I hope I have experienced the great shaking that took place, as I began to see my standing in nature begin to be shaken and torn apart. Isaiah said, "For the windows on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake." (Isaiah 24:18) And in the 23rd verse of the same chapter we see what this shaking accomplishes for Jerusalem. Paul in the 12th chapter of Hebrews, 26th verse, refers to the words of Haggai concerning this great shaking.

(Haggai 2:6) And verse 27 of 12th chapter of Hebrews, shows what shall be accomplished, "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

What a wonderful gift Christ is to God's people! What a stabilizing effect He has in their life! No wonder Paul said, "Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is Him in us the hope of glory; and the scripture is fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

May God bless you and all the others who so earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints. My wife and I remember so well when you came to visit our little church here in Birmingham, and would so welcome another visit our way . . .

In love and fellowship,
Claude and Irene Hand

LOVES THE OLD TRUTHS

101 Venice Park,
Lexington, Ky. 40503

Dear Brother Spangler:

Greetings in Christ's dear name.

I celebrated my eighty-seventh birthday March 10th. I was very sick the month of February, and was in the hospital with an inflamed sciatica nerve. But the dear Lord restored me, and I am back in my lonely apartment; and am thankful to Him who is keeping me here: Jesus knows every step my feet must go.

I wish to thank you for the blessings the *Signs of the Times* have brought me. I love it because it teaches the dear old Primitive Truth. I do not believe the progressive movement that is flooding the South, but the old truths so dear to my heart. I would surely have enjoyed meeting you, but I am not able to make the trip. How I wish I could

hear the dear brethren of the *Signs* who are sending out the old story of Jesus and his love. Pray for me.

Your unworthy sister,
Emma H. White

Rt. 1,
Martin, Tenn.

The Signs of the Times has been in our family for almost a hundred years. My grandmother took it when I was a small boy, and I have some of them now; and I am past eighty-two years of age.

We enjoy reading the many experiences of the Lord's children. May He give you the grace and wisdom to carry on.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
J. E. Jones

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

The Lord willing an all-day meeting will be held at the Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y. on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1966, (August 6th). Lunch will be served at noon.

All brethren and interested friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church, Franklin County, Virginia, August 5, 6, and 7, 1966. To reach Bethel Meeting House from Rocky Mount, Virginia, take Rt. 40 to Glade Hill and turn left two miles. From Gretna take Rt. 40 to Glade Hill and turn right about two miles.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Association is to be held with the Danville Church as host, but will be held at Malmaison Meeting House all three days: July 8, 9, and 10, 1966. Malmaison is located on State Road 726, between Highways 29 and 360. Visitors from any direction should follow Highway 29 to road 726, which is about five miles north of Danville, Virginia.

We greatly desire the presence of our brethren and friends.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixtieth session of the Upper Country Line Association will be held at Cobb Memorial High School, the Lord willing: Moon's Creek Church is the host church.

Cobb Memorial High School is located between State Highways 29 and 158, approximately 4 miles north of Casville, N. C., off Highway 158, and 4 miles south of Pelham, off Highway 29, in Caswell County, N. C.

The session will meet the 3rd week end July 16, 17, and 18, 1966. We extend a cordial invitation to our corresponding brethren and ministers to meet with us at that time.

Donald E. Smith, Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, on August 20 and 21, 1966.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk
Newcastle, Me. 04553

SOLDIER CREEK UNION

The next session of the Union Meeting of the churches of the Soldier Creek Association will be held with Zion Church, south Seventh Street, in Mayfield, Kentucky, beginning Friday morning before the fifth Sunday in July and continuing through Saturday and Sunday. Highways 80 and 45 come into the city.

Friends of the Old School Primitive Baptists are invited to come and be with us.

Effie Bowden, Clerk
Benton, Ky. 42025

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To May 1, 1966)

Mrs. William Johnson, Del.....	\$ 5.00
H. L. Gardner, Ark.....	2.00
Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Folmar, Ala.....	2.00
Mrs. Nanna M. Carney, W. Va.....	5.00
Mrs. Harry Pruitt, N. C.....	1.00
Arthur Merigold, Me.....	5.00
Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va.....	17.00
Homer Bailey, Del.....	2.00
J. M. Shockley, Md.....	5.00
N. R. Roberson, N. C.....	2.00
Mrs. J. Luther Brake, N. C.....	2.00
C. D. Turner, N. C.....	3.00
John H. Simpson, Wash.....	1.00

Danville, Virginia

July, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

*Published each month by***SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.**

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICER. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.**EDITORS****Elder David V. Spangler**R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.**Elder John D. Wood**

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS**Elder W. D. Griffin**

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

*All letters for this paper should be ad-
dressed and remittances made payable***TO****SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.**R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541**EDITORIAL****THE KISSES OF HIS MOUTH***"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 experi-

ence 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 plan 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 re-

sponded 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 talk 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 spake 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 45:2: "Thou art 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 persons' words quoted in the Bible; if it were necessary for me to dispose of all persons' 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 submitted to John's baptism. 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' baptisms 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.

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

"*Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times.*" (Matthew 16:3)

To discern the "signs of the times" means to be aware to what a succession of events point; and to which they

will eventually lead: this is the sum of accumulative evidences.

In this article we refer only to things which are commonly called spiritual: for under this heading many foreboding events are accumulating, which can only lead to further, and, if possible, wider departure from the primitive simplicity of the gospel.

As we begin to consider the subject, it is necessary to recognize that there are in fact just two kinds of churches abroad in the world: One follows the gospel doctrine and order, as declared in the beginning by the Lord and his Apostles, (and which still exists, since God said he would not leave himself without a witness); the other is after that which the apostle described as "another gospel": against which he solemnly warned and admonished the brethren. Under this heading we cannot but include all other religions, since they are likewise opposed to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First. The Doctrine of the Gospel:

The gospel preached by the Apostles was, of course, identical with the teaching of Jesus. And of it Paul said he was not ashamed, "For it is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe . . ." The Gospel has its clearly defined teaching, and is the declaration of the fulfillment by Jesus Christ of all things spoken by the prophets. So, when Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," he sealed forever any other interpretation of them; or that there was any other reason for their preservation.

When Jesus clearly stated that his purpose in coming into the world was to save his people from their sins, it is evident that He himself was *the way* his Father had provided for the redemption and salvation of His people. And it is apparent that those whom he called brethren, *believed all things which He preached and taught* after they were brought into the full

understanding of what he taught; and it should be evident that none can properly be called Christian who believe otherwise than what he taught.

His Apostles taught no other things than those Jesus delivered unto them; and the churches were set in order and established upon these things. In spite of all the intervening years, and all the attempts of unbelieving men to rid His doctrine from the face of the earth by declaring that parts of it are inconsistent with the nature and being of God, there are yet those who believe and hold the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, without admixing the commandments of men. They believe and hold to these things because God has not ceased to call men out of darkness into his marvelous light; nor ceased to shine in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; nor ceased to bring all his own to the spiritual birth, and seal them with the holy spirit of promise — the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

God is in no way dependent upon the voluntary zeal and work of men for the promoting, or the continuing of his church in the world. As the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he does all the work: the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling: He does everything for the bringing of his beloved people unto glory. He has ordained all things to this end, and for his own glory: whether men, times, or events, so that all things are accomplishing his determined purpose. God has set up his Kingdom in the world, and it shall not be destroyed, or left to other people; but shall stand forever, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

So, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures that God *loved His people, and chose them in His Son before the world began*. He sent His Son into the world to redeem all these from their sins: He died for their offences, and rose again

for their justification. All of these compose the Church of God: as individuals they are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began. God has his own way in bringing each one of them into the knowledge and comfort of his love and mercy, so that it is declared that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God has, of course, given gifts unto men, qualifying them to preach his gospel, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for edifying the body of Christ; but certainly not to go outside of the election of grace, and undertake to add to the redeemed family.

The above things make up the sum and substance of The Gospel; but there is

Second, Another Gospel:

Herein lies what we presently have in mind concerning the "signs of the times." Any other gospel — any other teaching, must be considered counterfeit; and, being so, has many similarities of the Gospel. It speaks of grace, of mercy, of being born again, of Christ the Redeemer, etc. But the emphasis is always upon the will of men being able to accept or reject what is called an *offered salvation* to everybody; which makes everything in the way of salvation dependent upon men, whether they will or will not accept and believe to the saving of their souls. This leaves the sacrifice of Jesus questionable both to its application and effectiveness. And, if true, would destroy the eternal choice or election of God; and, if true, would destroy the whole purpose of God in sending his Son into the world; and would prove that Jesus failed to do what his Father sent him to do.

Such teaching is well called another gospel, since it is contrary to what Jesus and the Apostles left on record in the Scriptures. If God is unable to

do his will, he ceases to be God. *We thank Him that this can never be.* But, if he is, it would confirm the recent pronouncement that, "God is dead"; and we readily agree that the God which many have been preaching all these years, is dead. For many have preached and believed that he does not control all things, and that he has stiff competition in the Devil; and is even subject to men's wills as to whether he can save them, or not. It is true, there were those who would not come to him; but they were pronounced as being of their father the Devil, and not of those unto whom Jesus came as a Saviour.

Now, some more of the signs of the times: When I was a boy going to the schools of such teachers, it was freely asserted that if the churches could get enough money and men, (which they expected without question,) they would be able to Christianize the world, the whole world, save the heathen, etc.: Then wars would cease between men and nations, and there would be a sense of brotherhood among men. That was more than sixty years ago: The whole scheme is a failure. Men do not seem to learn that human nature cannot be purged of its nature by the urging of other things which are of the same nature; or that a profession of religion of sorts means there is a real change in heart. Even the quickened subjects of grace do not experience a change in their "old man," except as the Spirit subdues and controls him; and they are made to hate the things of their flesh, expecting someday to put on immortality. Paul knew what a wretched man he was in his flesh, and desired to be delivered "from the body of this death."

How many hundreds of years this work of men has been going on, I do not know; but it is certain that it has been based upon nothing more solid than mortal men. Paul wrote Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men

shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of these that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: From such turn away." Also he wrote, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

This is a serious indictment; but the signs of the times all along have proved how right he was; and more: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:3-12)

The signs of the times today show that men know their designs have failed; but, being nothing daunted, they now move to take a new start: to

"back up," join forces, and use every available means — natural, that is. With individual church organizations giving up their long cherished freedom, joining with every conceivable and diversified doctrine, to form a mighty phalanx, reputedly to fight sin and the Devil, and save those within its clutches; to fight what must be a losing battle, since all the redeemed of the Lord have been taken care of by the eternal love of God, who deals with his people directly through his Spirit; and sends his servants to feed and comfort them, and perform those ordinances which he has established in his church, for as long as the church is in the world.

These are some of the signs of the times religiously. They seem good, we suppose, to everyone except those who do not name the name of Jesus, (and some of these are joining in,) and except those who have learned that the Lord made a new covenant, which he has applied in their hearts, in which it is said, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." And likewise those who believe with Peter, "For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Those who are so taught will not join in such things to which the signs of the times point. Those who have felt the power and grace of God in bringing them into the knowledge and joy of salvation, know that an empty profession cannot bring salvation; and that the mere act of being baptized is not regeneration; and that none of the other so called sacraments as commonly administered and adjudged, bring about that which is solely the work of the Spirit of God, in revealing and applying what the election of grace has ac-

completed.

The signs of the times are not encouraging to us, but they do serve to make us glad that we know that all things are still under the control and disposition of our God, who said unto his Son Jesus Christ, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

There is a great multitude of people who, ". . . cannot discern the signs of the times."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God's judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt

has been found upon all the posterity of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." — Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7.) By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit." — Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is of all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also

should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and shall never again come into condemnation, for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law, but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third. The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is

the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand the testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his

faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places; and they are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine relation assures us that "The Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us." — Isaiah xxxiii. 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

"Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin."

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up

of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1856. We are glad to re-publish it, for the truth it contains should put many at ease who have been concerned about the Judgment. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

DEACON ARTHUR A. CHAMBERS

Brother Arthur A. Chambers was born July 17, 1893, at Pearsonville, Texas; and departed this life January 4, 1966, in the West Texas Hospital, Lubbock, Texas.

He was united in marriage to Miss Myrtle Boen March 10, 1918, at Gorman, Texas; and to this union six children were born: two daughters died in infancy. He and his family lived in Texas until 1951, when he moved to Rogers, New Mexico; and have resided in that community since.

Brother Chambers joined Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, Rising Star, Texas, in July, 1934; and was ordained deacon May, 1936. He was a lovely member and a faithful deacon. I trust I am thankful of having had the privilege and pleasure of having him one of my deacons for many years.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his dear companion, Sister Myrtle Chambers; two sons: Lohman P., of Dallas, Texas, and William J., of Del Rio, Texas; two daughters: Mrs. Dorothy Varnell, Rogers, N. Mexico, and Mrs. Betty Elliott, Portalis, N. Mexico. And one brother, Charlie Lee Chambers, Gorman, Texas; three sisters: Mrs. Clara Hansford, DeLon, Texas; Mrs. Annie Logan, Gatesville, Texas; and Mrs. Alice Gist, Sundown, Texas; and eleven grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

His funeral service was conducted by Elder C. M. Haygood, assisted by Elder Durwood Bradley. He was laid to rest in Mt. Zion Cemetery, near Rogers, New Mexico, to await the second coming of the blessed Saviour.

Written and submitted for publication upon the request of his dear widow.

Elder C. M. Haygood

MRS. SUSAN EVER LANGWELL

Mrs. Susan Ever Langwell was born near Harrison, Arkansas, February 21, 1881; and passed away in a hospital in Henryetta, Oklahoma, November 27, 1965, at the age of more than eighty-four years. Her husband, Brother Roy Langwell, passed away in May, 1949.

She leaves to mourn her passing, five sons: Bryan, Seminole, Okla.; Walter, Holdenville, Okla.; Dennis, Fowler, Calif.; Solomon and Leonard, Henryetta, Okla. Also one brother, N. W. Patton, Morris, Okla.; one sister, Mrs. L. W. Langwell, Compton, Calif.; twenty grandchildren, and twenty-nine great grandchildren.

Sister Langwell united with the Primitive Baptist Church more than fifty years ago. She was patient, kind and considerate, and loved to talk of the mercy and power of the God she loved: having a hope that she was one of those chosen in Christ who would be raised with His likeness, see him and be satisfied.

She will be missed by the little flock at Dustin, Oklahoma. May the God of all grace, and the Father of mercy comfort the family and her brethren and sisters; and, if His will, reconcile us unto the truth that we too must pass through death before we can enter into something better, even that which He promised before the world began: life with Him.

Services were conducted by the writer in Buchanan Funeral Home, and she was laid to rest in Okemah Cemetery beside her husband.

Her pastor,
C. U. Landers

ROBERT M. JONES

With a sad, heavy heart I attempt to write Papa's obituary. I could never tell how much his life meant to me. He was born in Dickson County, Tennessee, January 7, 1885, and died October 28, 1964, making his stay on earth more than seventy-nine years. He died of a heart attack.

He was united in marriage to Alice Viola Coone on December 17, 1905; and to this union three boys and five girls were born, all of whom are living. He was a wonderful father and husband, and we all miss him so very much; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1908, at Bardon's Creek, Dickson County, Tennessee. He and mother moved to Texas in February, 1908. His pleasures were all in attending his meetings and meeting his brethren and friends, never missing except in case of sickness. We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who called him from our midst to await the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from their graves, and behold His face in righteousness, and be satisfied. May the Lord bless and comfort all who mourn his passing.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Lloyd Wall, October 30, 1964, at East Mountain Church, in the presence of a large congregation. His body was laid to rest in East Mountain Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers, to await the coming of his Saviour.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this writing be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by his son, who loved him.

Arthur B. Jones

LEVETTA (PUSSY) BEASLEY

Sister Levetta Beasley passed away November 27, 1965. She was born February 15, 1889, making her stay on earth seventy-six years. She was the mother of four daughters and one son.

She united with the Providence Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1906, and was a faithful member and firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone.

May God comfort and sustain the bereaved family. We believe our loss is her gain. Written by order of the church in conference.

also

SISTER LAURA PERRY

Sister Laura Perry was born September 8, 1891 and passed away December 26, 1965, at the age of seventy-four years. She united with Flatty Creek Church August 29, 1948, and was transferred by letter to Providence Church in October, 1959.

Sister Laura was faithful to her church, and a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She traveled considerably among the brethren, and had many friends among them. She was loved by all who knew her, and is greatly missed by them.

She is survived by her husband, two daughters, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

May God bless and comfort all who mourn. Written by order of the church in conference.

also

BROTHER MILTON PERRY

Brother Milton Perry passed away January 9, 1966; he was born August 25, 1914, making his stay on earth fifty-two years. He united with Providence Church in June, 1951.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and one daughter. We wiss our dear brother, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

May the Lord bless and comfort his family and loved ones.

Written by order of the church in conference.

Elder George G. Trevathan, Mod.
Eldridge D. Beacham, Clerk

LUCY A. HEDRICK MATTOX

Lucy A. Hedrick Mattox was born May 11, 1871. Died December 27, 1965, making her stay on earth ninety-four years, seven months and sixteen days. She was united in marriage to S. D. Mattox June 18, 1905. Her husband preceded her in death in 1933. She was the daughter of James Hedrick and Sarah Bobbitt Hedrick.

She leaves the following stepchildren: H. M. Mattox, W. L. Mattox, J. A. Mattox, A. E. Mattox, all of Chatham, Va.; and Mrs. Elva Dillon of Moneta; Mrs. J. H. Oakes of Chatham; and Miss Ruth Mattox of the home. Also one sister, Mrs. Kizzie Bowen of Danville, Va., and one brother, A. A. Hedrick of Chatham, Va.

Sister Mattox joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1903. A faithful one has passed into the great beyond. One whom I felt was a Mother in Israel. She was firm in the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace. I visited her bedside a good many times and she always greeted me with a smile and bid me goodbye with tears. We feel that her life, her walk, and her conduct, love and fellowship will be remembered by us as long as we live. I know we will miss her, but we must submit to the will of the Lord. May He give us grace to look to him.

Her funeral was conducted at Scott's funeral home in Chatham, Virginia, by her Pastor, Leonard J. Brammer, assisted by Elder O. K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. A large crowd attended the funeral to show their love for Sister Mattox, and their sympathy to the family.

May the Lord in his mercy bless those that mourn and give them grace to be reconciled to his will.

"O where shall rest be found,
Rest for the weary soul?
'Twere vain the ocean's depths to sound,
Or pierce to either pole.

The world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh;
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.

Beyond this vale of tears,
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love."

Her pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

SISTER NATALIAH M. BOCOCK

This is a brief but true account of one who knew what it is to be lost and saved. She was born January 30, 1894; and died April 30, 1962. She is survived by her husband John T. Bocock, their children, three sisters and one brother.

A revealed Christ, His sin atoning blood and justifying righteousness, was the firm foundation of her hope. Many years ago being impelled by need and drawn by love, she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Roanoke, and was baptized by Elder Jim Stegall. Elder Stegall knew the gospel he preached.

At times mother was filled with joy and peace in believing, but frequently she was exercised and tried. Mother loved to have the Lord's children in our home. Graciously independent of creature verdicts, the smile of God was her one desire, and at the last time, I am persuaded, His smile will be her satisfaction.

For long years mother was a cancer victim, but amidst it all Jesus made His Name to her as ointment poured forth and blessed her in every trial.

The Lord sent able preachers and many saints to weep around her grave.

The small tribute this brief obituary pays to a worthy lamented saint now safely garnered, will be endorsed by all who knew her.

Written in sadness by one of her children.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, in taking by death our dear brother, Andrew Jackson Moore, Sr.

Brother Moore was born January 29, 1872, and died December 27, 1965; making his stay on earth 93 years, eleven months. He united with the church at Hopeland in September. He was a faithful and humble member, an example of Christian humility. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that our loss is his eternal gain; and we send our deepest sympathy to his family. Second, That three copies of this Resolution be made: one to be sent to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one placed on the church records.

Written by request of Hopeland Church.

Elder W. B. Barnes, Moderator
Margaret Davenport, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved brother, Brother Levi Milbon Donaldson. Brother Donaldson was born on October 29, 1924, and died October 29, 1965, thus making his stay upon this earth 41 years to the day.

Although our dear brother was received into the fellowship of our little flock approximately 3 years before his departure, it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that we were blessed with associations prior to this time, inasmuch as we were blessed to see the manifestation of God's love in his daily walk and conversation long before his request for a home. Yes, he was a faithful husband, a faithful father to his children, but most comforting to us was his faithfulness to his God and the church before and after his confession in-so-far as we were blessed to see and understand from the fruits he bore. Although his afflictions were not light he remained faithful, and with much effort, continued to attend his meetings until the time of his departure.

The church at Skewarky grieves over her loss, but we hope and feel our loss is our brother's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because he professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and was abiding in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city, eternal in the heaven's whose builder and maker is God.

He leaves to mourn his passing his widow, Sister Virginia Donaldson, to whom he was united in marriage on October 3, 1945; four sons and one daughter all of the home. Also surviving are his mother and stepfather, four brothers and two sisters. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Elder W. E. Grimes. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery beneath a lovely arrangement of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which he was held by his many friends.

RESOLVED: That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, *Old Faith Contender*, and *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1965.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1966

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
8/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A VISION OF GLORY

(Rev. 21, 22)

"A vision I had of a scene most bright.
Language must fail to describe it aright;
Of a fair city bathed in unearthly light,
Through which a pure river ran.

Its mansions sparkled with glistening sheen,
Of amethyst, topaz, and emerald green;
Such dazzling rays never surely were seen
Since the world and time began.

There were trees with fruit and foliage rare
Full of healing balm for the nations. There,
On a radiant throne all bright and fair,
Sat One like the Son of man.

Its streets were of gold like a molten sea;
Its walls were of jewels most rare to see;
And its gates of pearls shone gloriously,
In light from the jasper throne.

In the quivering waves of the ambient air
Flew ethereal forms of angels fair,
Who encircled the steps of the throne; and
there
Bright burning seraphim shone.

Now a countless multitude caught my sight,
Who walked in those realms of endless light,
In robes which were wash'd and perfectly
white
In the blood of the Lamb once slain.

And now, in this paradise safe shut in,
They are free from pain, and sorrow, and sin;
And the terrible burden of guilt within
They never will feel again.

They are those who were chosen by sovereign
grace

From the number of Adam's fallen race,
To behold in glory that Saviour's face
Who was crucified for them.

How I long to be there, in that land of the
blest,
In the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness
drest,
To spend an eternal Sabbath of rest
In the New Jerusalem!"

From The Gospel Standard of 1880. (Selected by C. W. Vass.)

"I stood in life's fair morning hours,
My hand upon the door,
And from the pathway outward looked,
And scanned the pathway o'er
A little way through pleasant fields;
Through meadows fair and sweet
Where one might walk with joyful heart,
And light and careless feet.

And then more narrow grew the path,
And rougher grew the way:
Beset by dangers, and overhung
With shadows cold and gray.
'Ah me,' I said, 'life is so long,
So full of hopes and fears,
With much to do and much to bear
For many days and years.'

With joys that I must have, or give,
And tears that I must weep,
And many foes to meet and fight
Before death giveth sleep:
And I must journey all alone
This rough and darksome way.
Alas, Alas! Before the end
My feet will go astray.

But while I trembled at the door,
And murmured in my fear,
A tender voice of wonderous power
Fell on my waiting ear:
'Fear not, my child, but take my hand
And journey by my side:
I know the way — I am your God,
Thy counsellor and guide.'

And so I stood on life's dark way
Close clinging to His hand;
And He has led me safe along —
My leader, great and grand.

And when dark clouds encompass me,
My heart is brave and strong;
And I can sing through life, in death,
Faith's glad triumphant song."

(Author unknown to us. Sent by the late Sister Fetter to Sister Topping.)

SOME CORRESPONDENCE IN 1902

Rt. 2,
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing some correspondence between Sister Lulu Allen Aldridge and the late Elder L. H. Hardy. Elder Hardy was pastor of Prospect Hill Church at that time, (1902). Sister Allen joined there just after this correspondence. Later she married Mr. John Aldridge at Haw River, and moved her membership to McCray Church, where she remained until her death April 29, 1966.

We never saw a more faithful and devoted Christian Mother in Israel than she was. She lived to the ripe age of ninety-five. I felt that many of the loved ones in Christ would appreciate reading these letters.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. C. King

LETTER FROM
ELDER L. H. HARDY
TO MRS. LULU ALLEN ALDRIDGE

Reidsville, N. C.
October 21, 1902

Miss Lulu Allen,

My Dear Friend:

Since Sunday there has been such a fellowship in my heart for you that I just want to tell you about it. Indeed, I have had fellowship for you much longer than that; but then it was strongly renewed.

The subject on which I spoke on Sunday, was not calculated to stir so

deeply one who had never felt those things of which I spoke; but to those in whose hearts the grace of God reigns, it brings such sweet fellowship that those little ones are drawn sweetly together in the Spirit of our dear Lord.

Such has been the case in this instance. I am satisfied that the good Lord has been merciful to you, as I hope he has to me, and given you a good hope through His grace. Now, dear lady, I want to say to you, "Why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." I know that sometimes the amusements which are enjoyed by the young, hold some of the little ones back from Christian duty, but if they would stop a moment and think that those joys are but for a moment, and often cause leanness of soul. Yes, they perish, like all natural things, with the using. The joys we have in the house of the Lord are sweet here; and then they do not stop here: what we have of them in this life, are but momentary, and but an earnest of the blessedness of the joys to come. Again, remember what the dear Lord has sacrificed for you and for all of his; and you will see how little you sacrifice when you turn away from the world, to follow Christ in the watery grave.

I would but cannot tell you the joys of obedience to His word, for none can know that, but those who learn in obedience.

Let me entreat you not to be among those who halt between two opinions, but come home to your brethren and tell what the Lord has done for you, and that he has had mercy on you. It will do you good.

Believe me to be your true friend; and excuse me for taking this privilege.

The Lord bless you,
L. H. Hardy

REPLY

Carr, N. C.
October 24, 1902

Mr. L. H. Hardy,
Reidsville, N. C.

My Respected Friend:

Your letter was quite a surprise to me, yet I must confess that it afforded me much consolation to have you express yourself so warmly toward me. If I could only feel worthy of your fellowship, it seems to me that all things would be well with me. But, Oh, when I examine myself, I find so much corruption and sin in this old body, that I am made to ask, if I were a child of God, would it be thus with me? Surely, those who have been brought from death unto life, are not as vile as I feel to be at times.

I often look at those whom I believe to be God's dear children, and wonder if they are as sinful as I am. I sometimes feel I would like to be one among that precious band, but, Oh, I am so doubtful, and fear so much that I may be deceived; and, if I am deceived, I do not want to deceive other people. And, Mr. Hardy, let me add right here, that since I have received your letter the tempter has come and said, "Why have you tried to deceive that man?" 'Tis true, I was deeply moved by your preaching last Sunday, and thought it was the best sermon that I had heard. You happened to strike a subject that my mind had been exercised on all the week previous, (more or less). And I could witness with so much that you said, that I could not help from thinking if that was the way the Little Ones had been drawn together, that I must be one too. But, Mr. Hardy, if one so unworthy as I am can claim a hope in Christ, it is so small, and I have such few evidences, that I have always been afraid to acknowledge it.

From my earliest recollections, I have always had serious thoughts of death and eternity; but I would think that I would be a good girl and would be blessed. But as I grew older, I found that if my righteousness depended upon my own good doings, I should be lost;

for in my flesh no good thing dwelleth, and I felt sorely dependent upon the mercy of the Lord. I first realized my helpless condition on the night of the Charleston earthquake; and I commenced to call upon the Lord for his mercy toward me, and would pray for him to convict and convert me. But if I wasn't already convicted, I have never been. And right here is where I am puzzled, for in all of the experiences that I have ever heard told or ever read, they would always know just when they were delivered. But, if I have ever been, I can't tell just when or where. I know that there has been a change with me, but just when or in what way, I have never been able to tell. This causes me to doubt my case so much.

I know very well that the things I once enjoyed, have no further charm for me; and I can see more beauty in divine things than I once did. But let me add that I never did hate Christianity. I always had the greatest respect for those whom I believed to be Christians; and would think that they must be the happiest people in the world. There are many things I could say along this line, but time and space forbid.

And for fear that what I have already written will not meet with your approval, I will stop right here, hoping that you will please pardon all errors, and pray for me; for I feel to need your prayers.

I am, with all confidence,

Your true friend,
Lulu Allen

ANSWERING LETTER FROM
ELDER HARDY

Reidsville, N. C.
October 31, 1902

Miss Lulu Allen,

My Dear Friend:

I got home last night and received your sweet letter. It made my poor,

drooping spirit revive, and I drank deeply in the precious cup of salvation, as I read your dear, sweet experience with much comfort.

I want to say that you have not deceived me. You had never said one word to me about those things, and it was by the spirit in my own heart that I saw the Spirit of Jesus in you. This gives me renewed evidence of my own experience in spiritual things, and shows me that we are kindred spirits, and, therefore, you are my dear sister in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we have sweet fellowship one with the other.

As to your not being able to know any certain time of your deliverance, that has nothing to do with the fact that you are born again. Suppose you and I are going to walk from Carr to Prospect Hill. When we start we each have a burden of twenty-five pounds to carry. As we go, your burden gradually leaks out, so that when you get to the end of the journey your twenty-five pounds has all leaked out, and is gone. At the end I throw my twenty-five pounds down all at once: I am no more clear of my burden than you are, but I feel it more sensibly than you do, and can point to the moment when it left me and I got relief. But you cannot point to such a time; yet you have got relief — the same relief that I have. Your relief is just as sweet as mine, though you do not feel it so sensibly.

I hope you may be able to draw comfort from this, and that the tempter may not be able to take advantage of you on this ground.

You have seen the Church of Christ, and that is an unmistakable evidence that you are a child of God. For, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The world knows not the church because it knows not Christ who is the head of the church; but you know the church, because you know Christ. You love the church because you love Christ; and "we know that we have passed from death unto

life because we love the brethren."

You know the joyful sound of the gospel; and you have that blessing. "Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." What a glorious promise to those who know the joyful sound!

You love the church and would be glad to be one of them, because you are one of them. They are your people, and their God is your God. This is why I have felt that you should not parley with the flesh, nor tarry with the world; "For without are dogs and sorcerers, . . . and all who love and make a lie." These things you hate. In the church is love and joy in the Holy Ghost. These things you love. Why not walk in that you love? Why not turn away from that you hate?

Like you, I never hated this way but have always loved it. I do not remember the time when I did not love the Old Baptists, and believed them to be *the church* of the living God; and the doctrine they preach to be the doctrine of God our Saviour.

This has given me some trouble, but has not destroyed my hope in Christ; and I am glad that I have always loved God's people and his truth. I hope the dear Lord will so open your heart and the way before you, my dear friend, sister, that you may no longer halt between two opinions, but arise and be baptized straightway.

May His grace attend you and His Spirit guide you, that you may walk in His love and hear His voice say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord."

Your friend and brother with much confidence and love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

L. H. Hardy

(There is much in the above correspondence that will be of comfort to those who are concerned in the same matters. We are glad to publish it, hoping that some will be encouraged who are under the same trying experi-

ences. We feel Elder Hardy was faithful when he encouraged one in whom he saw the evidences of God's grace, and for whom he already had fellowship. — J. D. W.)

1550 Portland
Abilene, Texas 79605

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

My subscription is due by now, so I am enclosing the money for two years' renewal.

I surely appreciate the *Signs*. Everything in it is food for me most of the time. I think it is so wonderful that the doctrine of the dear old paper hasn't changed in these many years. I feel sure that God is in the matter, guiding and directing you Editors and good writers.

I received my June *Signs* just a few minutes ago, and I can hardly wait to get time to read it.

May God bless and direct all of you.

A sister in hope of a better home,
Mrs. Agnes Jones

LOVES THE OLD BAPTISTS

Rt. 4, Box 14,
Roxboro, N. C. 27573

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a money order for my subscription for another year for the paper I enjoy reading very much. I do not get to church as much as I would like to, since I have to depend upon others. I lost my oldest son and then my husband, and no one knows how one feels until they go through the loss of their loved ones: then is a time in life that one feels forsaken of everyone, and that God had hidden his face from them.

If it wasn't for the little hope which I hope I have, I don't think I could go on in life. I lost my mother and father when I was very young, and my uncle, Elder Charlie Evans, took me to my father's sister to live with her. She and

her husband were Old Baptists, and I loved them from the first time I saw them. They made me mind; for which I am thankful. I have always loved the Old Baptists, but don't feel that I am worthy to be with them, but I love them so much, I would be lost should my name be taken from them.

I read the experiences of the brothers and sisters, and wish I could tell what I hope that God has done for this poor sinner. If I am one of God's loved ones, I am the least of them.

May it be God's will that the good old paper may continue as long as the world stands, for the comfort of God's people. Remember this poor one when you have a mind to pray.

Carrie T. Allen

LOVES THE DOCTRINE

Rt. 3, Box 44,
Sulligent, Alabama 34486

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I am enclosing money to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two more years. I am also enclosing money for two dear ones for two years, as listed.

We hope we love the doctrine the *Signs* sets forth. The letters, the Editorials and the Voices of the Past are wonderful.

We were reared among Old Primitive Baptists: our grandfather was a Primitive Baptist minister; naturally we loved him very much. But we did not know what he loved and preached until several years after his death. We hope by the goodness and mercy of God we were made to love the truth and the doctrine he preached for many years — salvation by the grace of God, and grace alone.

We have had a name among the dear Old Baptists twenty-seven years, but feel so little and unworthy to have a name among them. We hope we are thankful for their sweet fellowship; for without a home with them, we have no

place to go. The world holds nothing for us.

May God richly bless all the household of faith. When at a throne of grace, remember this poor sinner.

(Miss) Tennie Egger

COULD STAY AWAY NO LONGER

Rt. 2, Box 220,
Elon College, N. C. 27244

Dear Brother Spangler:

I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. I enjoy reading it so much; and so does my husband. I enjoy reading the brother's and sister's experiences: I feel that mine is the least of all. It gets so small at times, I wonder if I have any. Yet it is more to me than the whole world. I think sometimes that I am mistaken, but it seems that I can't stop going to meetings and hear the gospel preached. The more I hear, the more I want to hear: it is joy and peace to my soul, I hope for Christ's sake it has followed me ever since I was young.

I thought for sure I would stay outside until I knew I was fit; but I have never seen that time yet. I have had some wonderful dreams, yet I would try to forget it all, but the more I tried the stronger it got. I would read the song, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know;" and that fit my case so well. I would go to church and think that I would offer — that I could wait no longer; but when the time came, I could not go, and that made me feel more unfit than ever — it was not my time to go.

I dreamed one night of being on high in the largest white mansion I ever saw; it was so large there was no end to be seen; and there was no human there but me. But I feel the unseen power carried me there, and brought me back to this sinful world. It was the whitest place and the posts were

the largest I ever saw. The day I offered to the church, the earth was white with snow; and that dream came back to me. I had dreamed of being baptized twice before I was baptized. One time I had no extra clothes with me; and this made me feel more unfit than ever. After my husband joined I would go some on Saturday, and would see others join: so I quit going on Saturday, thinking that I could stay away longer. I thought I was staying away, but I found that it was not the time for me to go. The night before I went before the church, I dreamed that I went to a valley where the road ended; and a voice spoke to me, and said, "You have gone to the end now." On Sunday we went to the church at Bush Arbor, and I could hardly wait until Brother King, our dear pastor, finished preaching, to go up and tell him he preached my experience better than I could tell it. I felt that if they didn't receive me, I had no home. Then, before I got home, I felt that maybe I had done the wrong thing; but the more I tried to forget it, the stronger it got, and it lingered with me day and night. I feel that others may have greater experience than I do, but still, if they will just let me live at their feet, for I feel to be the least of all, if one at all.

I have regretted many things, but joining and being baptized has meant so much to me — more than words can ever tell. I was longing for the time of the baptism, and it seemed the longest month. This was six years ago the second Sunday in this past April.

I did not think to write so much. I cannot read the Bible very much since my eyes are not good, but I enjoy hearing the Scriptures preached. Whenever you feel to pray, remember me a poor sinner.

Mrs. Viola Page Apple

Rt. 3, Box 123
Axton, Virginia 24054

Signs of the Times:

Just a few lines as it is time to renew.

I love to read of a God that has all power — not one that has all power: but, or if, I don't feel that we have a right to charge God or his power with anything; and if we did, it would be charging him foolishly. But I think we rightly charge the weakness of man with things. Some say that predestination of all things implies, or makes God this or that. How could they make Him anything, except in their own minds? If sin entered the world by the disobedience of man, how could it have come any other way; and how could we charge it to any other than man? No man can justify sin; but I believe in the God that justifies his people, whether I be one or not.

Enclosed is a check for two year's renewal.

Howard T. Edwards

Rt. 4, Box 73,
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Kindred in Christ:

While here on my bed of affliction, it has been in my mind to try to tell a little what I hope the Lord has done for me. When I was about the age of seventeen I dreamed of seeing the Saviour, and he said to me, "He that climbeth up some other the way the same is a thief and a robber." And when I awoke, it was a dream. I wonder if there was nothing to that dream, why does it still stay with me? I dreamed again that the Lord came to my bedside, and said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."

All I have is a hope; and I know that sin is mixed with all I do. I am eighty-seven years of age, and according to nature I have about stayed here my allotted time. If I am blessed to see that Just One, it will be by the grace

of God given in Christ, and not by my works.

I hope a brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

FELT THEY WERE NOT ALONE

Rt. 2,
Littleton, N. C.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see that my subscription is due so I enclose check for two more years.

I have enjoyed every copy I have ever read, though sometimes I don't understand or remember what I have read very long; but I hope never to give up reading them. I remember my precious mother used to tell me when I was a child, to read the Bible, (she read it a lot,) but I would tell her that I didn't get anything out of it, or didn't understand it. She would say, "Read it, and pray for understanding." I have been trying all these years, and sometimes I get a little comfort here and there.

I can't help but feel that God has been with me all the way through life; but I feel that I have never thanked him as I ought. I would like to tell you of a dream I had last year. I dreamed of seeing just a few dead bodies lying on the ground in our church yard; and they were taken up in the air. I was trying to pray to be taken up with them. They were all just alike and of the same size. All at once, I was lifted up; and it was the sweetest ride I ever enjoyed. I told my husband that if dying was that easy, I wouldn't mind at all. I hope to be forgiven if this was just imagination.

Last Fall I had opportunity to go with my daughter and her husband to see his family in New Bedford, Mass., and since I had never been farther than Richmond, Va., I went with them. We had a nice trip; and I want to say I know God was with us there and back, as we drove through all the traffic. I felt that we were not alone.

I just felt that I wanted to write a few lines, and hope to write more sometime.

May God bless you all,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

EXPERIENCE

April 25, 1966

Dear Ones:

I was awakened so forcibly this morning at 4 A. M. with the word *Experience* on my mind. I have tried four years to put on paper the little pathway my God saw fit for me to travel. Now I feel not to know the beginning or the ending: How does one start when there are so many priceless and precious memories? An experience has always seemed to me as if it were a gift of remembrances from God to you; of which one feels so unworthy to receive. I only hope that all I say, shows praise for my God.

I lived in the Methodist Church for nineteen years. On December 31, 1950, I married into a wonderful Old Baptist family. They did not know this faith at that time, but as years unfolded the truth, they were drawn among the little flock of Primitive Baptists. My father-in-law, Mr. William Davis, began attending Snow Hill Church alone. He would come home from preaching full of the truth, and try to tell us of it. It was as bitter as gall to everyone of us. Then before long Mrs. Davis started going to church with him. The Lord had a wonderful experience awaiting her, which I hope she can write some day. In May, 1955, she was received as a member of Snow Hill Church. They would both try to tell me of this faith. I would leave their house sometimes so full of hate for this faith, I would vow I was not going to talk with them about this anymore. Mr. Davis especially upset me, since he was such a strong and plain defender of the truth. This was all so contrary to my belief; yet I would feel even

worse when I read the Scriptures, because I could only find what he had just told me. The flesh part could not concede that I had seen any of this truth; but our paths were to become so entwined that my vocabulary is limited in describing the beauty of traveling a path of love, faith, and hope.

The world was weakening to me as the truth started to unfold. My worldly faith was shattered completely one night in Snow Hill Church: Elder W. D. Griffin expounded the text concerning the eagle stirring up her nest. Every straw he pulled out, was another prop from under me. I left the church that night in such a *non-existence*: I felt lost to everything for all time. I thought to be the only person in this world without a meaning — surely God had forgotten me. It was such a terrible feeling I will never forget. I felt doomed. My old faith was completely demolished; and the truth had not been made whole to me yet. Have you been there? Have you felt so alone, so full of sin, so lost? If so, then my loved ones, we have fellowship with each other, and I hope with the Almighty, who predestinated this bond in the flesh.

Baptism had not entered my mind until one Sunday morning at Salisbury Church. Brother Harry Ward went before the members and humbly asked for a home. I thought this to be the most beautiful sight I had ever witnessed. Yes, I say witnessed, because I felt his weakness unite with me. I became so weak that I could not stand to finish the last hymn. Such a closeness entered my heart for Brother Ward that day; and it has never left. I felt to say I love him, and I still do; yet, with all this, I had a fear. Right then I longed to do what he had done, knowing I just couldn't because I was so unfit. My life seemed disassembled: Why had I been broken, and not mended? Yet, bless His name, had I not been shattered, would I have known a little of his unsearchable riches of truth?

The treasured memories of my dreams will always be one of the greatest gifts of his blessings. They were so real and true to me that it was as if I knew for certain that were going to happen. I'll not live long enough to tell the beauty in them for me. From them, I was led to believe that Mr. Davis, not yet a member, and I would be baptized together. In my first dream I saw him crying on his mother's shoulder, telling her he was troubled. In the second one, he and I were in a car together, happy and talking as though going to meeting. In the third, (the most puzzling at the time), he was like unto a little child in a baby's stroller. I was pushing him around a narrow pathway on a mountain: he seemed to have plenty of room, but I was about to fall. He reached back and touched my leg, and said, "I'll not let you fall." This dream is priceless to me now, as I'll reveal later. In my last dream, I saw Elder Griffin, Mr. Davis, and one other person, and myself in the water of baptism. I firmly believe the Lord visited me at these special times. He never leaves us but that he sustains us, and assures us that in our trials we are not alone.

After the last dream, I wrote to Elder Griffin and expressed a desire that, if ever I was baptized, he would be there. During the next two weeks, I endured a suffering such as I had never known before. I could not bring myself to talk to anyone about my fear of going before the church at Saturday night meeting: I walked the floor, and cried alone. I couldn't even tell my husband, Billy. Then on Saturday I asked him twice if he was going to church with me that night. His reply was, No! no reason given, just plain No. My heart ached to tell him my fears, yet I was restrained, for I feared it would not be.

So I went with the Davis family, and upon entering the church that night, I saw Elder Griffin, who had not planned of himself to come, since it

was Elder Spangler's appointed time. Later he said he felt he had to be there. The moment I sat down, I began to tremble with fear; and yet relief. My seize was now at its peak — I felt as though all would soon be over; and yet was about to begin. At the end of the service, as unworthy as I was, I asked for a home. The only desire in my heart, was to say, "I know I love you all." I knew I had nothing else because I was so full of sin. When leaving the meeting, I asked Elder Griffin to baptize me because of my dream. Elder Spangler, gracious as he is, said it would be fine with him. Mr. Davis told me later that he desired so much to go before the church that night, but couldn't. I still felt happy, because I knew he would be baptized with me Sunday morning. When arriving home that night, I asked Billy what he thought had happened. He said he knew I went before the church; and had been knowing the same two weeks before when I suffered so. He was laboring with me, yet couldn't say a word, just as I couldn't. Isn't God gracious?

Sunday morning, May 6, 1962, we met at Shumaker's Pond. At the water's edge, Mr. Davis gave the most beautiful plea for mercy I've ever heard. He was received by the members; and he asked Elder Spangler to baptize him, (the fourth person in my dream.) Such a perfect day for a crumb of his mercy! That watery grave appeared as a bright light unto my eyes. It was so bright that it seemed to overpower all worldly things. All I could see was a celestial beauty. I cannot describe it, so I will not try.

Just this year my third dream was revealed to me. In my first, there seemed to be a burden; in the second, a sweet fellowship; and the fourth, a birth — the baptism being a new life. When entering the water to be baptized, Mr. Davis reached me his hand, and said the exact words, "I'll not let you fall." This dream was my reassurance in God, knowing he was and is all

in all — a finished work. My cry still is, "My God, why hast thou bestowed such riches on this worm of the dust?"

The Lord blessed my life so with my husband, who stands firm in the truth, and with four wonderful children. Only three were a burden to me in my experience, since my baby is one year old: I felt it was wrong not to carry them to Sunday School, and they were not old enough to go alone. I was afraid they would not know enough about God without being taught. Then, one morning upon awakening, the world's last clutch was gone. It was as if a voice said to me, "What did nineteen years of Sunday School do for you? You did not know Me until I first knew you." Never again was there any doubt but that God would take care of all in his own way, and own time.

If this be of any comfort to a sufferer, I am glad. Be thankful that He sees fit for you to suffer. A sinner never receives a greater gift than His mercy. He has been so merciful to me this morning in letting me re-live these precious memories. All praise, honor, and glory are His.

I close with the constant plea in my heart, "O Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner."

Unworthily,
Audrey M. Davis
New Church, Virginia

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Union Church, Patrick County, Virginia, September 2, 3, 4, 1966. The meeting house is located on Road 623, the Fairystone Road, about one mile west of Philpott Lake.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association** will convene August 26, 27, and 28,

1966, with Shepherd Fold Church, of Houston, Texas, if it be our Maker's will.

The meeting house is at 815 Little York Road, in the NW corner of the Little York-McGallion intersection. This is approximately half-way between U. S. Highways 75 and 59, and two blocks west of the I. & G. N. Railroad. For further information call the Clerk at HO 5-0693.

We send a most cordial invitation to all brethren and friends to meet with us at this our twentieth annual session.

Jerry Evers, Clerk

LExINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will convene, the Lord willing, on Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, with the church at Holcottville, N. Y. Entertainment will be at the same place as last year, the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y. Those coming on Wednesday afternoon take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left hand road to the third house, called Windy Acres. If you are coming on Wednesday please notify Mr. Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead. Brethren and friends are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with North River Church, Carteret County, N. C. July 30 and 31, 1966.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, at the church at Scott's, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1966. The meeting house is located about three miles west of Lucama, Wilson County, N. C.

All who have a mind to attend, are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Please note that the **Maine Association** is to be held August 27 and 28 instead of August 20 and 21 as stated in the July issue. The Clerk of the Association asked that the correction be made. — Editor.

Danville, Virginia August, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

JOHN 3:7

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

There are many gospel truths presented in the Bible, but none of them is as important as this one. Unless we have experienced the New Birth we will never know anything about the Bible. We might have all the scholastic learning that men could teach us; we may have conferred upon us all the titles that seats of learning have at their disposal; we may attend any and all theological seminaries, and wear the initialed titles of that *kind* of learning, but none of this teaching and learning will enable us to be born again, nor will any or all of it teach us any other tenet of faith.

God's children have had vile epithets

hurled in their face about illiteracy. However, I do not recall any of our brethren going on a preaching mission telling unborn people to be born again. I have a precious hope that I love the Old School Baptists, and as long as I have had that hope I have been under the impression to preach the gospel of peace and good tidings in Jesus' name. Yet, if there are conditions to be met in being born again, I have not been born again, therefore the following statement is not hurriedly nor unthoughtfully nor extravagantly made, to wit, If it can be proved by medical science and by the Bible that the unconceived embryo can be a contributing factor in its own conception and final birth, I will never enter the pulpit again. I am sure that this will never be done.

The word "again" is of primary importance. It could not have been used had there not been a first birth. If this "again" birth had not been a birth, I am sure that the Lord would have used something else to tell us about it. Instead, he used the word "again," which, to me, is conclusive that the man born the first time had to be born a second time. The manner in which the births came about did not differ. Had this not been true, it is evident that the word "again" would not have been used. The difference, then, was not in the manner, but in the begetter. In the first birth, it was begotten in the flesh. This birth, being of the flesh, will remain just that. What folly it is to think that the "again" birth is a renovation of the old, a making new of the old. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. In the new birth we are begotten of God. This is a spiritual birth. God is a Spirit, and he seeketh such to worship him. This word "seeketh" is not used to show aimless wanderings around hoping to find someone that *wills* to worship him. The correct meaning in the Greek is that he desires and requires this phenomenal work. Whatever God desires, that he

will do (Job 23:13); when God desires toward the work of his hand, he always brings to full fruition that work. (Job 14:15) These two births, one as much as the other, brought the desired end. They were effective according to the design in each. In the first, the child born had a desire or propensity towards the things of the earth. This was not partial, as many would have us believe. He is born of the flesh, therefore his need, and the filling of that need, could never rise above the source of the cause of conception. The receptive organs of that birth would be made ill by the introduction of anything foreign to its nature. It never, never, could thrive and grow on matter that was contrary to the source of its life. So it is in the new birth. That new life must have things according to its nature. Why is it this way with these two births? Because that one of them is earthy; it is from below, and must have only those things from the earth, from below, before that it will survive. The other, which is from above, and brought about by the Spirit, must have those things from above, those things which are of, and from, the Spirit.

What a bright display of the mystery of godliness in John writing about the new birth. I do hope that the readers that feel so helpless about being able to tell the certainty of the new birth will remember that so much of the time the richest and sweetest writings and preaching, and singing and praying will come from those that know the least about the certainty of the time of the new birth. The only evidence that is left us about it, is his leaping in his mother's womb at the mention of Jesus' name. He never did refer to this in later years. O dear heart, do not be disturbed because you do not remember being born of God. It was necessary to digress for a moment there to give you some comfort while we deal with the technicality of proving that this new birth is solely of God.

Times have not changed one whit about salvation. There is not any change in God. A change in dispensations, yes, but not in his dealing with Israel. How often that we are blinded by present conditions. This isn't always spiritual activity when we think that the church has gone to the dogs, when we think that we are so few, when we get discouraged because of the bewitched condition of people in seeking the things of the earth. Ah, how wicked the world was when Jesus came. The world does not have room for the Old Baptists now. What dismay it brings us, not realizing, or forgetting, that no room was found for him in the inn; that even those that came from the same lineage of David that he came through, could not receive him. How prone our heart is to forget past necessities, both joyous and painful. How often we think it is hard for us to pass through privation, loneliness, isolation of our day. How prone that we are to think that the things with which we are surrounded are things which the early church did not have to bother them. But not so, brethren. They had them then, we have them now, and the people of God will have them in the future.

When the Master came into the world, he came among the Jews. The promise of God was to them; that he would raise them up a Prophet from among themselves. (Deut. 18:18) The writings of the Jews were preserved, and I feel sure that they knew this promise as far as its having been inscribed in the writings of the Jewish fathers, and having been handed down from father to son. Although the promise of this Prophet was made only to Israel; although *their* prophets prophesied time and again of His coming, telling in the most minute detail about it, yet they, as a nation, as a whole, did not receive him. "He came unto his own, and his own (as a nation, as a whole) did not receive him, but as many as received him, to them gave

he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:11, 13) This has puzzled many because they could not see how that the sinner could become the son of God. These things will always puzzle us unless the truth is opened up to us. How far away, how far removed, was John's leaping in his mother's womb, and yet he does not hesitate as he is moved by the Holy Ghost to write. May it be God's pleasure that the same power move us all to examine the beauty in this text. Above everything else, I would to God that he preserve us from shutting our eyes to the truth just because it does not say things according to our pre-conception. What caused them to receive him? Some among them did not receive him, and we are told why. They were not his sheep; had they been his chosen, and had they been born, they would have done so. They received him because they had been born again. If language means anything (who will say it does not?), there was a sense in which those that had been born were not the sons of God. It is necessary that we remember that it is essential that we be born again in order to see and enter the kingdom. If he gave them power to become the sons of God, in some way they were not the sons of God.

In what way? How shall I deal with this pertinent question? Ignore it? Say that it does not mean what it says? Give it a meaning to fit the tradition of the elders? No, that is wresting the scriptures, which will end in our destruction. (2 Pet. 3:16) No, that is striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. (2 Tim. 2:15) Then let us, as blessed of God, view the matter in another light. There is a wearing of the garments of salvation; there is a putting on of Christ; there is an adorning of the work of Christ. This wearing and put-

ting on and adorning is not of the flesh. It is not to be in dressing up the fleshly birth. While it is not that, neither is the new birth made manifest by a continuing in the things of the flesh. That is why he gave them power to become the sons of God by manifestation. We might, with some degree of propriety, say that the translators did not give us the best word here. When a new born child comes before the church, we desire to know their authority or right to baptism. The eunuch would not have had any right or authority for baptism had he not been a believer. He was a child before Phillip preached Jesus to him, but he was not a believer in Christ. Thus these that received the Saviour had been given the right or the authority or the power to become outwardly what they already were inwardly.

It must be insisted upon that this reception, and the giving of this right, came *after* they were born, not *before*, as unborn men would teach. Again and again, it must be insisted that this birth did not originate and bear fruit in the natural or fleshly mind. It did not come about by royal blood in them, nor even blood at all; it did not come about by the will of the flesh, nor it did not come about by the will of man. Some of them were of royal blood, all of them had a will according to the first or fleshly birth; being men, they had wills of their own after the flesh, and being Israelites, as was Paul, they would have willed that all Israel be saved. But this birth did not come about in that way. They were born (before he gave them power to become the sons of God) by the will of God. At God's own time, and in God's own manner, and in God's own place, he sent forth his Spirit causing conception and birth.

But how am I to know about the new birth? Be patient, little one. Gainsayers must be stopped as well as believers comforted; Agrippa must be dumfounded as well as the poor of the

flock built up. The Master used the wind to illustrate the new birth. We do not know where the roar of the mighty hurricane comes from. We are brought in awe to stand still and behold the destruction of the fierce tornado. Our minds and spirit are lulled into tranquillity by the gentle breeze of the wind, but to tell where it arose, and where it will lay, we can not. We do know some things. I taught school long ago, and recently an old pupil told me that she had never been able to see beauty in history until I kept that little rural school. Is God a poorer teacher than I am? I refuse to be drawn into such treason as that. My God teaches his people to know him, whom to know is eternal life. We might not know, and if we do, not as we ought, whether it was the Lord or something else; we might not know whether in the body or out, but we will find plenty of fellow travellers when we begin to describe what has been taking place under the effectual working of the power that envelopes and moves us on.

As a usual thing the wind arises with tempestuous looking clouds. Has that arisen in your life? You desire evidence that you have been born into the family of God. As the sun shined in your life (which was the unfolding of the life which you received in the first birth), as you contemplated the things that you had conquered, and the worlds that challenged your imagination and skill, did a black cloud arise? Did the lightning flash? Did the thunder roar? Did you quake and tremble under the grave forebodings that loomed before you? Did you, dear child, look to the safety of your goods? Have you felt the great force of the power of the wind (spirit) as your goods were scattered? Did you try to salvage something that you might start anew? Were you swept from your moorings, reeling and rocking under the terrific onslaught unleashed against your citadel? Did you see the sandy foundation being swept from under the building? If you

are seeking evidence of acceptance with God; if you desire to know whether you have been born again, let me ask you: Have you felt the fury and power in the operation of the Spirit? Have you felt the effects of the wind of the Spirit? Have you been bowed down under its sweeping power?

But yonder comes another little child. They seem to be at a loss. O, they say, your description of this work leaves me out. Why, wounded heart, do you think that it leaves you out? Because you have not felt the boisterous wind! Come dear heart, and listen while I describe the gentle breezes. All wind does not come from black and angry clouds, nor is all of it the kind that scatters everything before it. O, no, dear seeking child. Sometimes the breezes gently kiss the cheek and is felt as a very light touch. As with John, and as with so many, you do not remember being knocked to the ground as was Paul; some ministers will join with me that they have not had the challenging experiences of a Jeremiah or Isaiah, or of a Peter or a Paul, but that they love God and love the doctrine, that they love the church and love the people of God. Is it evidence, dear child of God that you desire; is it evidence, dear yoke-fellow that you desire? Here it is, dear one. Look no further, here is the place to rest. He that loves, is born of God. If you have felt in a small way this love for the Lord Jesus Christ, for the truth, for the church, for the people of God, you too, have felt the operation of the Spirit in being born again; you too, have felt the blowing of the wind as God blows upon his people, even though it has been gentle.

What a lovely picture is before us *after* having been born again. We have entered into the most restful kingdom; we are now looking upon Zion in her solemnities. Thanks be unto God, we are now blessed to both enter and see the King in his royal beauty, to behold the lovely fountain in the midst of the city, to come to Mount Zion and find in

the Lord a place of broad rivers and streams, and to have him as our Pilot with no fear of gallant vessels running to and fro molesting the fragile vessels, nor of being impeded in progressing towards our haven of rest by those galleys that are trying to use oars (works of the creature), but love is bringing us home to glory and rest.

This is the substance of a sermon preached at the Black Creek Association on Sunday morning, October 24, 1965, and is sent in by request of some of my listeners.

W. D. G.

SERMON AT BLACK ROCK
ALL-DAY MEETING
JUNE, 1966

I trust that we are thankful and glad that we are blessed to meet together one more time in this June All-day Meeting; and I hope that our coming together will be not only for the fellowship and being together socially, which we enjoy and which is proper upon occasions, but what is more important, that we are come together for the purpose of worshipping our God, to hear something of his goodness and mercy, and his loving-kindness as recorded in His Word, and revealed by His Spirit in the hearts of His people.

There is a verse of Scripture I want to read as a possible starting point of what I shall say, if the Lord is pleased to open it up to me and to you. If He is, it will be wonderful, because it is the language of the Saviour. You will find it in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of John:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

When this scripture came into my mind, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," I began to ponder: Just what do I believe; and why do I believe what I believe? Did you ever sit down in a quiet, peaceful atmosphere where there was nothing to interrupt you, and wonder about what you believe religiously, and why you believe it?

Then this thought came: If we believe just merely because our parents believed, it must be a shallow belief. In other words, if your parents were Old School Baptists, and you follow in their sentiments just because they did, it is to be wondered how much you really do believe. This may be applied to any religious denomination: If you believe merely because you were brought up among such and such a people, and have not had any real exercise in mind and heart, no real conviction, no real conversion, you might well question yourself; and I hope that what I might say will stir you up — or rather, that the Spirit of God will stir you, and cause you to think about what you believe, and why you believe it; and what evidence you have that what you believe is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This is a momentous question, a very important question, because there are so many who believe just because some one else does; and who do not really believe what they think or say they do, since they are without conviction in the matters.

In our text, Jesus said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." The dispute among the Jews of that day was whether Jesus was the Son of God, and the Messiah that was to come; and most of them are yet disputing. I do not suppose that those who profess to believe in Jesus, ever question it nowadays. But it is a serious and important matter, my friends, to profess to believe in Jesus, and claim to be a Christian, without having the necessary evidence in you to confirm it. **What evidence do you have that you are a Child of God? What evidence do you have that Jesus Christ is your Saviour?**

Now it is not just some abstract confession, not just a nominal profession: that won't do; for we must have a powerful conviction, a powerful quickening: We must have experienced with David, "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will **declare what he has done for my soul.**" Or with Peter, to be ready

to give a reason of the hope that lies within you.

I think just now of the Gadarene, the man who was full of unclean spirits, and dwelt among the tombs: called by some the wild Gadarene **because no man could tame him**. He was typical, if we have any understanding of it, of what we are in our flesh. But when Jesus cast out the devils, the evil spirits, the man was clothed and in his right mind. Have you ever felt that there was a change wrought in you, whereby you feel you are now clothed and in your right mind? Has there been a change in your belief and faith from what it once was? Do you now heartily believe with the Scriptures, that salvation is not by works of righteousness which you can do? If so, the language of Jesus to the Gadarene applies, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

But, if you feel you are able of yourself to believe by the exercising of your own will, to the saving of your soul; that you are able to bring yourself to the new birth; that you are able to "turn over a new leaf," and believe upon the Lord Jesus to the saving of your soul, then it is well to listen to what the Scriptures teach. All true Christians must believe what Christ taught, and what the Apostles taught, for they taught the same things: Christ gave them the keys of the kingdom and enabled them to set in order the doctrine and order of the church; and the church was established upon these principles. Yet multitudes of professors have not loved these things, and have cast away practically everything except the name. In the absence of the Spirit and grace of God, (and I would like for you to consider this,) vain philosophy has taken over in every age of the world, and men have formulated their own doctrines and systems; and have always taught contrary to the things of God. We are glad, therefore,

that God has revealed and recorded the truth in the Scriptures, so that the false doctrines of men are disproved.

When the man Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and inquired of him, Jesus told him that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God. That man did not know what Jesus was talking about: he had never been brought experimentally to know anything of his own condition; he knew not that there was the kingdom of God, as well as the kingdom of nature. To the necessity of being born again, he could only ask, "Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again?" I am sure that most of us know that Jesus was not talking about a re-birth, but rather a new birth in being born of the Spirit of God. This is a mystery, because it was entirely out of the hands of Nicodemus: outside of yours and mine; for, "The wind bloweth where it listeth: thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." Because of the necessity of it, yet beyond the skill of men, we necessarily must understand that it is the work of God alone.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God believe also in me." Belief, brethren and friends, has its seat deep within us: belief is the consequence of faith; and faith is the gift of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God." Many believe that they can have faith, and say, "All I have to do, is to believe." But we read that faith is the fruit of the Spirit: so if one has not been born of the Spirit, he cannot have faith, which is the fruit of it. There must be something powerfully wrought in your heart, like in those upon the day of Pentecost, when about three thousand were pricked in their hearts, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" If there has been no such exercises in you, what evidence do you have that you believe

in Christ? what evidence do you have that you really believe in the true God? "Ye believe in God: believe also in me."

Most of us read not long ago that some are talking about God being dead. The first reaction I had when I read it, was, if I believed in the God some profess, I might well say that he is dead. Many profess to believe in God, yet deny his power. Many do not believe that he controls all things; that kings and nations are in his hands. Surely such a God would indeed be dead; but no one can so testify of the God of Israel, of him of whom Jesus spoke when he said, "My Father worketh hitherto; and I work;" or when he said, "I and my Father are one." Or when God said, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Jesus said, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." You will not find the way to obtain eternal life by searching the Scriptures; as if they will tell you what you must do in order to obtain it. But he that hath an ear to hear and a heart to understand, when he searches the Scriptures will find the truth of what Jesus said, "They are they which testify of me." So, if you are blessed to see Jesus when you read the Old Testament; to see him in all the sacrifices and offerings unto God: if you see Jesus as the ultimate end to which these things pointed; see him as the great anti-type of these typical things, then Jesus has taken up his abode in you, and you have been born of the Spirit and know that he is your Saviour: then you can say, "My Lord and my God." And you will have realized that you have been brought out of the great darkness of the flesh and carnality, and that the light that shines out of darkness, has shined in your heart, and given you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, his Son. Then, indeed, as you believe in God, you believe also in his

Son. And you believe all things that He taught, for you need all that he did for your salvation, and are not ashamed of his gospel, knowing that it is the power of God unto salvation. Then you fall at his feet as the Gadarene did, desire to follow him in all things.

It is easy to see, therefore, who believe in God and in his Son. And it is further affirmed by Jesus in his reply to Peter and the brethren with him: Jesus had asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And the reply was, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Then Jesus asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, answering, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This should be pondered over, and carefully considered by every professor, for this is the way God brings all of his people into the knowledge of the truth that Jesus is His Son, and the Saviour whom he has sent. Those who know this to be true, are truly taught of the Lord.

On the other hand, those who believe that they are able themselves to dig into the deep mysteries of God, which are reserved in his own will and disposing power, and appropriate them to themselves, they neither know the mysteries of God, nor that the disposing is of the Lord alone. It must be said of these that they know not themselves as to their real impoverished and immobile condition before God; that they have not learned that the "good work" **must be begun in them, and carried on in them**, else there is no quickening to the knowledge of the truth. Their ways seem right to them, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Those who are taught of the Lord are particular as to what they hear preached: there is a clear answering of faith to faith. This is wonderfully

confirmed in the desire of the Centurion whose name was Cornelius, when he was given a vision and told to send for Simon Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do. Likewise Peter was given a vision from the same source, and made willing to go to the Gentile, as you will recall; and when he came to Cornelius, he was given the "reason" why he was sent for: "Immediately therefore I sent to thee: and thou hast done well that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, **to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.**" That is what Cornelius wanted to hear; and that was the only thing that Peter had to preach: what God had commanded him. He preached Jesus and all that he did, including his death and resurrection. And those who heard, giving evidence of the same grace that Peter and the brethren had, were baptized.

Again, when Saul was wrought upon by the same Spirit and power, and brought to the spiritual birth — out of darkness into the marvelous light, he, who so recently had denied Jesus as being the Messiah, and hated those who called upon his name, began to preach this Jesus as the Son of God, and the Saviour of the Lord's people. And this was all because of the power and evidence which was given him in the matter.

This is what I would ask, my friends, has something been wrought in you also? I do not necessarily mean some great and miraculous experience as in the case of Paul, (though all the dealings of the Lord with his people are outstanding and miraculous,) but I do mean that there must be some evidence that you have been born of the Spirit. Paul had been professing to believe in God all his life, and was a strict religionist, believing he was doing God's service in persecuting the disciples of Jesus, even consenting to the stoning of Stephen to death. But when the light shined about him and the voice spoke from heaven, he fell to the ground, say-

ing, "Who art thou, Lord?" What a marvelous difference when the Spirit speaks in the heart!

Are you guilty of blasphemy by denying the doctrine of God our Saviour? If you deny his Word, you are blaspheming him. If you deny that salvation is only by the grace of God, you are denying him. If you believe that salvation is partly by grace and partly by works, then you are denying him.

It is to be seen that what we believe is an important thing; yet there are some who will receive and approve just about anything that has a semblance of religion about it. Did you ever notice a bird's nest with young birds in it? They hold their bills wide open, and make a terrific fuss when they are hungry; and will receive just about anything that is put into their mouths. Let us not be that way my friends: let us not "Be carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness;" but may God give us grace that we shall be staid upon the doctrine of God our Saviour; upon that foundation which is sure and certain — the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

There is another thing to which I would like to call your attention, as I think of it. What about the untold millions who have lived and died, and who, so far as we know, never heard a gospel sermon. If the doctrine of men is true, then there is no hope for any of them. But the doctrine of God our Saviour being true, which we preach and believe, the Lord knew those that were his among all those so called heathen; and they, in His own way, were given the assurance of eternal life by the same grace that any of us have. We are glad that Paul said, ". . . nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his." We are glad to be numbered with these "strangers," and glad that salvation, both theirs and ours, was accomplished just as Peter

wrote it, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This is the only doctrine that is world-wide: it teaches that the Spirit of God reaches into every nook and corner of the world, unto every one for whom Jesus died to redeem from his sins. This is truly the only doctrine that teaches the **only way** that salvation comes unto men.

There is another scripture in Paul's writings to the Ephesians, which seemed so wonderful to me a few days ago: "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-27) This is what He did for his people, who said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." No wonder they believe in him, for it is the working of the mighty power of God; and after they believe, they are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest (assurance or foretaste) of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. These are the ones who are, "According to his abundant mercy begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5) In these things they greatly rejoice in spite of manifold temptations during their pilgrimage.

No doubt there are some here this morning who have questions in their minds as to the truth of what I am saying; to such I hope that what you have heard has sufficiently stirred up your minds that you will search the

Scriptures to see whether these things are so. You may remember that the Bereans searched the Scriptures daily to see whether they were so, when they heard the Apostles preach these things.

Jesus sometimes said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see." What a blessing indeed when the full saying of Jesus upon the occasion of our text takes possession of us with power: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also."

(The above is from tape of sermon at Black Rock Meeting House in June, 1966, abridged and edited for publication instead of undertaking to write an Editorial; and was by J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW 18:7

"Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh!"

These words were spoken by our Lord, to his disciples, at a time when they had evinced an undue ambition for preferment in his kingdom. A spirit which was common to the Gentiles, to lord it over one another, though common in the world, was unbecoming the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. And he set a little child in their midst, 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." There is no aristocracy in the kingdom of our Redeemer; all the subjects of his government are brethren. All

are alike dear to God, chosen of him in Christ, redeemed from sin, death and hell, by the blood of the immaculate Lamb, quickened and born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, and all alike freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They are not to be lords over God's heritage; but they are commanded to be kindly affectionate one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. The artless, unassuming disposition of little children becomes them. Woe unto the world because of offenses. Although there is a must needs be for them, still the offenders of God's little ones are not held guiltless. The necessity for offenses may be considered.

1. From the very opposite character of the kingdom of Christ from that of the world. While in the world the church must needs have tribulation. Because God's little ones are not of the world, therefore the world hates them, because the world hates God, hates Christ, hates holiness; and therefore it is, that if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.

2. It is needful for the saints. Their trials and afflictions are working together with everything else for their good. God has chosen them in the furnace of affliction; and he sits as a refiner's fire, and as fuller's soap, and he will thoroughly purge the sons of Levi. He presides over them in all their trials, and will not suffer the enemy to exact upon them, nor the son of wickedness to afflict them beyond the limits which he has set. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath will God restrain. As God used the heathen nations as his sword to chastise Israel, so the powers of this world are suffered to afflict the people of God, so far as shall be for their good and his glory, but no farther.

3. Offenses must needs come; because

so it is written; and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. In the last days shall come perilous times; many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of the devil, &c. That wicked shall be revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish. There were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, &c. How could the Scriptures be fulfilled, if the saints should have no conflicts with the world, or receive no offenses from the world?

4. These trials are needful for the trial of our faith. Hence the admonition to consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, &c.

But notwithstanding the must needs be that offenses should come, notwithstanding the wisdom and power of God in overruling them for the good of his people, and for his own ultimate glory, it were better that a mill-stone were hanged to the neck, and the offender cast into the sea, than he should offend one of God's little ones. Men of the world when they belch forth their venom upon the people of God, do it from the most impure and wicked motives, as when the Jews and Romans stained their guilty hands in crucifying the Son of God, and they are equally as guilty as though their wickedness were not so overruled. God has created the smith that bloweth the coals, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and he has created the waster to destroy. He will suffer no weapon that is formed against Zion to prosper, or any tongue that riseth against her to go uncondemned.

The admonition of our text is addressed to the disciples. They have great

occasion to deny themselves of worldly lusts, and to crucify those fleshly propensities within them, which war against the Spirit, lest they become the authors of offenses, by savoring the things which be of men, or of the world. And when of their own selves men rise up to draw away disciples after them, when they cause divisions contrary to the doctrine which the saints have received, (by divine authority), they are not to be countenanced by the church of God. However high their standing, or important their station in the church, if thy hand, or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee; or if it be an eye, let it be plucked out, according to the discipline of the house of God; for whoever may be the agents in producing offenses, the spirit which leads to such offenses, is of the world, and the principle is condemned.

Whenever Christians grow up to be anything larger than little children, they may certainly conclude that they have increased with an increase which is not of God. Their flesh is inflated with a worldly spirit, which wars against the spirit of holiness, and from these fleshly lusts proceed wars and fightings, subjecting them to discipline, sorrow and woe. Let us who profess to be the followers of Jesus, put off the old man with his deeds; and may God grant unto us grace, that we may walk humbly before him in love.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 15, 1856.)

WHAT IS PRAYER?

In the preceding number of the *Signs*, Sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views, of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have now to confess the humiliating

truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that,

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

we were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said,

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

And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and

perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion, and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we had imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like Sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness, because we could not pray, or rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indited by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession for us in that way, and we were made more sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously

poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of Christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show and ostentatious parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool, and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their loud speaking, nor for the sanctimonious tone in which the words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indited by the Spirit of God.

In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it indites within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God has not only made

bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that we can create or exercise, but that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promise, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, April 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER JOHN W. JOHNSON

Brother Johnson was born September 5, 1879, and died April 9, 1966, age 86 years. Brother Johnson moved his membership to Springfield Church October 13, 1951. He was faithful to the Church and attended meetings regularly as long as he lived. It was my pleasure to visit in his home many times and hear him talk of the wonderful love and power of the Lord. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy will of our Lord, knowing that He doeth all things well. We know that we shall miss Him, yet we feel our loss is His eternal gain. Besides his wife, Sister Johnson, he is survived by three sons, four daughters, three brothers, three sisters, 21 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and his body laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Done by order of Springfield Church; and written by L. R. Willis.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

ROBERT VERNON DUDLEY

Please note the omission of the name of Brother Harry Dudley, Vinton, Virginia, as one of the brothers surviving Brother Robert Vernon Dudley, whose obituary appeared in the June issue of the *Signs*. We regret this oversight. — J. D. W.

SISTER ANNIE WATT

In loving memory of our precious departed sister, Annie Watt, widow of Brother Robert Watt, who was taken to her eternal home December 5, 1965, in her 92nd year. She leaves three daughters and three sons: Mrs. Elizabeth Bartz, Detroit, Mich.; Alfred Watt, Alvinston, Ontario; Mrs. Leos (Jean) Brown, Archie Watt and Joe Watt, Detroit, Mich.; and Mrs. Jack (Flossie) Anning, London, Ontario. Gordon and Harold predeceased her.

Sister Watt was received into the fellowship of the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, and baptized by the late Elder Carnell, July 12, 1903. She enjoyed reading her Bible, and many gospel hymns were precious to her; and she loved to attend meetings when she could. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and delighted in having those of like precious faith visit her. Many comforting and encour-

aging visits were enjoyed in her home, both before and since her husband's death. While we are saddened at seeing her face no more, we desire to thank God for his loving kindness and tender mercy in removing her from her afflicted body, to be, as we hope, forever with the Lord.

Her funeral was conducted from Black's Funeral Home, Alvinston, Ontario, by her beloved pastor, Elder George Ruston, who spoke comfortingly from Psalm 1:1-3, and Revelation 22:1, 2. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in Alvinston Cemetery, to await the resurrection day, when Jesus will come the second time to awake the sleeping dust of his children, to be clothed with immortality; when the Lamb's bride will be with her blessed Redeemer, be like Him and be satisfied, to praise, honor and magnify Him forever, world without end. Amen.

Written by request.

Sister Flossie Bishop

MEMORIAL FOR SISTER ROWLAND

Sister Nannie Rowland was born September 27, 1881, and departed this life April 6, 1966. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church at Gretna, Va. October 8, 1938. She was the wife of Robert Rowland who died several years ago. She leaves five sons and four daughters; one sister, one half sister, one step brother; 42 grandchildren, 60 great grandchildren, seven great-great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial in Gretna Cemetery.

Sister Rowland was a lovely person, loved her church and manifested it in her quiet, gentle and kind manner, filling her seat whenever possible. We are confident that He who called her by His grace will watch over her while she sleeps. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints."

We, the Church at Springfield, bow in humble submission to God's will, and may He comfort the family in their great loss.

Done by order of Springfield Church, and written by Annie Tosh.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

MICHAEL ALEXANDER (M. A.) THOMAS

Born December 2, 1871, died September 18, 1965. Son of Johnathan Peter Thomas and Mary Jane Griffith Thomas. Surviving are Sister Thomas, two daughters, three sons, seven grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. He was united in marriage August 28, 1902, by Elder Wiley Via to Sister Annie Peters.

Services were held at Salem Church September 20, 1965, by Elders J. O. Conner and B. O. Thompson, with interment in Rest Vale Cemetery.

From his own writing: "I was 13 years old had never heard anyone preach but realized I had a soul to be saved or lost, and in some measure had a little knowledge of what a Savior was. Then I began going to Charity Church on Sunday. Some of my older brothers would go with me. Then I began going every meeting Saturday and Sunday, there was a good turnout both days. When the brethren would meet there seemed so much love and fellowship we could see their faces light up as if the face of Jesus shown in their countenance, and when they dismissed on Sunday they would shake hands; called the parting hand. They preached salvation by grace, election, predestination, fore-knowledge of God, the resurrection of the body, eternal happiness for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked. I have always loved this doctrine from the first sermon I heard, so there must have been something in me that gave that knowledge, though I had no hope at that time. At about age of 16 or 17 I began to go to other churches, Long Branch and County Line, could see the same love and fellowship there as at Charity Church. At the age of 24 I hope the Lord had pardoned my sins one year before I joined the church at County Line, and I hope have been growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ every since, yet know but little of His ways, nothing of myself."

He was received into their fellowship the fourth Sunday in September, 1896. He was ordained Deacon in 1900. He missed only one association between 1895 and 1957 when he became ill with influenza and never regained his strength to get out among the brethren again. He bore his failing health with much patience and expressed a great interest in the welfare of the church and brethren to those that visited him. His experience was published shortly after he joined the church in *The Messenger of Truth*. Once while greatly tried about the resurrection, as he was on his way home from teaching school, he viewed in some manner the bodies coming forth, and those that were upon earth with him did not hinder the ones coming forth. He wrote the Smith River circular letter 1921. He truly had a deep sense of the love that binds the Lord's people together, and treasured their fellowship very highly. He was grave, holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. He had a deep insight in doctrine and discipline. The church at County Line feels their great loss, and that their loss is his eternal gain.

N. F. Conner

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1966

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

NOT ASHAMED OF CHRIST

"Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise;
Whose glories shine through endless days!

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till he,
Bright Morning Star; bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No; when I blush — be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

Ashamed of Jesus! who can say,
Who that has sins to wash away,
Or tears to wipe, or good to crave,
Or fears to quell, or soul to save?

O then, nor is my boasting vain,
O then, I boast a Saviour slain;
And O, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

— Gregg

"SOMETIMES WANTS TO HELP
CARRY THE ARK"

Rt. 1, Box 310A,
Steem, Miss. 39766

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a money-order for \$5.00

to renew my subscription to the Signs. The paper is full of food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, and comfort for the heavy laden. I enjoy reading the history of the church of the early years, and her travels.

I feel that I need to read, and to learn more of the ancient landmarks that Jesus taught the apostles and disciples, for I am so unlearned, and feel to be the greatest sinner on earth. I am so weak and feel so far from God. If I have any gift or talent, I feel sometimes I may have buried it like one of old, for I was afraid. But I will relate a few things.

I remember reading about Joseph when he was in prison in Egypt; and there was another man, (the chief baker) in prison with him, who was freed. Joseph asked him to remember him "when it is well with thee," but he forgot Joseph until later when Pharaoh dreamed a dream which none could interpret. Then he said, "I do remember my fault this day." And David said that his sin was ever before him.

If not deceived, I saw a vision like unto John in Revelation, who, when speaking of what he saw when he turned to see Him that spoke, saw seven golden candlesticks; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet as dead. Then he that spoke laid his right hand upon John, and said, "Fear not, I am the first and the last." In my vision, (I had not long gone to bed, and was not asleep. I had been reading, and had turned out the bed light,) I saw a large arm come down, and he placed his hand on my right side. I saw just the arm and hand below the elbow, and it looked like iron, and the largest I ever saw; and it came with power. I did not breathe or move - and could not if I had tried. The hand touched my right side and was held

there for a short time, and then disappeared, and was gone. I got up and went for a drink of water, wondering what it should mean.

This was in 1964. We had been having all kinds of troubles in the world: nations against each other, racial trouble, wars and rumors of war - crime everywhere; and I had been greatly concerned and worried over these things. So when I saw this powerful hand reach down and touch my side, and I was powerless to move, I thought at that time it meant that we would be overrun by the racial trouble, or some wicked power like King Herod. I pondered over this for a few weeks, and as I was writing Elder Rhodes a letter, I mentioned something about John in Revelation, and I came upon the above scripture; and I believe the great Creator of heaven and earth gave me the meaning of the vision. You recall that John said that when he saw Him, he fell at his feet as dead, and it was said unto him, "Fear not: I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and death."

The Lord showed me plainly that I was not to fret or fear, and that no one could touch me. The Saviour said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Here is the Hand again! I was made to repent, and made sorry and ashamed for fretting over these things. I realize that I am made of dust, and that the flesh is weak: "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." All my hope is in Christ the Lord, and his precious promises to his little ones the world over. So much of my time my prayer is, "Lord be merciful to me a poor sinner." I feel much of the time to be in the wilderness, and down in the valley; but when I first began to experience some of the things, as I hope, that were given to John on the Isle of Patmos, I sat down and wrote to the church, or the sisters of the church.

But sometimes I get to where I want to help carry the ark; or like Elijah, complain, and flee from Jezebel. But the angel fed him and gave him water for the journey of many days. Though my eating and drinking are many days apart, if not deceived, I would not exchange my hope and these seasons though far apart, for all things others say they know and do. In my Bible it is written, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." If we ever walk a good step, or think a good thought, or do a righteous act, it is because we are led of the Spirit. As is recorded in the 25th chapter of Matthew, when the Lord shall separate the sheep from the goats, he shall say unto the sheep, "... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." They did not know when they had done these good deeds unto him; but the goats told him, "Lord, when saw we an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you."

I feel so much of the time that I leave undone that which I ought to do, and do that which I ought not; so I conclude that it is sin that dwells in me: that is, in my flesh. Jesus told Peter that Satan had desired to have him, that he may sift him as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. It seems that Satan has always been at my elbow, telling me, as he did Mother Eve, that "Ye shall not surely die." For when I would do good evil is present with me; but, if Jesus has prayed to the Father for me, I know that his prayer shall be answered, for he said that he did always those things that pleased the Father; and that he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father that sent him. We are not our own: we are bought with a price, and Jesus paid that price when he hung on Calvary's cross.

We love him because he first loved us: He chose us, we did not choose him, as he said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you..." "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This love

passeth all understanding. I can never explain my feelings, and what I hope the Lord has done for this poor worm; and what great mercies he has bestowed on such an one as I. He has carried me through the deep waters and many storms. I remember that he said, "I am the first and the last, and have the keys of Hell and death." In the 91st Psalm we read, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." So, dear ones, as long as his angels are guarding us, no evil shall befall us.

I must close; I had not intended to write when I began, only to mail the renewal. When it goes well with you remember this poor sinner at the throne of grace. If saved, saved by grace.

Minnie Seay

GLAD TO RECEIVE THE SIGNS

Rt. 3, Box 639C
Greenville, N. C. 27834

Dear Elder Spangler:

It gives me great pleasure to know that we still may receive the periodical, **The Signs of the Times**; which gives God all the praise, honor and glory. May we continue to be blest to hold fast to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ in these trying times, is my prayer for Christ's sake. And may the editors and associate editors continue to be blessed to contend for these things.

I have not been privileged to call you my brother: that is in God's hands, if and when He sees fit; but I am proud to call you and all the other servants of God, Elders of the church. Please remember me, a sinner unworthy even to be remembered, when you are blest to pray.

Mrs. M. E. Garner

(In the above was also stated that the Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church of Greenville, N. C., has forty-five "Old

School Hymnals" number 9, copyrighted 1942 by J. A. Monsees, which are almost new; and which they desire to dispose of. Should anyone care to buy them at a good price, information can be had by writing her at the address given above. - Ed.)

"CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

What did Paul mean by saying all things? My answer is all things. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." (Colossians 1:16)

I believe that in as much as he created all things for himself, he created all things for his bride. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Revelation 4:10-11) I have noticed that these things were not to do his pleasure, but for his pleasure: all things are not working good, but for good. "In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalm 76:10) According to this scripture, God will restrain all of the wrath of man that does not praise God. We see how this works by studying the life of Joseph. Joseph's brethren were jealous because of his dreams: they did not want to bow to him. One day they lifted up their eyes and saw

Joseph coming to see how they were getting along. They plotted to kill him, and then they would see what would become of his dreams. But this part of their wrath must be restrained, because Joseph must go down into Egypt: then they thought to sell him to the merchants for a slave, which they thought would be just as well. This part of wrath was not restrained, because it was to God's praise - it was God's way of sending Joseph before his brethren, to save much people alive. (Joseph's brethren must bow before him: he was a type of Christ.)

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near unto me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not." (Genesis 45:1-9) "Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." (Genesis 45:20) (My brethren, I am looking forward to receive the call to come to Jesus, and

leave all my stuff behind; for in that heavenly land we will not need any of our stuff: for the good of the land will be ours to possess forever.)

"And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto him: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is still alive: I will go and see him before I die." (Genesis 45:27-28)

We can see that the very act which Joseph's brethren meant unto evil, God meant the same for good; and he overruled it for good. In this we can see that God works all things after his own will. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." (James 1:13)

Brethren, let me say that if any have the thought that predestination excludes the need of admonition, or exhortation, he does not understand predestination of all things; because these things are a part of the things he did predestinate, and he makes admonition have its affect.

May God give us better understanding; and the unity of the Spirit.

(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth,
Rt. 4, Box 479,
Bassett, Va. 24055

"I WILL GIVE YOU REST"

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew (11:28)

The Jews were looking for a natural King who would restore the Kingdom to them, and they did not have any use for Jesus. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) I believe that we are safe in saying that the majority of the "higher class" of Jews were the ones who despised him. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zepha-

niah 3:12) This was in the midst of Israel. There were a few who trusted in the name of the Lord. These were the afflicted and poor people--which were the class of people who followed Jesus and believed in him. "Thought the number of the Children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." (Romans 9:27)

The majority of the Jews did not feel the weight nor the burden of the yoke of the law. They trusted and boasted in their own works and were righteous in their own estimation. "They worshiped the works of their own hands." (Isaiah 3:8)

Jesus spoke a parable unto those that trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. (see Luke 18:9-14) As we observe the prayer of the Pharisee, we notice that he was not really praying to God, but he was praying thus with himself. He was actually bragging or boasting about the things he had done, and in his prayer he scorned the publican. He was actually worshiping the works of his own hands. He was not giving any praise to God. Instead, he was praising himself. This is a model prayer of those who have a form of religion, but who do not know anything about the Grace of God in their hearts.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The words of the text were directed to a certain people among the Jews during that time, and these same words are applicable in this day and time to a certain people. If these words apply to you, dear one, they are living words, and are far more reaching than the words of any other book. These are words that touch your heart, do they not?

I feel sure that these words meant something special to some people during that day. Certainly, it must have made them rejoice. It revived their spirits, and gave them fresh courage to look for something better than the condemnation of the law. This was glorious, but there is something else more glorious. "For if ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of

righteousness exceed in glory." (2 Cor. 3:9)

Let us think of the people who were weary from being under the weight of the law. The burden was grievous to them. The demands of the law were too strict, and their strength failed them. The doctrine of the world which attempts to mix the Grace of God in with the works of the law brings remedies such as these: "You ought to get up and work for the Lord, you ought to have faith in the Lord, you ought not to have doubts and fears and if you do it shows unbelief, you ought to trust in the Lord, etc." But the poor one finds he is helpless, weak, poor, undone, and has learned that he does not have the strength nor the ability to do that which is acceptable in the sight of the Lord. He feels the condemnation of the law, and knows something about the truth of these Scriptures because he has experienced it: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord." (Romans 3:23) And, "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Romans 3:20)

His prayer is something like this: "God be merciful unto me a sinner." The publican felt what he prayed, and I do not believe that he got this from a prayer book or from any other source but from his own heart. By nature, the publican's heart was not better than the pharisee. The difference was that God had touched the heart of the Publican. He felt the weight of the law. He realized he was a guilty sinner and knew that he could not atone for his sins. He knew that his works were as filthy rags in the sight of God. He knew that if justice was meted out without the mercy of God, that his doom would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God.

We can also see the work of faith in the Publican. Despair did not swallow him. He may have been on the banks of it, but he was delivered from it. There was something that caused him to pray to God. Before he could do this, the trust in God was put in his heart. He

was made to believe that God is a merciful God. He was given faith to look to the blood of Jesus which would take away his sins. The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel." (see Hebrews 12:24)

The Publican went to his house justified. One may wonder why. " - -and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) How was there a coming to Jesus in the prayer of the Publican? Let us think of it this way: It is written: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission for sins." (see Hebrews 9:22) We read in one place that God will by no means clear the guilty." (see Numbers 14:18) I believe that this means that God does not clear the guilty without the satisfaction of justice. Jesus took care of this by giving his life for his people which did satisfy Divine Justice.

Therefore when one is given faith to pray to God for mercy, I certainly believe that he is given the same faith to look to the blood of Jesus. This blood shows forth the mercy of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We read in one place that the blood is the life. Jesus said, "I lay down my life for my sheep." (John 10:15) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

The majority of the Children of Israel could not look beyond the types and shadows of the law. All the sacrifices and ceremonies under the old law, Levitical priesthood, etc. were all beautiful in its way. They were all pointing to Jesus who would make the acceptable offering which would take away sins. The blood of bulls, goats, etc. would never take away sins, but there was a continual remembrance of sins. (Hebrews 10:3) Let us think of the few who were given the faith to look beyond the type and given to view the substance. They knew they were guilty sinners, and were given faith to believe that God would prepare a sacrifice to redeem them from the curse of the law. They were looking forward to the coming of Jesus. Think of the shepherds

who were led to see the new born babe. I am sure that their hearts leaped within them. When they went back to their country, they certainly had some wonderful news to tell to their friends.

Let us get back to the setting. Many followed Jesus because of the miracles. In other words, they went to satisfy their curiosity. Some went to spy on Jesus, and many tried to trick Jesus, but we note that he stopped their mouths by the beautiful truths that flowed out of his mouth.

There were a few who followed Jesus because they were drawn to him by this wonderful love. These were the afflicted and poor people, who followed Jesus because they loved Him. As we have tried to think of the feelings of these few people and the feelings of the publican, do you find something in common, dear reader? Do you feel to be poor and afflicted? Have you groaned under the weight of the law? Do you know anything about the curse of the law? Have you labored under the terrific weight of the law, and in doing so become weary and found that you were heavy laden? If so, do not the words of the text mean something special to you? ("Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.")

As we think of that rest, this Scripture comes to mind: "For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from him." (Hebrews 4:10) This rest is Jesus. Jesus is telling you that Salvation does not rest upon your works. What a wonderful relief! As he speaks the word "come", then you come willingly. This is your only hope and salvation. Resting in Jesus is a wonderful rest, is it not?

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

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE
PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends in the Lord:

It is with a deep feeling of incompetency that I undertake to write to you, realizing that without divine inspiration my writings will be in vain.

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

The apostle was letting it be known that if he had all faith and the gift of prophecy, and had not charity, he was nothing. Though he could move mountains, give his goods to feed the poor, or any other thing, and had not charity, it simply meant nothing. If one should do all the above named things, together with any others, without charity it would mean no more than attempting to approach the throne of God under the law. He compares this with sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; which is an uncertain sound.

Though one may speak with the tongue of men and angels, and has not charity, he is nothing. So we see, there must be something else. That something is charity, or love. Until now, brethren, I have written but little about charity, except to show that our endeavors without charity, are null and void.

We might ask Paul, "What do you mean by charity?" The answer to that can be summed up in one word: Love. Charity is love in action to the end. It suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, doth not behave itself unseemly; together with all other righteous qualities. When an individual is exercised by charity, or love, he or she will do no vile to his brother or sister; but is kind and gentle in words and deeds to their brethren; or even to unbelievers.

Charity or love is the thing that brings the children of God together, bearing each others burdens. Charity

is not unkind, and does not take advantage of the brethren. One who is moved by charity does not want to wound the feelings of his brother or sister. But, instead, it will cause him to love his brethren, and want to be with them, to sing, pray, preach, or to talk about the wonderful work of charity.

Long ago there were two women, each of which had a child. One mother while sleeping, overlaid her child, and it died. Being without charity, she claimed the other woman's child, until contention arose between the true mother and the other woman, to the degree that it was decided to divide the living child between them. When this was proposed, the true mother said, "No, give the child to her." Through this act the true mother not only demonstrated a mother's love for her child, but she was willing to sacrifice for it.

These are the marks of charity: kindness, meekness, and humbleness. This is Christ in us the hope of glory. I hope this give us a small glimpse of what charity is: May we abide in it.

Because of this love, we have an humble hope that at our passing from this life, we will have peace with God. Then we can look upon Him whom our souls love, to praise him forever in that world that shall have no end.

"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Much more could be said, but space will not permit.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) C. E. Turner

FROM ELDER H. M. CURRY
IN 1901

Pleasant Plains, Illinois
January 1, 1901

Dear Brother Beebe:

I have just received and read the *Signs* for January 1, 1901. I believe I read it with more reverence for the truth, more thankfulness for the priv-

ilege, and more love, fellowship and sympathy for the editors, than ever before. For a number of years of my mortal pilgrimage, the *Signs* has filled a place in my life that no other paper could. If one should ask me why I love, patronize and uphold the *Signs*, I can give but one answer, and that is, because it suits me. It is in keeping with my experience, it agrees with the teaching of the Bible, and brings me into correspondence with the faithful in Christ throughout the land.

In looking back over the achievements of the century that has just closed, we see the progress that men have made in all the spheres of human thought and action. Progress in truth, and progress in error; progress in knowledge, and progress in ignorance; progress in virtue, and progress in vice. Above all, the nations have progressed in avarice, greed, and the spirit of conquest. The progress in religion has been signal but alarming. All creeds and professions have openly departed from their ancient steadfastness, they have all caught the delusive idea of progress. The Mohammedan of today is not the Mohammedan of one hundred years ago, but worst of all is, he is no improvement on his brethren in the past. He is a Mussulman in name only, and cares nothing at heart for the faith in God's decrees that once pervaded Arabia as the very soul and spirit of the religion of Arabia's prophet.

The Jew of today is entirely different in his faith from the Jew of one hundred years ago; his Sabbaths are a dead tradition, his sacrifices a conscious burden, his feasts are perpetuated through fear of reproach, if he should abandon them. The Catholic hierarchy, which has long been looked upon as the most impregnable font of conservatism, is giving away to the pressure, and is beginning to swerve from her ancient steadfastness. The Episcopalians have long since denied their thirty-nine articles of religion, especially the seventeenth, which treats of predestination.

The Presbyterians have at last agreed to expunge from their confession of faith the doctrine of God's decrees, which has long since departed from their hearts and consciences, and disappeared from their pulpits and theological schools.

All the departures mentioned, and many that are not mentioned, are moved by the same cause, and are tending in the same direction. But what pains me most is that in the midst of all this, many Old Baptists show a disposition to go with all the rest. The first step in this direction is to find fault with God's decrees, to begin to oppose predestination, to find fault with salvation by grace, and to desire to substitute free agency, conditions and works, for the efficacious and sovereign grace of God in his daily care of his people. Every moment God waters his vineyard, lest any touch or harm it. Where is there any time or any opportunity for any agency under heaven to get in between God's momentary waterings, to bring a blessing to one of God's poor that was not given in Christ according to God's choice before the world began? God is the sole dispenser of his grace, both for time and eternity. Christ is the servant of his people. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; the elder shall serve the younger, is the keynote of the gospel of Christ; Christ is our elder Brother, and he serves us. When I look back over the way which I have come, I must confess that the Lord alone did lead me. When I first felt the movement of sin within me, it was Christ that moved in my heart. I knew no place to go but to my own works. I found no relief there; all was failure. I reached the end of my strength; I saw an end of perfection. I knew nothing more, and without God's almighty grace there I must have remained; but he brought salvation, unexpected salvation, unmerited salvation, a salvation unknown and incomprehensible to me: salvation by Christ.

When I afterwards in my ignorance

wondered in doubt and unbelief, and in false doctrine, he still kept me, guided me and preserved me; bless his holy name. When I, ignorantly, joined a false church, he still guided and blessed, and led and taught me, and when the time came for me to hear the proclamation of his truth, the way was open, the preacher there, and I was there; he preached and my heart received it, and rejoiced. God led me out of Babylon, against all opposition; he removed all obstacles; he united me in heart and soul with his people, and then gave me a place among them in church membership. And ever since, in all my troubles, in all my sorrows, in all my confusions, he has comforted me, he has borne me and carried me, and has dispelled my confusions, and established my goings. These things confirmed of the holy Scriptures, have established me in the doctrine advocated by the *Signs*, which is the doctrine of God our Saviour. I am glad that I have company in my pilgrimage in the doctrine of God. In the midst of all departures, God has always reserved to himself a remnant according to the election of grace. This was so in former times, and it is so now. My only hope that any shall continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, is in God's election. Let the heathen rage, and the people continue to imagine vain things, the God of heaven rules, and his church is his peculiar care. The church is dead, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Even when we were dead in sins, our life was hid with Christ in God; before Adam was created, our life was there. The sin of the first man did not reach that life, and never can reach it. "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."

Thus the record stands; thus the record stood when we were dead in sins; thus the record stood from the ages eternal, and thus it forever shall stand. We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and this is God's purpose of election, and must stand.

This purpose stood in the case of Abel, it stood in the case of Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, and millions in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. All things are ordered to this end; nothing has ever taken place in heaven or in earth but what was ordered, that this purpose of election might stand. The subtlety of Satan, the transgression of Adam, the treachery of Judas, the blindness and hardness of pharisees, the inveterate malignity of Jewish priests and scribes, the opposition of Gentile rulers, were all embraced in this eternal purpose, and ordered, restricted and disposed so that nothing of them has been done but what God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. I know that men hate this truth; they also hate the author of it, and of course hate those that hold it. They do not want to grant the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. They would rather have God make the vessel to honor, and then the vessel make itself to dishonor. But how can a vessel be any other than the potter makes it? To deny that God makes vessels both to honor and to dishonor, is to reply against him, and this seems to be the chief business of man. The world is full of men and women professing to be lovers and worshipers of God, whose every effort and entire lives are spent in replying against him.

In the midst of all the confusion, vain jangling and desperate opposition to the truth, there are some who still declare it; some who cannot turn away from it, because it abides in them; it is written in their hearts; it is imprinted in their minds; it is burned into their consciences; it is a fire in their bones; it is a voice upon their lips, and it finds a vent; it makes an utterance; its proclamation is perpetuated. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that proclaims it; how gracious are the lips of him who speaks it; how blessed are the ears of him

who hears it!

For my part I cannot go with nineteenth century religion, nor with twentieth century religion. Nothing will answer my case but Christ — Christ in doctrine, Christ in order, Christ in joy, Christ in sorrow, Christ in light, Christ in darkness, Christ at all times and under all circumstances. His obedience must be made my obedience, his righteousness must be my righteousness, he is my life; all my springs are in him, all my hope, all my comfort, all my salvation for time and for eternity, centers in him. If he is all this to me, how can I preach anything short of this to others? A repentance that is not wrought by him, is no more than a sorrow of the world that worketh death; a hope that he is not the substance of, is vain, and shall end in disappointment; a faith that he is not the author and finisher of, is a dead faith, and is destitute both of the substance of hope, and the evidence of things not seen; a righteousness that is not in him, is filthy rags; an obedience that he is not the soul and spirit of, is mockery and delusion; and works that he does not work in a man, are the works of unbelief, darkness and presumption; a wisdom that is not comprehended in him is the wisdom of the world, and is foolishness with God: it is carnal, sensual and devilish; any fruits that are not produced by his life in us, are not the fruits of the Spirit, but are artificial, vain and deceptive; a sermon that he is not the Alpha and Omega of, is false, delusive and destructive.

This is my New Year greeting to all those who know and love the truth, those who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, to the pilgrims and strangers in this world who have here no abiding city. Go on in the name and love and strength of Israel's God; go on in the power of his might, in the strength of his Spirit, fearing not man whose breath is in his nostrils; go on in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace; put on the whole ar-

mour of God; go on in the fellowship which is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; go on in the faith and order of the gospel; go on, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith.

To those whose lot it is to preach the word, I would say, Stand upon the walls of Zion; stand in the gaps, and remember that "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." "Study to shew yourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "Preach the word, . . . reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Your inheritance in this world is tribulation, but your heritage in Jesus is peace.

And now, Brother Beebe and Brother Chick, may the Lord bless you both. He has blessed you and sustained you in the work whereunto he has called you. He has made you a blessing to many; you have both been a blessing to me, and I desire here to confess it.

May God sustain the *Signs* and all his faithful servants.

H. M. Curry

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
CIRCULAR LETTER
1966

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, convening with Moon's Creek Church at Cobb Memorial School, Caswell County, N. C., July 16, 17 and 18, 1966, wishes to extend Christian greeting to our corresponding brethren, churches and associations. We believe that only our Heavenly Father has given us this mutual fellowship in this unfriendly and weary land below; for which we hope to be thankful.

Since the year 1790 it has been the practice of the Baptist association then, and the Primitive Baptist Association now, to write a Circular Letter to be in-

serted as a part of the association minutes, to be circulated to the people with whom we correspond.

May the Lord endow us with spiritual understanding and application of Joshua's farewell address to his people Israel in our lives while we walk in this precarious and troubled world below. After the Lord had given rest to his people Israel from all their enemies, Joshua was stricken in age and waxed old. Knowing that he must go the way of all the earth, he called the elders, head and judges, telling them how God had delivered them from all the nations, and from every hostile foe which they had met. Could the Elders passed and gone speak, this no doubt would be their address to us today. In the future, should it be the Lord's will and the world stand, His witnesses shall be declaring the same: that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, removing not the ancient landmarks.

Joshua told them to be courageous and to turn not aside to the right hand or to the left; he told them not to go among the nations whom God had delivered them from, or to make mention of their god's: neither to serve them or bow themselves to them, but to cleave unto the Lord, for it is God who fighteth for you. Knowing therefore that his death was at hand, he said, Ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All these things are now come to pass unto you, and not one thing has failed. We feel that God has not failed this association, but has gone before, led and preserved it for over 160 years, when it was known as the Country Line Association: being its Great Moderator, to the mutual comfort of Zion, and to his own glory. May He continue to guide us in the way of all righteousness.

Not only did Joshua tell of the good things, but to take heed unto ourselves that we love the Lord our God or else we will cleave to the nations and make mar-

riage with them. He said to know for a certainty that your God will no more drive out any of these nations, but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish all from the good land which he promised, and has given you.

I humbly submit the above to be amended, rejected, or approved by your body. Written by one who hopes God has made him a part of you in this good land.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Donald E. Smith

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The **Lexington-Roxbury Association** will convene, the Lord willing, on Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, with the church at Holcottville, N. Y. Entertainment will be at the same place as last year, the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y.

Those coming on Wednesday afternoon take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left hand road to the third house, called Windy Acres. If you are coming on Wednesday please notify Mr. Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead. Brethren and friends are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **Virginia Corresponding Meeting** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House on Wednesday and Thursday, October 12 and 13, 1966; to begin at 10:30 standard time.

The meeting house is located on Rt. 50 about one mile east of Gilbert's Corner. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1966 session of the **South Ouachita Association** will convene at Liberty Hill Church on the 4th Sunday in September and beginning on Friday before. The Church is located about six miles northeast of Farmerville, La. and one-fourth mile east of the Farmerville-

Marion Highway.

Lovers of the truth are welcome.

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

CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association will hold its 139th annual session at Elam Church, two miles north of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, the second Sunday in October, and Friday and Saturday before. Pike County is in southeast Alabama, and the County Seat and the largest town is Troy.

Brethren and friends of our faith and order are welcome.

A. C. Carter, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association is to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Reedy Prong Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C. September 16, 17, 18, 1966.

The meeting house is located about twelve miles east of Dunn, N. C., and about five miles west of Newton Grove, just off Highway 55.

We greatly desire that our brethren and friends meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 98
Wade, N. C. 28395

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1966)

Mrs. S. E. Goard, Va.....	\$ 1.00
Paul Morton, N. C.....	5.00
Mrs. J. M. Carmack, La.....	2.00
Mrs. Lillian Holt, Va.....	5.00
Andy D. Hall, Oreg.....	10.00
Mrs. James F. Thompson, N. C.....	2.00
Hugh L. Gloer, Ga.....	10.00
Mrs. C. A. Halstead, Wash.....	1.00
Mrs. M. E. Garner, N. C.....	1.00
S. N. Moon, Ga.....	22.00
J. B. Barron, N. C.....	3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	1.00
J. J. Cain, La.....	2.00
Mrs. A. F. Pilchard, Md.....	5.00
Ben F. Preston, Ore.....	10.00
Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash.....	5.00
George and Bernice Truitt, Md.....	5.00
Willie Dunn, Tex.....	1.00
Mrs. G. E. Rogers, Can.....	45.00

Danville, Virginia September, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 48: 10

"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

In all of God's dealings with Israel he has manifested that he has a sovereign choice, which is not influenced by the thoughts or mind of man, but is definite according to a purpose fixed and settled before the foundation of the world. He is of one mind, so much so that none can turn him. Balak would have Israel cursed, and that if he could by a prophet of God; but to the confusion of Balak, Balaam blessed and said, How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" When God chose Abram it was not that he was good, and when Israel looked back to that choice she confessed, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father." When

he chose Moses to lead his people Israel, Moses said, "Who am I?" and confessed that he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue, yet God said, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord?" When God would make David king he sent Samuel to anoint the one that he would name unto him. When Samuel looked on Eliab he said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." In the end David, the youngest, was brought from among the sheep, and was manifested by the word of the Lord as his chosen. God's people are called "a chosen generation," chosen before the foundation of the world, embraced in the promise made unto Abram when God told him that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. When Abram would have more assurance of the promise God had given him we find an horror of great darkness fell upon him, and God said his seed should be a stranger in a strange land, and should be afflicted for a definite time. Thus Israel of old was to be an afflicted people. "I will also leave in the mist of thee an afflicted and poor people." Afflicted, yet beloved of God, so much so that "he reproveth kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." God was to Israel a wall of fire round about her and the glory in the mist of her. There were certain characteristics seen in Israel of old. She was in Egypt, yet she could not learn their language. Egypt is spoken of as a people of a strange language, also an Israelite was an abomination to an Egyptian, nor would the Egyptians and Israelites eat together. Again, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Just as Israel of old had characteristics peculiar to her, so it is with Israel to-day, and it is our

intention to write of some of the marks of the children of God, particularly of their trials during their pilgrimage through this wilderness world. The Lord has a purpose, or end, in all afflictions. James says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." From the moment that God the Holy Ghost begins the work of grace in the soul there is a bringing judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and a sweeping away of the refuges of lies. Perhaps the most deceptive refuge of lies is self-righteousness. Many of God's dear saints will cling to that and find refuge in it. Righteous self is as obnoxious unto God as sinful self, yet how many there are while professing a pronounced hatred to sinful self, view with pleasure what seems to be an improvement in self. Being stripped of all fancied goodness is a very painful process, hard to be endured, for, like Job, one will cry, "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go," but as Job, all of God's chosen will come to the place where they confess, "Behold I am vile," and, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." There cannot be a true worship in the kingdom of heaven unless it be in a life from the dead, for "the body is dead because of sin," and it is in and from this very state that life, in a cry, a sigh or a groan, is manifest. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted: their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death." This death is that which fills a heavenborn soul with wretchedness and woe, and this is one of the marks, yes, and the most precious of marks, of God's dear saints. The worldly religionists have no bands in their death, their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men are, neither are they afflicted. They have more than heart can wish. Not so the children of God, for sin is mixed with all they do.

"A daily cross, a stubborn will,
A heart replete with every ill,
Afflictions prone from God to go

Are bounds that only Israel know."

Others can worship God when they please, but with God's children it is,

"Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring them to his feet."

Sometimes it is the thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, darkness of mind, temptations and evils too numerous to mention, that will bring them to the place of prayer. Generally the great besetting sin is unbelief. An evil heart of unbelief; oh, what a plaque this is to many of us! Though the Lord has smiled upon us and given us the joys of those that fear him, yet we will hearken to Satan's lies rather than to what the Lord has spoken. Yes, and the very goodness of God in bestowing upon us his unmerited grace will be lost sight of, and if he bless us with prosperity, so that for a while everything runs smoothly, we manifest our ungodly inclinations, and would but for grace sink into perdition. In his grace meted out to us there are trials, crosses, losses, yea, in the words of our text, a "furnace of affliction," and the chosen of God are manifest in and by their afflictions. Not but what the world and worldlings have their trials and troubles, but afflictions of God's saints yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness in those who are exercised thereby. John Newton, writing to a friend, said, "If you should ask me what is the clearest proof of a person being a christian, I should have to say, the one who is saying, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me,' and 'How to perform that which is good I find not,'" and so we believe, for on our heavenly Joseph and all his offspring there is a cross-handed blessing. There is no comfort or help, experimentally to us, but what finds its beginning in tribulations. The word of God is like a fire, and when applied by the Spirit it will burn, and one's moisture is soon turned into the drought of summer. It will rebuke and condemn. "My son, dispise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourg-

eth every son whom he receiveth." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It has always been the lot of Israel to be an abomination to the worldling, professing and profane, neither can they eat together, for, "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." What is life to the one, is death to the other. The furnace separates the dross from the gold, and under God's afflicting hand his children learn patience, which is manifest in their hoping for that which they see not. Thus tribulation works patience and patience experience. While passing through the trial it was hard, and the cross heavy, but our eyes having been opened to the wretchedness of our own heart, we could say, It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. If the Lord seems to leave us to ourselves we seldom go far before we prove the heart to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and though we always dread affliction, yet at times we cry in bitterness of soul, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Thus there is not a flame of the furnace but has its work according to the wisdom of God, and works for good to his saints. The Lord has made no bargain with his people in this matter, and there is no way to escape the furnace or the chastisement. It is not conditional, for all are partakers. William Gadsby in a sermon preached at Manchester, England, November 1st., 1840, said, "Every principle that would make salvation conditional in man I hate as I do the devil, because God, in the riches of his grace, has brought me so solemnly to feel that it is all a rich precious teeming out of the love of God."

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston of April 1, 1924. We re-publish it in the absence of a current writing, and feel that all will find it experimental, and therefore comforting and edifying. -J. D. W.)

EDITORIAL

We are quite aware that the faith or doctrine of the Lord's people is entirely unlike anything held and believed by other people. But we are not moved by this, for it is as it should be, else there would be nothing but human wisdom and ability advocated; and the truth as it is in Jesus would not be heard anywhere in the land.

By the Lord's people we mean, of course, those who are taught of the Lord in every nation, kindred, tongue, or denomination: the religious world, other than these, is holding to doctrines based upon human wisdom and philosophies of men. Against this the Apostle warned: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2 : 8,9.)

To make such a statement, and to hold to the truth, is not bigotry: it is not holding blindly and stubbornly to a conviction without abundant reason for doing so. Nor do these ever feel they should be against the right of anyone to have his personal views and opinions; but they do steadfastly hold to those things which are "spelled out" in the Scriptures, as given by inspiration, and therefore revelations from God himself. They firmly believe the Scriptures to be the record of God's way and manner of dealing with his human family; and that they are the complete and full record. The Apostle wrote to Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Further, these hold that for one to know and believe the truth of the Scriptures, (which are the constitution and by-laws of the church in the world,) he must be born of God - born of the water and of the Spirit: he must have the rev-

elation of the Son of God in himself, or it is impossible for him to know that the Scriptures are of God. If he does not have this experience, he can have no firm assurance that they are. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John 5 : 10)

Those who believe these things do not attempt to prove them by appealing to the intellects, or the reasoning of men. They know from their own experience that these are things which men by searching cannot find out; that they are things which belong to the kingdom of God, rather than the kingdom of the world; and that they are things therefore above and beyond the comprehension and acceptance of those who have only the "spirit of man" in themselves.

So it is that, when they write or preach the things embodied in the Scriptures, they do not attempt to persuade men to believe what they well know men cannot believe of themselves; they do not endeavor to fill the churches with members, by compassing land and sea to make proselytes. They leave this where it rightly is: in the power and keeping of God, to apply it where he will apply it. They are content, by God's mercies, to feed and edify those who have had the necessary work of God wrought in them; in which it is apparent that they were chosen by the Father in his Son before the world began, and that they are citizens of the world by nature, yet citizens of the kingdom of God experimentally and manifestly.

These are not so unstable that they will admit additions to the scriptural text to be proper, as if the inspiration of God left it incomplete. Neither can they approve interpretations of scriptures which are not consistent with the scriptures themselves; nor the omission of anything to make them acceptable to men, for to do so, is degrading to the power, honor, and glory of God, which they will not be a part of. They know that the Scriptures are in full and complete accord with those things revealed in them when they were brought out of

darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God: when God shined in their hearts to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of his Son. And they know that things added by men either in doctrine or forms, are things not revealed by the Spirit: so they simply will not have anything to do with them.

In this brief article we only intend to show the fundamental differences in the two religions in the world. (There are in reality only two: the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of others; truth and error; right and wrong.) One relies alone upon the teaching of the Scriptures for all doctrine, and everything else necessary for the Church while in her time state; while the other confessedly relies upon the Scriptures, but finding some "things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest . . . unto their own destruction," they are happy and content to explain them according to what appears right to them; but, according to John in his second Epistle, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of God, hath not God." But, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

We are aware, of course, that there are many people who have religious beliefs which are not based upon the Scriptures at all. Concerning these, and the ones mentioned above, we would not be critical, but must include them all together, and merely point out the fact that both are operating contrary to gospel teaching. We feel that we would not be faithful to our God and our calling, if we did not declare these things; that there is only one gospel of Christ, and that, "His is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And that salvation is not just a matter of holding to some religious belief, or performing some rites, or living a life of the highest morality in the nature of men; but rather in being sealed with the holy spirit of promise, the earnest of one's inheritance, all, "According as he hath chosen us in him be-

fore the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

The doctrine of God our Saviour comprises the truth that salvation is by His grace alone, and not by works of the creature: grace from first to last, - from the beginning to the ending in glory. Those who know this, are confident "That he that has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." All other doctrines, (including the wrong interpretations of the Scriptures,) we must say, are based upon what the creature does, rather than what is done for him. This is not condoned in the gospel, since men clearly do not have any ability to make the least atonement for their sins; and it is contrary to the express statements of Jesus, and the other writers.

Did we not know our own self, we would find it beyond our understanding how that multitudes confess the name and work of Jesus, yet do not believe and practice half of what he taught. Solomon certainly was right when he wrote, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor." (Eccl. 10:1)

To have the eyes of his understanding opened to know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, is the greatest blessing a mortal man can receive in this life. (see Ephesians 1:18-20) The immutable things of God give strong consolation to those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them: and they have this hope as the anchor of their souls, sure and steadfast; and

which enters into that within the veil where their forerunner has entered. (see Hebrews 6: 18-20) What a blessing it is to have this anchor!

When the grace of God appears and manifests salvation to a poor sinner, he is taught something: "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:12-14)

As these things are manifested in the lives of men and woman, there is evidence of the grace of God in them; without which, all their professions will not make it so.

Paul also wrote Titus, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 8 : 20

Brother Beebe:—Should you feel at liberty, I would like to have you preach me a sermon on Romans 8:20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

Affectionately,
S. G. SUPPLEE

Gustavus, Ohio, Jan. 21, 1879.

REPLY.

In this eighth chapter as well as in those preceding it, we understand the apostle to define the two opposing elements which are developed in every heaven-born subject of saving grace while here in the flesh, one of which he calls **flesh**, and the other **spirit**. Of these two elements, this same apostle writes to the Galatians, saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against

the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." —Gal. 5 : 16, 17. There are not only two distinct elements, but so distinct and hostile to each other as to disable the child of God to do the things that he would. "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law (or ruling power) in my members (members of the outward or fleshly man) warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom.7 : 19, 21-23.

Now Paul had been born again; but this law of sin, which would not allow him to do that which is good, and which he desired to do, was not born of God, for he possessed it before he was born of the Spirit. This law of sin in his members was with his members born of the flesh, and pertained to the flesh. If we walk after the Spirit, the new or inward man, we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The fleshly nature of the children of God can no more bring forth good fruit, than the new man, which is born of incorruptible seed, can bring forth corrupt fruit. The flesh and the spirit of life in the saints differ as widely in their nature, parentage and vital relationship, as in their opposite, belligerent and contending propensities. The one is of the old, fleshly birth, the other is of the new and spiritual birth; the one is born of the flesh, the other is born of the Spirit: the one is human, the other is divine; the one of man, the other of God. The element in the christian which is of the flesh, can only produce the works of the flesh, which are summed up by our apostle thus: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." But the fruit of the Spirit in them which are born of God is

“love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”—Galatians 5 : 19-23. “Whosoever (therefore) is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”—1 John 3 : 9. “Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”—1 John 5 : 4. And this faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit, which cannot proceed from the flesh; and yet, in its absence, no man can please God. With these preliminary remarks, we proceed to consider the text proposed for investigation.

“For the creature was made subject to vanity.” There has been much discussion in regard to the identity of the creature here spoken of. Some have supposed that the apostle was speaking of the natural or old man, and others that he intended the spiritual or new man; but by a careful attention to the connection, we think it will be seen that the apostle has drawn the line of distinction between creatureship, as pertaining to the flesh, and sonship, as pertaining to that which is born of God. The simple meaning of the word **creature**, no more expresses vital relationship to God in this case, than it does when applied to anything animate or inanimate which God has created. We are aware that this apostle has said, “If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold all things are become new,” see—2 Cor. 5 : 17. But this is said in connection with the declararation, that if one died for all, then are we all dead, crucified with Christ, buried with him by baptism into death, and risen with him in newness of life. It therefore is spoken of what they were as **creatures** in the flesh, who being dead with Christ, and risen with him, are to be known no more in the flesh; but being quickened together with Christ, we are raised up with him from our old, fleshly relations to the law, are now created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained

that we should walk in them. “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, (all his people, who had sinned in the flesh,) then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.” Therefore on this account, and in this sense, as we know him no more in the flesh, so also we only know his redeemed members as risen with him from the dead, in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. But in the fifth of Galatians, and the seventh and eighth of Romans, he is speaking of the two natures or elements which are sensibly felt and experimentally realized in everyone who has been born of the flesh, and then born again, of the Spirit. Our Savior has himself settled the point beyond all controversy, that “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” We can hardly believe that any intelligent, careful reader of the word will fail to understand that all the fleshly nature of mankind was **created** in the Adam who was made of the dust of the ground; and all of the divine nature of which the saints are made partakers in Christ Jesus, the second Adam, who was not a creature or a created being, but the begotten Son of the eternal God, are decendants from him as their heavenly parent in that spirit which they receive by birth, and not by creation, in the common acceptation of the word. The creature then which was made subject to vanity is the creature that the apostle says in the immediate connection of our text is still held in the bondage of corruption, and shall hereafter be delivered, and changed from creatureship to sonship, at the redemption of our body. For this change the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth, even for the manifestation of the sons of God or for mortality to be swallowed up of life,

for deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. That which is born of incorruptible seed cannot be held in a bondage of corruption; but every saint while here in the flesh knows that the bondage of corruption is that which pertains to our carnal or fleshly nature, which is born of corruptible seed. They can all, like Job, say unto corruption, "Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister,"—Job 17: 14. But the spirit which is born of God cannot say its father is corruption, for its Father is God: or its mother is a worm, because it is born of incorruptible seed, by the Word Of God, which liveth and abideth forever, for it is born of him whose flesh saw no corruption.

The word vanity in our text we think is used synonymously and interchangeably with the words in the connection, corruption, mortality, the suffering of the present time, which we are made subject to, and which the creature or created element in us shall be delivered from when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and death is swallowed up of life.

According to the words of the wise-man, all terrestrial things are vanity. He says, "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."—Eccl. 1: 13, 14. Until we can find an interpreter more wise and reliable than Solomon, we must accept this definition of the word vanity. The creature man, when made of the dust of the ground, was made subject to vanity; for if he had not been made subject to it, he would have been proof against it, in which case he could never have been involved in it. This vanity, which the apostle is speaking of, is a vanity which involves the whole creation, and not the saints only. Paul speaks of it as "the bondage of corrup-

tion," from which the saints shall be delivered in the change that awaits them at their adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body. This vanity is common to all our race, whether saints or otherwise; for the apostle says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit." The first fruits of the Spirit which we have any knowledge of is the manifestation in us of that spiritual life which is born of the Spirit, as the development of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God. We who have received this first fruit by the birth, and in whom dwells the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, have the assurance of its ultimate fruit in quickening our mortal bodies in like manner; and until this quickening Spirit shall accomplish the resurrection of our mortal bodies, we also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption. The spirit of adoption we have already received as the first fruits, and certain assurance of its further fruits in our final resurrection, and the full adoption of our spiritual bodies, changed and made like Christ's glorious body.

The vanity entailed to us as creatures, is involuntary: it is not received willingly, or the whole creation would not groan under its ponderous weight. We are not willingly subject to it until the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bond of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. This change with the saints will be from creatureship, so far as our flesh is considered, to sonship, from bondage to liberty, from groaning to rejoicing, from vanity to that which is substantial, from burden to rest, from depravity to immaculate purity, from death to life. For, if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; and now, like Paul, you inquire, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But in the consummation of the adoption, these vile bodies shall be changed from vileness and vanity, and made like Christ's glorious body.

This vanity, which now makes even those who have the first fruits of the Spirit groan, is subjected in hope by him who has lead captivity captive, who has triumphed over death and the grave, and who has begotten us again to a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead, to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, because it is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. The apostle continues, "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth; why doth he yet hope for?" "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

And while here we wait and groan and long for deliverance from the vanity of earthly state, we are in fellowship with the sufferings which Jesus endured in the flesh to bring us to God, and to subject our vanity in hope.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 1, 1979.)

GENESIS 9 : 27

The will of God concerning the world and its people is revealed in the events that occur from day to day in its history. History is a record of past events. Prophecy, however, dares more than history, and looks into the unrevealed future, declaring what is yet to be brought forth from the womb of time. Noah's words quoted above are prophecy, and are an instance of God's method of communicating with the fathers of old by the prophets, and not by his Son, as now. (See Hebrews i. 1, 2.) This one bit of prophecy is fraught with deep significance; it contains the key to much of the world's history, but much more, it contains the secret to the history of the visibility of the church of Christ. I hope we may be able to obtain a glimpse of both meanings of the text.

Noah does not deserve any credit for

unusual sagacity and foresight, for his saying is the fruit of faith. Noah did not understand what he was talking about any more than the people of the Lord in this day understand fully their own thoughts and emotions when under the exercise of this same faith. Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet, and moved by fear built an ark to the saving of his house. How was Noah warned of God? By faith, that mighty principle which has moved the people of God aright in all ages of the world. Faith is the magnetic needle of the soul's compass which points always to the same star—the Star of Bethlehem, and will not let us go wrong. Noah could not warn others of the coming disaster, because none had this faith, and the things of God are revealed "from faith to faith," and not from faith to **no** faith, assertions to the contrary notwithstanding. The lessons taught in all these faithful sayings of old, instead of being wasted upon the world of that day, were reserved for us unto whom the better things of the gospel are come.

Certain circumstances surrounded the utterance of this prophecy quoted at the beginning. Noah was drunk with wine, and lay naked in his disgrace. His son Ham discovered him in this condition and exposed it to the two other sons, Shem and Japheth, who, instead of gloating over the incident, spread a garment over their father with their faces turned away. Upon awaking, Noah, aware of Ham's treachery and of the faithfulness of Shem and Japheth, cursed the offspring of the one but blessed the others. The blessings are promises unto us. So is God's will made known. He makes use of wicked things and base to further his purpose concerning his elect. Who dare question the predestination of God in these things, or who, acknowledging his predestination, dare lay the charge of guilt before his throne? These circumstances which accompanied the utterance of this truth by the lips of Noah furnished an unworthy setting for so precious a stone. Truth is a gem often found in the most unlikely

places, and in settings unworthy of it, yet devoid of its habitation its brilliancy would not appear so wonderful nor its rarity be appreciated.

Shem was the forefather of Terah, the father of Abram, whose name was afterward changed to Abraham, who was the father of Isaac, the father of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, from whom sprang that nation of old so singularly favored of the Lord above all nations of the earth. Japheth had seven sons, whose posterity divided the "Isles of the Gentiles," every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. From Noah sprang both Jew and Gentile. Japheth, the father of the Gentiles, was to be enlarged by the Lord, and should come to "dwell in the tents of Shem," meaning that his posterity should so increase in power and influence as to gain the ascendancy over the sons of Shem, and dwell in their dwelling-places. For many centuries the Jews were the ruling power in Jerusalem and the "land of Canaan," but finally passed under the government of Rome, and were gradually borne down under the yoke until their national identity became lost, about 70 A. D., when the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army and many of the Jews were put to the sword, resulting in the massacre and banishment of hundreds of thousands of the unhappy people who were scattered among their brethren in all parts of the world. Josephus estimates the total number slain to have been no less than 1,356,460. This is the **historical** fulfillment of Noah's prophecy concerning Japheth. This is also the "abomination that maketh desolate," spoken of in Daniel 12 : 11. It is also the fulfillment of the prophecy in Hosea 1 : 4: "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." Jezreel, meaning "God's seed," prefigures Christ the only begotten Son of God. Historically speaking, the widespread desolation that came upon the Jewish nation in the year 70 was the awful vengeance of God upon

that people for the crucifixion of Christ.

Now with the help of God's Spirit to give us understanding let us turn from the external to the internal or spiritual meaning of the text. Note the language, "tents of Shem," not land of Shem. Quite a decided difference. Not only was the seed of Japheth to possess the land of Shem, but the home of the Israelite was to be the home of the Gentile; he was to have the same roof for a covering, and be protected by the same wall. Israel dwelt beneath the wings of the Almighty. God was his covering and his wall of salvation. He was eyes unto Israel and a strong arm. Who was it that for Israel's sake caused the Red Sea to become a way of escape from the bondage of Egypt? Who was it satisfied their thirst with water from the smitten rock, and who sent manna from heaven in time of great hunger? Even the Lord God Omnipotent did all this, and more, for his mercies unto that rebellious people are beyond recounting. This same God gave them by the mouth of his prophets many sweet and precious promises whose fulfillment was treasured in the Savior to be revealed. But the Israelites blundered, they based their right to the promises upon endless genealogies, establishing their lineal descent from Abraham. That they were altogether wrong in so doing is clear from the words of John the Baptist to them, as recorded in Matthew 3 : 9: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." We have also the direct words of Christ concerning this matter in his address to the Jews, as recorded in John 10 : 26: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Now as to who are the heirs of the promise, ask the great apostle to the Gentiles and he will tell you: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since we are Gentiles, my brethren, we have great reason to thank God that our right to the promise does not depend upon our being able to trace our descent

from Abraham, for we could never do that, being descended from Japheth, and not from Shem. The whole thing depends upon the election of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. If we are included in that election, then are we heirs; if we are not so elected, then all the genealogics in the world will not make us heirs. Christ did not permit his disciples to bear this news unto the Gentiles until after his death, but sent them only unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. After his resurrection, however, he sent them on the great apostolic mission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "All the world," meaning Gentiles as well as Jews. By the way, permit me to say that this mission was finished prior to 63 A. D., when Paul, while a prisoner in Rome, wrote his letter to the brethren of Colosse, in which he said that the word of the truth of the gospel had come unto them as it had "in all the world." So now it is clear that God no longer gives unto the Jew his peculiar care and providence, but has brought the Gentile to trust in him also. Thus Japheth dwells in the tents of Shem. The election of God in Christ includes both Jew and Gentile, all whom the Holy Ghost has circumcised in heart, for the circumcision of the flesh avails nothing.

"God shall enlarge Japheth." "Enlarge," according to the marginal reading, means to persuade or convince. This convincing is the work of the Spirit in the heart of the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, and brings him to dwell beneath the love and mercy of an all-wise God, to know his gracious providence disposes each event, and to trust in that everlasting arm which is able to save unto the uttermost, thanking his heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our Lord that he has redeemed his soul from destruction and keeps his feet from falling.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

(Written by Elder Lefferts August 10, 1904, while living in Philadelphia - J. D. W.)

ORDINATION OF BROTHER DONALD ALEXANDER McCOLL

THE COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH
Meeting at Ekfrid, Ontario, June 26, 1966

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that DONALD ALEXANDER McCOLL, a member of this Church, was ordained to the full work of the Gospel Ministry on June 26, 1966. The proceedings of council ordaining him were as per copy of the minutes below.

THE COVENANTED BAPTIST CHURCH

Deacon Eldon Gilbert, Church Clerk

Elder George Ruston, Pastor

Minutes of council called by the Church at Ekfrid, Ontario, for the purpose of examining Brother D. Alex. McColl with a view to ordaining him to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

The council convened at 10 A. M., June 26, 1966, in the Ekfrid Church. Order of service:

Prayer by Elder D. V. Spangler

Singing — Psalm 100

Preaching by Elder G. Ruston — Philip-
pians 4:8

Elder Ruston was chosen Moderator and Brother Gilbert, Clerk.

Churches and ministers invited to meet and act with the Church responded as follows:

Elder D. V. Spangler and Sister Spangler,
Danville, Virginia

Elder W. E. Turner, Scott's Church, North
Carolina

The minutes of the Church meeting held May 8, 1966, at Dunwich Church, calling for the assembly of this council, was called for and read. It was then moved and seconded that the council proceed to examine the candidate. Before putting the question, the Moderator invited all members of sister churches of our faith and order to act with the council. Question put and carried unanimously. Brother McColl then related his experience as a subject of Grace and his exercises respecting the work of the ministry. The examination proving satisfactory, it was moved and seconded that the council proceed with the ordination. Carried unanimously. Ordination was then imposed by the laying on of hands by the ministers present, Elder Turner speaking in prayer. A solemn and impressive charge was delivered by Elder Spangler. The Moderator then, on behalf of the churches, gave the right hand of fellowship to Brother McColl.

The 121st Psalm was sung and the meeting closed with benediction by Elder D. Alex. McColl.

Elder George Ruston, Moderator
Deacon Eldon Gilbert, Council Clerk

OBITUARIES

SISTER IDA WARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy, to remove from our midst by death Sister Ida Ward — widow of William L. Ward, who died in 1958.

Sister Ward was a member of Gilliam's Primitive Baptist Church. Her survivors are: Mrs. Lexa Terrell and Mrs. John Younger, of Gibsonville, N. C.; Woodroe Ward, of Burlington; Frank C. and Albert L. Ward, of Gibsonville; and Boatsman 1stC Eddie Lee Ward, of the U. S. Coast Guard, Orlando, Fla. Surviving also are: one brother, Coley Cox, Rt. 3, Reidsville, N. C., and four half-brothers, George Cox, of Greensboro, Robert and Johnny Cox, of Ruffin, and Charley Cox, Rt. 1, Reidsville; and one half-sister, Nannie Gregory, of Greensboro; twenty-one grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren; and her step-mother, Mrs. Dora Dickerson.

Sister Ward was a good mother to her children, setting a good example before them; and she was loyal to her church, and attended meetings as long as she was able. We will miss Sister Ward very much, for she was a loving, humble person. The Lord gave and he has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our profound loss in her passing, and that we pray our Heavenly Father, who only can know our great loss, to reconcile us to his holy will. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to the family.

Done in church conference at the May meeting, 1966. Written by Brother L. J. Saunders.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Charles F. Somers, Clerk

MARTHA SUSAN SHELTON

Martha Susan Shelton was born March 21, 1897, called from this time world December 25, 1965, making her stay on earth 68 years and 9 months. She was the daughter of Robert Clark and Martha Turner Clark, and wife of the late James Aubrey Shelton. They were married 50 years and 8 months, and to this union were born 9 children.

She leaves to mourn: two sons: Melvin Shelton and Alvis Shelton, Route 2, Stuart, Va.; four daughters: Mrs. Tonic Stone, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Gladys Martin, Collinsville, Va.; Mrs. Nick Martin and Mrs. Glenford Sigman, both of Route 2, Stuart, Va. Also, two brothers: Elder Flem Clark, Henry, Va.; and Grady Clark, Leaksville, N. C.; and two sisters: Mrs. Ralph Moss, Danville, Va.; Mrs. John Dollar, Lowell, N. C. Twenty grandchildren, three great grandchildren.

Sister Shelton joined Union Primitive Baptist Church, October 25, 1924, and was baptized the next day. She was afflicted before her husband died and it was necessary to remove one of her limbs. She was brought to his funeral in an ambulance. She bore her affliction with patience. I shall not forget her love and devotion to her family and church. Even in her last days she was brought to church in a wheel chair, but she wanted to fill her place in church; and most of the time she did. She was well cared for by her children and in-laws who made the necessary arrangements for her to go to church when she was able. One of the last words that she said, "I am ready," and her life and walk showed that she was. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Church by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder R. A. May. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord. May the Lord, who doeth all things well, reconcile the family and church to his will.

Written by her pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

MRS. JANE JOHNSON WEST

In loving memory of our dear daughter, and niece, who passed away on November 25, 1965. We miss her but God saw fit to take her out of her suffering here on earth; as her health had been bad for several years.

She was born January 6, 1926, making her stay on earth 39 years, 10 months, 19 days. She was the daughter of Annie and H. Wesley Johnson. Her father passed away less than two weeks after her death. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, Wade West, her mother, four brothers, and five sisters. She leaves also many relatives and a host of friends.

She united with Hickory Grove Church on June 19, 1960, by experience and baptism.

She graduated from Four Oaks High School in 1944. She trained for a nurse in Washington for 2½ years; then went to Baltimore,

Md. for the last 6 months of training. She graduated from there in 1947. She came to the hospital in Smithfield, N. C., and she nursed there for 2 years. She then worked for Dr. E. H. Alderman for sometime. During this time she married Wade West, they made their home at 609 North General Lee Ave., Dunn, N. C. She worked at the Good Hope Hospital in Erwin, N. C. until her health would not permit. She was a true and faithful nurse always thinking of others and helping the sick. She did her suffering so patiently, never complaining.

Five sad months since you left us,
Whom we cherished and loved so dear,
Can we help from feeling lonely
When we know you are not here.

Surrounded by friends we are lonesome,
In the midst of pleasure we are blue,
A smile on our faces, still a heartache,
Aching and longing for you.

Home is so lonely for daughter's not here,
Death has taken her out of our care,
Dark is the room, empty her chair,
Home is not the same since you are not here.

There's a spot of ground
We cherish fond and true,
It's the grave dear daughter
That holds the blessed form of you.

In life we loved you dear daughter,
In death we do the same:
We will never cease to love you,
Until we meet again.

Sleep on dear one, your labor is over;
Your willing hands will toil no more,
A faithful daughter so loving and kind,
A more faithful one could never be found.

Sleep on dear one and take your rest,
We loved you dearly, but Jesus loved you best,
Upright and faithful in all her ways,
A beautiful character to the end of her days,
Always devoted good and kind,
What a wonderful memory left behind.

Done by order of Hickory Grove Church
while in Conference.

Georgia Hill, Clerk
Written by Mother, Annie Johnson and
Aunt Leacy Beasley
Committee

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Resolution of Respect to Brother Cleveland Byrd, who was born July 29, 1887, and departed this life April 4, 1966. He was 78 years and 9 months of age. He gave his name to

Liberty Church in 1955, to help organize the church, living a faithful and devoted member until his death. We feel our loss is his gain and we should not weep, as we would for those who have no hope. While the church misses Brother Byrd, his family misses him most.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who makes no mistakes and doeth all things well. May God give grace to his family to say His will be done. May we extend our love and sympathy to each loved one, and that our prayers to God be that he will bless and comfort each one of you. A copy of this Resolution of Respect will be sent to the family, a copy put on our church records and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Liberty Church, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1966.

W. A. Tart
Liddie Tart
Eva S. Tadlock
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Brother Son Arthur Holmes was the son of the late Holland and Spicey Barefoot Holmes. He was born November 26, 1889, and died February 8, 1966; and was united in marriage to Lula Strickland in 1914, and to this union four children were born.

While in the hospital he united with Liberty Church in November, 1965, and was baptized in a bathtub. He said, "I've always been a Primitive Baptist — just born one, and couldn't help it." We say to the surviving wife and children, Ernest, Howard, Mrs. Clara Lee, and Mrs. Margaret McLamb, and also to all the loved ones, weep not as those who have no hope.

His funeral was at Banner's Chapel Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, assisted by Mr. Atlas Blackman; and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery. May we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord," for we hope to bow in humble submission to his holy will: always looking to him for mercy and guidance.

It was agreed that we send a copy of this Memorial to the family; one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one entered on our church records.

Done by order of the church in conference in March, 1966.

Sister Mollie Tart
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young
Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1966

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"IT WAS INDEED SWEET
TO MY TASTE"

(Song of Solomon 2:3)

Some time ago, I dreamed of traveling,
As I have often done;
In this sweet dream I was traveling
With my wife and son.

Before long, we came to deep waters
Outspread before our eyes;
This vast expanse was like an ocean
Beneath the azure skies.

It appeared that the waters arose,
And fairly covered the hills;
This was an awe-inspiring scene,
Much greater than the rills.

At the edge of this vast expanse,
I sat down to rest,
And from the things here related
I trust I was blest:

From the ground I took a substance,
Which was like unto bread;
It was indeed sweet to my taste,
And its hues white and red.

With delight, I partook of the same,
Like manna from above,
And on the following morning truly,
I felt the warmth of love.

It seemed to have a saving power,
And I felt that I was saved;
I hope it figured the Bread of life,
And that this Bread I've craved.

For periods since joining the church,
I've been down in the depths,
And spiritual dreams (I hope) since
Have been refreshing helps.

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

"COURAGE AND CHEER
TO THE WEARY"

1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W.Va. 25530

Signs of the Times:

I am enclosing payment for a year's renewal to the Signs. So many good things contained therein, give courage and cheer to the weary. I find the same good doctrine being preached today as was preached one hundred years ago. For ages that cannot be told ten thousand thousands of His elect people have joined as one to stand on the banks of sweet rivers of redeeming love, to praise the Eternal Three.

Today as I travel through the country side, on every hand I can look to the hills and the mountains, and see mute evidence of the crucifixion of our Lord: Mountains of stone broken to pieces - the mountains shook and the hills trembled when they pierced his side. Go, if you will, up any road, or creek, or hollow, and gaze in wonderment at the very sight of the evidence. It is there to this day, and will remain so for a grim remembrance that Jesus gave his life that we might live.

One thing I feel sure of: I am in the way He designed for me, because He has promised me that he will never leave nor forsake me, nor will he let me fall. Were this the only promise he ever made me, I would be satisfied. I love the old Church of the First Born, and to love the church is to love you. I am unlearned in books, but God never has to learn, and he tells me all I can contain, for I am a small vessel; but he appointed my way, and knew my substance before the hills were, and he appointed my days before the first daybreak; and he whisper-

ed to me while in the womb of time, "Peace, be still." I would not worry any who may read this, so will stop here.

Faithfully Yours,
J. M. Bailey, Sr.

LOOKING FOR FAMILY RECORDS

Yanceyville, N. C.

Signs of the Times, Inc.
Danville, Virginia

Dear Elder Spangler,

Some people from Texas came to the Office here looking up the Henslee family records and had with them the experience of their great grandfather, written in 1857. I read it and thought you might like to publish it. These people gave their permission for you to print it in the *Signs*. Elder Henslee was from this area and preached in your churches in this Association.

It was nice seeing you at the Association. When in this area come by to see me.

Sincerely yours,
J. B. Blaylock

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER RICHARD HENSLEE (1775-1871)

Eatonton, Ga.
October 27, 1857

Dear Brother Beebe,

As many of my brethren and friends have often solicited me to give a sketch of my experience of Grace, and call to the Gospel Ministry, I have concluded to commit it to writing and send it to you for publication, if you think it worthy, hoping that it may be of benefit to some of the children of Zion, in their pilgrimage in this world of sorrow. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

I was born the 9th of January, 1775,

in sin, as are all Adam's race. In the year 1783 I learned to read, and from some cause it soon became a great pleasure to me to read the Scriptures; and while reading the Old and New Testaments, I became alarmed. In 1784, finding that the world had been destroyed by water, and that it should be destroyed once more by fire, I came to the conclusion that it would take place about day-break. I was so much alarmed that I was afraid to sleep for fear it would take place before I awoke again. About the end of the same year, my father seeing that I was distressed, called me to him and asked me if I was afraid that I was going to die. I told him yes; but that was not the case, I was afraid the world would be burned up, and that I, a poor sinner, would be forever lost. My distress continued off and on, until 1788. I went to meeting with the rest of the family, to hear Samuel Harris preach; and while he was preaching and telling what an awful situation the sinner was in, by reason of the fall, that they were in a state of condemnation, without hope and without God in the world — their hearts desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. Before he closed I began to examine myself, and from some cause, I was made to acknowledge the truth of what he said, and saw, for the first time in life, that I was a poor condemned sinner. I was so much alarmed that I could no longer hide it — I wept and trembled until he closed. My father seeing the condition I was in, came to me, and then asked the minister to come and pray for me. He then asked me something about my condition. I told him that I was a poor lost and ruined sinner, and if I died in that condition, I must be forever lost. He tried to pray for me; and when he closed his prayer he asked me some questions. I answered him in the best way I could. He then said to my father that the Lord was about to give him a preacher, but my thoughts were that the Lord was going to send

me to hell. I went home in great distress, making many promises to the Lord, and solemn vows. I thought that if my soul was sent to hell, his righteous law approved it well. But I did not want to ever commit another sin while I lived.

So I went on from day to day, seeking rest, and found none. I was made to try many ways in order to ease my troubled mind. I would often go among merry company to get rid of my troubles, and would do and say many things to prevent any one from knowing what my troubles were; I was compelled to leave the company that I was in, to weep and mourn.

Thus I went on until 1792, when I was called to witness the death of one of my uncles. I stood by his bed and saw him breathe his last; and when they closed his eyes an awful thought occurred to my mind — if that had been my eyes closed in death, my soul would have now been in hell. My feeling at that time is more than tongue can express; but my life was still spared, and I roved still in darkness, and great dread continually on my mind, until June, 1794. While at my work one day there were thoughts occurred in my mind, as though someone had spoken to me: "Why are you thinking so much about the word of God? How come it the word of God? Did God come down to earth and give it to men? Or, did men go up to heaven and get it from God?" This being the devil's trick, the world and flesh united to persuade me that there was no reality in religion, nor truth in the Bible; and they planted me firmly on the doctrine of Deism. Some time after this I had a very hard spell of sickness — my friends thought my recovery doubtful — but in all this my faith in Deism was unshaken, and I still went on in open rebellion.

In 1795 I was engaged to marry, under promise to my intended wife that when I married I would reform my manner of life; but before the time came for us to marry she died. I then

thought that all my hopes for happiness in this life were gone. I then thought I would spend the balance of my life traveling through the world. In 1799 I took a trip to Georgia, and while there I got in possession of Oatne's *Age of Reason*, which confirmed me more in Deism. In that year I had a hard spell of sickness, but all this did not shake my faith in Deism. I then went back to North Carolina, and when I got there they told me that there was a revival of religion going on not far off, and that one of my cousins was very much interested. I thought that when I saw her I could put a stop to all of that. And in January there was a meeting coming off where I thought I would go and convince her of her folly; but to my utmost astonishment, there was a power that was ahold of her out of my reach or control. When I saw her fall as if dead, before me and all the people, I went up to her and for awhile I thought she was dead. I then took a seat near, and laying her head on my arm I saw her lips move. I placed my ear near her mouth and heard one of the most pleasant prayers that I ever heard in my life. I remained with her that night without much impression. The next morning as I went on thinking, these words came to my mind, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" My answer was, if the Scriptures are the truth, I am forever gone. My troubles began to increase. I could not tell what to do to find rest, nor could I tell whether the Scriptures were the truth or not. I verily thought if the world was all, I would give it all to know whether the Scriptures were the word of God or not? I thought if the Lord would perform some miracle before me, I would believe; and, while I was standing gazing as though I was waiting for him to perform the miracle, this passage of Scripture occurred in my mind, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of law, to do them." It seemed to remove every doubt from my mind,

the reference to the word of God being the truth. All the reason of Tom Payne and the devil could no longer keep me from believing the Scriptures were the truth, and that my condemnation was sealed.

My trouble here was inexpressible — my tongue cannot tell it, my pen cannot write it. All of my former promises rushed to my mind, and the advantages of past life seemed to crowd around me as witnesses to the justice of my condemnation; and I a miserable creature had to unite with them all, and in language of the poet and say:

“If my soul is sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.”

I then was made to grieve that I ever could read the Scriptures, or ever had a praying father and mother, for her prayers and tears seemed only to aggravate my woe. Thus I went on for weeks and months, thinking often that when I went to sleep I should wake in hell. Thus I went on in great distress, until some time in February I was walking among a flock of sheep, looking at the little lambs jumping and playing: my thoughts were, Oh, if I were as happy as these lambs! But their happiness seemed to increase my distress. I thought I would go to a certain place and try to pray, but when I got to the place I was afraid to bow myself in prayer for fear the Lord would destroy me if I attempted to bow before him. In this distressed condition I went on until the 5th Sunday in March. Then I ventured to try to pray once more before I died. I bowed myself, and while trying to pray I thought someone would see me, I jumped up and ran to the house; then this thought came into my mind, What has kept you out of hell until now? Nothing but the mercy of God, was the answer. At this my distress was so great, that I did not think I should live until morning; but life was still spared, and when at the breakfast table my mother

helped my plate, and when I received it my thought was, This is the mercy of God, which has kept me out of torment all my days, and now shall only turn as curses on my head.

I left the table in great agony of soul. I could think of the happy state of father and mother, brother and sister, if called to die. All this seemed to distress my soul, and I could see no way how such a sinner could be saved. One Wednesday while plowing, my distress was so great I thought every hour would be the last. That very evening my father came out where I was plowing, and while I was facing him I looked at him and his eyes were flowing in tears. He then turned away from me, and I thought that he knew that I was dying, a ruined sinner, and was grieving about it. I could think of the conversion of my comrades, and think how they had found favor with God; but their case was not like mine, for I was the worst out of hell. “Lord save the soul condemned to die.”

At this time another thought occurred to my mind, Are you not willing to live in all this distress and trouble, even to old age, if you could find eternal life through Jesus Christ who died, that poor lost sinners might live? I was made to view the Son of Christ on the cross in the most dreadful agony of death, but in the very midst of them he could say, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” At these words light and peace burst into my poor soul, and the burden of guilt that had so long pressed me down, now fled away, and a new song was put into my mouth, praising God with all my soul for the gift of such a Saviour. I felt at the moment as if my sins were all gone, and I had received a robe of righteousness, that was sufficient to appear before God in. I then had no doubts, no fears, but could sing, Grace, grace, free grace shall ever be my song. While I lived in this happy situation, my mind was drawn out after some of my young comrades that were still in

sin, and I thought if I could see them, I could tell them all about the Saviour, and the plan of salvation.

I had a desire to tell it, and was telling it in my mind as fast as I could, when at once this thought came to my mind. Now you are thinking about preaching, and that only because some of the old preachers have said you would have to preach. Now you know it is all of men and not of God; and in a moment doubts and fears covered my mind, and sure enough it was all a delusion of mind, and I was deceived. This left me in great distress of mind, and my conviction was gone, and I could not get it again, and I had no hope that would do to depend on.

Thus I went on in error and great anguish of soul for twelve or fifteen months, while the tempter was busily engaged in throwing every temptation before me that he could, though he could not keep me from loving the cause of God, and Christians. My mind was constantly exercised on preaching, and I thought, if I was in the church and was to attempt to preach in my weakness, that I should dishonor the cause; and this I could never do. And here the tempter took hold again, and said, "Now you know that you are no Christian for if you were, you would do what God bids you do; so you had as well curse God and die." This was continually in my mind for several days, and again the tempter would ask, "Do you not believe in the doctrine of election? Yes. Well if they are to be saved they will be saved anyhow." This put me to reading the Scriptures, and I found this doctrine well established, that God had chosen his people in Christ, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ. But my fears were that I was deceived, and had not been chosen nor blessed in Christ; for surely no one that loved Christ could have so many doubts and fears, and sore temptations as I had. For it did seem that temptations in every shape were presented to me. A

number of hard questions would be put in different ways, such as this: What will you take for Christ? I would not take the world, no, nor ten thousand such worlds as this. The tempter would then tell me, Now you know you are no Christian, or you would not think about selling Christ, for he is the chiefest object with Christians. So I could not pass one day without sore temptations and fear.

I was afraid that I soon should lose all my hopes and fears, and go back into sin as others had before me; and I feared it might be so, and in order that I would never bring a reproach on the cause of religion, I would leave my native land and go to a far country: and when I got there, I would never say a word about religion. I got ready and bid farewell to father and mother, brothers and sisters, and to my native land. And after a short stay in foreign land for some cause, I could not tell why, I became uneasy and restless, and said, I can not stay here. I will arise and go to my father's house, and to my native land, and seek for pardon there. I reached my native land again in March, 1802, but could find no peace of mind there until June. I remained in darkness and distress of mind. The last Saturday of this month I went to visit one of my neighbors, and on my return home I went through a piece of woods. My distress was so great that I turned aside to try to pray again, that if I was deceived, to undeceive me; and if I were not deceived, to instruct me, and give me brighter evidences of my acceptance with him, and confirm my hope in Christ. While in this place I was made to pray aloud by his help, that I would try to preach or do anything else that was his will. On Friday night I went to hear Elder Sanders preach: his text was: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." And while he was speaking of the people of God and how they were comforted, I thought that I felt some gleam of comfort to my poor soul, and I went and shook hands with him and others,

and thought if they would ask me the reason for my hope I would tell them; but they did not ask me, and I thought it was because they knew that I was a hypocrite, and would not tell the truth.

Thus my distress returned, and the next night I went to hear Elder Dorris preach, and after preaching they began to sing; and when they sang these words, "And when to the bright world I rise," in a moment I forgot all my darkness of mind, and by faith was made to see the glories of that world above, and then began to tell it. On Sunday night I went to preaching, and while the meeting was going on my feelings were so much aroused, that I got up in the midst of the congregation and began to tell about the goodness of God and the plan of salvation in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. I spent the time in much comfort until the next Saturday. When I went forward to the church I told them the exercises of my mind, and was received into the fellowship of the church. The baptism was put off for two weeks. After I left the meeting, I began to think of what I had done, and thought I had deceived the church, and darkness soon covered my mind again. Doubts and fears filled my mind so much that I thought I would never be baptized. But before the time came, I was made willing to do anything the Lord wanted of me; so I was baptized on the fourth Sunday in July, 1802. I then found rest in that act that was nowhere else to be found. But to my astonishment my doubts and fears soon returned and it was continually in my mind that I ought to do something, and I knew not what. I therefore was crying out, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? Though it was continually in my mind to preach the gospel or "feed my sheep," I could not think it was the Lord's will for me to preach; but I could find no rest nor peace of mind day or night. After all the excuses I could give about my poverty and im-

perfections it was continually rushing in my mind, "feed the flock of God" or some such expressions. I will here mention that I came into the church about the close of a great revival, and it began to cool off; and there seemed to be some restless ones in the different churches, some soon making shipwreck of their professions which increased my trouble. My soul was drawn out after them, whilst at the same time it was continually sounding in my mind, to feed the sheep; and found all other things failed to give me peace of mind.

In September, 1803, I ventured to preach for the first time from Isaiah xxxiii:13, "Hear ye that are far off what I have done; and ye that are near acknowledge my might." This effort moved a burden off of my mind but brought on another which troubled me so I thought I would never try again; but I had to try it again and again. Thus I went on until about 1810, when a revival took place and I could preach day and night with pleasure. All seemed well for a while but after many bright days of sunshine the wintry season must again come, and many dear brothers and sisters turned back again to the world. Thus my fears increased that I would disgrace soon myself and bring a reproach on the cause of Christ; but Christ gave me grace to help my infirmities so that I retained a name and place among the people of God, as a poor feeble minister of the cross of Christ.

Thus I passed through mixtures of joys and sorrows for 15 or 20 years, when another revival took place throughout the country; this was one of the most delightful seasons I ever witnessed — this revival continued about two years and large numbers were added to the church — 142 members joined Willears Church at that time. But every sweet will have its bitter, for here was about the first introduction of Free Willism among the Baptists. A number of their preachers

got the "big head" and then they could no longer wait for the Lord's appointed time to do his pleasure but must lend him a helping hand, and thus brought into the church many strange women, calling themselves benevolent societies, and soon produced a number of strange children who could not understand the language of Canaan, and they began to mock and growl and fight, and soon caused division in the church and associations, spreading their poison from land to land and from sea to sea. But by the grace of God I was made to stand in the defence of the gospel of the Son of God. Down to old age, I was determined to know nothing among men save Jesus and him crucified.

Thus I have spent a life in service of my God, poor as I have been.

I have given you my hope in Christ, and a few hints of my poor progress in the ministry, for the last fifty-five years. I am now in Georgia where I shall spend my few remaining days before my departure which is near at hand. I am now 83 years old.

Dear brethren in the ministry, you and your cause is still dear to me. Brethren live in peace, contend earnestly for the faith, watch over yourselves, shun every appearance of evil; and what I say to one, I say to all — WATCH.

And now may the God of all grace be with his children in every land to help them all their journey through, is the prayer of one near home. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give to all at that day, and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8)

Now dear brethren and sisters, with whom I have taken sweet delight in days that are gone, we can never meet again on earth but I have a hope that I shall meet you and the blood washed

throng in heaven: to see as we are seen, and know as we are known.

Yours in love, farewell,
Richard Henslee

(This is a footnote placed by the granddaughter of Richard, Martha Elizabeth Henslee Cochran: "Our grand-father, lived to be 96 years old.")

(We believe that the above was published in the *Signs* in 1857, since it was addressed to Elder Beebe, but not having any copies of that date, we are not certain. We are glad to publish it again, for we feel that those who know the travels of the Lord's people, will find they have much in common with Elder Henslee, and will find it good reading. — Editors)

"THE HEAVENLY PHYSICIAN"

1570 Golfside Avenue, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

Elder and Mrs. W. C. King
Burlington, N. C.

Dear Elder and Sister King:

I realize how unworthy I am to try to address any of the dear saints of God, but I cannot rest until I try to express a few thoughts. It is hard for me to express myself, especially in talking, and I feel I did not explain in our conversation so that you could understand what I meant when I remarked about the healing both physical, as well as spiritual, that I hope I have experienced; and just why, Elder King, your sermon meant so much to me at Roanoke Church on Sunday.

These wonderful blessings that I hope have been mine from time to time, are so precious to me; and yet I wonder how the Heavenly Father could stoop so low as to reach my sinful and wretched state. Nevertheless, I feel I do know something of the healing of the natural body by His almighty hand — especially on two different occasions, and I hope I know something of the spiritual healing of a sin-sick soul, if not deceived.

Many years ago I was suffering from a throat condition, while at the same time I was under the sentence of death for my many, many sins. Due to my

physical condition, I was unable to lie down, and spent the days and nights in a sitting position. On that memorable night my life seemed to be slowly slipping away, as I gasped for each breath; and I knew if I died in that condition, everlasting punishment would be my doom. I felt that I must make at least one attempt to plead for mercy before I died. (I remember the occasion as if it were only yesterday.) The words did not seem to have left my lips when these words were spoken to me, "God will take care of you."

Then my breathing became easier — a calm came over me, and a peaceful rest flowed into my soul; and I could lie down the first time in twenty-eight days. How my soul leaped for joy that the precious Saviour of sinners would hear my last plea for mercy, and reach down to the low state of sin and death, and raise me up both physically and spiritually! I felt that I could shout from the house top, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Later I was afflicted with the dreaded epilepsy, which grew worse each day. When my oldest little son was only six months old, I was having as many as six fainting spells a day sometimes. My physician had made arrangements for me to be hospitalized for an indefinite time. Having no one to care for my little infant and my companion, I was almost beside myself with grief as to what to do. My pleading to the Lord seemingly was not heard — they did not seem to reach higher than my head. I knew He was able, (of that I was sure,) to reconcile me to His will. According to nature the affliction could never be cured: only controlled in a measure by drugs. But now everything had failed; drugs would not control, and my Lord had turned a deaf ear. Yet there was no place else to go. I must continue to beg to be reconciled to His will.

One morning, (two days before I was to leave for the hospital,) as I was standing by the crib of my little son, my heart was burdened to breaking,

it seemed, when these words were spoken to me in that still small voice that can be heard only in the heart and soul, "Be of good cheer; thou art healed."

Precious ones, I knew from that moment I would never have another fainting spell from epilepsy. I wanted to cry from the housetops, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." It will soon be nine years since I felt that glorious relief, and I never have a fear that it will return, because our Heavenly Physician does not make a promise, then break it, as we poor mortals are prone to do.

I do not know that I am one of the chosen little ones, but I do know that He has shown me how helpless, how lame I am; how blind and dependent I am on Him for all things, and that I cannot reach out and touch the hem of his garment: He must reach down and touch me with the finger of his love.

I did not have to have the throat operation that was required almost twenty-two years ago. Our blessed Lord healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, (I trust he opened my blind eyes to my sinful, helpless condition when I was almost seven years old.) He brought forth from the dead when he was here on earth, and he is yet as able to deliver in this day and age as he was in that day.

My life has been much of affliction — I cannot direct my steps, they falter by the way. I cannot walk, live, or think, as I feel a child of God should in praise to His high and holy name. It seems sometimes I must give up and will surely be numbered with the forgotten; yet, from time to time when it is the good pleasure of our Heavenly Physician, I hope I have been brought up for a little season to rest in the sunshine of His love. The healing balm is applied and we can rest for a little while, as I was given to do last Sunday. It is just a little foretaste of heaven on earth while under the sound of the word of God coming forth from

his dear servants whom he has called to preach his wonderful word: the heart thrills and leaps for joy; the cup is full and running over; and the tears of joy flow.

Though I feel so unworthy to mingle with the dear saints, I have no place else to go: nor do I want to go any place else. When I am blessed to hear the blessed word preached from time to time; to hear the dear servants so describe the feelings of my soul, (as you were blessed to do Sunday,) to enter into my exercises and bring forth such sweet evidences of grace — and that in spite of my wretched state, I am given to hope He remembered me when He hung on the cross. At such times of rejoicing, I am made anxious to go where “Congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end.”

Dear ones, I realize this is becoming lengthy, but I was so burdened to let you know in a small way what I meant in our conversation. I visited with Brother and Sister Poff again Sunday night, and heard the recording of Sunday morning; and, you know, it meant as much the second time as it did the first. My cup was filled to running over again. It will be a day I hope long to remember.

May you both still enjoy the Lord's richest blessings; and remember me to the Heavenly Physician when you are brought to beg before his throne.

A little sister in that blessed hope,
Rlee Houchins
(Mrs. H. C. Houchins)

“STRANGERS PRESSING
ONWARD”

3314 Debley
Memphis, Tenn. 38127

Dear Editors:

Such a negligent worm of the dust I feel for failing to renew my subscription before now; and how typical of the people who are my earthly treasures, (when I am blessed of God to

see this,) to continue sending the *Signs*, believing that I would reimburse them. How different with worldly magazine subscriptions!

When blessed with the mind and a peaceful hour from God, it is much comfort and pleasure to read of those other “strangers”: strange to their neighbors and friends, and even strangers to themselves at times, who press onward believing in God as the cause of all things; the upholder of all things, and the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. How different is He whom we seek and the one which is nearly everywhere depicted as a meek, beggarly creature, who wants to save people if they will only break down their stubborn will, and bid Him enter. How frightening, it would seem, to believe this! How comforting to believe that nothing, nay nothing, is too insignificant to work together for good to them that love God, and that He supplies and provides for everything both natural and spiritual that his children need! Each child is unique in some way, therefore his needs fit him perfectly, and even though these needs be grievous at times, we still must say by an eye of faith, Even so, for it seemeth good in Thy sight.

Reconcilliation sometimes looms the bigger of all the blessings we could ever humbly beg for, since this state causes us to run with patience the race that is set before us, hoping, believing and praying for continued guidance and protection.

How beautiful God is to those who love him, and believe that his arm is never too short to reach down into the very depths of hell even, and cradle and carry a child to safety. How I feel at times to cry out as David, that no matter where we make our beds or habitation, God is there.

The mystery that sometimes seems perplexing enough to “destroy” me, is the mountain and the valley: How quickly one who feels honor, praise, and glory to God in his heart, can be

thrown into the valley of dark, doubting despair! With me these transitory stages get no better, and I am progressively less able to store-in a goodly supply for the dark days. This says to me that God is a sovereign God, and when he opens none can close; and when he closes none can open. Surely then we can also say that the ways of God are filled with mystery, and can be seen in part by us only as it pleases Him to reveal it to us.

The sweetest peace is seeing God in everything, and feeling to rest securely in His promises. Were it not for these moments, could we possibly stand the dark, dreadful hours when we tremble with a fear that "imagination" is the culprit, and we were "taken in" by it? O how one's heart cries out for a sign, O Lord, that your love embraced poor, wretched me! Again, the sweet, comforting, swelling tide of praise and thanksgiving flow into our hearts, and we are shown the marvelous beauties of God's love and mercy, and are made to sing His praises. These seasonal experiences are symbolical to me of the year's seasonal changes: the Spring is the small stirring of hope that swells within one until Summer, and is then full blown; Autumn is when we feel the receding tide, and frantically try to stem its departure; and cold, bleak Winter is when we feel God has surely turned his back on us forever — if indeed He ever embraced us. But, lo, if indeed Winter be so cold and blustery, can Spring, beautiful Spring, be far behind? Such to me is the travel of God's little ones, whether I be included or not. Sometimes in the "Summer of my experience," I feel to know my Redeemer liveth, but then have to consider the short Summer and the Fall and Winter which follow.

Fear of wearying you prompts me to close. At the moment, I feel it is "Summer" in my heart, and it seems I could write a book of the beauties of God and his ways, but this would not be prudent.

Consider the carnal source of these poorly put phrases, and hastily cast them aside if unsound: they too will have served their purpose, if even be to show you what a pitiful worm I am. God is praised even if it be only the wrath of man which renders it; so my precious hope is that I am not deluded in my belief at times that miraculously I, though least of all, may be one of his flock.

A sister I hope,
Carrie Jo Williams

P. S.: My subscription was a gift from a dearly loved and treasured cousin in the flesh but brother in the Spirit; and his gift of it meant so much that I too desire to send enough that you may extend or give a subscription to a hungry, thirsty soul who may not feel able to take one himself. Enclosed is a check for both.

Rt. 4

Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Brother Spangler:

I see that I am behind with my subscription for the paper, and am enclosing \$5.00 for renewal, and \$1.00 for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoy the paper very much, for it sets forth the doctrine I believe. I hope you and yours are well; we are as well as usual. If my hands did not shake so much, I would try to write you a long letter and tell you I still love you I hope for Jesus' sake. I think of you all lots of times; but I cannot go to preaching as I once did, but I still love that grand old doctrine of Electing Grace. I used to think that when I got old, I would be a good man, but I have missed it. But I still have something down inside that Satan has never reached.

Hope you can read this left hand scribbling.

John L. Paschal

"CAN BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED"

1223 Rhue Road
Winston-Salem, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am enclosing check for \$5.00 for our renewal to the *Signs of the Times*.

We feel thankful the dear Lord has continued to bless his people with a paper whose editors and writers still earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. My wife and I find great comfort in reading the experiences, editorials, and Voices of the Past.

It is wonderful indeed to realize the Lord still has a people who can be clearly identified, (by those who love the truth,) as the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, contending for the doctrine of salvation by grace; which is good news to those who have been brought to the end of their own strength, and made to cry unto God for mercy. I trust I have heard his voice. Many times has he spoken to the wind and the sea, and said, Peace, be still, and know that I am God. Then and then alone can we rest, and wait patiently upon him who works his sovereign will.

We trust that you and Sister Spangler are well. May His grace ever be with you and all the household of faith.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
Z. L. Rhue

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

Due to the illness of some of those who usually entertain during the session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, it is necessary to announce that there will be no session of the Corresponding Meeting this year. We regret to have to make this decision, but found it necessary. We hope, the Lord willing, to resume the meeting in 1967.

John D. Wood

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Skewarkey Church, Williamston, Martin County, N. C., on the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following: October 1, 2, 3, 1966.

The meeting house is located on Highway 17, south, at the intersection with Nos. 64, 13, and 125. Elder C. E. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Clerk

THE SKEWARKEY UNION

The Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Norfolk Church, Norfolk, Virginia, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1966. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

The meeting house is located at 3231 Tidewater Drive, Norfolk, Virginia. We cordially invite all interested to come and visit with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C. 27892

UNION MEETING

The union meeting of the churches of the Predestinarian Old School Baptists of California, the Lord willing, will be held with the Little Flock Church, Bakersfield, California. It is located on Alpine Street near Baker and California Avenue in the Oddfellows Hall. Meeting will start on Friday before the 5th Sunday in October and continue three days. (October 28, 29, 30)

We desire to extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth. For information, call Brother Troy Smith — phone 322-1830. 2735 Monterey Street, Bakersfield, California.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes with the church at Red Banks in Pitt County, to begin Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1966, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located 3 miles southeast of Greenville, N. C. All lovers of the truth are

invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Forest Grove Church, near Parsonsburg, Maryland, October 19 and 20, 1966, at 10 A. M., Daylight Saving Time.

Those coming Tuesday go to the home of Louis Holloway on Route 350 about six miles from Salisbury. Those coming Wednesday go to the meeting house. Take the new Route 50 from Salisbury about six and one-half miles to the Forest Grove Road, turn right, and the meeting house is about three-quarters of a mile.

All of our faith and order, and all lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

Ethel Holloway, Church Clerk
P. O. Box 243
Ocean City, Md. 21842

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1966 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held at the White Oak Meeting House, Saratoga, Wilson County, N. C., to begin Friday before the fourth Sunday in October at eleven o'clock and continue through Sunday.

Saratoga is located on highway 264, ten miles east of Wilson, N. C. Go to stop lamp, turn north on highway 222 a short distance to meeting house.

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

W. E. Turner, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND (To August 1, 1966)

Mrs. A. R. Carter, Ark.....	\$2.00
Mrs. Lola Moon Howard, Ky.....	2.00
Harold Weatherford, Va.....	4.00
Mrs. P. O. Clowdus, Ala.....	3.00
Miss Sarah Burt Welling, N. Y.....	1.00
Mrs. C. C. Dodd, Va.....	5.00
Elder Julius Boccock, Va.....	2.00
A Friend.....	3.00
Mrs. Fannie Shelly, Md.....	1.00
Elmer Lock, Mich.....	1.00
Elder H. R. Prince, Tenn.....	1.00
Mrs. G. C. Martin, N. C.....	2.00

Danville, Virginia

October, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

Sister Blanche B. Brown, of Chatteroy, Washington, asks that we give our views through the *Signs* on blaspheming against the Holy Ghost. We had referred to blasphemy on page 186 of the August issue.

The question is, "Do you believe that a child of God can be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?" And with the further consideration of the Scriptural statement that, ". . . the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," and, "Who-soever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Matthew 12:31, 32)

We checked our files and found that we re-published an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe under the heading of the *Voices of the Past*, on the subject of "The Unpardonable Sin." This was in the March, 1963, issue of the *Signs*, and

we believe that Sister Brown, and others, if they have this issue available, will find much in the article to set them at ease on the question, since Elder Beebe dealt in this writing with the subject of the forgiving of the sins of the Lord's people.

To us it is evident that no child of God can ever commit an unpardonable sin. We prefer, however, to refer those who are interested in the question, to the article by Elder Beebe, rather than take up the subject at length ourself.

We have heard some say that they feared they had committed the "Unpardonable Sin," and have sometimes heard it intimated that only the children of God can commit this sin of speaking against the Holy Ghost, yet it is contrary to the doctrine of God our Saviour to say that any of the redeemed of the Lord can ever commit any sin that was not atoned for by Him. Consequently they are not held guilty of any sin for which they are not forgiven, neither in this world, nor the world to come.

We could not endorse for a moment the advocating that one of the Lord's elect might possibly *be lost because of any kind of sin*. Where would be the certainty; where would be their peace of mind — the peace that passeth understanding, if it were possible that any of the elect "might be lost"? Where would be their being, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"?

It is commonly believed, of course, that a person may be saved today, but by neglect or sinning may be lost tomorrow. But this is by those whose idea of salvation is that it is based on the works of men — that salvation is conditioned on themselves, rather than upon the choice and finished work of Jesus, who, by the one offering of himself, has forever perfected them that are sanctified. So we may boldly say that which is commonly believed, is not of that faith which was once delivered to the saints.

Though the children of God are sorely tried, and afflicted and poor, and often question their part and lot in the matter when they are blessed to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, fearing that they have only "caught the shadow and missed the substance," yet God has shown unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, and confirmed it by an oath, so that they have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, which they have as an anchor of their soul sure and steadfast, since it enters into that within the veil, where Jesus has entered for them. (See 6th chapter of Hebrews.)

The doctrine of the sureness of the salvation of the Lord's people is often objected to in some quarters, saying that such sureness would promote licentiousness. This is deceptive, for such speak without having experienced the work of God in their hearts, which teaches them, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly and righteously in this present world." Nor do they know the restraining power of the Spirit, or the terrible conflict as described by the Apostle Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans.

No, it is impossible for one of the redeemed of the Lord, to commit an unpardonable sin. Though they sin in their flesh, they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. These have the laws of God written in their hearts and put in their minds, so that they hate sin and all connected with it; and desire above all things else while they live, to keep his commandments, and his word, and walk as He walked; and in so doing it is proved that they are born of God. (Read *Voices of the Past* by Elder Chick, on page 234.) Thus, being his children, they are kept by the power of God, through faith, (of which He is the author and finisher) unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

PSALMS 15:1,4

“Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.”

If I may be permitted to indulge in fancy, I feel that in this day we have many that are like unto the associates of the humble hen in one of our early readers in the literary school. A great chorus sounded when it came time to eat the pancake. The most of them were ready, and it would seem that the most of religious people are ready to abide in the tabernacle, to dwell in the holy hill.

A friend of the Old School Baptist people desires that I write about any change that is found in God. The paramount question is this: Does God change? My friend wanted me to say yes or no and to stop there. I cannot do that. There is a sense in which he does change, and there is a sense in which he does not. If I said an unqualified yes, I would be bombarded by Bible scholars and they would point me to time and again in which God did not change. If I gave an unqualified no, I would have an equal number on me with quotations to prove otherwise.

Administratively and dispensationally, I would declare without hesitation that God changes. But this cannot be said from the standpoint of a Covenantor. For instance, God promised eternal life before the world began. It is the nature of men to lie, and if it is for their best interest to change their mind about a promise they will do it. But God cannot lie. He has not just come into that kind of quality, but if anyone can tell me how long God **has been**, it will be a delight to tell them how long that it has been since He could not lie.

To write upon such a deep subject calls for more talent than I have, but I am willing to do the best that I can. I will not make any effort to please anyone, but I do hope that we have all learned of God from His own teaching. Whether we have learned it or not, does not

change the inspiring fact that God is unchangeable in His existence. If he is unchangeable, he will not make a covenant and then break it. If we prove that he is not a covenant breaker, we have proved to all reasonable people that he does not change. Let us make high sounding eulogies of God and his grace and purpose; let us talk about his sovereignty and laud him to the sky as the One that performs his will in heaven and in earth, but if he is a covenant breaker, then, by all the logic that nature can summon, he is changeable.

Whatever the make up of God is now, it has always been that, no more, no less. If God is now alwise, he always has been that way. He knows as much now as he knew before the curtain of time was let down, and if this universe continues to stand and to be operated by its Builder, he will not know any more in the final windup of it than he knew in the eons of eternity. Any thought, expression, idea, opinion, doctrine, interpretation, that would tend to present God as learning something or forgetting something, is not the truth, even if it springs from the most learned divine in the midst of the church. Regardless of where it comes from, and regardless of whether he or she is Chloe or Phebe or Pope John or Elder John Doe, any expression that would set God up as having less or more power now than he had at, or during, or before time begin, is not the truth, for, reason how we may, he was not perfect to begin with, if there has been any increase in his power or enhancement in his glory.

As I have often said, I have not been called to preach this fundamental or the other; that I have not been called to ride hobby horses, regardless of who brings them into the riding field. My absorbing thought, my chief delight, my highest ambition, has been to present every man perfect in Jesus Christ; (Col. 1:28) to know nothing among the churches save Jesus Christ and him crucified. To me, this is most important, to wit, that both speaker and hearer be moved by the Holy Ghost to receive Him as our all

sufficient Saviour. (John 14:17) It doesn't matter who does it, but whoever does it, can not preach the gospel that preaches Christ as having his whole life predicated upon the things that come to pass around him. To preach the gospel, it must be preached that the whole course of his life was determined in saving sinners. To preach that the life and death of Jesus Christ was determined, but that the thing that caused his death was not determined, is, to me, begging the issue. Therefore, the eternal fixedness of all things is necessary in order to preach Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

There is not any change in God. He is in one mind. Whatever he desires, he has desired that from all eternity. He does not get new desires, nor does he forget or forego any that he used to have. The desires of God are carried out. What God desires, that God does. This mind of God is not changed by any created thing. If the covenant of God's everlasting love is worth anything, the Father and the Son must be in mutual agreement about it. God gives us to know that Jesus is his fellow (Zech. 13:7); the Saviour gave us to know that he and the Father were in unity. (John 17:22) There just is not any room in the kingdom of God's grace for one of the covenanters to be changeable. Since a chain is not any stronger than its weakest link, just so, a covenant is worth what all parties in it are worth.

Look around you! Behold all of the slack talk about the weakness of the Holy Ghost, the Third member in the Three-in-one God. Primitive or Old School Baptist would blush to speak of there being a change in the election. If you want trouble, if you want a dispute, begin to say that God the Father forgot one of those that he appointed to salvation. Most any kind of an Old School Baptist would be ready to go to bat for the Lord's defense. Where would you find an Old Baptist that would say that Christ laid down on the job; that he failed in redemption for those given him in covenant? The prospect looks exceed-

ing good to say that all praise and honor and glory will be rendered to the unchangeableness of the God-head. Ah, let us wait a time; waiting long enough, we will find the same people that have rendered perfect praise to the Father and to the Saviour, now are alleging to the Holy Ghost failures. His failures in carrying out the desires of God's one-mindedness is caused by the objects upon whom he is to work. These subjects are **now** able to thwart the desires of God. He is having to change!

God is eternal. He is not subject to change. To be subjected to a force or a power so that the mind is changed, is preaching that the creature surpasses the Creator in both wisdom and power. I'd rather live in a corner of the house top alone than to live in a large room of people that presented God as having to surrender to any created thing. If I must preach a change in God, I must preach more power to the thing that caused the change than is in God.

The eternal God is the refuge of sinners. Any power or wisdom that creatures have is a delegated power. There is not any power save the power of God. Even a devilish minded man could not have any power save it was given to him from above. I hope that our friend, and that my dear kindred in Christ, will be blessed with a sweet meditation in thinking about this solemn truth. Even though the blasphemous thought that nothing was fixed; that he could do one of two things; (John 19: 10, 11) let the saints rejoice aloud that all of the hellish powers that be, are given what power they do have; that they **could not** have **any power**, save it is given them from above. Who is above? Who is the Head over all things? Would he that has all power in his hands make any change?

How lightly people talk about God. How degrading to his glorious name it is to have his puny creatures ascribe such desultory characteristics to the unchangeable God. Men think nothing of talking about God as they talk about human witnesses in earthly court rooms; they think nothing about charg-

ing God with the same thing that men are guilty of in government. How many men have raised their right hand and swore to tell the truth, to fend off every opponent to our Constitution and then broke it before the sun went down. And God is charged with being changable like unto that. I dread to think about it; I fear to say it, but there is a momentous question I must ask: Do men know God who have such a shallow conception of him? In the ordinary religious life of men, they do not believe one another on their oath. From every direction, from every quarter, men esteem their oath very lightly. They look upon God as one that is like unto themselves, therefore his oath means as much to them as does the oath of one man to another.

God swore with an oath to save his people. I do hope that my soul leaps forward at the heavenly prospect that lies before us. God did not swear by anything on the earth; he did not predicate the fulfilment of that oath on any creature. As there was not found any one, any one at all, that was worthy to open the book, (Rev. 5:1,4) just so, no more, and no less, there was not one by which God could swear. If He had sworn by you and me, changes would have been on every side; but he swore by himself, by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie. God could not swear by the earth; he could not swear by created things (where were they?), for God could not lie, therefore he swore by himself, by two immutable things. What was immutable at the time of taking this oath? What a foolish question. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" In the hidden (without measure, without regard to time) annals of eternity, God, for a purpose of his own glory, swore by His fellow, the Son of God, by His Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, that he would send His manifest or begotten Son, to his death, which death was to redeem those thus given him.

The truth is not debatable. If we have been taught the truth, we can not, as is often said, have an open mind about any

tenet of faith. Have an open mind about God altering or breaking or changing his covenant? God forbid. We are not open for conviction about this matter. We have been converted and convinced that God is the Sovereign of the whole creation. Only two witness will be introduced. The first one is in the Bible. God did not change on that night when sweat, as it were great drops of blood fell to the ground from the countenance of that Man. You and I would have changed, had it been our son approaching death for a whoring bride. God swore in eternity, but it hurt in time. I do not want to put words into your mouth and mind, but this is God that is here as the man of sorrows. It wasn't God veiled in flesh. It was God the Word made flesh. It was God shedding his own blood. (Acts 20:28) This record-bearing God is bearing record that He swore to save his people, and the cry of the Word in flesh shows that it brought about hurt to him in the carrying out of the oath; and the leaving of the Son to suffer, to bear in his body the consequences of that oath, shows conclusively that there is not any change in God.

Remember, dear reader, no change in God. But lift up your head and look gloryward. God changes things. The creatures do not change God, but God changes the creatures. The creature is changed, not a spirit is changed, not the Holy Spirit changed, not something new come down from heaven and dwells in the creature without a resulting change in the creature; no, no, my God not that, but any MAN that is in Christ is a new creature. Here is a change, here is a glorious change. O dear children of God, may the Lord send forth his light and truth and bring us to the holy tabernacle where Jesus abides. Ah, yes, dear weeping, sighing saints He has come into your life, and great has been the change which he has wrought.

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream,
The grace appeared so great
The world beheld the glorious change,
And did thy hand confess;

My tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sung surprising grace."

And when this glorious change was first felt, what anxious thoughts prevailed. The eyes that had been looking for laurels to gain on earth were lifted on high. The Root out of dry ground became a plant of Renown. The hands that had reached for deadly things now laid hold on eternal things. (I Thes. 5:21; I Tim. 6:12, 19)

This Sovereign Spirit of this unchanging God brings liberty where there had been prison. (Isa. 61:1) Wherever this Spirit is dwelling there is liberty. (2 Cor. 3:17) His coming and dwelling in the child of God produces all the change. The life of God's people is an ever changing scene. This change is not in the kind or quality of scenes, but ascending glory. They watch in awe and fearfulness as the glory of the ministration of death and condemnation (2 Cor.3:7, 8) is swept aside by death even the dying of the Lord of Glory and the ushering in of the glory that is in the ministration of the Spirit. This is change unexcelled, and it all comes in the creature and is wrought by Him, and in us. It wrought in a changeable creature by the unchangeable creator. The scenes will be heavenly all the way, but the change will be from glory to glory. These changes of beauty and splendor and glory will not be wrought by the creature, but will be wrought by Him who is changeable. (2 Cor. 3:18)

These changes from glory to glory will keep us looking up and leaning forward; they will change us from depending on ourselves to depending on the unchangeable God. They will enrich us (read carefully the first ten verses of the first chapter of I Corinthians) and confirm us to the end; they will teach us to know Him and to have fellowship for him and to be conformed (made like unto; to be changed) like unto the Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil. 3:9) But while the changes will cause surprising grace to be sung, glorying in the Lord to be carried on in our lives, yet there will still be

the pangs of indwelling sin. He who changes not must reign until that too is changed.

"If a man die, shall he live again" was asked thousands of years ago. It was answered to the querist by the unchangeable God. (Job 14:14; 19:25,27) Many great and marvelous changes had come in Job's life. However, there was something else that he was looking for; there was a change that was more desired than anything yet made manifest in his life. He asked the question, "If a man die, shall he (the man) live again?" He tells us that he was waiting for the change. What change? A living man continue to live? O no, not that. If a man die, die, DIE, shall he live again? It is the dead that he is asking the question about. With all the troubles that he was having in the body, he knew that soon he would die. He was not talking about a continuity of himself, but he was asking (since he knew that death was certain), would he live after death. He did not ask if there would be a continuation of this life. He did ask if the dead lived again? It was not unfaithfulness that caused Job to ask the question, but faithfulness. Immediately after asking the question, he tells us that he is waiting for his change. The days that he waits, they are appointed; the change, it is also appointed.

If at the death of this body there is a living principle or life, or call it what we may, that goes to God, that does not die, then all of Paul's talking about the resurrection of the dead was the most useless chatter and waste of time that has ever been inflicted on a people. It is the dead that is the subject of the resurrection. If there is not any death, why talk about a resurrection? If there is in us (this fleshly body) a life, of which the body does not have any part or promise, and this life goes to God at the death of this body, then why did Paul write about the resurrection? The resurrection does not have to do with the living, but exclusively with the dead..

Are you looking for this change?

What change? The resurrection. As pertaining to the resurrection (of the body) it (what?) is sown in corruption. Now what is it that is raised in incorruption? What is the antecedent of the "it" in the second clause? If the "it" in the first clause is not the "it" in the second clause, what is the antecedent of the "it" in the second clause? This is a glorious change. Does it mean anything to you? Does it cause you to leap forward at the thought of the unchangeable One changing the dead from corruption to incorruption? Again, "It is sown a natural body (how could that ever apply to anything except the body of a sinner?); it (the same it) is raised a spiritual body. "O what a glorious change that will be. Again, "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. "Ah, these bodies, how dead they are because of sin. (Romans 8:10) **This body of death, this body of death, who shall deliver us from it? Who shall deliver (change) us from this dishonorable death, which death shows at every turn in our lives unless restraining grace is granted us. It (what) is sown in dishonor: it is raised in glory. This dishonor is a part of that death, and it is the dead that are raised or changed. Again, "It is sown in weakness." What is sown is weakness? Not the Spirit of God, perish the thought! It is not the spirit of man, for that goes back to God. (Eccl. 12:7) What is as much in weakness as the dead body? The word "weakness" in the Greek language means strengthlessness. Isn't it wonderful what language the Holy Ghost uses? It is sown in strengthlessness, it is raised in power. The glorious change that this unchangeable God is to bring about is the swallowing up of death in victory. What a glorious change. For such an unspeakable change as it is, I will, God giving me grace, wait alongside Job all of my appointed days until my change, (not yours, not somebody else's, not that at all).**

Sin did not change Him; the privation and suffering and agony and prayers of His Son did not change Him; He does not change. If he did change, if he had listened to the cries of Jesus, his un-

changeable justice would be poured out on the elect family of God, and they would have been consumed. (Malachi 3:6) He did not change, he does not, and cannot be changeable, therefore he brings about the change in his people that fits and prepares them for heaven. He that is not changeable, is ever changing the ways of his creation to His name's honor, glory and praise.

No, no, God is not changeable.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

I COR. 6:20; JOHN 21:19

Brother James Jones of Poplar Creek, Miss., requests that we write upon the Scriptures found in 1 Cor. 6:20, and the first clause of John 21:19.

The first text reads as follows: "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The second reads, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."

The theme is the same in both Scriptures, and they may well be presented at one time in the subject set before us. The glory of God manifested in the life of believers, and in their sufferings and death, is that to which our attention is called. The design of the work of grace in the hearts of men is, that in the ages to come God might show forth the riches of his grace in us, through Christ Jesus. Jesus lives in us, that his life may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. All that is done in what we speak of as the work of grace is that God may be glorified and his name exalted in us. And what a wonderful, what an astonishing thing it is, that our God should see fit to manifest his mercy and loving-kindness in such vile creatures as fallen men. The apostle said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us." What a glorious treasure! what

a mean abiding place! The treasure golden, and the vessel earthen.

In the first text to which our attention is called, Paul reminds his brethren first, that they are bought with a price, and that therefore they are not their own, that they belong to God, and that therefore, as he says elsewhere, they are not to seek their own glory, but the glory of him who has bought them, and to whom they belong. Paul (verse 13) would urge upon them the truth that even their bodies are for the Lord. He has bought them, and this includes all the powers and faculties of their being. They could have no right to say therefore, We may subject our bodies to all manner of lusts, and desires, and evil deeds, because the body is evil, and only evil, and is not the Lord's and shall never be his. On the contrary, even their bodies are said to be the members of Christ. Shall they therefore make the members of Christ the members of an harlot? His whole soul revolted at the thought, and he said, "God forbid." And if any man be indeed redeemed unto God, there will be in him such a work wrought as that he will with abhorrence against all sin in word or deed, also say, "God forbid." "He that is joined to an harlot is one body, but he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." By so much as the spirit is higher and more excellent than the body, therefore is he, who is joined to the Lord, under higher obligations to render to him all praise and glory, and to live in the Spirit, and not fulfill the desires of the flesh and the mind. While the special sin of which Paul here speaks is that of fornication, and against this he urges the relation which they occupy to God especially, yet the same reasoning applies to all sin. He that is joined to the Lord is redeemed from all sin, and is to remember that he is no longer under its dominion. Once in time past they fulfilled these evil desires and lusts, but now they have been called to a holy relationship to God. His life dwells within them, and they are to manifest

this better spiritual life in all their conduct. This true light has been kindled in their heart, that it should shine out. He would say to these brethren, "Remember who you are now, and to what you have been called." "Remember the profession which you have made before God, and that you have not been called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

"What," he says to them, "know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." Your body, the very body in which you live and move, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and his holy Spirit is within you, and ye have received it of God, and ye are his, not your own. Could there be stronger reasons urged upon them, and upon us also, for careful living, for keeping our body as unto the Lord? And now still further he urges upon them this last most solemn and glorious truth, "Ye are bought with a price." He reminds them and us that all these blessed and holy privileges of which he has spoken, and which he declares have been conferred upon us, are ours simply because first, we have been redeemed, or bought with a price. This of course implies the sinful and lost estate of those who have been redeemed. It carries with it a reminder of the great unworthiness and unfitness of each and all of us to receive such immortal blessings. The fallen condition of man, his justly condemned estate, his alienation from God by wicked works, his enmity to God in his whole nature and life, in short, all that makes man a sinner, is implied by the apostle in the expression, "Ye are bought with a price." From what they were bought, and to what they have been redeemed, is all involved here. Who are we, and who has bought us, and what blessings are ours through this purchase? Who shall ever measure it all? Only the Holy Spirit, which dwells within us, can take these things and show them to us so as to melt these hearts of stone, and humble us in deep

contrition, and arouse within us true praise and gratitude to God. The longer we live, and the more we meditate upon these things, and the more we come to know our own heart, the more we can see why the inspired apostle urges the things that he does as motives to stir us up to right living. If the mercy and goodness of God does not lead to repentance, to godly sorrow for sin, and to earnest strivings to overcome all that would oppose godliness, and to hatred of self and indwelling sin, then we know of nothing that will. Paul reminds his brethren of God's great mercies in these preceding verses, and these are the motives to which he appeals. Such appeals must have found in the hearts of all who knew and loved God, a chord attuned to what he was saying to them, and which must at once respond. In the hearts of his brethren would be aroused gratitude, love, and all that could stir them up to earnest desire to glorify God. "Ye are not your own." Ye are bought. What more could he say concerning the Lord's gracious work for them and in them?

Now who could remember these things which had been wrought in their own hearts, without an experience of longing to so live outwardly as would best testify to the gracious work of the Lord. It is a fact of experience that the more we are enabled to sit at the feet of the Lord, the more we are permitted to drink in of his life, of his grace, of his divine nature, the more shall we find it to be our meat and drink to do his will in all things. And it will result that the chief sorrow of our hearts will be that we in spite of our best endeavors, are still so far short of what we desire. "I count not myself to have apprehended," will be our solemn confession to the end of this life. If indeed the things of which the apostle was speaking, had a place in the hearts of his brethren, if they have a place in our hearts, we shall welcome such exhortations as being that which is calculated to stir us up to more zeal. Our experience in preaching, and in urg-

ing such admonitions as seemed scriptural and suitable, upon those who have heard us, has been this, that those who seemed to us already walking spiritually and carefully as the spiritual always will, have often responded and said, "We felt all that to be good and true, and we feel as though we desire to be more faithful than we have ever been," while those who were in the sight of the church walking far off have not so responded, and we have seen no result of all the preaching and admonitions in them. Before any exhortation will thus stir any one up to realize the importance and sweetness of this careful walking, the spirit of truth must first soften the hard heart, and make it ready for the seed. Our observation and our experience has been that those already spiritual among the Lord's people, have received the good seed in good and honest hearts, and have felt to respond to the word spoken with praise and gratitude to God for the word, while those who were not spiritual among them have not been made to feel their shortcomings and lack of true spirituality, by all the admonitions urged upon them, and urged with faithfulness and love. So that we say that if any to whom the apostle wrote in the text were alive to what the Lord had done for them, and to the relation which they occupied to him, these would feel how exceeding good were these words, and would rejoice and be glad to be reminded of their obligations to love and obey him.

Now Paul says to them, Glorify God, therefore, and glorify him in both body and spirit. Is not this lesson taught us here, that these two things cannot be disjoined? We cannot glorify God in spirit without this spiritual exercise also appearing in the body, and we certainly cannot really glorify him in body without this inward spiritual exercise of love joy, faith, hope, humility and fear within. One may in the body so behave as that to men they may seem to glorify God, but still to God it is not so. On the other hand, it is vain

for a man to say, I glorify God in my mind and heart and spirit, in my thoughts concerning him, and in my soul's affections toward him, while at the same time the body is found in the service of the world, sin and Satan. One may say, I rejoice in God, while he attends places of worldly amusement, while he engages in dancing, card playing or what not of those things which the world loves, and which worldly professors say there is no harm in, but when he say so he lies. He either willfully says what he knows is not true, or else he is deceived, and mistakes carnal joys for those which are heavenly and spiritual. How utterly opposed to both the letter and the spirit of the gospel of the grace of God, and how utterly contradictory of all Christian experience is it to say, "My body is, as it always was, and it never can be expected to do anything but sin, and therefore it may indulge itself in all worldliness and wickedness, while yet the Spirit within me seeks and loves the glory of God. This Spirit within to love God led this same apostle elsewhere to say, "I keep my body under." It led him to say here to these Corinthians, "Glorify God in your body," as well as in your spirit. Again we desire to say that these two things cannot be disjoined. Our experience has been that we have found those who walked most carefully before men, and who were exceeding jealous of the slightest thing in thier daily conduct that might be to the reproach of the name which they had named, to also be humble and spiritual, and in feeling and thought very near to him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who did not sin, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found, and we have not found any pleasure in conversation with those who walked carelessly and indifferently before men. They who most earnestly love God, and desire that in all their thoughts he shall be uppermost, have been those who most jealously guarded their every word and act. Yet these same brethren and sisters have been

those who have most bitterly complained of themselves, that they could not do the good that they would. Such as these who possess such a mind and desire will welcome all admonitions and rebukes, and will feel as a dear brother once said to us after listening to preaching, which at that time was to him heart-searching and life searching, "I love that kind of preaching which tells me my faults."

To glorify God in the spirit, is to be possessed of those things in the soul which abase self and exalt the Lord, and to glorify God in the body is not to absent ourselves from the house of worship, it is not to prefer worldly gain or pleasure to the privileges of the sanctuary, it is not to have the mouth filled with careless, light conversation, or foolish talking and jesting, or tale bearing, or slandering, or fault finding, it is not to seek first of all the riches or gain of this world, but it is to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," it is to be sober in life and conversation, it is to prefer the companionship of the friends of God before all other, and to esteem the pleasures at the right hand of God as being more than all the light pleasures of the world, it is loving God more than pleasure, and not pleasure more than God. It is impossible to cover all the ground; we can do no more than to glean a few thoughts in this wide field. May the Master commend some handfulls to be let fall on purpose for some needy soul.

In the second text it is shown that God will be glorified in the death of his saints, as well as in their life. Peter should glorify God by the manner of his death. It is said that he was in the end crucified, as was his Master before him. We do not know that this is any more than a tradition, but be this as it may, in his death the Master promised that God should be glorified, and we desire to but call attention to the fact that all that relates to the death of all the saints is fixed, and so fixed that they all shall in death glorify

God, even as did Peter. It matters not whether the believer himself knows that it is so, or whether any one else knows that it is so, God knows it, and to him all that pertains to their death is precious; it all shall glorify God; all sickness, pain, weakness in the flesh, if indeed the subject of these things be a child of God, shall glorify him. With this may we not be content? Like Peter we know not the day, nor the hour, nor the manner in which God shall call us to glorify him in death; we do not need to know; God knows, and that is enough.

How blessed to have this hope set before: as we desire that God may be glorified in all things, so we are assured that even in death we shall glorify him, and as he is glorified in us, so shall we be in him. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

(Editorial by Elder Chick, November 15, 1901.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ETTA HAAR

I am again called on to write concerning the passing of one of our dear sisters, Sister Etta Haar; and I feel that I cannot do justice to such a dear one.

Sister Haar was born June 8, 1884, and died May 1, 1966. She was married to George W. Haar in 1909. She leaves three daughters, two sons, and three sisters to mourn their loss; but we feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

She was a great sufferer in this life physically, but bore her sufferings with great patience and fortitude — one of her daughters said, "She won't hurt anymore." She joined Malmaison Church some thirty years ago, and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend; and always hoped to be able to go again.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder D. V. Spangler, after which her body was laid to rest in Mt. View Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord.

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

Done by order of our church at our June meeting, 1966.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

and

SISTER ANNIE BLAIR

Also another of our dear sisters has passed on: Sister Annie Blair. She was born December 23, 1885, and died May 2, 1966. She also had been a member of Malmaison Church thirty years or more. She was a faithful member, and attended as long as she was able; and wanted to come when she was not able. She enjoyed having the Baptists visit her.

She leaves one brother and one sister, who feel their loss greatly. May the Lord give them courage and strength to say, "Thy will be done, not ours."

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder D. V. Spangler; after which her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, to await the resurrection morning.

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

Done by order of the church at our June, 1966 meeting.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

SYLVANUS CARTER

Deacon Sylvanus Carter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Republican Church, on February 21, 1894, the son of Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Greer Carter, both members of Republican Church.

He married Virgie F. Dodson on November 15, 1914.

He offered to the Church in May, 1941, and was gladly received, as was his companion who also offered on the same day. They both were baptized in July, 1941, by Elder Emmit Bryant at Old Union Church in Smith River.

His church saw the gift of a deacon in him and he was ordained deacon January 17, 1948, serving faithfully until his death. He was chosen clerk of his church November 17, 1945, and filled that duty until taken from us by death.

He died on October 27, 1964, as a result of injuries received in an automobile accident on October 24, 1964. His funeral was conducted at his home church, Republican, on October 29, 1964, by Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, and the writer, his pastor. He was interred at his home cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Virgie Dodson

Carter; two daughters, Mrs. Boneta Corley, Chesapeake; and Mrs. Elaine Nuckols, Rocky Mount; five sons, J. Lauren Carter, Rocky Mount; T. Donovan Carter, Ferrum; A. Otis Carter, Cockskeyville, Maryland; Leon V. Carter, Reisterstown, Maryland; and Maury L. Carter, Orlando, Florida; and one brother, Thomas G. Carter, Bassett, Va.

Brother Carter is missed by all, — family and church. His brethren and friends are left behind to mourn, but not without hope, for we verily believe God called him. He was faithful to both his family and his church, and we desire grace to say "Thy will be done," and to be made to know that God will care for us.

Written by the late
Elder J. P. Helms

DEACON JESSE JONES PRIDGEN

Deacon Jesse J. Pridgen was born March 8, 1895, in Nash County, N. C. Son of the late Bunyam and Pattie J. Pridgen, and passed from this life November 21, 1965. He had been a life long resident of the Rocky Mount area.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Moore Pridgen; three sons, Jesse Clyde and Thomas Guy, of Rocky Mount, N. C.; and James Bunyam of Winterville; two sisters, Mrs. Nannie Pridgen of Wilson, and Mrs. Pattie Ruth Bridgers of Newport News, Va.; three brothers, Wiley of Rocky Mount, and George and Cooper both of Lucoma; seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Deacon Pridgen had been a member of The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and was ordained Deacon January, 1959, serving in this capacity faithfully. He will be missed by all who knew him. We who loved him bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father. To the family we extend our deepest sympathy and pray that God may comfort you in your hour of distress.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder Leslie Coker, midst a host of relatives and friends. His body was laid to rest in Rocky Mount Memorial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Nina Pearson

IN MEMORY OF
U. BARTLEY PENNINGTON

He was born April 29, 1883, and died March 10, 1964. He married Bessie Johnson Pennington the 11th of September, 1911. To this union were born five boys and three girls, which deeply feel the loss of a dear father, who we feel was devoted to his family, and his dear companion, who stood by with a helping

hand to minister to his needs in his last days of illness; and who we feel will miss him most of all. May God bless and comfort them is our prayers. His occupation was farming as long as he was able to work.

Brother Pennington united with the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church first Sunday in September, 1961, and was baptized the following weekend. He remained a faithful member as long as he lived and was able to attend.

We, the members of Wilson Church, mourn the loss along with his companion and children and loved ones. We hope our loss was his eternal gain, and that he is resting from his labors. In his suffering, we could not wish him back. He went to sleep to be with Jesus, and to enter into that heavenly home, which God prepared for His children.

His funeral was conducted at the church by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. E. Turner before a large congregation of loved ones and friends.

He was laid to rest at Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Wilson, N. C. under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of our Lord.

Done by order of conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk

DEACON
ROBERT SOLOMON ARMSTRONG

Deacon Armstrong was fatally injured in an accident Friday, May 13, 1966, when he was hit by an automobile. He was born in Wilson County, N. C. December 26, 1878, son of the late W. H. and Lavenia Armstrong. Surviving are his wife: Mrs. Henrietta Batchelor Armstrong; four daughters: Mrs. Clyde A. Douglass and Mrs. Thomas C. Allen of Raleigh, N. C.; Mrs. Edwin Coffey of Rocky Mount, and Mrs. Virgil B. Jenkins of Maysville; three sons: L. Clinton Armstrong of Raleigh; R. Jack and Marcus of Rocky Mount; 14 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

He united with The Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in November 1919; and was ordained as Deacon in June 1956, serving in this capacity faithfully. He will be missed by all who knew him. We who loved him bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind Heavenly Father. To the family, we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their hour of distress. May God comfort you with his Loving Kindness and Tender Mercies is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by his Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, amidst a host of relatives and friends, and he was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming our our Lord.

Nina Pearson

IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER ALLISON GEORGE

Brother George born May 31, 1878, died June 5, 1966, age 88 years old. He joined Springfield Church June 9, 1963. He was faithful to the Church and attended meetings as regularly as his health permitted. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Holy will of our Lord who doeth all things well.

He is survived by one brother, Robert Robert George, Gretna, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Tiny Pulliam, Front Royal. His funeral was held at Colbert Funeral Home and conducted by his Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Adame. His body was laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis by order of Springfield Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Mrs. Nancy Jane Cobb of Route 1, Ruffin, N. C., died in Ann Penn Memorial Hospital following an illness of three weeks. She was born in Caswell County, and had lived in the Pleasant Grove Community all her life.

She is survived by her husband, James Floyd Cobb, and two daughters: Mrs. Donald Pegram, Yorktown, Va., and Mrs. Johnny Oakley, of Reidsville, N. C.; five grandchildren, and two sisters: Mrs. George Harrelson, Reidsville, and Mrs. Julius Cobb of Ruffin.

The church at Pleasant Grove wishes to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father, in removing by death a beloved, dear Sister, Jennie Cobb. She was a faithful and humble member, and an example of Christian humility.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of this dear sister, we feel our loss very keenly, but bow in submission to the one who does all things well. And

RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy. May God's blessings be upon each of us who mourn her loss, together with her family, and all who were near and dear to her. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be spread on the church book; one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and one sent to the family.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church in her regular conference meeting. Written by Sister Lena Walker.

Brother Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

SISTER FANNIE SUE WALKER

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister home from this world of suffering. Sister Fannie Sue Walker died in Annie Penn Hospital May 7, 1966, following a day of critical illness.

Funeral services were conducted at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church by Brother Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith. Interment was in Camp Spring Methodist Church Cemetery. Sister Walker united with Pleasant Grove Church in May, 1959. Since that time she was an humble and loyal member. Her loving smile and handshake at the meetings gave evidence that she loved her church and her Maker.

She was the former Fannie Sue Summers, daughter of the late George and Nannie Summers. Her husband, Luther P. Walker, died in 1952.

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

Done by order of the church Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in May, 1966.

Written by Mrs. Nellie Hodges.

Brother Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is at the request of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, that I attempt to write in memory of our dear Sister Maggie Tolston.

Sister Tolston was born on January 7, 1881 and died May 21, 1966, making her stay on earth 85 years. She was blessed to ask for a home in our church May 2, 1965, and was received and baptized in full fellowship. It was due to her affliction that she was not blessed to attend her church after being baptized, but we feel that she was present in Spirit, if not in body. We feel that Sister Tolston was already a member years before she joined, as she well believed in "Salvation by Grace."

We, the church at Tarboro, feel that our loss is Sister Tolston's eternal gain. We feel that she is resting in peace and her trial and tribulations are over. We feel that she is awaiting the Resurrection Morning, when her Spirit shall rise to an everlasting home and we all shall be as one and be satisfied.

Therefore, We resolve that four copies of this be made, one for the Church Record; one for the family; one for publication in *The Landmark*; one for publication in *The Signs*;

This done by order of our June conference.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1966

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER FOR 1966

(Written by Elder A. J. Slauson)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the First and Second Churches of Roxbury at Halcottville, Delaware County, N. Y., Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9, 1966, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond;

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

The time has arrived again for us, with joy and love for those of like precious faith in the true and living God, to meet together to sing and preach, and to feed on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, to give new courage that the hands that hang down might be lifted up, and the feeble knees confirmed; that we, as babes in Christ, might take on strength to press onward and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ; and run with patience the race set before us. And to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, that our light might so shine before men that they shall behold our good works and glorify our Father in heaven.

As this letter is to be circulated among those who know what it is to need mercy, and know what it is to have been given mercy, our conviction

is to mention that we are told in the Word of God that God is rich in mercy, and has great love for his children. (Ephesians 2:4) Is it not true that great love will produce rich mercy? We understand that all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and to whom the Lord is their whole trust, have some knowledge in feeling with much sincerity the great and abundant mercy God has shared them of his rich mercy every second of their lives, from birth until the present time. The Apostle Paul says, "As we have received mercy, we faint not." Again he says, "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved his children even when they were dead in sin, . . ."

God was so rich in mercy that he could love the poor, guilty, hell deserving sinner, who had gone astray and come short of the glory of God. Not one had done good, no not one; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. This is not so distressing if we only know about it by the reading of the Word, but when the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus has sent to teach his people all things, takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, and our blind eyes are made to see, and our deaf ears unstopped — or the Holy Spirit or light has shown in this corrupt, filthy and dirty man Adam, then it is a different matter. We do not have to read to find out what we are: something has shown us the many things we have done, "Is not this the Christ?" Sad as it may seem, it is strange but true, that not one single thing good is shown us that we have ever done: even when we would do good evil is present with us.

Brethren, do we understand this kind

of language? Are our hearts running together as two drops of water in these things? Is it any wonder that Adam tried to hide himself from God! after his eyes were opened. The fruit had given him knowledge of good and evil, and he then knew he was naked, and was ashamed before God. Do we not know what it is to be naked before God, and to be ashamed before him of our many faults, and of our thoughts? Would we want our brethren to know as much about our faults as God does? We don't think so. But we are glad that God knows about our many prayers and cries to him, and our thanksgiving and praise to his Holy Name in our secret prayers, because all things are known unto God.

Yet God, because of his rich mercy toward his children who had gone astray, withheld not his only begotten Son, who was full of grace and truth, that through His death and suffering, and his shed blood on the cruel cross, rising the morning of the third day, became the ransom for all whom God the Father had chosen in his Son. Because of his rich mercy for them, terrible sinners became saints of the most High God — heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Jesus, being God manifest in the flesh, was rich in mercy: rich enough that he had mercy for Mary Magdalene; and to reveal himself to doubting Thomas, and comfort him. Rich enough that he prayed for poor Peter in his weakness; and to the poor thief on the cross at the door of death, he promised Paradise; and the poor publican, who could not as much as raise his eyes toward heaven, found rich mercy coming from him.

We could go on and on, but the half has never been told of his rich mercy. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18) What a change through rich mercy and the great love of God. "Great and marvelous

are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints," thou can cleanse the vilest sinner's guilt, and soften hearts of stone. What great mercies we have from God. We have been made to love God, and to put all our trust in him; and to observe his mercy on every hand, and to know how very greatly we are in need of his rich mercy as long as life remains in this mortal body. Then, when death comes, what "last rites" do we need, as they call it, or must have, if heaven is to be our eternal home? Is it not God's rich mercy only, which we are told is from everlasting to everlasting and which endureth forever, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed? Is it not true that each one of God's little children feel that he is the poorest one, and that he needs more mercy than anyone else?

"A needy sinner led to seek
For mercy and for grace,
May always come to Christ, though weak,
And tell him all his case.

I'll never cast out those who come,
The gracious Saviour said:
All such he very dearly loves —
For them his blood he shed.

Though they may feel their lack of faith,
And scarce know how to seek;
Yet Jesus can preserve from death,
And hold them up when weak.

Then let true seekers all press on,
Not faint, but persevere
Until the Lord himself makes known
That they to him are dear.

When this he does, how blest they'll be;
What joy will fill their hearts:
Joy which transcends exceedingly
The best that earth imparts.

They then will bless and praise their God,
And wonder at his love:
With faith and hope pursue the road
That leads to joys above."

THOUGHTS ON THE RESURRECTION

Do you believe in the resurrection of the dead, a bodily resurrection both of

the just and unjust? Friends, I do, because in Acts 24:15, it says, "And have hope toward God which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

If we take the opinion that some Baptists take that the resurrection is when we are "born" again of the Spirit, then what will we do with the unjust in this scripture? It says they will be resurrected also, and when will they be resurrected? Just as surely as we must be born again to see the kingdom of God, we must be quickened again at the last day to be resurrected.

A dead body can do nothing. We could not be born again of ourselves but God who quickens us in this second birth brings forth life (spiritual life) and gives us hope in Christ. The earthly or fleshly birth we have is also without our help. We can do nothing to be born either fleshly or spiritually. Have you ever thought just how glorious this is, and how merciful is God? Without Him, we would never have had a birth at all. But, what love he has towards us to quicken us in the new birth. To quicken means to impart life to.

When Christ is born in us the hope of glory, it is the work of God. When Christ is born in us or made manifest to us, then and only then do we hope for glory and glorification. Before we know anything of Christ in our hearts, we have no hope, and without hope, how could we hope for glory? But still, after Christ is born in us the hope of glory, if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. Yes, my dear friends in Christ, the hope of glory reaches into the veil where Jesus the forerunner has gone and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his children. Our hope shall not end until that last day when we shall hear the verdict, either guilty or not guilty proved by this saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," or "Depart from me, I never knew you." Oh, how I

hope to hear the former verdict, but if I hear the latter one, then God is just and I have gotten my just condemnation.

Do you believe the resurrection is yet to come? I do, because Jesus' own language confirms it in John 6: 39, 40: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up **again at the last day.**" "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up **at the last day.**" What is life everlasting? Does it end when this body of ours is laid in the grave? Certainly, I do not think so! We are to be raised again immortal and that is what is everlasting.

Read John 6: 44 and 6: 54 - "No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up **at the last day.**" "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up **at the last day.** The Spirit of God that dwells in his children maketh them eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ; and the Spirit within them also quickens their mortal bodies to life eternal and they shall be raised at the last day.

First Corinthians 15: 12, Paul is asking if Christ be preached risen from the dead, why say some there is no resurrection. There were some of those Corinthians in that church at Corinth that surely must have been saying there is no resurrection, and Paul tells them that if Christ is not risen from the dead, his preaching along with the others is in vain; as well as your faith is vain also. He further states that if we believe that Christ is not risen, we are false witnesses of God because we have testified that he raised up Christ. For if the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen, then we are still in our sins. He died for our transgressions, he arose for our justification - such love! What? - Say some of you that these bodies rise not? Then, why was Christ's body raised? I can't help but believe that it is written for our understanding that if Christ died, was

buried, and rose again, these bodies of ours will do the same by the grace of God. Don't you remember Christ telling his disciples after he had arisen to touch him, for a spirit has not flesh and bones? Also, don't you remember how he ate with them? Ah, yes, Christ was certainly in the body.

This body of ours is to be buried or sown in corruption, for we are corrupt and mortal and we shall be raised incorruptible and immortal. 1st. Cor. 15: 53, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." Verse 54: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Verse 55: "O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Paul futhermore establishes the resurrection of the body by saying that Christ being raised from the dead became the first-fruits of them that slept. Every man shall be made alive in his own order: Christ the firstfruits and afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the **end** when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.

If we believe that when Christ is born in us the hope of glory, is the time of the resurrection of the dead, then we must believe that it is then this body puts on immortality; and something immortal can never die, but I believe as did Paul "what advantageth me if the dead rise not?" For we suffer such afflictions that as with Paul "we die daily." Some have not the knowledge of God and this was spoken to their shame.

There are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial -- that is to say there are bodies earthly and bodies heavenly. When this terrestrial body dies, it is sown (buried) a natural body and raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. To me this means there are two bodies, the corrupt or natural body, and the spiritual or incorruptible and immortal body. I believe

that the natural body is the one that you and I see, and this same body because of the spirit of God dwelling in it when the last day shall come, he shall quicken it and resurrect it, and it becomes incorruptible and immortal. Romans 8: 11; "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Can we compare the quickening of the heart or regeneration to the resurrection? When Christ is born in us the hope of glory, and our stony heart becomes a heart of flesh, we do become dead to sin or the law and alive to hope in Christ. Colossians 2: 13; "And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;" John 5:21; "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5: 25; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Now consider this, John 5: 28; "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."

Can't you derive a pleasure from this scripture when he says the hour is coming and now is, and then when he says the hour is coming when all in the graves shall hear his voice. Yes, I believe it's two different hours he's speaking of, because in one verse he says the hour is coming and **now is** (present tense), and he follows it up by saying the hour is coming (but he does not say **now is**) in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. That hour he mentions is in the future.

But, our flesh or natural body ever wars against the spirit that dwells in us and surely this war must be conquered. If the Spirit of God dwells in us, it is in

our hearts the hope of glory, and if the Spirit of God dwells in us, it is through the grace and mercy of God and nothing we have done to merit it, for in this flesh dwells no good thing; and what can the flesh profit us? And, if the Spirit of God dwells in us, we will surely be raised incorruptible and presented by Christ into the kingdom of God. Oh, my soul, I would that I may be one that the Spirit of God dwells in. Paul says, "I shew you a mystery." And it is a mystery as to what this body raised shall be, but it is no mystery that it will certainly be raised. It is sown corrupt and raised incorruptible at the last day. Else, how will we ever see Jesus and be like him and behold him in all his glory?

Why do I so emphatically believe that this is to take place at the last day? Because my Bible is simply full of scripture declaring this very thing. Why do you suppose Peter said that David's sepulchre is with us to this day? Because it is the truth, and David's sepulchre means his grave is with us -- his burying place. He has not risen in body. His spirit has returned to the Father who gave it, but when Christ shall descend with the sound of the trump and the voice of the archangel to gather his elect, if we are alive at that time, we shall not prevent David's rising or any of the others who have slept. It speaks of those left at his appearing as being changed. I cannot describe this change, but I sincerely believe that they will be changed and meet Him in the air. This must hold true to the fact that Enoch and Elijah were translated that they should not see death. This establishes the scripture that we shall not all sleep, but we all shall be changed. Surely this mystery was written for the edification of His people, from which they could, and do, derive comfort. And when all of this transpires at Christ's second coming, and all the graves have given up the dead and these bodies put on incorruption and immortality then shall be brought to pass this saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. The grave can no longer be victorious

over these bodies it enclosed. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. How in the name of scriptural knowledge do you suppose death can be destroyed? By life, of course! And to have life, these dead bodies must be quickened and made alive in the resurrection.

You know and believe that the psalmist David was a loved character -- loved by the heavenly Father -- he was born again, we'd say, but in Psalms 71: 20, he seems to have thoughts on the resurrection of his body for he believes that he shall be quickened **again** and be brought up **again** from the depths of the earth.

If, in the scripture, only one verse could be found that spoke of the resurrection of the body both of the just and unjust, it would be just as sure and just as comforting as if every chapter and every verse in the Bible spoke of it. I can recall that only once do I remember reading that "Jesus wept," and how I believe that he did, for he had great love for Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. Surely, Martha believed in the resurrection of the body at the last day, for Lazarus was dead and buried and she told Jesus she knew he would live again in the resurrection at the last day.

Romans 8: 18, 21: "For I reckon that the suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the **bondage of corruption** into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Isn't it glorious and overpoweringly joyful to hear that the things Christ's children suffer now is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them. What a consolation to believe that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The glorious liberty of the child of God must surely mean the hope being ended when Christ presents them to the Father. A glorious liberty or freedom -- no more hoping but freedom in the knowledge that their hope has become a reality. Surely, if we knew already

(those of us who trust that God has born in us Christ the hope of glory) that the resurrection is past, we would not yet hope for anything, for we would have reached the end of our hope.

But consider the following: Colossians 2: 8; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

It may matter not to some how or when the resurrection is, just so they believe in a resurrection, but ah, my friends, it matters to me, because the apostles and my Lord (I hope) taught there is a particular way this body is resurrected and also when it shall be. The truth must rightly be divided. There are still some today who frustrate the grace of God and overthrow the faith of some. It is by grace we are saved, and it is by His grace that we are raised immortal after death and presented by His Son into the Kingdom of God.

Why am I so bold as to say that there are some who frustrate the Grace of God and overthrow the faith of some? Because Paul said it, I believe it; but, also because in the past few years, I have seen and heard from some of my friends (who I believe God has touched their hearts and quickened them) say that they didn't know what to think of some of the things that the people who called themselves Old School Baptists were advocating, people whom they had had confidence in. It seems my friends are suffering because there are still those who frustrate the grace of God. I hasten to add that these friends of mine are not children of this visible church, but their manifestations are such to lead me to believe that God is in the matter.

Pray for me, and if I am wrong in all my belief, then I must say we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, and to me this is what the scripture given through inspiration has taught me through revelation, and I cannot accept the teaching of man in this world with all his pomp and learning.

In humble hope,
Lavonia Lee (Mrs. Gilbert Lee)

REPORT OF UNION MEETING

Benton, Ky.

To the Editors and Readers
of the *Signs*:

Our Union Meeting time "Came to pass": we gathered together, a few of us afflicted and poor people, trusting, as we hope, in the name of the Lord. Our Moderator, Elder O. W. Perkins, passed away December 26, 1965. He had been Moderator of our Union Meeting for many years; so "it came to pass" we had to select another to fill the vacancy, and the selection was Elder Paul Poyner, who is also Moderator of our association.

When our three day Union was over, and we were getting ready to leave for our homes, I wondered why this Scripture kept coming to my mind, "And it came to pass."

We were blessed to have as our visitors, Elder W. D. Griffin, Associate Editor of the *Signs*; Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville; Elder J. N. Darnell and Elder W. Y. Chandler of the Little River Association, Elders Herbert Prince and Grady Brown of the Memphis congregation, and Elder R. W. Rhodes and Elder Euley McCool of the Hopewell and Buttahatchee Associations.

"And it came to pass," that we spent each day at the Zion Church, in Mayfield, Kentucky; and had four and five sermons each day before retiring to places of rest for the night. We ask, "Why, oh why, Lord, was it so." Truly it was the good pleasure of the Most High to favor us with such riches of his grace, which was purposed for us even before there were any of us. Could we be among those people chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was? Chosen a peculiar people, singing, "From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the

people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." (Numbers 23:9)

Surely, in one sense we are alone, and not reckoned as a church: no room for us in the world — a people trusting only in the finished work of the Holy Child Jesus for our salvation in time, and in eternity.

"And it came to pass." All the sermons delivered by these God sent and God taught ministers, were comforting to us who were present. The texts they were inspired to use, exalted our Lord, giving him all praise, all honor and glory; and showing the depraved condition of fallen man, unable to redeem himself from his lost and undone condition. What a Union Meeting! A reunion of believers in Christ Jesus our Lord, knowing that sinners are saved by God's grace now, and forever.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Dear Editors:

This Scripture has been on my mind so much of late, and, if it is of the Lord's direction, it could be that I can write something of interest to the dear readers of the *Signs*. The Apostle's mind was on *sin*, for he made mention of it several times in this chapter. He gave very strict admonition against us continuing in *sin*; and in closing the chapter, he told us what the wages of *sin* is. Please read the chapter carefully, following the mind of the Apostle.

Now, we note that the Apostle referred to *wages*, and to the *gift* in the same sentence. The first is something to be received for work done, and the latter is purely an unearned or gratis act. Did he not have in mind *works* and *grace*? He wrote on another occasion, "By grace are ye saved through faith;

and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: not of *works*, lest any man should boast."

Also, we find that he spoke of *death*, or of being in a dead state, in more than one way. "How shall we that are *dead to sin*, live any longer therein?" (2nd verse) "Now if we be *dead with Christ*, we believe we shall also live with him." (8th verse) He made another reference to death in verse 13, ". . . as those that are *alive from the dead*, . . ." Then the type of death which he said was the wages of *sin* in the last verse of the chapter, is what we want to bring out and examine. Just what kind of death is it? Since he referred to the *gift* being eternal, was not the *death* also eternal in, or as to its existence? God fore-ordained or determined before the world was, all who were to be the recipients of this *gift of eternal life*; and left record of what eternal life is, or is to be. Would not the same apply to this *death* that is the wages of *sin*?

As I am given to see it, the death that occurred to Adam was a type of identical death we have in mind. God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, it being a type of heaven, or place they could have remained had there been no transgression. After they transgressed, God drove them out, and made it impossible for them to enter therein again. What was this but that they received a type of death as wages for their *sin*? Continuing this line of reasoning on through the time world, we see those engaged in works of *sin*, enjoying all the worldly benefits, and living their lives in God's great sunshine, and the wonderful things that natural life affords. When this time world ends, and the resurrection comes to pass, and the multitudes, the countless millions upon millions that were not given that gift of eternal life, are separated from those that have received this gift, will they not be receiving the wages of *sin*? They are to be forever

afterwards in a state of darkness, entirely void of any of God's eternal love.

Referring again to chapter 6 of Romans, verse 16, the Apostle sees two groups of people in this time world. Again it is my mind that one is that which is of *works*, and the other one those recipients of *grace*, or *gift of life eternal*. He says, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness."

This, to me, means that all mankind is separated into these two groups by the will of God, and determined upon long before time began. We know not the reasons thereof, and will never know the mind of the almighty God. "Be still and know that I am God," is the written word.

Turning to Matthew 7:21-23, it is seen that Christ viewed that group doing works, and earning the wages of sin, for it is written, "Then will I profess (say) unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." On another occasion, when claims were being made by some that they were his followers, he said, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John 8:44)

Many pages could be written on these Scriptures, and still they would not be fully covered. Suffice it to say, when we look about us at the works of this sin-stricken world, we must recognize we are in the last days. How dark and perilous are days now, and how fast are the world's conditions worsening? We are prone to view all this with great trembling. How soon will it be till the almighty God will be meting out those wages of sin spoken of by the Apostle? The world is filled to the near breaking point with iniquity, evil and vice, hatred and corruption, and troubles without end. I am mindful of the words of the writer whose mind viewed what we are now going through:

"When trouble like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud."

We are surely hearing great thunderings, and seeing the shaking of the earth; and many, many signs that we are in the last days.

Then, how priceless and precious are our experiences, and all the evidences that we are recipients of that gift of eternal life? Many are the times, when meditating upon this very mysterious thing, I am made to ask, "How can it be possible such a vile and sinful being as I, should be given that gift. Should not my lot be to receive the wages of sin instead?"

If this writing is of any interest to the household of faith, give all praise to the all-wise and all-powerful God.

A sinner, saved by grace, that gift of God, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington 98273

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a letter for your consideration, which I received from my niece. To me it sets forth the doctrine and the experiences of God's children. She has spoke many such words to me.

Yours in hope,
Carrie Campbell

"NOTHING TOO INSIGNIFICANT"

3314 Debby,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dearest Aunt:

Your letter, or sermon, gave me great pleasure to read yesterday, but seemingly this morning is the stimulent to a heart racing wildly with praises to God. Aren't you glad to believe that nothing is too insignificant to cause an outpouring of praise to God? Meaning not, by any means, that your letter was insignificant, but thinking that no great spectacular import was broadcast, when you very quietly wrote it, and as quietly

stamped it for mailing; but if you could hear the thunderous rolls of Hosannas within my heart to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, it would cause you to feel humbly thankful for God's directing hand over your paper the day you took pen in hand to answer my letter, maybe hesitatingly, maybe anticipatingly, I know not, nor care not, for I know that in the doing, God's inspiration shown through.

I often rejoice in my observations of small, unnoticed things, and realize that, to me, those small unnoticed things are symbolic of the little lambs of God who are not recognized in this world, even to the point of derisive comments on their complete unimportance; but how sweet, how comforting, how glorious is the fact that God, not the lambs, chose particularly this way to hide and protect them from the world. Who in the world, knowing their richness and vast inheritance, would not seek to enter into that fold by "hook" or "crook"? What better way to hide His flock than to clothe them with the mysterious belief and faith in the true God, and not the world's conception of God? This belief and faith is hidden in temples which appear no different to that of all of Adam's creation, but sets them apart as surely as the severing of a sword.

I even sometimes feel to see and rejoice in the mystery of being made subject to vanity, even as others. Again, how perfectly hid are his children going about in the world, partaking of frivolities, lusting, yea, even lusting for prestige, admiration and respect of men. Only when it pleases God to remove these vain thoughts, and show his children a glimpse of perfection as it is in Jesus Christ, are they made repentant of these pursuits, and desirous to set their whole mind and heart toward God and godly things, and forsake all foolishness. Then what a glorious revival is staged in the heart; what praises, what songs rise unto that One who holds the world in his hands: who is longsuffering and patient to his children's infirmities, and leads them about and instructs them in right-

eousness; who suffers them to stray, to haltingly step into ways not desirable, all for their teaching; and who finally lifts them tenderly and confidently up to the place where they sing joyously, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

All of this must be borne in the secret confines of that temple which resembles outwardly, all of Adam's creation; but which differs as much as darkness to light, due to that marvelous operation all His children undergo: the establishment of a new heart by his skillful hands. Seeing as all of this wonderful work is done within, and none but the child feels this master surgeon's skillful work, it is not unusual to read that God's children must worship him in truth and Spirit, and go in a closet to pray and make supplications.

When given an insight from the Divine Creator, we feel bold to the point of saying that we see the mysteries of God unfolding everywhere; and we even feel to see and understand it is good that we spend so much time floundering without this insight. For at these times we feel to look everywhere, beholding this thing and that in nature, and say it is good, for God has divined it thusly, etc.

How soon, when left to ourselves, we begin to look at these same things in nature, and find nothing but paradoxies, and reasons to doubt everything about us - about even God; and must again wallow in the slime of despair until it pleases God to renew us again, and show us again his sustaining power and pleasure.

How at times when lifted up, I feel to mourn that all creation can't see and acknowledge the glory of God. Sometimes I feel a spirit of anger, combined with a missionary zeal, to see to it that God is praised-all in my mind, of course-but, Oh, how I must be taught anew that even the wrath of man praises Him: the remainder God restrains.

Could I but be given a thankful heart

and mind for the experiences I feel to have had. Sometimes I even dare to exclaim that surely my teacher has been God. Needless to say, I had no idea of writing so much, but if it be of God, it will profit that which He pleases; and if it only be of me, it too will serve the purpose of God. My prayer is that He lead me about and instruct me in His love.

Love,
Carrie Jo Williams

“OFTEN IN A DRY AND
DESOLATE LAND”

Rt. 6, Box 1
Fayette, Alabama 35555

Signs of the Times:

Excuse me for letting my subscription be past due.

We certainly enjoy reading the **Signs**, and sometimes reap much comfort from its pages in reading of the travels of God's little children. Also the rich food that is set forth in the many good articles and editorials. Elder Gilbert Beebe's writings are especially satisfying to our hungry souls, when it pleases God in his tender love and mercy, to touch our hearts in removing from us the cares of the world, and opening up our understanding of spiritual things.

Most of the time we find ourselves in a dry and desolate land, so far as being able to reach out and grasp anything that is food for the hungry soul: then we can only hope against hope that we have a hope; but if indeed God has ever touched our hearts in tender love and mercy, and given us hope of a better life to come, when we will not be burdened with this heavy load of sin, and our doubts and fears done away, and all will be joy and happiness: if indeed this be so with us, we cannot throw our hope aside. What God has done, is done forever. This is my staff of life: if I did not believe this I don't think I could continue on.

Right now a scripture comes to my

mind, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” To me, He, Jesus, is all the rest we have; and it is only when we have labored with our heavy load of sin, and are made to look unto him for help, and are made to see, through an eye of faith, that he, and he only, is able to bear the heavy load. We are given hope through this same eye of faith, that when He bowed his head on the cruel cross of Calvary, and said, “It is finished,” that we were included in that number that he loved with an everlasting love: a love so great that he took upon himself to suffer, bleed and die, to give himself a ransom for our sins, that we might go free.

It is here that we find rest that is sweet and enduring; that cannot be done away with. I don't mean that we will not be burdened again; but that each time there is peace and rest in our souls, he is present with us in a revealed sense. I believe that if we are one of his, he is ever present with us, and always watching over us; but not always in a revealed sense. We are left to ourselves at times, and so far as we can see or do, our soul becomes very lean, that we might know that we ourselves are nothing; and that we might look unto him for help, and rejoice in him and see him as our redeemer.

In the beginning, I meant this to be a very brief and business like note, but you see I have “spilled” a few of my puny thoughts, which I hope will not be offensive in any way. If not deceived, I remain a lover of the truth as set forth in the pages of the **Signs of the Times**.

Mrs. U. R. (Hallie) Taylor
Quitman, Texas

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors, Brethren and Sisters —

I was a silent reader of the dear old **Signs** before I was made to ask for a home with them in the church, (this was about two years before my dear father was called away) for which I have always been thankful to the Lord. He was a strong believer and a member

of the Old Baptist church at Friendship before I was born. He read the Bible at night to us children, likewise the **Signs of the Times**. At the time of much of this reading it only made me feel that I was condemned to die and be sent to an everlasting punishment. I would go to bed and try to pray that I might do good and escape the awful punishment. I wanted to be as good a girl as I could, although I seemed to realize that I had to have a great change before becoming a fair subject for joining any church. I felt if I could receive an experience like those I read in the **signs**, or like my father's experience which I heard him relate many times, I would be glad and thankful.

As I look back now, I can see and sometimes feel, that everything was working as the Lord directed, yet it was a sorrowful road for me to believe as my father; but different to my mother, as she was a Missionary Baptist. We children attended both churches, and would go to the revivals. Others of my age would go up for prayer and get converted. But as wicked as I was, and as bad as I needed help, I felt that it was not for me. I just could not believe in that kind of Doctrine, although I did not at that time, see how that I could ever join either church, as I loved my parents the same; and now feel that I shall, through grace, meet them both. I went on like this for some time, being torn between parents. As time went on, I began to love the Old Baptist church more and more. During this time I believe that the Lord gave me a dream, for after it I did not worry about it anymore. In my dream mother and I were in a large church building with but a few people there. It seemed that the minister called for people of her faith to come to the stand. She went and I followed; she stopped and shook hands with the minister, but I left her there and walked away from the stand and did not see my mother anymore. When I was brought to wakefulness I felt relieved from joining her church, although she had never asked me to do so. As much as I

loved her I felt that burden leave my mind. In the meantime my love for the Old Baptist increased and I knew that I believed what they preached. On a Saturday morning, my father came to my home and told me that I could go with them to Nashville to church. I met them at the highway and went with them. On that morning he talked with me and gave me an opportunity to tell him how I felt. I told him that I believed all that they preached; that I knew that it was the truth, and that I could never join another church, but that I had never felt an experience of any kind. When Elder Curry began talking he surely was inspired, he opened up my understanding, and the way was shown to me, and I was blessed to shed tears of rejoicing.

However, at this time I did not feel that the time had developed for me to ask for membership. We went out to one of my cousin's for lunch. I did not talk much, but they all talked of the wonderful sermon, though I did tell them that I felt relieved and had a great desire to join the church, which my father knew. From that time on I would go to church, but wasn't given the right feeling for about three years. It was at our association on Sunday, when I hope the Lord led me to ask for a home at Friendship. They gladly received me and I was baptized by Elder R. L. Biggs, my first cousin. Whether I am worthy or not, I have a great love for them, which is beyond description.

I was married in early life. My husband was not a member of any church, but he had never heard an Old Baptist preach. His people were all Missionary Baptist, but he did not believe their doctrine. We would go some and carry our children to both sides. He liked the Primitive Baptist, although he did not understand all that they preached. He would go with me to the meetings nearer home. He was not opposed to me joining the church. He helped to prepare for the last association, and died shortly afterwards with a heart attack.

I am a lonely widow and have lived with my daughter for twelve years. I am

twenty-four miles from my church, but go as often as I can.

I have tried to tell of my hope in my Saviour, although it is very weak at times. I do know that I love the brethren and all of his servants. May God continue to bless you who are Editors now, as he did the ones that served when the **Signs** was first started. They have been a great blessing to the readers; they are a great comfort to me. I have old copies of my father's papers, and even now they are still new when I read them.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Nellie Carver

618 Cardinal Place
Apt. 2
Danville, Va.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I received my August *Signs of the Times* last week, and appreciated it very much. It contains rich and beautiful writings each month, which I much enjoy.

I am enclosing copy of my experience which I wrote in 1942, soon after I united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church the 3rd Saturday in July. Elder R. B. Denson, now deceased, was our pastor then. It was a wonderful experience to me, and is still precious. We can never express the beauty of our experience in writing, or in relating it to any one; but we can never forget the time when the Lord was gracious and merciful to us when we were in deep trouble and affliction. He is the only one who gives any comfort and abiding peace. He never leaves us, nor forsakes us, but leads us and guides us in paths we have not known, in his own appointed time.

I have moved my membership to Springfield Church, Gretna, Va., since I moved from Norfolk. Please pray for me when at the throne of grace.

A little sister,
Thelma Reece Wilson

EXPERIENCE

I am going to try to write some of the good things I feel have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I hope I have been blessed with the love that God sheds abroad in our hearts at his appointed time; and he prepares our hearts to receive it.

I had often been concerned about my mean and sinful ways, and felt that I should change and do better, or I would be lost eternally. But I did not know what to do. I thought that if I would attend church somewhere regularly it would be all right, (thinking that there was something I had to do that would make me a better person.) So I would start attending church and Sunday school, and take my children with me when they were small, for I felt that they should be taught to go to church somewhere. I would go every Sunday for awhile, and then I would stop going — forgetting my sinful ways, and was content the way I was until I would think about it again. I did not have a desire to join any church at that time.

I was born and reared in Wilmington, N. C., and I often went to the Wilmington P. B. Church with my mother, who was a member there then but moved her membership to Norfolk after we moved to Virginia. My grandfather was a deacon in the Wilmington Church for many years. I enjoyed going there, for I had always gone there when I was a child; and always went to meeting there when I went home on visits. I did not understand the doctrine for I had not been enlightened, as I hope I am now. I did not have that love that I now have for the Primitive Baptist people, for I knew nothing about it.

I was in trouble all last summer and fall over my lost and ruined condition. (1941) One day in June while I was busy with my work at home, it seemed a voice spoke to me, and said, "You are

under conviction for your sins," and repeated it again. I felt that I was one of the meanest persons in the world; but I did not think so much about it until the last of June. I was taken sick, and was very ill for a week. I just felt like I was going to die, and I knew that if I died then there was no hope of eternal life for me. One morning about dawn, (I had slept but very little that night,) I prayed for the Lord to heal me, if it was His will. I know that he answered my prayer, for I was better all that day, and continued to improve. But I could not get away from the thought that I was lost; and that without help from God I would be lost forever. So in my weak way I tried to pray, but I felt that my prayers did not reach Him.

I felt as if I was one alone, without a friend in the world; and that even God had forsaken me. I could find no peace or rest anywhere. I would visit around, thinking that would get it off of my mind; but I was miserable until I would get back home — and when I got home, I was no better off. I could not eat or sleep, and would just stay awake and think about my lost condition, and that there was no hope for me.

One Sunday I stayed in bed most all day: I had no desire to get up. I got to the place where all of my strength left me, and I could barely lift my hand. I believe it was God showing me just how helpless I was. I was so distressed that I cried most of the time. I felt that everyone was against me; and my friends told me that they believed I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown; but I did not tell them of my trouble. I told no one except my mother, and wrote to my friend, Sister Annie Higgins of Newport, N. C., who wrote me some very comforting letters.

I could not get away from the heavy burden that was in my heart. I tried to pray this way, "Lord, save me from my sins, for there is nothing I can do." He has all the power, and we will call

upon him to have mercy on us when we realize the ruined state we are in.

I continued on in this trouble for awhile, praying every night, and then through the day also; and I began to feel that God was hearing my prayers, for these words would come to me, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." That was very comforting; and the sermons were also. The last of November in 1941, I had a very beautiful dream or vision: I could see the Lord preaching his wonderful gospel to a crowd of people by the water. Which, I hope was revealed to me, was the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists. I now loved that doctrine, and could not hear enough preaching; and I loved all the Old Baptist people. Verse after verse of Scripture came into my mind, and I was rejoicing because I now felt the Lord had heard my prayers, and was answering them; but I still had the burden on my heart.

About the 18th of December, 1941, was when I felt the burden was lifted, and I received my hope of eternal life — which is very precious to me. It seemed that my whole being was filled with the Spirit, and I could not praise the Lord enough. I kept repeating, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, praise his name." I was so happy that my Saviour had sought me out when a stranger wandering from the fold. This was in the daytime, and that same night I had a beautiful vision — I was not asleep. I saw my blessed Saviour going to the cross, and in the distance I saw the cross of Calvary; and all the time I was viewing this, a voice was coming from heaven, saying, "God sent his only begotten Son down to earth, to die on the cross for the redemption of thy sins." And all that time, I seemed to be held by the power of God, and I could not move until it was over.

Then I was astonished and amazed that such a wonderful vision should come to me, as unworthy as I felt to be. The next night I had the very same vision right after I went to bed, and

the very same words were spoken; only at the end of these words were added, "Take up thy cross and follow me." It was wonderful — I cannot express the beauty of it.

I got along fine for awhile, and then I began to have doubts and fears as to whether my sins had been forgiven or not; and then one day a voice spoke the words to me within, "Thou hast found favor with God: thy sins have been forgiven thee." This made me very happy, that I should have this blessed hope: a gift of God to go with me always.

Then these words came to my mind while at work in my kitchen, "Go and tell thy friends what good things the Lord has done for you. Go to the church." But I did not think that I was good enough to join the church, so I could not go then.

This spring (1942) I went two or three times with the intention of offering to the church at Norfolk; but I didn't. I had to be made willing — we cannot go of our own accord, we have to wait the Lord's appointed time. But these words were in my mind: It is not complete (my experience) until I join the church and be baptized.

I feel that it was the Lord's will that I join the 3rd Saturday in July, 1942, and be with my people. After hearing the beautiful sermon that our pastor, Elder R. B. Denson, preached, I couldn't stay away any longer. I offered to the church, and they received me into their fellowship at Norfolk. I was very happy, although I felt too unworthy to belong with such good people. Sunday, when I started to the water, I seemed to lose my strength, feeling not good enough to be baptized; but I soon felt better, and was baptized. And then I could say, "It is complete — my experience of grace." When I came out of the water I felt better both naturally and spiritually.

Written by a little sister in a precious hope.

Thelma Reece Wilson

I wrote the above in July, 1942, after I united with the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church. After I moved from Norfolk, I moved my membership to Springfield Church, Gretna, Va.

"FIVE HUNDRED YARDS VS
FIVE HUNDRED MILES"

Weatherford, Texas 76086

Dear Readers of the *Signs*:

I sometimes have a desire to write you and share a few thoughts with you, but when I think of my ignorance, it has a killing effect on my writing.

I'll give you some proof of how ignorant I am at times. A good while back I was on a trip on the bus, and having to wait a good while for another bus, and it being Sunday night about 8 o'clock, I heard someone preaching down the street, and it sounded like a woman's voice. I reasoned that, since there was no one that knew me, I would not be seen giving audience to false teaching, to the extent that some weak brother would be embolden to eat that which was offered unto idols: "If any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish," etc. I felt free from all this, but it is part of my faith not to give audience to such.

I found this an air-dome kind of revival. Soon the little woman got near the end of her harangue and began to call for anyone that desired to be prayed for, to raise his hand. My hand had no inclination to go up, although many others did — of course, I got a bit of attention. Just before she dismissed, she asked all who who wanted to go to heaven, to raise their hands — again my hand did not go up, although I think all others did. I did not go there with any intention of taking part with them; but, my, my, what a crowd

I had around me when they dismissed: they wanted to find out why I wanted to go to hell — why would anyone not want to go to heaven? Then is when I wished I was at home. They asked me about myself, who I was, what I believed, etc. When I confessed I only had a hope, one ridiculed me, and said he once only had a hope, but now *he knew* he was saved. He gave me a lecture on what all I must do to really know I was saved.

Once again, I was in Waco, Texas, and had to wait on a bus. It was about 2 P. M. on Sunday, and I saw a church house not far away. I thought I would “while the time away” hearing someone preach. I again thought of the Scripture that warns us against sitting at meat in the idol’s temple; but again I knew that no one would know me, nor know that I had knowledge of the real truth. A man was preaching when I went in. I took a seat and listened a short while, then began to feel miserable. As I decided to leave, he began preaching against the “honky-tonks” up and down the highways, condemning the ones that went there. As I arose and went down the aisle toward the back door, he said, “Look at him! look at him! what do you think of a man who can’t stand to hear one preach like I am preaching now?” I thought that it served me well: I knew better than to go there: If it is not right to go near your home to hear false teaching or preachers, it is not right to practice it away from home.

For thirty years I suppose I have given audience to false teachers not more than five times. Once, when my son graduated from high school, I went to the auditorium to hear a baccalaureate sermon: about half-way through the sermon all the lights went out, and, of course, the preacher stopped speaking. A missionary son-in-law was sitting beside me, and said, “Mr. Purdy, I don’t believe in note preaching, do you? When they can’t see their notes, they have to stop.” I replied, “Yes, I be-

lieve in it.” His reply was that he did not think our preachers practiced it. ““We don’t,” I said, “but I believe in it for that preacher: what could he do without his notes? God never called him to preach; then how could he preach if he did not know it by-heart to recite, or have notes to look at.” He laughed a bit; and I am sure he got my point.

I know I am pretty hard on arminians: they have said that I was too hard on their ways, and much too selfish in my way of worship. I do not go to hear them when they are about five hundred yards away; while I will go as far as five hundred miles to hear what I believe to be the truth. Those who have the truth revealed unto them, know the reason; but I can never make others understand. When it is preached that God wants to save you, but some will not let him, that I call a blasphemous expression — putting the great God lower than we are: the God that made the world and all that is in it, and who upholds all things by the word of his power. Does this God “want” you to come and accept him, and be saved? does he “want” you to believe in him? “want” you to be his servant? etc. I am sorry for that kind of God. I am often in that kind of fix: wanting something, and can’t get it; but I cannot conscientiously listen to anyone with that kind of blasphemy, so I just don’t go hear them.

. . . I cannot in any way blame anyone for worshipping in a natural way, or according to nature; but I also cannot have a good conscience toward God, and encourage that form of worship. So, as I see it, whether they speak blasphemy against our God, or whether they worship idols and don’t speak of our God, I have no business in their audience. Daniel 2:44, may have a two-fold meaning, when the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and shall not be left to other people, but shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms; and it shall stand forever. I used to think

that every denomination in our town was worshipping God, and I would just as soon go to one as the other. But I trust that the God of heaven set up a kingdom in me, the powerful kingdom, and it broke into pieces all these other kingdoms and consumed them; but this kingdom shall stand forever.

Dear ones in the faith, you may get discouraged often, as I do, and desire to return to the fleshpots of Egypt; but you cannot. You are in the land of Canaan where there are hills and valleys; and you will get into the valleys against your will, and you will have drouths against your will also. But remember, when it rains in Canaan it is from the clouds of heaven: it is not as it is in Egypt, for there they turn on the water with their foot, and off with their foot, and their water comes from the ground, a cursed source. God once said, "Cursed is the ground for man's sake." When one can state what he will preach on before hand; begin at 11 A. M. and quit at 12, he surely can turn the water on with his foot, and off with his foot. But it is just an irrigation project and not the preached gospel at all. At least this is the way I see it. I will stop lest I crowd out better material.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
W. C. Purdy

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To August 1, 1966)

John Paschal, N. C.....	\$1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Krewatch, Del.....	5.00
Jack A. Davison, Ala.....	5.00
Jno. E. Pace, Sr., Va.....	2.00
Mrs. J. C. Brock, Va.....	1.00
Carrie Jo Williams, Tenn.....	3.00
H. T. Dudley, Va.....	2.00
Acton Perkins, Ky.....	7.00
W. C. Purdy, Tex.....	1.00
Mrs. W. H. Cannady, Va.....	5.00
Paul Morton, Md.....	2.00
Irene Lilly, W. Va.....	1.00
L. C. Hunt, Va.....	2.00
Mrs. Nellie Carver, Tenn.....	2.00

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Upper Town Creek Church, Wilson County, N. C., the 5th Saturday and Sunday in October.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in October, 1966, with the church at Aycock's; which is located about four miles north of Fremont, N. C., Route 2.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Danville, Virginia November, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL
PSALMS 145: 14 - 21

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy. My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever."

There are many times when we need the Lord. There are many times when we need deliverance. There are many times when we need saving. How utterly foolish is that poor sinner that has imbibed the theory that we become needy by the whim or fancy or volition of our will. There is not at this time, and there has not in any past time, nor will there be in any future time, a sinner becoming needy at will, that is, by his or her will. As foolish as it is to think such a thought, how much more foolish it is to think that once needy, we can, by efforts of our own, supply that need.

If I am not mistaken, I have been needy many times. I have needed saving many times. I do not think that I would be far wrong in saying that there have been many salvations manifested to me along the way. Each time of need, each time that salvation was necessary, it has been supplied. As often as I have been brought to need, that often, no more, no less that need has been supplied. This supply, this salvation, all of these times, varied times, sundry times, have all been from the same divine source, from the God who stands alone, who does not have any at his side, who is the only Saviour of sinners.

In every instance when Israel had sinned, it was God that moved. In all the Bible there is not an instance wherein God waited for his creatures to act first. Futhermore, there is not the first instance wherein God got a welcoming hand, a co-operation, a meeting of Him on half way ground. Salvation is of the Lord. If we are saved a hundred times, each time whether the opening of our eyes to the truth, or the closing of our eyes in death to this world, it is all of God. It was the Prophet at the Mount of Sinai (Deut.18: 17, 18); it was the Son of God at the baptismal waters (Mat. 3: 17); it was the Son of God that was left on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9: 35); it has been, it still is, and for all futurity it will continue to be, Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. It was the Son of God in the eternal abode of God the Father (Prov. 8); it has been Jesus for all time (Heb. 13: 8), and it will be Him that the redeemed saints of God will praise for all eternity. Therefore, salvation is of the Lord from his eternal design to save, through every step of time, and to the final deliverance home to glory of every chosen vessel of mercy.

The text is setting forth the above doctrine in its fulness. All of it is setting forth the needs of God's children. As fully, it is setting forth the Saviour, the One that is to supply their need. All these characters have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Not one of them knows God until it has been revealed unto him. Then, but not before, do they become aware of their need. It is declaring the state of God's people, and equally declaring who will bring them out of that needy state to one of fulness and joy in the Lord. In short, it is declaring what God will do for them that are not able to do for themselves. When this declaration has been fulfilled, the recipients of this fulness will be filled also with praise.

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall." How beautiful is this language. How can it be said that the Lord will uphold these that fall? If so, then they could not fall, could they? Thus it is becoming

that we seek acceptable words (Eccl. 12: 10), that we consent to wholesome words, and that we show ourselves a pattern of good works by sound speech. (I Timothy 6:3; Titus 2:7, 8) There has not been a falling away from God by his chosen people. As far as the law covenant is concerned, they did fall, but the covenant that was ordered in all things and sure had the underlying support of the Son of God from all eternity. They fell in Adam, and they fall experimentally, but in this fall, they are upheld in His righteousness and thus they can not fall from it.

“And raiseth up all those that be bowed down.” What is it that bows down a sinner? It is sin. Can a man get from under the guilt of sin? Indeed not. Why? Because he is a sinner. For him to be able to atone for one sin, he would have to quit sinning first. This he can not do. Rather hard doctrine, don’t you think? Doctrine does not have anything to do with it. A man is a sinner by nature. It is his nature to sin. Who can change that nature? The man does not have a nature to do any righteousness. Sin and righteousness are opposites. One springs from a fallen nature; the other springs from the nature of Christ, a spiritual nature. Until born again, the man does not have a nature to do anything but sin. Can he do anything else? No, it can not be done. However, as important as the quitting of sin is, there is something else that must be done before a man can atone for sin. What is that? He must cleanse his polluted blood; he must change from flesh to spirituality. Why must he do so? Because he that is in the flesh can not please God, and to atone for sin, certainly one must please God. He that is bowed down must be straight, must be raised up. Only the blood of a pure blooded man could atone for sin, therefore only the Lord can raise up him that is bowed down by sin.

“The eyes of all wait upon thee.” I will not suit some of my readers here. The eyes of the ungodly do not wait on the Lord. The eyes of the animal world does not wait (consciously) upon the Lord

for their food. It is true that the Lord gives the food for ungodly men as well as for all creation, but they do not wait on the Lord. The ungodly are not waiting on him for anything. They are stealing and robbing and pilfering everywhere we look. The animal world is not waiting on the Lord. It is foraging, stalking, sneaking, looking for weaklings. But the text has all waiting on the Lord. I would embrace the text as being the truth. The eyes of all that wait on the Lord are waiting on him. These have seen the futility of stealing as well as stalking. They have seen what none others see. They have seen that their works will not feed them. They have been given to eat from vineyards that they did not plant, and to drink from wells that they did not dig. Necessity says for them to wait, and love makes them glad to wait.

“Thou givest them their meat in due season.” The meat under consideration is what is eaten, food, and means many times simple bread. This meat is the delicacies found on the table of the Lord. It is eaten in the banqueting house of the Lord. It is an appointed table, and every item that it takes to cause growth is placed on that table. The food is seasonal. This dietitian is technical; he will measure exactly the required nutrients for the sick, the weak, the pale. (Jeremiah 30: 6) No cases of spiritual indigestion among these, for the food is just right, and the time of eating is in due season.

“Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” Again, I will not satisfy all of my readers. It is true that the hand of Providence feeds all men and all creation and all things. That is not denied, but that which the text is teaching is denied. Remember that the Bible is the Book about living things. Not the dead, not that which you would expect among a dead atmosphere, not at all. We are writing about the gospel, definitely not a science lesson. We are writing about the Hand that leads children, that embraces them, that opens fountains to them, that

heals with the soothing, healing touch of mercy; in short, the hand of grace. But the text says "things." Would you have us to think that the children of God are things? Why not? The precious Saviour of sinners was spoken of as a thing, even though it was a holy thing. (Luke 1: 35) There is such wonderful fulness at this point. He was a holy thing, and we are to partake of the holiness of God, therefore we are holy things. And it is the holy things that are fed and satisfied by the opening of the Lord's hands. It is the small things that shall rejoice in the hands of Zerubbabel laying the foundation and finishing the building; It is the small things that know the Lord of hosts sent Zechariah to prophesy; it is the small things that shall see the plummet in the hand of the king, and the seven eyes of the Lord. (Zechariah 4: 9, 10) These small things, these little children of God, are satisfied when the Lord opens his hands and feeds them on the riches of his grace. Others are never satisfied; if they get a little they want much. (Proverbs 30: 15)

"The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Faith embraces this without comment, and without a puny man's expounding; it leaps forward at the thought of his salvation being in the hand of one that is righteous in all that he does. God has a way about him at all times and under all circumstances, that is always called in question by gainsayers. None of the ways and works of God are compatible to the ways and works of men. Men used to think, and still think, that it is incredible for God to raise the dead; men used to think, and still think, that God was unjust in loving Jacob and hating Esau; but in all his ways and in all his works, he is both holy and righteous. Why is He righteous in his ways and holy in his works? Why did the writer say it that way? Things that take place are always right, but they are not always holy. It was right for Christ to suffer, but it was not holy in the ones that committed the deed. It was right for God to deliver his Son up for the heirs of promise, but it

was not holy by whom the woe came. (Matthew 18: 7) The righteous ways of God will never be understood nor known, but the holy works of God will be known, for one is hid in the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the other is revealed in the hearts of his people. (Romans 11: 33; Cor. 2: 10)

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." How perfectly has Inspiration sent this forth. One of the most remarkable things about the testimony of Jesus, (John 18: 37; I Timothy 1: 8, Rev. 19: 10), is how that all of his writers were blessed to look forward and see the false reasoning that would arise, and to give the Lord's people a sure report. Many call upon the Lord that never are heard in the sense of granting them their request. But it is not our task to bring the negative of this precious doctrine to you. We are talking about what belongs to the children of God and not what the other children of men do. The Lord is not nigh everybody that calls upon him. He is so far from many that call on him that a great gulf was fixed between him and them, and it has never been spanned. From the standpoint of God being everywhere at one and the same time, he is as near those that call upon him in falsity as he is them that call upon him in truth. He answers in love those that call in truth, and he will answer in wrath those who call upon him in falsity. What is it to call in truth? in untruth? The first is to call upon him in the work of Jesus; the second is to call upon him in creature obedience.

"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them." In order for us to know whether this writing is a part of the gospel or not, let us ask this question. How many of my readers can be afraid of that which you are not afraid? So many deluded men and women would give anything in the world to be able to destroy the doctrine of free grace. I am willing for it to be destroyed if it is not the truth. If you can be afraid of that

which you are not afraid, then it is destroyed. If you can not (and you can not) then it is still the truth, and is enthroned in the lids of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; and is so deeply embedded in the mind and heart and soul of every child of God, that all the fires that could be set by the occupants of the infernal regions could not eradicate it. I know from the letters in the Signs and from those that cross my desk, and from those that are under my ministry, that they are, like the poor frail writer, often tormented by doubts and fears. May God still these little ones with the sweet influence of his Spirit and his refulgent glory. Every child of God that is fearful (and they all are) has had the fear of God instilled in them. Our Father put it there. He put it there (not on an experimental basis but) to try us and to humble us.

This fear will follow us to death, and it will serve its purpose. But, thank his precious name, it will not exceed that purpose. A god that does things according to his purpose, but does not control things working in opposition to that purpose, to where more is done than he intended, is not any more dependable than one who works without purpose. The desire of those that fear him is not the desire of those that do not fear him. Those that fear him desire things from above; those that do not, desire things from beneath. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. How many of their desires? How much of their desire? Ask him. He said their desire, and that is what I say.

Now will a child cry for his father who is not afraid? **Will they do so?** All nature says that they will not, and all the Bible says that they will not, and all Christian experience says that they will not. Now that is established for those that fear him. Let others shift for themselves. God hears them that cry unto him. How many of them does he hear? He said that he heard them that cried, and I would beg him for writing and preaching grace that I might say the same thing. But suppose that he

heard their cry but could not reach them? Suppose that he heard their cry and **would not** reach them? Such a thought is sacriligious. Let us preach and write about better themes, for he will hear and save every one of them.

"The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy." How many poor deluded creatures have stood off, Ishmael like, and mocked the people of God because they believed in the everlasting preservation of the saints to glory. Not one of them know a thing about the God of Israel. Not one of them know anything about the love of God. I fain would send out the good news of the gospel from the pulpit, by the printed page, by the radio, and by personal contact, that the Lord does preserve all those that love him. Lest scoffers and spies and imposters would run in, to reap the benefits of such a glorious time church, I would inquire into the reason of our loving him. It had to originate in some one. That some one had to be God or man. The whole world (that includes unbelievers; perhaps some of them in the militant church, but, if so, still unbelievers) will tell you that it originates in the mind of the sinner. But John does not give us such a description of the origination of our love to God. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (I John 4: 10), and we love him because he first loved us. (Verse 19) How delightful it is to write to you and you, and to tell you that the Lord preserves them that love him.

As sure as is the preservation of those that love him, just that sure is the destruction of the wicked. That destruction is not annihilation. The wicked shall see him, but they shall never be like him, nor shall they be with him. (Matt. 25: 41, 46; John 5: 25)

What is the effect of these truths? What is the result of the Lord doing these things? When seen and felt, it fills the mouth of God's humble poor. "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever." Dear child of

God, have these promises been fulfilled in your life? Have you seen him high and lifted up? (Isaiah 6: 1) If so, your heart was enlarged in you towards the saints of God, and praise unto his great name burst forth from your lips, as it did with David. Blessed is the people that know these things (Psalms 89: 15), for they shall walk where the redeemed walk; they shall rejoice among those that joy in the Lord; they shall be exalted in his righteousness. The life that is lived in the flesh will be lived in lofty praise to the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. (Galatians 2: 20)

This is in answer to Brother Odom in South Alabama.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 10:9

Dear Brother Beebe: — If it is not too much for me to ask, I would like to have your views through the *Signs* on John 10:9, especially on the last part of the verse, *and shall go in and out and find pasture*. Your compliance with this request will greatly oblige your brother, in hope of eternal life,

Wm. P. Robertson
 French's Island, Indiana
 Nov. 10, 1858

REPLY

The text proposed for consideration reads, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Among the numerous figures employed in the inspired volume to set forth the relations of our Lord Jesus Christ to his people, and the unspeakable benefits resulting to the saints from such relations, we have the very familiar figure of a shepherd and sheep, The prophet Isaiah says, "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work be-

fore him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." And the psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In the connection of our text, our Lord Jesus Christ claims that he is this Shepherd, and consequently that he is the Lord God. Divine Justice recognized him in this character, in the words of Zechariah, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." This prediction was fulfilled in the person and offering of our divine Redeemer. He says in our context, "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Again, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." The prophets assert, and the apostle repeats the declaration, that "All we, like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," who like sheep had gone astray; and as a consequence, "We are returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."

But the Shepherd and Bishop has not only taken on him the iniquities of all his sheep, and borne them in his own body on the tree, laid down his life for his sheep, but his work which was before him, was also to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom; and as the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, he leads them to living fountains, and into green pastures where they shall feed and lie down.

When Jesus spake the parable recorded in the first five verses of this chapter, unto the Jews, they understood not what he said unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me

are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."

Three important ideas are expressed. First, Christ is the door by which all his sheep enter the spiritual sheepfold. Second, all who enter the sheepfold by him shall be saved, and all who enter by any other way are thieves and robbers, and shall perish. Third, all who enter by him shall go in and out and find pasture.

1. Christ is the door of his sheep, and the only way by which his sheep could be lawfully delivered from the bondage of the law, cleansed from guilt and pollution, and brought into the liberty of the gospel. "All we like sheep had gone astray," had trespassed, and were lawful captives, held by a just and righteous law for the trespass committed. Divine Justice, as a porter at our prison door, refused to open the prison to us; but to him our Shepherd, the porter opened; he having laid down his life for the sheep with all their iniquities laid on him. As he had redeemed them, the porter opened the door to him, and with the door unbarred and legally opened, he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and having thus delivered them from bondage and wrath, he putteth forth his own sheep, and only his own, and having done this, he goeth before them, (namely, his own sheep.) And the sheep, his own sheep, follow him, and by him, as their door, they enter into his sheepfold. Led out of the Jewish sheepfold, in which they were held, by their Shepherd to whom the porter had opened, they are made experimentally familiar with their Shepherd's voice; it has strong and irresistible attractions, for hearing his voice, they follow him, and as his followers they enter by him in to the gospel fold, to which also *he must* bring all his other sheep, which were not of the Jewish fold, from the Gentile tribes and kindreds of the earth, and there shall be one fold and one

Shepherd. Through him, as the door of the sheep, they are led out of their prison, and into their liberty.

2. All who enter the sheepfold by him, shall be saved. This declaration is plain and positive, and securely embraces all the sheep and lambs of our Lord Jesus Christ. As he laid down his life for them, he has redeemed them from all iniquity, all their iniquities being by the Father laid on him, and he having put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, he has risen from the dead for their justification. Has put them forth from condemnation and wrath, their life being in him, and calleth them as his own sheep by name, having a perfect knowledge of them; even as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And he knoweth them as perfectly as his Father knoweth him, and as he knoweth the Father. By his knowledge, therefore shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, and "In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." Not the children of the flesh, for they are not the children of God, but the children of the promise, are counted for the seed. "My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." It follows, beyond a question, *they shall be saved*.

3. "And shall go in and out and find pasture." Brother Robertson desires us to dwell particularly on this part of the text, but we can perhaps convey the view we entertain as well in few words. As our brother resides in a pastoral country among the flocks of Indiana, he knows that a sheepfold is a place for the sheep to be folded for safety and comfort in the winter, or

when it is not safe or comfortable for them to feed in the open pasture. As their circumstances may require, the good Shepherd will lead them forth into the green pastures, by the still but living waters which John saw streaming from the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, and cause them even to lie down in green pastures in perfect safety, but when the chilling east wind beats, and the driving tempest howls, or the winter snow and ice cover the grass, and when the ravaging wolves are prowling around for prey, the careful Shepherd causes them to pass under his rod or crook, that he may see distinctly that every sheep and lamb is cared for, he brings them into the fold or shelter, where they are not to fast or starve, for there also the Shepherd has wholesome food for them, well suited to their needs. Thus they go *in* to the fold or shelter, and *out* into the green fields, and find pasture. They do not go out of Christ, or out of the bounds of his sovereign saving grace, for their life is hid with Christ in God, so that when Christ shall appear they shall appear with him in glory. But they are sometimes in the furnace of afflictions, and sometimes on the mount, sometimes in fiery trials, and sometimes in the banqueting-house, but in all their apparent vacillations they shall find pasture. The Lord is their Shepherd; they shall not want.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 15, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

LUKE ALLEN PERDUE

Our Brother Deacon Luke Allen Perdue was born November 25, 1892, at Redwood, Virginia and departed this life June 6, 1966. He was the son of the late "Babe" and Nanniebet Dudley Perdue.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Charleston, West Virginia in February, 1915, was baptized in Elk River by Elder B. F. Robertson, moved his membership to Rocky Mount Church, Virginia by letter, in October, 1933, was ordained deacon in August, 1935,

and appointed as clerk October, 1937.

He was a lovely member and faithful deacon. I trust I am thankful of having had the privilege and pleasure of visiting in his home many times, hearing him talk of the goodness and mercy of our God.

He was twice married, his first wife was the former Laura Edna Perdue who was killed in an automobile accident on March 16, 1948. Seven children were born to this union, three of whom preceded him in death. He then married Lila Hale Johnson January 27, 1955. He is survived by his devoted wife, Sister Lila, two daughters Mrs. Doris Hylton, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. Margie Hunter, West Palm Beach, Florida; two sons Paul Perdue, Spartanburg, South Carolina and Earl Perdue, Roanoke, Virginia; one sister Mrs. Sallie Randolph.

There are many things that could be said in regard to Brother Perdue's life, his hope, his firm belief in God and his great love for the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God. He was a man that was firm in his convictions and was not ashamed of the God that we so often heard him say had been so good to him. We feel that he will never be forgotten by those who loved him for Christ's sake.

The last few weeks of his life when he knew nothing of earthly surroundings, he was still firm in expressing himself of salvation by grace and God's love for His little children. His cry was "Peace, peace with my Maker."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Cecil Turner, and Elder Leonard Brammer at Oakey's Funeral Home, Roanoke, Virginia. His body was laid to rest in High Street Cemetery, Rocky Mount, Virginia, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by ones who loved him,
Alice and Posey Lynch

HORACE BENJAMIN (JACK) ECKARD

The Lord in his wisdom and power drew our brother from this earth to his final resting place, on February 19, 1966, at his home in Spokane, Washington. He had been ailing for some time, but was called suddenly: proving that we leave this earth, as we came into it, at His pleasure, and regardless of any man's helps. We come here without any help of ourselves; we leave the same way.

Our brother was a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Riffe, Washington, and was baptized by Elder Coleman in August, 1950. He was married to Mary L. Withers March 1, 1934, and leaves one son, Lee Eckard, of Wilbur, Washington; and two sisters. Mrs. Grace Poling, of California, and Essie Gibson, Spokane, Washington.

He was laid to rest beside his wife, who preceded him in death in July, 1964, in Fairmont Memorial Cemetery on February 21, 1966; there to await his calling at the resurrection. The services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Ernest Attebery.

We join with his family in mourning his passing, but knowing that our loss is his gain, we are reconciled to the will of Him who knows and rules all things.

Written at the request of his family and his pastor.

Charles W. Bond

DEACON O. C. DUNCAN

Brother Oscar Clifford Duncan was born August 29, 1887, at Honoraville, Alabama, and departed this life December 6, 1965, making his stay on earth 78 years, 3 months and 7 days.

His family moved to the Mt. Zion Community when he was a small boy, where he lived the rest of his life. He married Laure Kirkpatrick November 30, 1911. To this union were born three boys and two girls, of which four survive. The Lord saw fit to call his wife, Laure, home on March 31, 1919. He then married Miss Mae Barrett on December 19, 1919. To this union were born three girls and two boys, all of which survive.

He united with the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in May of 1936. He was a firm believer in the faith once delivered by the saints. He was ordained as Deacon on July, 1948. He served in this office until death.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p. m. on December 8, from Mt. Zion Church, with Elder Ed Gafford officiating. Burial was in the Church Cemetery.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Mae Barrett Duncan, Greenville; five sons, Robert S. Duncan, Baltimore, Md.; Aubrey C. Duncan, Fort Deposit; John B. Duncan, Dothan; James E. Duncan and Oscar Riley Duncan, both of Greenville; four daughters, Mrs. W. W. Hogg, Montgomery; Miss Ella Margaret Duncan, Mrs. Ralph Boutwell and Mrs. James A. Peavy, all of Greenville; one brother, John M. Duncan, Greenville; two sisters, Mrs. R. E. Lowery and Mrs. C. H. McCormick, both of Greenville; 25 grandchildren; four great grandchildren.

The pallbearers were Charlie J. McCormick, Stanley Owens, LaDon Cumbie, James Barrett, Oscar Andress, Hiram Heartsill, Joe Duncan and Roy Odom.

This was written at the request of the family and Church. Be it resolved, That a copy be put in the Minutes and Church Book, and a copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Read, and adopted by the church.

Elder Sam H. Dean, Moderator
C. Z. Moseley, Church Clerk

MEMORIAL

DEACON GROVER CLEVELAND BURGIN HAWKINS, TEXAS

We, the members of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, agree to file in our records the following tribute of respect in memory of our beloved brother and deacon, G. C. Burgin:

Grover Cleveland Burgin was born November 25, 1892, in Wood County, Texas. He was married to Miss Opal Harris June 15, 1917. He breathed his last natural breath May 5, 1966. His wife, Opal; three sons, Huell, James, and William; three daughters, Helen Pittman, Flora Stutts, and Patsy Willoughby; also, seven grandchildren, and two great grandchildren; all mourn his passing. Brother Burgin became a member of the church September 10, 1949, and was ordained deacon in February, 1951.

We thank God for having blessed us with the life and counsel of Deacon Burgin because: He was a faithful member and devoted deacon; he loved true Christians and hated hypocrisy with a godly hatred; he was peculiarly gifted to manifest love to the society outcasts; he was always helping those who were less fortunate than he; he fought against those who mistreated his brethren, — using the sword of the Spirit instead of carnal weapons; he was patient as long as patience was a virtue and used sharp rebuke when necessary; he was a good soldier: — fighting for the principle of love, and against hatred; he was blessed with a great degree of hospitality and knew how to make all who visited his home and church, feel welcomed; he counselled and advised wisely and freely showing that he was blessed with a great degree of godly wisdom and understanding; he left us a treasure of greater value than silver and gold.

God hath given and God hath taken away. Blessed be His name for having blessed us with Deacon Burgin's gifts of the Spirit. Our sympathy goes to the bereaved. However, his testimony while dying is ample proof that our loss is his eternal gain.

We order copies of this be sent to the family and *Signs of the Times*. Adopted August 6, 1966.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
H. H. Faulk, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 134

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1966

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
12/66
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

'TIS A POINT I LONG TO KNOW

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull, this lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Savior's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin and grief a thrall;
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy His saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case,
Thou who art thy people's sun;
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day.

John Newton

WHAT IS THE POINT
YOU LONG TO KNOW?

What is this point you long to know?
Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this:
I want to know I'm born of God,
An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?
The point is settled in my view,
For if you want to love your God,
It proves he first has loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me;
I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood
Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,
I want more liberty in prayer,
But when I look within my heart,
It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed
On Christ, my everlasting head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
And not so barren or so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God;
I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,
And count it all but trash and toys;
I want more tokens of God's grace,
Some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want — I know not what I want;
I want that real, special good,
Yet all my wants are summed up here:
I want to love; I want my God.

Is this the point you long to know?
The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
That knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found,
I think I may be bold to say,
That God has fixed within my heart
What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
There's plenty in thy living Head;
These wants you feel, my Christian friend,
Were never found among the dead.

Daniel Herbert

(Copied from the *Signs* of several years ago.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, and the several correspondents and visitors, assembled with the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church,

Greetings in the Lord:

Attention is called to the 11, 12, 13, and 14th verses of the fourth chapter of the epistle of Paul to the church at Ephesus. Though this epistle was addressed to the Ephesians, it is applicable to all gospel churches.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

In the eleventh verse, the various gifts to the church are described. There can be no question as to the Lord's purpose in giving these gifts to the churches: and each gift is profitable as he is blessed to fulfill the office.

In the order mentioned, Apostles are first. They were called and qualified by the Lord himself, to go forth preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. They were eye witnesses of the work of Jesus; and the same one who called them, gave them whatever power was manifested by them. There were Prophets among the apostles also, as we hear the apostles foretelling the churches things which would befall them in the latter days. All of the prophets were not among the apostles, for we learn of others describing future events.

Then follows Evangelists, who, we understand, were the first ministers to

preach the gospel among the people: traveling among them, and constituting believers into churches — as the churches of this **Eastern Shore** were constituted under the ministry of Elijah Baker, and others, almost two hundred years ago.

It will be noticed that Pastors and Teachers are the same persons. In the pastoral care of churches, one must be apt to teach, to be qualified to take care of the church of God, as shown in the qualifications of a minister in Paul's letter to Timothy.

The purpose of God in giving these gifts to the churches, is for the perfecting of the saints. This does not mean that hearing the gospel makes believers perfect in their lives; but it does instruct them in the doctrine and order of the Church. The preaching of the various principles of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, is like linking together the links of a chain. No chain can be stronger than the weakest link in the chain. No principle of doctrine is stronger than another: it takes all to make a complete chain. The doctrine of Predestination is no stronger than the doctrine of election, Justification by Faith, the Preservation of the Elect, the Perseverance of the Saints, the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead, or the Second Coming of the Lord of Glory.

Wherever a full gospel is preached, these truths are proclaimed; and they are for the unifying of the Body of Christ. These glorious principles of truth direct our hearts and minds to the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ. The proclaiming of these blessed truths, cause God's people to come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man: unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

All gospel preaching directs our minds to the perfect work of Jesus as the Son of God, and a perfect man: showing that he was verily God, and verily man; and is set forth in the Word as the Man Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and man.

These grand and glorious principles of truth direct us to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and He is presented as our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption — as the one in whom all fulness dwells; the one in whom we are complete. For God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Him, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.

In our preaching and writing, how blessed we are if we have admonitions, exhortations, reproofs, and reminders of His great love and mercy for us, that we be no more children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

When the great principles of fundamental doctrine are set forth, it unifies the Body of Christ. When these are not continually set forth, soon there will be a turning to the doctrines of the world.

May God, in whose name we hope we are assembled, bless us to continue to speak of His great love and mercy for us; to admonish one another in love; to exhort one another daily; to encourage those who love His great name, to take his cross and follow Him, as the blessings which flow from Him who has given us the glorious doctrine of divine grace.

SEASON OF REJOICING

Roanoke, Virginia

Elder and Mrs. C. E. Turner,
Rt. 3, BOX 115,
Bassett, Va.

Dear Brother and Sister Turner:

Surely, surely there is something to heart-felt religion. O, that all people could know the love, peace, and freedom that comes only from my Lord. I say, **my Lord**, and I feel that he is my Lord, my Father, my everything I need now, or ever will need in the future: be it joy or sorrow, be it on the mountain top resting in His love, or down with dear old Jonah in the deep with the sea weeds about my head, He is still all I need.

I cannot begin to describe this week. Never before have the tears of love and joy flowed so much. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, Who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Oh, precious ones, that sermon I heard on Monday has almost wafted me home to heaven. I don't believe I've felt such freedom, such peace, so nearly perfect rest since the words were spoken, "Be of good cheer, thou are healed."

The sermon that the Lord blessed you to preach at the Upper County Line Association, has been my meat and drink, my breathing, and even sleeping since. I would awake from sleep with my soul bursting in love. (Sunday night was sweet, but perfect deliverance did not come until you spoke on Monday.) My Saviour has been close this week — I have talked with him, and he has talked with me as I have read again all of the 8th chapter of Romans. He talked with me, he gave me the promise, he explained the meanings: he was here by my side. As we talked, I tried to tell him how thankful I was to have you Elder Turner as our pastor, and you Sister Turner as his helpmate; and for the love and fellowship of all the dear saints of God. I begged him to keep me from straying from the narrow path, that I bring no reproach on the church, and His dear name. I cannot tell all of the conversation, but it was heavenly.

Sister Turner, oftimes I feel when I speak to you all, that perhaps it seems only to Brother Turner, but, dear ones, you both are as one in my feelings. Before anything was made, our heavenly Father decreed that you be as one. Yes, Brother Turner is our pastor: he comes to us and brings us good news from our Father's house, but you are there also, pleading the Lord to lead him, to bless him to feed the sheep and lambs. You are in the ministry too because the Father designed that you be Brother Turner's helpmate, and encourage and hold up his hands — his burden is your burden, and when he is delivered, you

are delivered also. So, you see, I think of you both as one; and when the Lord gives me a prayer, it is for both of you. You are as one in my heart, and in Jesus Christ.

As I re-read the two last verses of the 8th chapter of Romans this morning, it seemed I was picked up and almost soared away. I have tried not to worry you dear ones with my thoughts. I did not express myself to you on Monday, as I felt you are weary of my stammering, broken expressions, but I cannot hold my peace longer.

I believe I understand this week the true meaning of what our David said to Harding as we were driving along the highway in the Spring. Everything was so pretty, but David said, "I just want to go where everything we see is God's, and nothing that is man made — just be able to see the beauty that has not been touched by man. I do wish we could see Jesus: if we could see him, the clouds would roll away and the sunshine would be so bright — it might still be raining on the outside, but the sun would be shining in here. Do you know what I mean?" We hardly knew how to answer him.

There is a beautiful city that man has never beheld, whose maker and builder is God, that will house all the little children of God. There we will see beauty in the fullness, for Christ is there; and with him all will be perfect. Yes, the clouds will be rolled away, and the sunshine of his love will light the place. My desire is so great to run swiftly with outstretched arms, to embrace my Father in that glorious city. Yet it seems too much for one as wretched as I to hope for; but, if heaven is not my home, I have already received more blessings here below than one could ever hope for. What I have received has more than made up for the trials and troubles, (many of which no one but my Lord knows). Yes, then thousand times more!

I must stop this before you become too weary. I trust that you both can still bear with me in my shortcomings and failures. I trust the Lord has been around about both of you this week, and

that He will be with you in the days to come.

Unworthy me, but in hope,
Rlee Houchins

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription for the **Signs**, so I enclose a check for two more years. We enjoy reading it so much, and believe it to be the truth. The August issue was so wonderful: we thought it was the best we had read in some time. The letters from Elder Hardy to Mrs. Lulu Allen, and her reply, was an experience that God's little ones feel. And the Editorial by Elder Wood was a feast to those that are given an understanding: the sermon at Black Rock was the truth, if I know anything about the truth.

May God's grace you all to keep the paper as it is, for we feel it to be the truth, and food to God's little ones.

A sinner saved by grace,
E. M. Reeves

MESSAGE TO HER CHILDREN

Leora Medona Hallard, was born October 22, 1882, in Nebester Co., Miss., at the age of thirteen joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Was baptized by sprinkling and the laying on of hands.

In the fall of 1899, I left my place of birth, and the home of my grandparents, to join my father in Lampasas Co., Texas, near the little town of Kempher. During the summer of 1900, father and I joined the Methodist Church nearest us. He, by confession, and I by testimony. Father lost his wife in February of that year, (my stepmother). He with the smaller children and I moved to Taylor County, Texas.

In the year 1905, I met and married John Curtis (Bud) Ivy. He was not affiliated with any church, but was, and had been for many years a firm believer in the doctrine of Predestination and Sal-

vation by Grace, and lived an honest upright life, as becoming a Christian during the brief ten years of our happy life together. In the spring of 1914 he had an acute attack of appendicitis, was operated on and died three days later, June 13th.

Our beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder J. C. Sikes, was with him daily, doing for him as only a true messenger of Christ could do, bringing to him spiritual comfort. He made a beautiful confession to Elder Sikes, and told him he had no fear of death, and that many times he had wanted to confess, and ask for a home with the old Primitive Baptist, of the faith and order he loved so well, but always felt to be unworthy. His only fear was for me and our little children's financial welfare. I had told him a year before his illness, that I felt I was in the wrong church. That I believed as he did, that salvation was by grace alone.

I do not know when, or how I was made to realize the God he professed to believe in, was my God; and I wanted to know more about a God that was able to save his people through all eternity: the people for whom he gave His son to suffer the shameful death on the cross; for Christ did not die until his work that the Father had sent him to do, was finished.

Jesus said, "Father I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He came not unto the world to call the righteous, but to call sinners to repentance. That we through him, might believe in God's power to save.

In the spring of 1915, I took our children and went to his people in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Was blessed with the privilege of going to hear the Primitive Baptist preach.

After attending service a number of times with those good people, and seeing them worship God in such a devout and faithful manner, I realized their God, was my God. Their belief in a crucified Lord, and Salvation by Grace was my belief. I wanted a home with them, but felt to unworthy to ask so much with so

little to offer. I could only feel to say, Lord take me, Just as I am.

During a meeting at the Nazareth Church, while Bro. Sammie Norris was preaching I was made to realize how much in need I was of the spiritual guidance such as the Primitive Baptist advocated. I asked for a home with them, though I had nothing to offer, but all praise to our Lord and Saviour, who has paid the cost, salvation is free, and I was accepted and baptized there, in the spring of 1916. I returned to Greenville, Texas, with my children. There through the influence of Bro. and Sister Sikes I met and married L. E. Willis July 3, 1916. I was reunited with the Baptist church known as the Seclusia, near Compton, California, having received my letter from the Altus, Oklahoma, Church in which my husband and I had joined by letter.

This was written by Sister Leora M. Willis, Sunday April 27, 1952. (see obituary in this issue)

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

The Snow Hill Old School or Primitive Baptist Church to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association in session with the Forest Grove Church, sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved Brethren and Sisters:

By the grace and mercy of an all-wise God we have been permitted to meet again as an Association. We hope we will be able to worship the God we love in peace and fellowship, for he is an all powerful and all merciful God who loved us while we were yet dead in sin. His promises are sure; they are yea and amen to them that believe. He is unchangable: the same yesterday, today and forever. We believe in salvation by grace for it is written: "It is not by works lest any man should boast." We have nothing of which to boast. We are poor, needy creatures, ever needing that manna which comes down from Heaven to carry us through our journey here. How wonderful when the Lord touches

the heart of a poor sinner, and gives him life and light to see how helpless he is to save himself; and is made to cry out "Lord have mercy." How marvelous are his works in the lives of his people!

We know not who his people are, but we believe that everyone that His blessed Son shed a drop of blood for, will in his own time, not ours, be brought home, to give Him all the praise, and to marvel that He could be so gracious to such a vile sinner. We hear the song "How Great Thou Art." Unless we know something of His greatness we can't sing it, but if we have been brought to where we can say as Jonah, "I will pay that that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord," then, though our voices be weak and tremble, and our mortal bodies infirm with age, we will all sing "How Great Thou Art" and praise his name forever more.

The Church at Snow Hill has been greatly blessed in the past year. We have had the gospel brought to us by Elder Wood of Manassas, Virginia; Elder Stokes of North Carolina and Elder Hand of Alabama; and our beloved former pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and our pastor, Elder W. D. Griffin, who is very faithful to us, leaving his home in any kind of weather to come to us and feed us that food for which we hunger. May we be blessed to continue to hear the good news.

Written by order of the Church
by Sister Beatrice Fooks

Elder W. D. Griffin, Pastor

Maude P. Truitt, Clerk

Winfield, Alabama 35594

Dear Editors:

I desire to write a few lines to the **Signs**, since I have never been satisfied with the way I came to the church, for I couldn't say anything. I do not know why, for, if not deceived, I have been made many times to rejoice in the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon me

from time to time.

I have often been made to weep while reading about the Lord dying on the cross for my sins. It seemed I could almost feel the agony myself. How he suffered, no one knows. If not deceived, I am longing to leave this world of sin and sorrow, but I desire to be reconciled until the Lord calls.

If I am one of the Lord's children, I feel to be the least: surely, I must be, for I can't see anything good in me. But, Oh, how could I stay here, if I could not be with the Old Baptists. They look so lovely to me, and are so humble.

I am enclosing three dollars for the Indigent Fund. In bonds of love with the household of faith.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch

Rt. 1,
Stuart, Oklahoma 74570

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am a poor unworthy creature, but I do believe I love the Old Baptists.

My subscription is past due, and I hope my delay in renewing will be pardoned. It seems that time is flying so fast, and people are so different to what they were fifty years ago. It is like we are living in a different world, with a different people. I just can't stand the new styles; and I am glad I am old fashioned.

There are many good articles and experiences in the **Signs** that I enjoy reading. And I try to read some in my Testament nearly every day or evening; and I enjoy reading it. I feel that lots of the writings in the **Signs** are worth the price of the paper. My mother used to take it when I was a girl.

I enclose \$5.00 to renew my subscription. I close with best wishes to all the staff and all the readers of the **Signs**. Please pray for me and my loved ones: we need your prayers.

Mrs. J. T. Black

DESIRES TO BE RECONCILED

Lawrenceville, Ga.
Rt. 3,

Elder R. W. Rhodes,
Fayette, Alabama

Dear Brother in Christ:

I can't explain why, but there comes a great desire to write you another letter. I greatly appreciate every one I have received from you, and I appreciate your interest in writing me. I received your letter acknowledging receipt of payment for books.

We do so much hope that we can meet again, if it is the Lord's will and purpose, before our waning lives are ended here in this world. I have reached a point in my experience where my greatest prayer now seems to be that the Lord might be pleased to give me a reconciled mind in all his providential dealings with me - whatever my lot is, and wheresoever it be cast. This casting of every lot of every kind, has been eternally subject to God's disposal; and He will dispose, but often it does not please our flesh. It is one of the hardest things for a **natural** man to do, or even a **spiritual** man when exercised by his carnal mind, to just "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." This applies to any and all things, but I am thinking now of the scattered and separated condition of the visible church of God. In one quarter or sphere of the religious world, we witness a coming together, while, except in some areas, the church of the living God appears to be scattered and confused.

I read with much understanding and approval the book of the Rhodes-West debate, and could just amen your impregnable citation of our Lord's own words, "Without me ye can do nothing." So I take it for its face value, and can only hope for closer unity among the Lord's people: which will come only when the spirit of unity is applied with power by the Holy Ghost. However, I think there is no disunity of the elect of God, for they are all taught of the Lord,

and taught the same things.

The hymn "God moves in a mysterious way" comforts me. For God does move in mysterious ways, his wonders to preform, etc. He is riding on every one of our storms. "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, (Oh how often we do it,) nor scan his work in vain, (we do that too)." But, dear brother, this is my comfort, "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." We have this given us in beautiful scriptures: All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose.

Scriptural order is difficult to maintain, because of the possibility of finding Achans in the camp; and because we have not reached perfection. I am glad that heaven's roster is not a facsimile of the church in the world's roster, but is written already, and sealed in the Lamb's Book of Life. Here in the world we limp along, hope along, and pray along, even carrying with us our carnality: the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Sometimes on the mountain top, sometimes in the valley. In our flesh dwells no good thing. Spiritually we are more helpless than any new-born babe, for it can move, and we can't, except the Spirit moves us. A spiritual man is spiritually activated, and can't move until the power reaches him. I know, for I have often tried it - and the scriptures declare it.

Back in the 1915 period the Baptist flourished here, with good church attendance, but we have devoured one another. In those days there were wagons and mules all over the place; the people were poor in this world's goods. I do not have to describe it to you, for you remember it. I suppose a man of our age has witnessed more changes in the space of seventy years, than any other men who ever lived on the globe.

I earnestly try to read and interpret the signs of the times, Elder Hewatt and I feel that the fulness of the Gentiles is at hand. We are looking for the glorious return of the Lord. None of us can draw an accurate blue-print of the future: the old prophets saw but dimly, but

there were those when Christ was born, who were in "great expectancy." Zacharias and Anna did not doubt. Let us who are blessed to be concerned over these things, count ourselves happy to be so exercised. We, I hope, look up, for our redemption draweth nigh. I believe we will see more and know more, and be given better light as time goes on.

If God should still my hand, this could be the last word I shall ever pen to you; and I want you to know my humble thanks for your remembrance of us; and though we may never meet again, we like to hope that we shall be enabled to dwell in the House of the Lord together, and forever. Hoping in God's mercy.

Your brother in this precious faith,
J. B. Dunagan

Collinsville, Va.

Dear Editors:

I am still enjoying the writings in the *Signs*, for they bring forth the truth so clearly, as it is in Jesus our Lord, and experienced by the children of God who now live, and was experienced by those that have passed on.

Elder Wood has made it very plain in the September issue, concerning the two religions in the world: one after the spirit of man that is in him; the other after the Spirit of God in those who are born of the Spirit.

I hear much said about bible schools. I remember when my oldest son went to school, the teacher wanted him to read a verse of scripture the next day. He asked me what verse to read; and I picked the 37th verse of the 6th chapter of John. After reading it at school, his teacher said to him, "You've had help." She did not ask him to read again. I hear much false doctrine preached over the radio. They often preach from the writings of Paul, but some of his writings to the churches they do not use, especially 2 Timothy 1: 8,9, "... be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according

to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is contrary to much that is being preached today.

In the 37th Psalm David speaks very comfortingly to the Lord's humble poor.

Yours in Christ,
Mattie Underwood

LETTER TO HIS MOTHER

Swansboro, N. C. 28584

Dear Editors:

If you ever have space available, and feel to do so, we would appreciate the inclosed letter and little poem be published and dedicated to our mother who is approaching her eighty-ninth birthday, and has been a faithful member of the Old Baptist Church since she was eighteen years of age. Also we would like to express our love and sympathy to all the old mothers in Israel who are afflicted and shutins in nursing homes, their own homes or the hospitals. May all the brethren be mindful of them and not neglect, but visit them often as possible.

Mother's name is Mrs. Noma A. Rhue. She still enjoys having the *Signs* read to her.

Yours in a precious hope,
Jabez J. Rhue.

Dear Mama;

Today, I have been thinking of you and all your children, your grandchildren and great grandchildren; and of course, my own. It has been somewhat dreary, having rained most all day. Have been wondering how Reginald would make out with his operation. I have had many thoughts to enter my mind and some of them make me sad, while others are reassuring. We fully realize that we are unable to take care of ourselves or our own. We do believe that the Lord is able, and has in the past kept and bless-

ed us until this good moment; and we are made to wonder what the future holds. We trust He will sustain us by his grace and keep us in the days to come. This is our hope.

Since you are approaching your four-score and eighteen years, and knowing how merciful the Lord has been to you in preserving your life in such a wonderful way, and knowing that we are prone to put things aside that we should do now, I thought that I would try to tell you now what a wonderful mother you are now, and have been to each of your children, and especially to me. I have wished so many times since Papa left us that I could be given the words to express my feelings toward him as I felt them, and that I could have done so while he was still with us.

Even now I cannot find words that truly express my thankfulness and appreciation for being blessed with such honorable, loving and attentive parents. Certainly we children should all be proud as well as thankful for your many, many hours and painful efforts to teach us what was right. Yes, your demands and discipline were very rigid we thought at the time, but now we know why. You loved us. "Bring your children up in the way that you would have them to go, and when they grow old they will not depart from it." This has been a wonderful lesson to me. We love you the more for it. I know that my shortcomings have been many. Many things I did should not have been done. So many things I should have done I failed to do. So many times it seems to me that I could have spoken a kind or encouraging word or done a little deed to have shown my appreciation to you both. I have failed in so many. I shall never be able to make good, but I wanted you to know that I remember very well how hard you and Papa worked through sweat and tears to provide for us children, caring for our needs when we were awake, and watching over us when we were asleep. All these and many more things you both did for us, too numerous for us to mention or find words to express.

I would not be satisfied if I failed to mention our relationship in the Church with you and Papa, and what a great source of pleasure and comfort this has meant to me. This I will never be able to express. No one can realize the great joy and comfort received in being permitted and blessed to take the communion with one's earthly parents, though unworthy, as we have been blessed to do when meeting around the communion table to commemorate the Lord's last supper with his disciples. We miss you so much at our meetings and the numerous occasions when you with Vilma and myself, would take our trips to visit other churches and the brethren far and near; and even in our earlier days when we took you and Papa to the churches. These are memories that I will always cherish.

Mama, I recall very vividly next Saturday two years ago when you Vilma and I visited Sister Cagle's church and went with her after services to spend the night, and what happened as you were lying down or retiring for the night when you fell and broke your hip, which left you helpless from then until now. These are some of the things that make me sad when my mind goes back to that sad event, but if it had to happen, where else could have been treated with more kindness and loving hands than with those people that you love so much. They in every way administered to your comfort and needs until you were on your way to the hospital. What amazing love his people have shown for you in visiting, preaching and writing, expressing their concern over your condition.

We are also mindful of the kindness received by you while in the hospitals by both doctors and nurses. It seems they all did everything they possibly could for you. I will always be very grateful to Kit, Eunice, Mildred and Naomi for nursing and trying to keep you comfortable. The other children have done the best that they could considering the distance they have to travel to visit you.

Above all, the good Lord has upheld you by his strength; and we are told in his written word that if we suffer with him, we also shall reign with him in glory. We do not know why you have had to suffer so much pain, but we are told again that the sufferings of this life are not to be compared with the joy we will have with him in the world to come. We are all in the hands of a just and merciful God and he does all things right. Our prayer would be for him to reconcile each of us to his holy will.

I am inclosing some words that I have written that I want to dedicate to the most wonderful mother a child ever had.

Jabez.

Mourning soul approach your God:
Our comforts he does restore;
On Calvary's cross he hung:
For redemption our sins he bore.

All the promises he made to us,
Based on his firm decree,
Will surely come to pass for
Poor sinners like you and me.

That grace we hold so dear,
Is through his darling Son:
His death for mortals was
For eternal salvation won.

Look no more to fallen men,
But on grace we shall rely:
No more on our self works -
Our blessings he does supply.

Once more we try to pray,
If it could be his will,
That he might bless us now
To look to him, - peace be still.

Peace and love we long to feel
Among his saints on earth below:
Mortals do not ascend so high
That he cannot bring them low.

When we are in that low estate,
We can hear our brother's sigh;
And then we have an humble hope
We shall dwell with Him on high.

When we can greet our brother
And in love extend our hand;
We feel he is among that number
Bound to reach that promised land.

No more restless nights, Mama dear.
And we will need no doctor's care,
But all be in that eternal home:
Humbly hope that I will be there.

Around that celestial throne sing
Everlasting songs to his praise,
There will be no long nights there
Nothing but eternal, joyful days.

A MARTYR FOR PREDESTINATION

Many martyrs have been condemned as heretics on many charges of heretical doctrines by the Roman Catholic authorities, among which was a denial of free will in divine things, and predestination. Early Lutheran martyrs were so charged, and it is well known that the Huguenot martyrs held firmly to the doctrines of grace, election, predestination, and a denial of free will in matters of grace.

But there is one man in history who was a martyr on the grounds of holding and teaching predestination, and on that ground alone he endured solitary confinement in a prison cell simply because he refused to recant and sign a moderate creed. This was before the Roman Catholic Church had reached the point that heretics were put to death.

This man was the monk Gottschalk who in the ninth century, stated, "As immutable God from the creation of the world by his grace immutably predestined all the elect to eternal life, so he also equally immutably predestined all the wicked, upon whom, on the Day of Judgment the divine punishment will be visited for their evil ways, to their merited eternal death." Rather than substract one iota from this creed, he endured imprisonment the rest of his life.

Few of his writings have been preserved, as his enemies destroyed them. One of the few preserved poems he composed show his experience and loneliness:

"What command dost thou give me, O infant
Boy,
What demand dost thou make, O infant Son,
That I am compelled to sing sweet songs,
That, exiled, I sail through a sea of wrongs?
O why should I sing to Thee?"

Gottschalk was born the son of a Saxon Count named Berno. The heathen Saxons had been conquered by the Franks, who demanded they submit to baptism, which the leaders resisted.

When Gottschalk was five years old his parents died and he was placed in the monastery of Fulda by his relatives, to receive his education. He was an heir to a fortune, so while a youth the head abbot forced him to become a monk so the monastery would get his entire inheritance.

When he became of age he left the monastery, stating he had received no divine call to be a monk, and that it was contrary to the laws of Charlemagne to force a man to be a monk against his will. He began a lone battle as a matter of principle to obtain his inheritance the monastery had robbed him of. A Council in Mainz in 828 ruled that he could not be forced to be a monk but that the monastery could keep his fortune. He appealed, and at the command of Louis the Pious the matter was ruled on by the synod of Worms, but the records about the matter from here on are lost.

The next record of Gottschalk finds him a monk in Obais. Here he proclaimed the doctrines of predestination and sovereign election. The monks rejected the truth, so Gottschalk left the monastery and went into northern Italy, where he preached to the people, and won many disciples who received the doctrines of entire grace; but the priests opposed him.

In 848 he appeared at the synod being held at Mainz where his doctrines were being discussed, and he confronted his opponents and defended predestination, but the synod rejected it, and he was declared a heretic. Next year he appeared at the synod a second time, prepared to defend his doctrines from the Bible, Augustine and the Fathers, but they refused to listen to him, beat him to the ground, and compelled him to cast his manuscripts into the flames. He was sentenced to prison.

At first he was permitted to write, so wrote in defence of his doctrine, and demanded justice, not mitigation of his sufferings out of pity. He offered to submit to trial by ordeal, being persuaded God would intervene to vindicate His truth. Then they forbade him to write

any more, and he endured solitary confinement for twenty years.

When the archbishop learned that Gottschalk was dying, he had a moderate confession of faith drawn up for him to sign, that he might die at peace with the church, but in the face of death, he refused to compromise. "I would sooner die a thousand times for the truth than submit to a lie," declared the dying martyr. Thus he left this vale of suffering, in the year 869.

Walter B. Branning,
29 West 5th Street, S.E.,
Lansdale, Pa. 19446

THERE ARE MANY THINGS
WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND

Rt. 1, Box 4,
Bivins, Texas 75555

Dear Elder Wood:

Enclosed is a check for subscription to the **Signs of the Times** for two years.

I hope the Lord will bring you and your wife our way again in the near future. We are wonderfully blessed to have good meetings at Pleasant Hope Church, with Elder Loyd Wall as our pastor; and also we are blessed to live near them, to visit and have wonderful discussions on the Scriptures. The Lord has blessed him with a deep understanding of those things.

I have some letters that I treasure that were written to us by Sister Buena Wright before she was killed almost two years ago. She was in the wreck, (about a week prior to the wreck in which she was killed,) in which I almost lost my life. Complications set up in which the doctors gave my husband no hope for about ten days; but the Lord was not ready for me to leave this world of suffering, trials and tribulations . . . I wish I could put on paper some of things that I experienced there, and also many things which have been revealed to me since I came home.

What I can't understand is why Sister Wright was taken and not me, when she

had so much to give, and I so little. Yet I know her blessed Saviour, whom she loved so very much, was ready for her to come home. I did not mean to get into all of this, but shall mail it anyway.

Give our love to your wife, and also to Elder and Sister Griffin.

An unworthy sister,
Annie Fowler

A NAMESAKE WRITES OF ELDER P. G. LESTER

Editors of the Signs:

My youngest daughter, who is a graduate student of North Western University of Michigan, writes of one whom I am his namesake. She found this information while doing research work connected with her studies, and wondered if I would not be interested.

I was interested, and wondered if the Household of Faith would be interested also. The Record is from the U. S. Congressional Directory and states:

"Posey Green Lester, a Representative from Virginia, was born near the Town of Floyd, Floyd County, Va. March 12, 1850; attended the common schools and the Jacksonville graded school at Floyd, Va. He was ordained a minister in the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church in 1886; resided in Floyd, Va. and traveled and preached in 21 states of the Union and in Ontario, Canada. He became an associate editor of Zion's Landmark, a church paper, published in Wilson, N. C., in 1883; and editor-in-chief in 1920.

He was elected as a Democrat to the 51st and 52nd Congress (March 4, 1899 - March 3, 1903.) He was not a candidate for renomination. Resuming his ministerial duties, he continued living at Floyd until 1921 when he moved to Roanoke, Va. and served as Pastor there until his death on February 9, 1929. Interment was in Evergreen Cemetery."

So ends the Congressional Record but much will be remembered by his many friends and associates. The Hymn and Tune book that bears his name, which

was jointly compiled by Elder Durand, is a credit to the Primitive Cause and should be in Primitive Baptist Churches everywhere.

Elder Lester visited in our home when I was a small boy, and I remember him very distinctively for he gave me a quarter. This was the first money that I ever remember owning. He said that he gave 25¢ to all his namesakes. This must have cost him plenty for there are Posies and Lesters all over the country.

I spell my name differently from what his is recorded but the pronunciation is the same, and I am thankful to be named after such a faithful Soldier of the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. May it be God's will to raise up others, men of stature like Elder Lester, to carry on in the tradition of our fathers; ever contending for the Faith which was once delivered to the saints of old.

May this record of Elder Lester be both an inspiration and comfort to all that read it.

With very best wishes to you Editors and to the Household of Faith, I am,

Yours in christian fellowship,
Elder P. E. Ingram

LETTERS TO ELDER AND SISTER RUSTON

Okanagan Centre, B. C.
Canada
August 24, 1966

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston:

We much enjoyed your letter to us, and have often thought and spoken of our pleasant visit with you both when we were in Ontario. Even a short time together with those of like faith refreshes us, especially after being in desert places so long.

There are several pieces that have been of interest to me in the August Signs. Just to mention one or two: Elder Wood's Sermon, June, 1966. I have often thought of that question: Do I only believe Old School Baptist doctrine because my parents believed? Then, too, the article by Elder Gilbert Beebe,

"What is Prayer?" I have so many times been troubled by the fact that I do not follow any set pattern in this regard. Of late years, I have felt all prayer is comprised in these words, "Thy will be done," and if we are led in this, what need is there in a multiplication of words? His promises are sure. It is perhaps a lack of faith which makes one tell God what he thinks God should do - for ourselves or our loved ones.

Anyway, when I read this article, I was arrested by the thought, truly "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform," for here I am receiving comfort in 1966, from something written over one hundred years ago; and I felt to thank our heavenly Father, who sent this comfort to me: for every good gift comes from Him, I know.

Thank you for telling us of Alex McCall's ordination. It seems so good that he was given to the church just at this time, to be a comfort to you and to them.

We were very sorry to hear of Flossie Bishop's illness. Hope she is improving from her stroke. Also hope your troublesome cough is better, and that Sister Ruston is in usual health.

Now I will close with the first line of the hymn you introduced to me in one of your letters: "Blest be the dear uniting love." With love in Christian fellowship to you both, from Jim and me.

Your sister in hope,
Annie M. Black

Okanagan Centre, B. C.
Canada
September 26, 1966

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston:

Thank you both for your much appreciated letter to us. We were both interested in hearing of your trip to the Lexington-Roxbury Association. How sweet and pleasant it is, as we read in the Bible, to hear of brethren dwelling together in unity. We can rejoice with those who are able to attend such meetings and feast on the preaching they hear. I am reminded sometimes, in hear-

ing so-called "sermons" on the radio, of the words, "The hungry sheep look up;" and they are not being fed.

It was good to hear of Brother Alex McCall's ordination. Someone asked me if we were related. I believe so; but the important thing to me is to know that we are related through our blessed Saviour, in ties that will never be broken, as all earthly ties must be. May God abundantly bless his ministry.

Now, in answer to your question regarding my last letter to you. Yes, you may certainly send on my letter to Elder and Sister Wood, if you see fit to do so; though I cannot think I wrote anything worthy of his honor. I remember thinking it was a poor attempt, but as it was the best I could do, I'd send it to you anyway.

Thank you for your dear message, Sister Esther, sharing your experience with us. You speak of the wonder that you were chosen to receive such mercy. This surely finds an echo in my heart. Sometimes I fear I must be mistaken - that I am taking promises meant for **His people** to myself; but I am sure that it is alone in Christ my Redeemer I can claim any knowledge of being one of his children. "The Lamb is all the glory, in my Immanuel's land."

With love in Christian bonds,

Yours sister in hope,
Annie Black

P. S. Tomorrow Jim will reach his 80th birthday. He seems so young it is hard to realize it. I am so thankful his health is good. I expect he will write before long, but I felt I'd like to send an answer to your letter this morning.

Rt. 1, Box 670,
Roanoke, Va.

Dear Friends in Christ:

I desire to write to the people I love, and love to be with, yet unable to be with them but little since I have no way to get to church very often.

I am writing of a few things I have seen; and I wish I knew what some of

them meant. I hope I understand some of them, but some of them I don't. Around fourteen years ago I saw a light at night rise up out of the east, and Jesus was in it. Then two or three years later, I saw a baby lying on my bed which I loved more than words could express. The baby was a few months old, and it sat up and started preaching like the Old Baptists preach when they are blessed to preach.

God gave me a son, David, who is nine years old. He loves to go to the Old Baptist Church, and will not go to Sunday school with others around here. My husband belongs to the Brethren Church, and our three daughters, (who were grown, and one of them married, when David was born,) were brought up in that church and joined it. But David will only go with me, and says that when he is older, he will take me to church.

I know the Old Baptists are talked about, and called a peculiar people; but to me they are the light of the world, and will be with Jesus, who is our light, in the world to come. He is our light and life, and I have a hope in him.

A few years ago I saw a large eagle in the sky, which seemed as large as a house; and its claws were open as if it were going to pick something up. Then I saw a large bird like a dove, and all around it were placed small doves in perfect order. I believe that Christ's coming for the church, is close at hand. But we know that only our Father knows the hour; as well as all things.

I wish it were so that I could go to church more often. We have moved to the country, so my husband could enjoy life more. He has a heart condition, and has been operated on twice for cancer, and has not been able to work for over two years. There are no Old Baptists around where we live now, and people are more against them here, I believe, than where we lived in Roanoke. We lived close to one in Roanoke for awhile. I have found out just lately just how people feel about Old Baptists, and I expect as time goes on, they will be considered less and less. It would be good

to live close to someone who believes like I do: that God is the same, yesterday, today and forever. In him we live, move and have our being.

The things I have seen and written of above, are things which have come to me at night in dreams.

A little one, I hope
Mrs. Margaret Gillispie

Danville, Virginia December, 1966

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Subscription price \$3 per year — \$5 two years

Published each month by

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Established 1832

Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

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

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

With this issue we bring to close another year in the publication of the **Signs of the Times** - the 134th consecutive year in which the Lord has sustained it among his people. It has been laden, as many of them write, with those things that cause them to rejoice as they are confirmed that their own exercises are similar to those of the brethren and sisters who write for its columns.

The consistent readers of the **Signs of the Times** are drawn towards those who

write, in a way no other method can do, short of personal contact while visiting with each other. When the Lord has taught one of his little ones, and brought him by birth into the spiritual family, that one finds that there is a bond with those of like precious faith, that is somewhat akin to children in a natural family, though far more wonderful and meaningful than anything that is in nature. He seeks the company of those of this faith whose speech is clear, and may be distinctly understood: those who can "frame to pronounce it (Shibboleth) right," (Judges 12:6) so there is no mistaking those who are brethren indeed.

Those of us who have the responsibility, under the blessings of God, of getting the paper together and sending it out each month, desire above all things else that the truth be maintained in its columns: so that the doctrine of the Lord our God shall shine forth from each page as clearly as we are enabled to present it. We know there is much we feel to have but little light on, but we are confident that what we have been taught, is in harmony with those things which remain unopened to our understanding; for these things can only explain and confirm other portions of the Scriptures.

No one should ever attempt to ignore or gloss over any part of the Word as it is written, as if any part may be set aside as unnecessary in presenting the whole truth. We cannot believe that there is such a thing as a half-truth," for such a thing would always be a "half-lie" at the same time. (Neither do we believe one is ever "almost persuaded," in spite of Herod's statement to Paul.) A little untruth, like a drop of kerosene in a barrel of flour, ruins the whole lot, and makes it unfit for human consumption. So, as far as we are concerned, unless all the doctrine is presented as all of grace, it is not fit to be set before the brethren in our columns.

Some years ago we began re-publishing articles each month under the heading of "Voices of the Past." We started

to do this in order that all of us could remain in touch with our heritage; and to show that we yet believe and rejoice in the same doctrine which has distinguished the **Signs** from its beginning. We are delighted to be in such company, and have no reservations in believing, writing or speaking such things: only desiring the grace of God that we may continue as long as we live.

We re-publish the original Prospectus on which the **Signs of the Times** was founded, as evidence that we remain upon these principles:

"Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the Signs of the Times, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. 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."
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect Only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. 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.
10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The Signs of the Times will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war on the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions."

We appreciate the continued support of the brethren and friends, for without your support and love of the cause, we could not continue. We wish that more of the brethren and friends would write for publication, and we urge those who hesitate to write, to send in their thoughts and experiences, so that we may have ample copy to fill our columns. We will publish what we can of them.

We would also appreciate it if the brethren, and especially the Elders, would mention the Signs to their congregations. Some do this and are helping to circulate the paper among those who desire to read it.

The year that is ending has brought many changes to all of us; but not outside of the will of God concerning each one of us. His grace has been sufficient; and whatever is in store for us in the year to come, we will not travel the road alone.

J.D.W.

EDITORIAL

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the

fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and

spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even

unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive, Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gos-

pel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's

life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

G. R.

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor. In the absence of a current writing, we are glad to republish it, with the feeling that our brethren will enjoy reading it. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Bucks Co., Pa., March 15, 1858.

Dear Brother Beebe:

I recently received a letter from brother Christopher Serch, of Md., requesting my views through the **Signs** on the following passage of scripture. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my veins be consumed within me."—Job 19: 25, 26, 27.

Brother Serch, I do not know that what I write upon this scripture will to you be worth the freight, although I find it much easier to communicate with

my tongue than with my pen. Yet such as I have, though it be but small, I freely give unto you. Perhaps some brethren have entertained the idea that Job was not brought into a knowledge of the true God and eternal life until the Lord spake to him out of the whirlwind, and they have probably come to this conclusion from what he says in the 42nd chap. and 5th vs. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee." But to me it is evident from the text, that at the time he uttered it, he was in possession of eternal life; for, says the Redeemer, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John 17: 2. Of a truth, Christ the glorious sun of righteousness, was never seen as the Redeemer of his people only by and in his own light, and his children are only seen as the excellent of the earth, when he shines out of them, just as the natural sun only by its own light is seen, and the smaller planets by the sun's rays acting upon them. Job expresses his faith in strong language, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth." The Apostle John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." The question may arise, how does he have the witness in himself? Because of faith, for faith is a fruit of the Spirit. Consequently this fruit is not found where the Tree of Life is not.

This servant of God looked to Christ as a whole and perfect Saviour. The one who possessed the legal right to redeem, having a claim upon them before they were sold into bondage; for they were the members of his body, and in his coming to save them, it is said by the Prophet, "He is just, and having salvation;" or according to the marginal reading, "He is just and saving himself." He would not only save his people from the curse of the law, by being made a curse himself, but he would ransom them from the power of the grave, and in so doing he would descend from heaven, with the voice of the Arch-angel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ

should be raised.

Having briefly noticed the 25th verse, I shall now come to the 26th, which, from what you have written, I conceive has presented some difficulties to your mind from the saying, "And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my **flesh** shall I see God." It has undoubtedly presented its difficulties to many of the children of God. While on the other hand those whose religion is of the flesh, have seized upon it to support the idea that heaven is only a place of carnal enjoyments, where parents and children, husbands and wives; brothers and sisters, were to meet and enjoy all fleshly relationship the same as now. Indeed, there is much to allure in this kind of fleshly religion, for the individual whose heart is at enmity against God, may be wrought upon by stimulating his mind with the prospect of self-gratification to make a profession of religion, and to attend to some of its outward forms for the sake of attaining to that in another world. Hence all those Ishmaelitic preachers, who under the magic power of Satan, are transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness, and of which the world is now flooded, are grasping every opportunity to work upon the carnal passions of the ungodly, by telling them that if they will only unite with their so-called church, and be liberal in their donations to support a board of mendicant preachers in affluence, that they will be sure of such a prize. This is but one of the many delusions put forth by the man of sin, "to cause them to believe a lie that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

But let us turn from these sickening views, "For flesh and blood doth not inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption!" When the question was put to Christ to know whose wife the woman should be, that had had seven husbands, he said, "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall arise from the dead,

they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven.”—Mark 12: 24-25. I think if you will examine the marginal reading of this text, you will find it divested of much of its difficulty, which reads thus, “And after I shall **awake**, though this body be destroyed, yet **out** of my flesh shall I see God.” You will bear in mind that our translators, in many cases, when the original text would admit, have given us a two-fold rendering; and as they were, so far as any evidence that I know of, only fleshly men, yet being learned in the various languages, they very naturally would place that rendering which was most consistent with their fleshly views in the text, and that which was the most contrary to their feelings in the margin. Hence, I think, the margin is generally the most definite, which says, “After I shall awake.” Job’s faith triumphed over death, notwithstanding his body should go down to the grave and become food for worms, and mingle with the earth from whence it was taken; yet his Redeemer being the God Almighty, who called the earth into existence, and made man from the dust thereof, would find no impediments in bringing up that body again from the grave, out of which he should see God.

This will lead to contemplation of the 27th verse, which also, in the marginal, is quite different, “Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not a stranger, though my veins be consumed within me.” Job, like all the fleshly family of Adam, was of the earth. “The first man Adam was of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” 1 Cor. 15: 47-48. Thus you will discover two different headships are brought to view and clearly stated by the Apostle. The one is from the earth, and every way fitted for the earth upon which he was placed and out of which he receives his sustenance until he returns to the ground from whence he was taken. This earthly man is a stranger to

God and godliness; the plan of salvation, as revealed in the scriptures, is only a stumbling-block and a system of foolishness unto him, notwithstanding he is only delighted with the earthly things, and would always remain here if he could, yet he knows he must die, and because of this he has been contriving a way to heaven; but he always begins to build upon the sand, such as resolving within himself to get religion, to hold on by a routine of duties. He supposes at the end or top of these duties is heaven, where he can enjoy himself in all his fleshly ties and emotions, consequently he expects to be rewarded for all his labor. This earthy man is called the old man; the other, the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and is said to be Christ in you the hope of glory.

And as Job had this hope in him, he must have been born of God. This birth is brought to view under a variety of expressions, such as receiving eternal life, the spirit of adoption, the holy Spirit of God, whereby we are saved unto the day of redemption, &c. Yet we are not to understand then, from that the Adamic man, (that which is born of the flesh,) in his nature has undergone any change. The form of words used by the pen of inspiration, as well as our experience, will not admit of this idea. For instance, adoption does not change the nature or the relation of the adopted; but it is “the taking and treating of a stranger as one’s own child.” So also in regard to sealing. The nature of the wax is in nowise changed by the seal being placed upon it. Yet the appearance of the wax is changed by the seal; because it yields to the seal and receives an impression from it. Paul, after he had received this sealing of the spirit, complains bitterly of the body of sin and death, saying, “Oh wretched man that I am.” Yet, like Job, his hope in Christ caused him to fully believe that he should be delivered. For, notwithstanding this earthly man was so wretched, yet he “bore in it the marks of the Lord Jesus.” As soon as the life of Christ was

implanted in him, a visible change in his appearance was manifest to all—the same feet that had run swift to shed blood, now ran in the way of Christ's commandments—the same tongue that was employed in cursing the Church of Christ, was now employed in sounding the name of that Jesus whom he had persecuted, far away among Gentiles as being all in all unto him. The same hand that had been employed in dragging men and women before the Jewish Sanhedrim that they might be punished, was now found laboring to provide things honest for himself in the sight of all men, and also in guiding the pen to write epistles of instruction and consolation to the saints. But after all this he keeps up a line of demarkation between the old Adamic man, which is born of the flesh, and the new man which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness—the one a heavenly child, the other a stranger to God.

But Job says in the text, according to the marginal reading, "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not a stranger, though my reins be consumed within me." This will lead us on to contemplate more fully the doctrine of the resurrection. Paul says in the 15th chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, "But some will say how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come forth? Thou fool that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every soul his own body."

From the foregoing testimony, and what follows in its connection, with other scriptures, I conceive the same identical body that is born of the flesh, born of Adam, and is a stranger by nature to all heavenly things, will be raised up from the dust of death. But in the resurrection it will be animated by that life which we have received in regeneration, or of the spirit of which saints are born of God. "For if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead,

dwelt in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. 8: 11. Consequently thou sowest not that which shall be. This body when sown in the earth is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption—it is sown in dishonor, and it is raised in glory—it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power—it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. It is destined to bear the likeness of Christ's glorious body. He in his incarnation, was the son of David, but in his resurrection from the dead was declared to be the son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness. Paul says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know him no more." "We shall all be changed." When the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch-angel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised. This I understand to be "the latter day," or the closing up of time. This voice had quickened Job into life—it had opened his blind eyes, unstopped his deaf ears. He recognized it as being all powerful in the beginning, as the Word—all powerful when made flesh to put away sin and conquer death, hell and the grave. All powerful in his reign as the King of Saints, and he would be no less powerful in his descent, for then should his voice rend the tomb, and bid his sleeping dust "awake," no more to be annoyed by Satan's malicious darts, for then the prince of this world would find nothing that could receive a pang from him. May not all who know, and by a lively faith can say this is my Redeemer, look to the auspicious moment, and say with the poet:

"How long, dear Savior, oh! how long,
Shall that bright hour delay?
Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day."

Thus, brother Serch, in commenting upon the text, I have endeavored to be governed by the scriptures, and as to our knowledge of each other in a future state, if we do know then, it will not be as we know here.

Brother Beebe, I submit the foregoing to you, and if you deem it proper you can give it a place in the **Signs**, according to brother Serch's request.

D. L. Harding

(Elder Harding was pastor of Southampton, Pa. church for a number of years. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MEMORIAL

ELDER E. D. GAFFORD
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
HONORAVILLE, ALABAMA

The Ebenezer Baptist Association of the Primitive Faith and Order while in its 129th annual session feels so keenly the loss of its highly esteemed and beloved brother and moderator, Elder E. D. Gafford; that we, the messengers, authorize the following obituary and tribute of respect recorded in our minutes to wit:

Since our last session God has seen fit to remove from us by death, Elder E. D. Gafford, who was wonderfully blessed to serve us efficiently through 44 annual sessions of this association. He was born November 12, 1897, on a farm in Crenshaw County, Alabama where he lived most of his life. He was married to Camilla Head on February 29, 1920. He was the father of four children. His wife and three children, Guy Walton, Darvey H., and Opal Gafford Daniel, survive to mourn his passing. Also, five grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends mourn his passing.

Brother Gafford united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Black Rock on his 24th birthday, November 12, 1921, and was baptized the next morning by Elder A. L. McVey in Cane Creek near Black Rock Church. The light of God's grace and love and the brilliance of God's great gift to Brother Gafford was made manifest immediately. He preached his first sermon in less than a month after he was baptized, December 10, 1921. It was in December at Black Rock that he preached his first sermon; it was in December at Black Rock that he preached his last sermon, 44 years later. He made a complete circle in his ministry.

He was ordained to the work of the ministry less than a year after his baptism, September 29, 1922. Elders B. J. Wilson, J. J. Richards, A. H. Williamson, and A. L. McVey formed the presbytery. His great gift of leadership was quickly recognized by his brethren electing him as moderator of Ebenezer Association just a few days after his or-

dination when it convened in October, 1922. Many churches called him as pastor. God blessed Elder Gafford to feed them with wisdom and understanding as well as to faithfully lead them in the old paths of truth and righteousness until God called him to depart this natural life. Elder Gafford preached his last sermon on the day of his death, December 12, 1965. His last text was the 23rd Psalm. One of his last quotations was: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

We recall that Elder Gafford used Hymn No. 364 in *Lloyd's Primitive Hymns* more often than any other in opening preaching service:

"Father, I stretch my hand to Thee,
No other help I know;
If Thou withdraw Thyself from me,
Ah! whither shall I go?

What did Thine only Son endure
Before I drew my breath!
What pain, what labor, to secure
My soul from endless death!

Author of faith, to Thee I lift
My weary longing eyes;
O let me now receive that gift,
My soul without it dies!

Surely Thou wilt not let me die;
O speak, and I shall live;
And here I will unwearied lie;
Till Thou Thy Spirit give."

Christ was first in his life. The business of Elder Gafford's life was PREACHING CHRIST. That which cheered Elder Gafford most was the PRESENCE OF CHRIST. The life of his life was the SPIRIT OF CHRIST. The power of his life was the LOVE OF CHRIST. The WILL OF CHRIST was the law of Elder Gafford's life. The GLORY OF CHRIST was the end of his life, because in his last statements, Elder Gafford focused the spotlight upon Christ being the Shepherd of His sheep.

His prayer, dependence, patience, faith, hope and humility was so prominent in his deportment that none questioned his sincerity. His love, gentleness, brotherly kindness and unselfish service to others made manifest the fruits of the Spirit. No one could move him from firmly standing on his deep convictions of the Sovereignty of God and the power of Jesus Christ to eternally save everyone for whom Jesus lived and died. We have known no one who was more blessed with the gift of oratorical eloquence in using beautiful phrases so fluently that his audiences respond-

ed with strict attention as though God was saying to them: "Hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." "Be still and know that I am God." He so keenly felt the controlling, ruling, and directing power of God that he would often say, "I am not late, I am never late; I am on God's scheduled time."

The great number of funerals he conducted proved that God had given him a special gift to console the bereaved. He said on many occasions while comforting the bereaved at funerals of men who left evidence of being born of the Spirit: "Our loss is his eternal gain." Elders Sam H. Dean, J. P. Morgan, Warren King and Yancey McCormick, who conducted Elder Gafford's funeral, confidently gave the same comforting thought.

We thank God from the depths of our innermost souls for having blessed this part of His vineyard with such heavenly gifts as were so effectively demonstrated in the walk, conversation and preaching of Elder E. D. Gafford. We shall see his face no more here, but may God bless us to use well the legacy we inherited through his influence which is more precious than silver and gold. We thank God for this treasure. He was a good citizen, loving husband and father, excellent pastor, and surely a faithful soldier in God's kingdom robed with Christ's righteousness tinged with the blood of Jesus which cleanseth.

His body lies in Black Rock Cemetery of the dead; his spirit is engulfed in the White Rock of Endless Ages in the City of the Eternal Living in Heaven. Amen.

Written by:
Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson Street
Winnsboro, Texas
Sister Eleanor Dixon
4070 Narrow Lane Road
Montgomery, Alabama

BROTHER
WILLIAM ROBERT (BOB) McLAMB

Brother McLamb was born in Harnett County, N. C. July 24, 1891, and departed this life July 18, 1966, at the age of nearly seventy-five years. He was the son of the late Jesse and Sister Melia Jane McLamb; and was married to Ida Webb of Harnett County April 21, 1912, who died December 19, 1945. To this union three children were born. In the year of 1947, July 21, he married Miss Mabel Reel of Pamlico County, N. C. He is survived by wife and two children: William Ralph, and Miss Alto Pearl McLamb, of Benson, N. C.; and by two grandchildren, two great grandchildren. Also by two sisters, Mrs. Irene Steuart and Mrs. Lillie Neighbors, both of Dunn, N. C.

Brother McLamb united with Liberty Church while in the hospital on February 25, 1966, and later was baptized in a bathtub in his home. He always been a Primitive Baptist believer. He was a prosperous retired farmer and merchant.

May God's blessings be upon his wife, children and grandchildren, and all who feel their great loss; yet we feel it is his eternal gain. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13)

His funeral was held at Liberty Church by his pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee, and his body was laid to rest in Bethsaida Church Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord, who will call his sleeping body to arise, together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him, and to see him and be satisfied forever.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference August 6, 1966.

James G. Young
Lovie Young
Eva Tadlock

NANNIE LOU BRYANT VIA

Nannie Lou Bryant Via was born March 19, 1901, and died June 19, 1965, making her stay on earth sixty-four years, three months. She was the daughter of John W. and Sarah Akers Bryant; and the wife of the late Jessie N. Via, they being married forty-four years and eight months. To their union were born ten children. She leaves to mourn, three sons: A. Neal Via and Jesse A. Via, of Collinsville, Va.; and Grant K., of Fieldale, Va.; six daughters: Mrs. Katie Johnson Lane, Mrs. H. D. Ingram, Mrs. Clinton Spencer, of Ferrum, Va.; Mrs. Bobby Hancock and Mrs. Glen Pickeral, Bassett, Va.; and Mrs. Herbert Roberts, Martinsville, Va. Also three brothers: Elisha, Floyd, and Stanton Bryant, of Fieldale; three sisters: Mrs. D. A. Turner and Mrs. H. A. Byrd, of Fieldale; and Mrs. G. F. Thompson, Bassett, Va.; and twenty-three grandchildren.

Sister Via joined Union Primitive Baptist Church May 23, 1959, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in June with her husband who joined the day before. She died in the Franklin Memorial Hospital after a week's illness. She was a devoted and loving wife and mother. She loved the church and was a faithful member. The brethren and friends were always welcome in her home; and she was loved by all who knew her.

Her funeral was conducted at Union Church by her pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder Amos Hash. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, (who preceded her in death about eleven months,) in the Via Cemetery beneath a mound of beau-

tiful flowers, to await the coming of the Lord.

May the Lord, who doeth all things well, reconcile the family and the church to His will. Written by one who loved her naturally, and I hope spiritually for Jesus' sake.

Rada L. Rakes

ALBERT COLEY COX

It has pleased our God to take from this life our beloved brother, Albert Coley Cox, on July 12, 1966, at the age of seventy-seven. He was born February 3, 1889; and was united in marriage to Sallie Bett Cox April 28, 1912, and to this union ten children were born. Two children and his beloved wife preceded him in death. He was again united in marriage to the former Maggie Minter February 14, 1964. Surviving are his wife of Reidsville, N. C. and six sons and two daughters: Lonnie, Alvis, Edgar and Malcolm, all of Reidsville, and Harold of Hopewell, and Bobby of Spray; Miss Beatrice Cox of Raleigh, and Mrs. Juanita Martin, of Greensboro. Surviving also are four half-brothers and one half-sister: George, of Greensboro; Robert and Johnny, of Ruffin, and Charlie of Reidsville; Mrs. Nannie Gregory, of Greensboro; eighteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Brother Cox was a native of Caswell County, N. C., and a retired farmer of the Harrison Crossroads Community, where he lived for many years. He was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the church October 22, 1939. He was a faithful member, and a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone.

We, the members of Dan River Church, would remind Sister Maggie and his children of the words spoken by the Apostle, "Sorrow not as those that have no hope," for Brother Cox died in the hope of eternal life; and we believe he is now asleep in Jesus, waiting for His second coming; when he, together with all the saints, shall come forth clothed in perfection, to see Him as he is, be like Him and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder David Spangler, and interment was in the church cemetery. May the grace of our God be with Sister Maggie and his children, to comfort and console them, is our prayer.

Written by order of the church.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk
By: J. B. Minter, Asst. Clerk

LEORA M. WILLIS

It has pleased our heavenly father to call from the walks of this life, Sister Leora M. Willis. Our dear sister was born in Webster

County, Mississippi, October 22, 1882, and was called from us in this life, June 18, 1966. She is survived by six children, twenty-four grandchildren and thirty-three great grandchildren. All of the children live in California. Son, J. C. Ivy, of Orland; daughters, Linda Vincent, Glendale; Nann Quinn, Fontana; Abbie Mitchell, Los Angeles; Earlene Hoan, Colton; and Lorene Wood, of Riverside.

Sister Willis asked for a home with the Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church at Compton, California, April 27, 1942, and was received by letter. She was always a faithful member and showed a love for her church. Her first membership was in Alabama in 1916. Sister Willis left on record an experience of Grace written by her in 1952. We hope it can be printed at a later date for the benefit of her brothers and sisters. Sister Willis was laid to rest in The Pomona Cemetery. Brother Austin Tipton spoke comforting words to the family and brethren in the absence of her pastor, Elder T. R. Jefferson. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings."

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

HOWARD MOSES LEE

Brother Howard Moses Lee was born January 18, 1910, and died May 7, 1966, making his stay on earth more than fifty-six years.

He joined Mingo Primitive Baptist Church December 18, 1934, and was faithful until death. Brother Lee and I were boys together, being reared not far apart. He was of good moral character from his youth up. He was a good friend and brother, and thoughtful of my welfare and that of the church. We will all miss him very much. Brother Lee is survived by his wife, one daughter, four brothers and three sisters.

His funeral was held at Hatcher, Skinner and Drew Funeral Home by Elder W. D. Godwin and Elder W. E. Thurner; and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

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

Done by order of Mingo Church in conference Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1966.

Elder W. D. Godwin
Sister K. Belle Lee
Sister Hattie Bass
Committee