

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1971

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THANKS THE EDITORS
AND WRITERS

14778 Springdale Ave., Rt. 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44052

Dear Editors of the *Signs*, the dear writers, and all who love the truth:

I feel this morning that I want to write and thank the Editors and writers of the wonderful messages of God's grace, for the joy that their efforts bring to the hungry child of God. I so much want to hear from you, and desire to hear the dear ministers of the true gospel of Jesus Christ, more than I have the privilege to hear.

I much enjoyed Elder Bocock's message on The Wisdom of God. Brethren write on! I detest the doctrine that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall. God knew when he put Adam and Eve in the Garden they would partake of the forbidden fruit; otherwise he would not have put it there. And furthermore, if they had not sinned we would not be here. God's purpose to send His Son and our Saviour into the world, to redeem those He had chosen in Christ *before the world was*, would have failed: which could not fail, because God, being all wise, *makes no mistakes*.

Oh, when we can see Jesus high and lifted up, then we know we have been quickened by God's Holy Spirit: for dead sinners do not see Jesus as their

Redeemer. Therefore, as God's word says, The preaching of the gospel is foolishness unto them that perish; but unto us that are saved, it is the power of God.

I hear them sing, "Were you there when they nailed Him to the cross?" Yes, I hope so. I thank God that Jesus Christ, I hope, was nailed to the cross for me. If not, I feel I would not have a hope, nor a witness within that He died for me, and arose for my justification. It makes me want to shout, just sitting here thinking of God's grace and what Jesus suffered for me. Can you dear ones rejoice with me? Then you too, no doubt, have wrestled with a man all night, until the breaking of the day, as Jacob did, or until light and understanding lifted your heavy load; and sent you on your way rejoicing. And we thank God that we will rejoice until He calls us home.

It has been sixty-two years now since they broke the ice in Clinch River in East Tennessee, to baptize my sister, Mrs. Ben Fields, and several more and me. Oh how sweet the hour when I first believed! and it gets sweeter as the years go by.

Yes, Brother Bocock, God knew we would sin when he put Adam in the Garden of Eden; and, thank God, He did not have to experiment on a cure, — try this and try that, to see what would cure the sins of his people. But thank God, he had a remedy, a sure cure, before the disease struck. It was a 100 per cent cure, and not one of his chosen subjects will be lost. Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me," and none of them would be cast out.

Write on, ye faithful of the Lord. Pray for me and Mrs. Thomas, as she

has been sick and not able to do very much. Ask God to heal her, if it is his will. In bonds of love, and in hope of eternal life.

Claude Thomas

P. S.: Here is \$10.00. Renew my subscription for one year, and if the following is not getting the *Signs*, send it to her for one year . . . If she is, keep the balance to help some needy child of God. Thank you, and may God richly bless you all is my prayer. With love.

Claude and Mary Thomas

MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH LETTER
TO THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY
ASSOCIATION

To the sister churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

We thank God for sparing us to meet at another association. It is good for the brethren to meet together, for where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:20) This was certainly evident at our last association. Though we were few in number with only three Elders, a wonderful evidence of God's love and abounding grace was felt.

How did it all begin? That we cannot answer. It is not needful for us to know. We have the scriptures to tell us all we need to know. It says in Romans chapter 8 verses 29 thru 31, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us." In Ephesians 1:4 Paul

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

God created the world in six days and rested the seventh. He is all powerful, all wise and everywhere present. How he could do this is beyond man's understanding, but not God's. It was God who created the family. He created man and said it is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helpmeet for him. (Genesis 2:18)

God, being all wise, knew the downfall of man: that sin would come about. He, therefore, determined the way of salvation for the elect of God. It was God's good pleasure to lay out the way through his son Jesus Christ. God set the time for Christ to come into the world. Jesus came and did the work of salvation for the elect of God, and returned to the right hand of God to intercede for His people. (John 17:4)

God was the master builder. He was all in all. God laid out the blueprint of the universe. He calculated the weights of the planets. God knew how many grains of sand by the seashore. God made up the formula for the liquids and gases of the earth. He put the proper chemicals in the earth to give the proper diet for man and animals to survive. God was the master electrical engineer, creating the electrical forces which we use today.

God was the master designer. He laid out everything in detail so that they would work harmoniously together. God put the planets in their proper orbit so that their paths would not interfere with each other. The 38th and 39th chapter of Job wonderfully substantiates all of God's work. The sun and moon all orbit to give us our seasons.

God was the master craftsman. He made all things that were made. God was able to bring into existence things which were never before.

God, before it all began elected a people, and engineered all that this elect people would ever need for their physical needs right on through to their

eternal salvation.

God, the master designer, laid out a blueprint of how it all should be. God, the master builder, brought all this into existence for His edification and glory. God then caused a record to be made of all this from beginning to end in His Word, the Bible.

Our pastor, Elder Amasa J. Slauson of Kingston, New York, meets with us on months of the year having 5th Sundays when the Lord so wills.

Our membership stands at three.

Done on behalf of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church.

Written by
Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger
Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk

AN ARTICLE TAKEN FROM
THE "SPIRITUAL LAW COUNSEL"
OF SEPTEMBER, 1911

(By the late Elder Asa D. Shortt)

Dear Brethren:

By request I will try to write an article for your paper.

The twelve Apostles are the antitype of the twelve Patriarchs, so these Patriarchs are the great grandsons of Abraham, the grandsons of Isaac, the sons of Jacob, except Manasseh and Ephraim who were the sons of Joseph. These two sons represented Joseph, their father. It seems to me that Abraham represents the Father, Isaac represents the Son, and Jacob represents the Holy Ghost. The Father sent his Son into the world to do his will, and in order to do the Father's will he had to choose the twelve Apostles who are the antitype of the Patriarchs. While the Son was on earth he gave the Apostles power to preach and cast out devils; but when the Son was crucified they had to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and they

were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This was to qualify them to preach the gospel to every creature. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." So unbelief is the damning sin. It was said to Abraham in blessing. "I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee." So Jacob had to bless his sons severally as God would have them blessed, and these blessings in a sense were natural blessings, but wonderfully portrayed spiritual blessings.

When Jacob blessed Judah he embraces the Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus told the Apostles that if he went not away the comforter would not come, "but if I go I will send him and he shall take of mine and show it unto you." These blessings of Jacob to his sons wonderfully represent the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles. Then they went everywhere that God directed and preached the gospel to both Jew and Gentile, and established the militant kingdom here on earth, and this is the reason it is said, "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The apostles were spoken of first, though the prophets were manifested first, so the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. So the testimony of apostles as well as the prophets is the word of God and will stand forever.

The testimony of the prophets pointed to the coming of Jesus, and the testimony of the apostles was for the establishing the fact that Jesus had come and had been crucified and rose the third day. And in about forty days he ascended up on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 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; even to this day the ministry is for the establishing of the church in the doctrine and practice of the apostles. If we would confine ourselves to

the Scriptures in preaching, it would be so much better for the church. When we fail to do this it is the duty of the church to call our attention to it.

While the pastor has the over sight of the flock, the church is the judge in Zion. The preacher should watch over the church for good, and the church should watch over their pastor. When this is the case there will be harmony between pastor and church. When this is the case the church will love her pastor, and the pastor will not only love the church, but will be her servant. It is said, "We are your servants for Jesus' sake." While Jesus was Lord of all, he was servant of all. Where love exists it will bind together, also it will hide a multitude of sins. When we are possessed with love we will not be finding fault one with another. May it be God's will to give us more of his grace that we might serve him with reverence and Godly fear.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Asa D. Shortt
Floyd, Va.

(Submitted by Elder Shortt's grandson, Wilson A. Shortt, of Roanoke, Va.)

5840 Court O. C. P.
Birmingham, Ala. 35228

Dear Brother Spangler,

On this month's issue of the *Signs* I noticed it is time to renew my subscription, so am enclosing check to pay for another year.

Irene and I were sorry we couldn't be with you for Elder Poole's ordination. We had hoped up to the last to be with you, then one of the members of one of the churches I serve passed away and I was called to conduct her funeral on the Saturday I was to leave.

I have talked with Elder Poole's wife by phone since the ordination and they plan to be with us at our association the third week in September.

I am always happy when I see the

Lord's people renounce the teachings of the world, and come to the Old Baptists. This makes us know that the Holy Spirit is yet working in the hearts of God's people to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, and to see the fulfillment of the scripture spoken so long ago by David, that a seed should serve him, and that it would be accounted to the Lord for a generation. (Psalm 18-30) I'm glad it wasn't to be generations, for there is but one generation of our Lord, there is none lost by death as is the case with our father Adam. We all in Adam have the sentence of death pronounced upon us. For in Adam all die, but in Christ all are made alive.

From the very outset we find that man's pilgrimage here was to be temporary, the first commandment that God gave man was to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. From that time forward man has proven that in nature this is the only command of God that he in nature has been able to comply with, none of the commands respecting the spiritual nature of God is he able to keep. This only comes after he has been made a new creature in Christ Jesus our Lord, then the law of God becomes a joy rather than a burden; and we rejoice in the law of the Lord after the inner man. It would be wonderful if we could so completely subdue the outer man that we could do away with all his influence in our life, but so long as we live in this world I'm sure we will be plagued with his presences with us.

The covenant that David wrote about, as he represented Christ, was a covenant ordered in all things, and sure. It was made not to grow, and I don't believe it will diminish either.

Irene and I appreciate your invitation for us to come to your meeting so much, and hope before too much longer we will be able to visit you and the brethren in your section again. We would welcome another visit with us any time you can come our way.

Yours in bonds of love and fellowship,

Claude and Irene Hand

A BIRTHDAY GIFT

323 E. Commerce
Mangum, Okla. 73554

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing a check for \$4.00 for one year subscription to the *Signs* for Bob Champean, 803 W. Brooks, Norman, Okla. — a birthday gift from an aunt. The late Elder W. N. Green was my father . . . Bob is a grandson of my father, and recently joined our little band of believers in Altus, Okla. He came to the church asking for a home with these not very popular people, saying that he felt very deeply and sincerely that God had revealed himself to him, and by His marvelous grace he had been made to believe and love this sweet doctrine. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."

My hope is that I was included among those the Father gave the Son: knowing that our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came and lived, suffered and died for those the Father gave him. He did not fail! "What wonderous love is this, Oh my soul?"

May God bless each of you to continue the *Signs*, and hold fast to the wonderful Truth.

In hope of God's mercy,
Willie (Green) Smith

HEARS FROM BRETHREN
THROUGH THE *SIGNS*

209 Taylor Road
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus:

I greatly rejoice in hearing from you through the *Signs*. It is very uplifting to the children of God who have been born of His Spirit.

Those who say that God wants people to be saved, but they won't let him, are denying the words of God and the power of God; and dishonor the Father and the Son. Those that say that Christ died to redeem his people and they may still be lost, do not believe in Christ; and are therefore unbelievers. They do not have the words of Christ, much less keep them.

I heard this preached over the radio by those claiming to be the church of Christ; and who also said that people who were not baptized would be eternally lost. I do not agree with this. Many have the name without the Spirit of Christ, and are false idol worshippers of the unbelieving world. These have not the laws written in their hearts and minds.

"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:16) We read in Ephesians 4:4, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism." "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity."

I have enjoyed the August issue of the *Signs of the Times*. I think it should be read and considered by all of its readers.

With love and best wishes.

Sincerely,
Mattie Underwood

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Bear Grass Church, Martin County, N. C. the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The Meeting House is located on State Road 1001 in Bear Grass, N. C. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

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

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will convene with the church at Malmaison the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971.

We invite our brethren and friends and especially our Elders of this area.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union is to be held, the Lord willing, at Healthy Plains Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1971.

The Meeting House is located about five miles southeast of Bailey, N. C. on Highway 58. Everyone cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Union Clerk

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the Original White Oak Union is appointed to be held with North East Church, Onslow County, fifth Saturday and Sunday in January 1971.

The church is located about five miles east of Jacksonville, North Carolina on paved road No. 1406.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
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(To October 1, 1970)**

Mrs. John W. Hawley, Va.	\$ 1.00
Dezzie Casey, N. J.	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.	1.00
Mrs. Mamie Aldridge, N. C.	3.00
Sam Dean, Ala.	5.00
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J. N. Darnell, Ky.	3.00
G. Wilmer Ensor, Md.	3.00
Mrs. Wesley Campbell, Can.	1.00
Mrs. C. H. Elliott, Va.	1.00
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Danville, Virginia January, 1971

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Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause
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R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
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EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

(Jude 1:3)

EDITORIAL

It is again time to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another year, and another volume of the *Signs of the Times*. In doing so we are mindful of our frailties and our dependence upon the giver of every good and perfect gift; and to acknowledge that it has been by His goodness and mercy that we have been sustained and have received all things needful for our natural existence. We trust that we are thankful for all these things — and much more, for He has enabled us to know our sinfulness, weakness and mortality, — which He has subjected in hope.

God's mercy and longsuffering is the most sublime theme with which we can ever be engaged; and more especially when we know that He was the one that "began a good work in us" and will continue to perform it until the day of our redemption. What an amazing condescension that God is mindful of sinners at all, and that He deals with those of whom it is testified that He "chose in his Son before the world began," and makes them acquainted through "experiences" with the fact of life that they were dead in trespasses and sins and were in bondage and condemned, without any ability to redeem themselves; and then reveals his mercy unto them. It is so true that we love him because he first loved us!

God's mercy is nowhere in his Word promised to any except those who were chosen in his Son before the world began; and of these Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me."

The Apostle Paul expressed his predicament when he said, "I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died." Meaning that he once felt his own strength and ability for righteousness, but when the commandment was applied in him by the Spirit's work, it brought an end (or death) to his boasted righteousness. So is every person

"alive" in his feelings of strength and ability in so called spiritual things, even while they are dead in trespasses and sins — which condition we have sometimes heard expressed, "So dead they don't know it."

And it is while in this dead condition that the Lord's people are quickened by the Spirit of God to know their condition, otherwise they would never know of their existing state and inability to recover themselves. This is a portion of the way the Lord deals with His own in bringing them to the New Birth of the Spirit, and manifestly bringing them into His kingdom to receive the Spirit of Adoption, sealing them with the holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, which is the adoption, the redemption of their bodies.

We have given quite briefly the difference in the faith of the Lord's people after they have been born of the Spirit, and those who are "alive while yet dead" in trespasses and sins: the one brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Son of God, and the other remaining as they were in their darkness.

We leave this matter here, with the feeling that those who have been born again recognize their own experience in what we have written. These things are not merely theories, but are realities to those taught of God, being revelations from Him, as testified by the brethren in their writings in the Scriptures; and by every other person born of the Spirit.

Many people do not believe that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God; but we have never heard of one denying them who has evidence of having been born again. And there is abundant reason why they do not. They have the same experimental evidence in themselves that the writers of the Scriptures had; and this is sufficient for each one of them, as much so as it was for Saul of Tarsus when he was brought to the knowledge of the truth.

The Spirit teaches all of His people the same thing, and they have fellowship one for the other.

The Apostle John wrote, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John 5:10) And he wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) Then notice this by John, "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." (1 John 2:21)

When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And Paul wrote to the Galatians in the same manner, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

All these testimonies were evidences of the quickening and the birth of the Spirit; and as these things come by the Spirit only, John wrote, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." (1 John 2:20) That is, you know all things pertaining to life and godliness by the teaching received from God, and not from man. These are things which we and the writers confess, and are why there is fellowship for each other — whether some lived a thousand years ago or are known to each other personally.

It is because they are born of the Spirit that they have faith, which is a fruit of the Spirit, and believe all things written by their inspired brethren and deny none of them, ". . . in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16)

Who among those "that have obtained

like precious faith" with the Apostle can read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and not agree with him that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," so that all things written set before us a vast panorama of God's work from the beginning: Including the creation of the heaven and the earth and the fullness of them; the formation of man from the dust of the ground; God's purpose in the entrance of sin into the world, and the promise that the seed of the woman (as the Redeemer) should bruise the head of the serpent; the choice of Abraham and his seed through Isaac, as typical of the elect who should be redeemed; the sacrificial worship pointing to the one great sacrifice; the coming of Jesus into the world, showing that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; the fulfilling by Jesus of all things written in the law and prophets; the crucifixion of Jesus, and his resurrection and ascension into heaven; the promise of his coming again; the preaching of the gospel by the Lord's servants; gathering out of the world all that are His and giving them hope in Jesus as their anchorage while they live, with grace sufficient for their every need; and then the completion of God's purpose as He has revealed, which is the adoption of the redeemed into the family of God, by the redemption of their bodies from the ravages of mortality and conforming them to the glorified image of the Son of God in fully preparing them for all that He has prepared for them.

With the beautiful and complete revelation by the Father in his Word, and its manifestation in him, who can deny the inspiration of the Word of God?

Let men deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, or any portion of them, or change the express wording and meaning to suit their own natural inclinations, which a great majority do, God's word and purposes are unchangeable and nothing shall turn him aside, for even men and devils who deny him are completely in His hands.

We recently heard a group singing, "The whole wide world is in His hands." We do not know how many believed what they were singing, but it is true that everything in the whole wide world is in His hands. May we be given grace in these troubled times to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; and to stand aloof from things spoken of by Paul in the third chapter of second Timothy. We feel that we shall never hear of any Primitive or Old School Baptists taking part or approving of demonstrations, marches, etc. for such would not be worthy of the name.

We pray that the Lord will continue to enable us to bring the *Signs of the Times* to you, laden with the same doctrine and experiences as in the past; and that the brethren and friends will be mindful that their support is needed in writings, subscriptions, etc. May God be with each of you in the New Year to comfort you in tribulations, confirm your hope, and give you peace and joy in assembling yourselves together to his praise, honor and glory.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

EDIFICATION

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Romans 14:9)

This being the beginning of a new year as well as the twenty-fifth anniversary of tenure on the SIGNS EDITORIAL STAFF, and in accordance to my *Salutatory* January, 1946: I am impressed to write upon the subject of *Edification*. The last paragraph of my salutatory was as follows:

"May I say in concluding my remarks, that it is not my purpose to read or write critically to find fault — but for edification. May each of us be blessed to edification instead of criticism. May God keep this periodical hewing close to its original prospectus

and from heresy."

I have heretofore written on the subject, *Peace*: I shall now proceed with *Edification*.

An *edifice* is a completed building. *Edify* is translated from a word which means: *to build up*. Edification is the act of edifying, the state of being edified, moral improvement or benefit. The spiritual application of edification signifies the advancing, improving, adorning, and comforting the mind. When one is blessed to rightly divide the word of truth, stimulate the desire to know more of the goodness and mercy of God, and to answer perplexing questions which confuse minds, people are built up and edified. We are edified when we are blessed to spiritually engage in prayer, preaching, writing, conversing, reading the Scriptures, examining our own status, meditating, hearing the Gospel, attending church meetings, and participating in the ordinances of the Church. We cannot edify others spiritually unless we engage in spiritual conversations prompted by love, faith, and hope. In order to edify others we must possess the God-given qualities of humility, forgiveness, forbearance, and meekness. We must be possessed with the desire to promote the happiness of them with whom we associate. Would it be proper for us to try to prove to them whom we consider weak in the faith that we are stronger? We find the answer to this question in Romans 15:1-3, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

The Holy Ghost reasoned through the writings of Paul upon the command, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." (Romans 14:1) Striving over words of none effect but to the subverting of the hearers, is contrary to edification. It would be contrary to edification to

contend that a person has no faith because of being weak in the faith. Paul enumerates a number of conscientious differences of opinions among believers in the 14th Chapter of Romans. He reasons that God is the one Who received them and is able to make them stand. He makes it plain that we are not to judge another's servant. We are not to wage wars on differences of opinions. Our right role is to follow after the things which make for *peace*, and to *edify* another. The God of personal religious convictions and different experiences blesses each to joy in his own convictions but it is self-egotism that causes one to condemn others whose experiences and convictions are different. Self-pleasing always inflicts injuries and misery upon others. Others bear our infirmities when they sacrifice to be sympathetic to us, speak to us with pleasing voices, and have smiles for us. These things edify the weak in the faith. We are not to yield to one another simply because another wishes us to yield, but our object should be in yielding to manifest spiritual benevolence for other's good. When my neighbor sees that I am unselfish in yielding to his selfishness, it will speak louder and clearer to him than thousands of words containing plain statement and firm reasoning. Bearing the reproaches of them, who through their infirmities bring reproach even upon the church, will do more to correct their errors, supply their deficiency, and lend strength to their feebleness, — than to accuse the weak of their infirmities.

Sometimes in these accusations we offend the little ones. Christ reasons that it is better that a millstone be put upon our neck and that we be cast into the sea than to offend one of these little ones.

It is better that the strong in faith bear the reproaches of the infirmities of the weak in faith than to condemn them. Christ bore our reproaches, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Stronger brethren ought to bear the

reproaches of weaker brethren. We wish to better clarify our position on bearing the infirmities of the weak by relating a true story of a certain high school football team. The coach of this team for several years was a man who was proud and arrogant. Every time this team failed to win a game, the coach would snarl and scold them because of their weaknesses. The team knew they were weaker than the opposing team because they were defeated. He drove them as slaves and punished them because they did not win. Through these years they muchly dreaded to come into contact with the coach. The result was that the team's morale subsided. They were influenced by his manner to greatly fear the coach.

This tense condition caused by fear of the coach accounted for their defeat by many teams. At last a new coach was employed. He startled the team by beginning the "work-outs" and skirmishes by calling the squad together for prayer. The demeanor of the new coach was so different that the players did not work as hard as heretofore because the new coach did not rule them with severity. The first scheduled game was played and this team was badly defeated. They went into the "dug-out" immediately after the game expecting a firm lecture because they played so badly. They felt to deserve it. The team was greatly surprised when the coach said, "I do not blame you for not winning. I blame myself for your bad plays. If I had coached you properly, you would have played better. It is my fault. I assume the blame for this defeat." What an impact these statements made upon each and every member of the squad! This inspired them to love and highly respect their coach. They were no longer driven and influenced by slavish fear. Love and respect inspired them to pay close attention to their coach's instructions and suggestions. This coach and team have been improving since then and seldom ever lose a game. They have won the admiration and respect of their opponents and

fans.

You may say, I agree with the principle but how does it apply in practice? Jesus edified the Pharisees even in their weakness when they complained and murmured and accused Him of receiving, eating, and drinking with sinners and publicans. Read the 15th chapter of Luke. Jesus spoke in parables showing the difference between the Pharisees and Scribes on one hand and sinners and publicans on the other. In the first parable the ninety-nine sheep represented the Pharisees and Scribes; the one lost sheep represented the sinners and publicans. His second parable classes the Pharisees and Scribes as the nine pieces of silver while the one piece that was lost represented the sinners and publicans. The younger son in the third parable represented the sinners and publicans, the elder son represented the Pharisees and Scribes. Jesus recognized these murmurers and accusers as being already in the fold of sheep; already as pieces of silver in the right place; and as the son who had been at home. This kind of edification will turn murmuring into rejoicing.

I want you to note that Jesus did not hint that their murmuring and accusations against Him proved them to be goats. He shows in the parable of the father and two sons that even though the elder son pouted and complained at the good treatment the younger received, his father was kind and gentle toward his elder son. Listen at the kind words of the father as he answers the angry words of his eldest son: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this, thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." The proverb: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1) surely was effectually used by this loving and merciful father. Soft, tender, loving answers to complaining, wrathful, and accusing statements turn away

wrath. No doubt the kind, loving, and encouraging words of the father made the son to feel at home and to accord with the judgment of the father that he should rejoice instead of being jealous.

Let us look for a moment upon the father's expression, "This, thy brother, was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." He was dead to the enjoyments, happiness, and unity abounding in his father's house. He had strayed from the communion, association, fellowship, and presence of his family. There is a difference between *existing* and *living*. I have heard many precious souls exclaim while engaging in spiritual fellowship, "This is my life!" There is rejoicing in the whole church when a little lamb is brought before it and received into its fellowship! What a joy it is to live in unison with God's humble poor in church capacity!! The elect of God are the family of God and none of them shall be eternally lost. No sheep shall ever be turned into a goat. A wolf may be in sheep's clothing. A sheep may look and act like a goat. Only God knows the difference.

God governs this world. He governs each and every one of us to the extent of the depths of our souls. True religion is so personal and individualistic that in a mysterious sense it is, *God and I*. I must not misuse spiritual gifts in questioning God concerning what He will have this man, or any other man to do. I trust it is the Holy Ghost conscience that tells me that I have been commissioned to follow God. I am not to inquire into what the Lord will have others to do. My concern should always be, what wilt thou have me to do? Read John 21:20-22. Jesus said to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? *Follow thou me.*"

We trust it will be edifying to deal prayerfully with the first two verses of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children: and walk in Love as Christ

also loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." The manner in which we are to follow God is, "as dear children." A little child sees his father walking and making footprints in the sand. The child attempts to walk in his father's footsteps. He plants his little feet in the first step. His eyes behold his father's next footprint. He stretches out his little legs but cannot step so far. However, the child follows after his father's steps but must make his own print a few times before reaching the next step of his father. We are like this little boy. Even though we follow God and Christ Jesus we take so many carnal steps.

Jesus Christ made giant steps, that we are unable to make. Yet, we are to follow Him in love, making as long strides as His grace permits. Christ took great strides in walking in love, Christ leaps from Heaven to the virgin's womb. He leaps from the earth to Heaven. We may not follow Christ in all things but we are to follow Him in love. Paul says, "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." (2 Cor. 8:12) We cannot follow God either in His wisdom, knowledge, power, or might. This He reserves unto Himself. We cannot be God. When Adam contended to be like God in knowledge, he was cast out of paradise. When King Nebuchadnezzar was so arrogant to be like God in power, he was cast out of his kingdom. God is not to be imitated in His finger of His miracles, nor in the arm of His power, nor in the brain of His wisdom, nor in the face of His majesty, but in the *bowels* of His mercy: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, *bowels* of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Colossians 3:12) *Bowels* mean the inward parts. There is an outer and inner man.

As I read Col. 3:12, I am reminded of the death of Elder W. C. King, who was pastor of Bush Harbor Church near Burlington, N. C. His characteristics of being merciful, kind, humble, meek, forbearing, and forgiving; all were so evident in his walk, conversation, and preaching, that the easiest thing brethren ever did was to love and adore him. Yea, it was easy for those people who did not agree with what he preached to esteem and highly respect him. It seems that Elder King was blessed always to edify. He was blessed to build up all those with whom he came in contact. He humbled himself before his brethren: therefore his brethren exalted him. His death had more impact upon me than any other death that occurred during last year. He was blessed to follow Jesus in meekness, lowliness, and love.

Many things perplex, confuse, and cause us to question the reason why. The great cyclone that caused hundreds of thousands to die in East Pakistan the latter part of last year was shocking to millions of people. Some of us may think that this act of Providence was because they were worse than we. Some of us may think that we are His elect; therefore, we should not fear His judgments. Read the first five verses of Luke, 13th chapter. We will readily see that the reason we do not perish is because our Lord is better to us in gracing us space for repentance. Jezebel was given space for repentance but she repented not. (Rev. 2:21) Jesus said, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Lord, enable us to realize and appreciate Thy forbearance!)

I believe that the calamities which befall others are ordained by God to the edification of His people. Such things are to teach us the necessity of repenting from wrong doing and to pray to God to enable us to walk godly in this present world. When we have learned to see in ourselves the bitter root of sin, we shall learn to acknowledge that whatever deadly fruit it bears in another, it might have borne the

same or worse, under like circumstances in ourselves.

When the *Signs of the Times* entered the homes of the Baptists in 1832 its editor fought against Arminianism, unscriptural organizations, and unscriptural practices of the churches. Many Baptists held these views of Arminius at that time. The purpose of the editor must have had great success. Now, I do not know any Primitive or Old School Baptist Church who hold to the doctrine Arminius advocated. Elder Beebe did not fight against distribution of Bibles but against The Bible Society as being church-sponsored. The fight was not against the discussion of the Scriptures in the churches under the leadership of ordained elders, but against separate organizations of Sunday Schools. He emphasized but one necessary Scriptural organization. These churches which are scriptural have but one head, lawgiver, commander, and judge. This one is the Lord Jesus Christ. *Signs of the Times* is itself a tract: therefore the editor was against the formation of tract societies — not against the distribution of tracts. Editors of the *Signs* yet speak against sin, but not the sinner.

Many changes have come since the beginning of this periodical. Many Old School Baptist churches that once flourished are now no more. Many places which were garden spots for Grace Baptists seem to be barren. Yet it is edifying to know that the vineyards of the Lord have been planted elsewhere. We who are blessed to live in these environments of God's spiritual favors should hold fast our profession lest we should find ourselves dwelling in a barren land. When history proves that the initiation of some new practice and the abandonment of other practices or theories cause confusion, divisions, and strife; other churches should profit by the mistakes made by others. Let us strive for unity and peace. Let us cease from striving over words, phrases, and statements which would tend to bring confusion.

When I entered the *Signs* staff twenty-five years ago, Elder Dodson was its editor and owner. Elder Vaughn was the senior associate editor. Both of them have passed from time into eternity. Elder Griffin and I have changed our place of residence. Elder Dodson gave the paper to the Primitive Baptists and it was incorporated and a board of trustees was formed, according to the information I have. I am glad that the present editors do not wage wars or enter into debates and wranglings but devote their time and efforts in positively preaching and writing the simple Bible Truth. They are blessed to contend earnestly for the truth once delivered to the saints. May God grant that our foremost object will be to preach the truth. The preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified will never divide God's humble poor. Satan is the tool in God's hand who causes our enemies to put up bars declaring non-fellowship for those who manifest humility. Satan will run from humility.

Time demands that I close. I do so by wishing for each and every one of you a happy and prosperous 1971.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT IS FAITH?

Webster defines the word as signifying "Belief; assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence." And what he denominates *Evangelical faith, justifying and saving faith*, he says is the "assent of the mind to the truth of Divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart." And this definition is established by the colleges and universities of our country generally, and endorsed by all Arminians and legalists everywhere. But the definition of the term

as used in the scriptures, as defined by the inspired apostles, differs very widely from the popularly received definitions of men. The apostle John speaks of it as a child from heaven, born of God, and inspired with heavenly life, and triumphing over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world: even our faith." That faith which is the creature of the carnal mind of man, the mere assent of the judgment of our fleshly mind, although cordially received and confidently relied upon, is but, at best, a creature of our own, born of the flesh, and can no more overcome the world, than can the flesh itself; because no stream can rise above its fountain.

Differing then, in parentage and birth as widely as the distance between earth and heaven, these two kinds of faith have no vital relationship with each other. The faith produced by the convictions of our natural judgment, however cordially assented to or endorsed by the will of man, is nevertheless a child of earth, which, could it overcome the world, would overcome itself, as it is an element of the world. But that faith which is of God, and in God, is the faith of the Son of God; and the Lord Jesus Christ is himself the Author and the finisher of it. This is the faith of God's elect. By it, all the saints are distinguished from the world, as none can possess it unless they be born of God, and as without it no man can please God.

We do not understand that the birth of faith is distinct from the birth of the saints; but an element of the new, heavenly and spiritual birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God. That birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and, therefore, unlike the flesh, which is grass, and the goodness thereof, which is the flower of grass, for they must wither and fall away; but the word of the Lord, the source, fountain and origin of true

faith, liveth and abideth forever. This true and living faith is, then, an element of the heaven-born child of God, and only by it can we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil; only by it can we approach the throne of grace, draw nigh unto God, or cry Aba Father. For he that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and the belief in God's being and perfections is the act of vital faith.

This heaven-begotten and heaven-born faith, is *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*. It is more than a shadow; for a shadow is not the substance of anything; though shadows do prove the existence of substances which cast them, and to some extent may portray the outline or shape of the substance of which they are the shadows, yet they have no substance in themselves. Thus in the ceremonial law, the meats, drinks, sabbath days and new moons, were the shadow of good things to come; but the body, or substance, is Christ. And as the faith of the gospel is the faith of Jesus Christ, and as the righteousness which alone can justify us before God, is by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us, so it must be a substance, in distinction from all shadows, passions or exercises of the natural mind, or energies of unrenewed men. The christian's faith and hope are inseparably associated, and must operate together in the spiritual exercises of the saints while in their pilgrimage state. Faith is not the substance of hope, but it is the substance of things hoped for, by the christian. The things hoped for by the new man are spiritual, heavenly and eternal, for it enters within the veil, and is fixed on things which are not seen by the natural perceptions of men.

Nothing short of the faith of the Son of God can make real, or give substance to, the things thus hoped for. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered 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; and all the revelations of the spirit to us are made to our faith. Hypocrites may hope, but their hope shall perish; for it is ideal, having no substance. But the hope of the christian is a reality, and faith points to Christ as the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof, and gives reality to the things hoped for; and until hope shall yield to fruition, it is the substance of the things hoped for, as well as the evidence of things not seen; of eternal things, which are imperceptible to the eye or intelligence of unregenerated men. "While," says Paul, "we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." We could not hope, in a gospel sense, for spiritual and eternal things which are not seen, if faith did not present them; hence faith is the substance on which hope is sustained, and just in proportion to the development of faith in us, will be the steadfastness of our hope, so far as christian experience is concerned.

When our faith is not in manifest exercise in our hearts, our hope flags, and we approach the borders of despair, and in great anxiety cry out, My hope is perished from the Lord! But the renewed manifestation of our faith, obtaining victory over the world, says, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. The faith that is born of God will lay hold of and endorse no other doctrine than that of God our Saviour, it will point out no other path for the saints to walk in but that which Christ has marked out by his precepts and examples, and it will admit as genuine no other experience than that which is led by the Spirit of God. And while all other kinds of faith may be attainable by the powers of the flesh, and when attained, can join affinity with other kinds of faith, that of

which we speak can only come from God, and never can be known or felt by any while in an unquickened state, and when implanted in the heart, will not amalgamate with the faith of men nor of devils.

Another peculiarity of this faith is that it will endure trials of the greatest severity, and God has ordained that it shall be tried. All the sore afflictions, tribulations, persecutions and temptations to which the saints of God are subject, are designed for the trial of our faith, and when it shall be sufficiently tried, they who possess it shall come forth as gold, purified and refined, the power of faith shall be known by all the saints, in its victories over the world, the flesh and the devil. It shall triumph over death, and vanquish the gloom and terror of the grave. As in times past it has quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, caused the saints to wax valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women receiving their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection. Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins, and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. And what shall we more say? for time would fail to tell of Gideon, of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets.

This invincible, almighty faith by which all these victories were gained, is directly ascribed, in this very connection, to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Author and the Finisher of it. Into the unity of this faith all the saints of God thus far developed have come; and into it all the redeemed of the Lord shall ultimately be brought; for, There is one faith, even as there is one Lord, one baptism, one God and

Father of all, one body, one spirit and one hope of our calling.

Having briefly treated on the nature, the origin, the peculiarities, the power and vitality of this faith, and labored to discriminate between it and all other kinds of faith, we will close by enquiring whether we, dear brethren, are in possession of it, and by pointing out some of the reliable evidences of its existence in our hearts.

The apostle has said, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." How important is this investigation; in nothing can we be more deeply interested. Without this faith, we may please men, we may gain the applause of the world, we may gratify the lusts of our carnal nature; but without it we cannot please God. In its absence we cannot know God, nor approach him. Only by it can we rest upon the provisions and gracious promises of the gospel, find access to the throne of grace, understand the truth, endure the trials of the way, quench the fiery darts of Satan, overcome the world, have communion with God, fellowship with his saints, or finally pass the chilling terrors of death and the grave without fear or dread. What are the evidences of its existence in our hearts? Of the many which God has graciously given, we can at this time only mention a few:

First. The faith of the Son of God in our hearts is always associated with hope and charity. Now abideth Faith, Hope and Charity, these three. If, then, we have the faith, just as its power is manifested in us, to the same extent will our hope be established in God, and our charity, or love, flow to God and to all who bear his image. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts will center in God as its Author and source, in his people, his truth, his government, his laws, his ordinances, and all the privileges of his church.

Second. Having this faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, or, in other words, are reconciled to God, rejoice that he is God, that he has all power in heaven and in

earth; that he reigns supreme over all beings, all worlds, and all events, that he has numbered the hairs of our head, and will not suffer one of them to fall unbidden of him to the ground.

Third. If we have this faith, we shall learn by experience that we cannot control it, exercise or enlarge it; but on the contrary, it will assuredly control, exercise and govern us.

Fourth. Having this faith, we shall assuredly also have doubts, fears, trials, temptations and great conflicts with the world, the flesh and Satan, for our faith must be tried, that its power may be understood and appreciated.

Fifth. If our faith be of the operation of God, it will give us such views of the perfections, power and majesty of God, that we shall abhor ourselves, in dust and ashes, while we admire, gaze and wonder at the amazing power and grace displayed in our salvation.

Sixth. This faith will lead us to trust alone in God, for our eternal salvation, and for the salvation of all his redeemed family, while it will effectually destroy in us all confidence in the flesh. The more we know of God, by faith, the greater will be our confidence to resign our present interests and our eternal destiny to his hands, and beg that we may not be left to be filled like Ephraim, with our own ways.

In proportion as we feel the reigning power of this faith in our hearts, we shall be ready, willing and anxious to honor, praise, revere, obey and glorify God. It will lead us to love the assembling of the saints, to frequent the house of prayer, to pray for the prosperity of Zion, and to follow after those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. And under its power each of its recipients will be led to esteem others better than himself, And although we may feel poor, and weak, and altogether unworthy of a place or name among the children of God, we shall feel an irresistible drawing of heart and soul to be

in their company and fellowship.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 15, 1860.)

“THE MISSING DAY”

On May 1 Bob Gooding answered a “Contact 8” request on Channel 8 News that prompted hundreds of viewers to request a copy of a script entitled “The Missing Day.” Mrs. Donald Maples asked “Contact 8” why an article such as the one she included with her request never made news on television or the larger newspapers. Mrs. Maples’ text impressed Bob Gooding to such an extent that he decided to read it and gave appropriate credits and thanks to the Duncanville, Plainview, Longview and Post newspapers.

It concerns a missing day in time discovered and related by Harold Hill, president of the Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore, Maryland and a consultant in the space program. Mr. Hill stated that he thought one of the most amazing things that God has for us today happened to our astronauts and space scientists at Green Belt, Maryland. They were trying to determine the position of the sun, moon and planets 100 years and 1,000 years from now. In order to do this they had to plot the orbits through past centuries.

They ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and suddenly it came to a halt. The computer signaled that there was something wrong either with the information fed into it or with the results compared to the standards. They called in the service department to check it out and found nothing technically wrong. The computer still came up with the same discrepancy . . . a day was missing in space in elapsed time. The scientists were dumfounded. There was no answer.

One of the team remembered a reference to the sun standing still in the Bible. Upon checking, they found in the Book of Joshua a pretty “ridiculous” statement for anybody who has “common sense.” According to the Scripture, Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy and if darkness fell they would overpower him, so Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still. “So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hastened not to go down about a whole day.” (Joshua 10:13). There was the missing day!

They checked the computers going back to the time it was written and found it was close but not close enough. The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua’s day was 23 hours and 20 minutes . . . not a whole day. They again read the passage and there it said, “about (approximately) a whole day.” This still did not account for the other missing

40 minutes. The 40 minutes had to be found because in projecting spacial orbits it would be multiplied many times over.

Again the man remembered somewhere in the Bible that it said the sun went backwards. In 2nd Kings, Chapter 20, Hezekiah, on his deathbed, was visited by the prophet Isaiah who told him that he was not going to die. Hezekiah did not believe him and asked for a sign as proof. Isaiah said, “. . . shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?” Hezekiah replied, “It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.” (2 Kings 20:9-10) Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes!

Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in 2nd Kings make the missing twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the logbook as being the missing day in the universe.

(The above most interesting account was submitted to us for publication by a subscriber. Bible skeptics may yet have to submit as scientific discoveries are made.

We give appropriate credits and thanks to all mentioned above and to WFAA, Channel 8, Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas. — Editors)

OBITUARIES

SALLY ANN EVANS

Our dearly beloved sister, Sally Ann Evans, a member of Pittman’s Grove Church near Kenly, N. C., fell asleep in Jesus May 4, 1970. She was born January 5, 1883; and was married the 5th Sunday in August, 1902 to J. T. Evans. To this union were born eight children: five boys and three girls. Her husband was also a faithful member of Pittman’s Grove Church, having united the 2nd Sunday in August, 1926, and was baptized that day with his wife who had united with the church the previous day. Brother Evans preceded her to the grave on March 27, 1946.

Sister Evans was a very faithful member in attendance, and her life was a living example of her profession. We all keenly miss her presence. Her faith and hope rested on the crucifixion of Jesus. Our sympathy goes out to her family and the church.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, the writer of this sketch; and she was laid to rest in the Pittman’s Grove Cemetery beside her husband.

Done by request of the church and family.

W. E. Turner

WRIGHT BRYAN

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved brother, Wright Bryan. He was born July 6,

1891, and died August 16, 1970.

He was received into the fellowship of Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church, of Duplin County, N. C., May 14, 1961, and remained a faithful member as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and loved the church and people in general.

Brother Bryan is survived by his faithful companion, Sister Annie Raynor Bryan; one daughter: Sister Lila Bryan Andrews; two sons: Vernie Bryan and Harrel Bryan. Also eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder L. L. Yopp, and Elder Harmon Brown at Sand Hill Church; and he was laid to rest in the Cedar Fork Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

It was resolved that a copy of this be sent to the family; one to be recorded in the Church Book, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Committee:
John L. Houston
Lloyd Kennedy
Brantley Kennedy

NANNIE LOU EVANS

Sister Nannie Lou Evans was born September 28, 1911, and passed away June 27, 1970. She was the daughter of William and Sarah Meadows Duke.

She was married to Willie K. Evans January 20, 1930; and to this union ten children were born: Willie Lou Cole, Stem, N. C.; Naomi Lee Brogden, Oxford, N. C.; Sarah Duke Newton, Butner, N. C.; Edith Dale Ramsey, Stem, N. C.; John William, Nelson Brent, Roy Lee, of Stem, and Willie Evans, Jr., Durham, N. C.; Elsie Lee Overby, Stem, N. C.; Eunice Estelle Hudson and Emma Mae Duke, Stem, N. C.

Sister Evans united with J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 9, 1969, and proved a faithful member, filling her seat in a wheel chair.

Her funeral was conducted June 28, 1970 by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Elder Wallis Smith. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery. The flowers were many and beautiful — a token of the esteem in which she was held.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Memorial be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of conference the second

Saturday in July, 1970.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

ANNIE LOUISE McCOLL BLACK

My dear wife was born at Winnipeg, Canada, on September 12, 1895, and died quite suddenly in our home at Okanagan Centre, British Columbia, on July 16, 1970, following a series of strokes which started November 3, 1969, — also many years of suffering from arthritis. She was the youngest of nine children born to Brother Ebenezer McColl, and was a granddaughter of Elder William L. Beebe. Sister Annie was baptized in April, 1910, by Elder S. H. Durand at Southampton, Pa., while only 14 years of age.

We were married at Winnipeg, Manitoba, on March 28, 1917; and of our five children four survive at this time: Flora Leslie (Mrs. George Snowdon), of Okanagan Centre, B. C.; Gilbert Duncan Black, St. Thomas, Ontario; Muriel Elisabeth (Betty) (Mrs. Lloyd Blackman), of Regina, Saskatchewan; and William Theodore Black (Ted) of Loveland, Colorado. Our oldest son, Lieutenant James Wallace Black, was killed in Italy May 30, 1944, while serving in the second World War. She is also survived by her oldest brother, Brother Gilbert Beebe McColl, of Winnepeg, Manitoba; fourteen grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and three step great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held from The Towers Funeral Home, St. Thomas, Ontario, on July 21st to the Covenanted Old School Baptist Church at Dunwich, Ontario, where services were conducted by Elder George Ruston and Elder D. Alex McColl, who also conducted the graveside services at the McColl Cemetery at Eagle, Ontario, where she was buried close to her father and mother, and a sister and brother, there to await the glorious return of her beloved Lord and Saviour.

She was carried to her resting place by two sons, Duncan Black and Theodore Black; two grandsons, James Black and Christopher Black; and two cousins, Samuel McColl and Fergus McColl.

All glory and praise to our Almighty God and Father who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will.

Her bereaved and lonely husband,
James W. Black

(Brother James Black has asked us to add a little to this obituary. His wife, Annie, was a dear sister in Jesus Christ, and although we have laid away her bodily remains, we believe her spirit has gone to heaven, and is

rejoicing in being with Jesus Christ her Saviour.

Esther Ruston)

W. D. ADKINS

Brother W. D. Adkins, a very dear member of Rocky Swamp Church, North Carolina, passed away in March, 1970. I knew him all my life, and have always called him "Mr. Adkins." We miss him so much at church, for he was faithful as long as he was able to attend. He was so good in helping to keep the building and yard in good shape, always sending plenty of help to do the work. At one time he gave our little church three nice chairs, but someone broke in and took them. We could replace the chairs but they did not mean the same.

Brother Adkins is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Naomi Harris, Mrs. Ethel Craddock, Mrs. Marie Berry, and Mrs. Mary Nance; and by three sons: Lonnie, Rufus, and Julius. Also by several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Their dear mother passed away in March, 1963. She was a faithful member also. We miss them both, but have a sweet hope that they are at rest with God, whom they loved.

Written by one who remembers them always,

Mrs. J. L. Smith
Littleton, N. C.

CHURCH NOTICES

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

J. J. COLLINS, Pastor

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

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

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

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

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

Sulligent, Alabama.

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

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

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

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

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

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

C. C. HAND, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

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

and Saturday before.

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

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas (about ¾ mile off Hy. 167, and located near Barnes Lumber Co.) meets each third Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

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

EULIE McCOOL, Pastor
Steens, Miss.

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

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

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

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

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

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

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

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

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

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
C. C. HAND, Asst. Pastor
G. E. RAGSDALE, 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

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

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

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

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

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

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

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

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

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

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 A. M. All visitors are welcome.

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

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

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

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

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

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

All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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

D. B. STOKES, Pastor

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

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

D. B. STOKES, Pastor

NINA PEARSON, Clerk

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

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

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

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor

ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

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

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; 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 FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor

967 Maxey, Memphis

C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor

807 Pope St., Memphis

RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

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

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor

967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.

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

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

JOHN WILDER, Moderator

N. E. LAY, Clerk

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

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor

IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

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

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

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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

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

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

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

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor

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

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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

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

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

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

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

LLOYD WALL, Pastor
GUY SISK, Clerk

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

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

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

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
Eldorado, Arkansas

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

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

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

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

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

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

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

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville, Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

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

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

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

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
MRS. WM. L. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

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

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 7:30 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome. No Saturday meetings during winter months.

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

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

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

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

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1971

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/70
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED THE ASSOCIATIONS

1231 Pecan,
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Editors,

We have been blessed with joys beyond measure at Associations this year. I have attended the South Arkansas, South Ouchita, Sulphur Fork, and Pleasant Valley Associations. We thank God for the visiting Elders, who traveled many miles to be with us all in the meetings. God blessed the Elders to preach, by one power, in one Spirit, one doctrine that is revealed by the Holy Spirit. These things are beautiful to the children of God, blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear the joyful sound, and a heart to understand.

I pray that the Lord will keep us humble and peace may continue in the Church. We know not our path, but have a blessed hope in the One with all power, all wisdom, the One who never learns, never needs to learn anything, for He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. To measure the work of God would be to limit His power. Since none of His works are measurable by man, may He bless us to declare what has been revealed to us.

I am sending a check for one year's subscription. Please send the **Signs** to Mr. and Mrs. Marlin R. Hibbs, 2309 Raymond, Pasadena, Texas.

May God continue to bless you in

publishing the **Signs**. May he bless the writers with grace to stand firm, bringing the Gospel. May we be blessed to receive. Yes, we shall receive all that lays in store for us. The Lord is the author and finisher of our faith. This author wrote a book called the Lamb's book of Life. Yes, this author is God, the Father. God the Son redeemed all that was chosen. God the Holy Spirit brings to life all that have been redeemed. God the Holy Spirit comforts His children from time to time while living here, according to the will of God. He has promised to never leave or forsake us. He that has begun a good work in us shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. All His works are good. All good works are His. Charge the sin and shortcomings to my flesh.

I hope a brother,
Earl W. Hall

FEELS UNWORTHY

P. O. Box 9134
Springhill, W. Va. 25309

Dear Brethren:

I see that my subscription expires with this issue, so am sending money order for one year; the remainder to be used as needed.

Dear Brethren, I know within myself I am not worthy to call you brethren, but I hope in the precious Lord Jesus is my fitness. Sometimes I am made to feel that I am not fit to be in their company, and I desire to be at their feet at all times, for if one of them the least of all. The blessed God has been gracious to me all the years of my life, and why, I am not able to understand - only that it seemed good in His sight. If a child

of the most high God, surely the most disobedient of all. The poet wrote, "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

I have never met any of the Editors, but it seems I have always known you; and, if not deceived. I love you all, and all the writers in the *Signs*. I love to read the writings for they tell my experience better than I can. So I enjoy the *Signs very much*. The love I feel for you brethren I hope is the love of God shed abroad in my very soul.

Yours in hope of eternal life.
Elder John J. Smith, Sr.

WRITTEN UNTO THOSE OF LIKE FAITH

"For by grace are you saved, through faith and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

Simon Peter begins his second Epistle like this: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:1)

A much quoted, but sometimes misquoted, passage of scripture is recorded in 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Was the apostle throwing this out to the world, or was he writing it to those whom he addresses at the beginning of this epistle? It goes without saying that he was writing this only to those that he addressed in the beginning: "Them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." It is not possible to make the saying of the apostle to mean anything else.

We find in the beginning of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews that it reads: "Now faith is the substance of

things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Doesn't it stand to reason that if you have faith you will receive something that you hope for, you must have evidence you will receive it. We find recorded in this chapter that several of the old prophets accomplished seemingly impossible things, and were made to see and understand other things that God himself did.

The writer begins chapter twelve by saying, "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about 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, 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."

Since faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, we must have the evidence that we will receive that substance or we have no faith.

The Apostle Paul in pleading his case before Agrippa, related his experience on the road to Damascus: "And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who are thou Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto you for this purpose: to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee: to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." There are many instances of this faith which is in Jesus:

He being the author and finisher of our faith if we have any. It is seen in this 18th verse of the 26th chapter of Acts: "That they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in me." This was Jesus speaking, which shows where faith comes from, since He is the author and finisher of our faith.

It is noted also that Jesus said, "Sanctified by faith in me." It takes a power above the person being sanctified, to do the sanctifying. In this case it was the faith that was in Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 10:1, we see that the writer, after enumerating the various things that were done under the law, says, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." So Jesus Christ by offering himself a sacrifice and the ransom price, has by His one offering perfected them forever that are sanctified. It takes faith to believe in Jesus — and He has to supply that faith.

My faith gets very low sometimes, and my hope almost vanishes, but there are times when it is so great that I would not trade it for the world and the fullness thereof. I am getting up in age and am afflicted with arthritis, and there are days I just can't work as I would like to. I haven't given up and do not want to as long as I can work at all. I realize, as Paul told Timothy, that the time of my departure is not far off. I cannot say with the assurance that Paul did, that I have fought a good fight, and have kept the faith, but I have a hope that there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give at that day; and not to me only but unto all them that love his appearing.

Dear Editors of the Signs, I am sending this to you to do with as you see fit. If there is anything in it that will be of any comfort to the readers, you

may publish it.

(Elder) J. A. Tew,
Rt. 7, Box 287
Dothan, Ala. 36301

**"GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY
THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST
WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT
AND IN TRUTH."**

(JOHN 4:24)

These words of Jesus have been in my mind for some time and I feel to write something about them, but unless the Lord guides my mind and gives me a better understanding than I seem to have, nothing of interest or benefit to His little ones will be the result.

Much could be written about the incident at Jacob's well if we should cover it fully. It was not by chance that Jesus was there — "And He must needs go through Samaria." (John 4:4) We see in his presence at the well, two types or kinds of water. In Him, "The Living Water" which he told the woman of in 4:10. In the well, the natural or earthly water. In Him that Spiritual Living Water that never loses its taste or becomes stagnant, nor can it be contaminated by, or mixed with, any earthly elements as to change it's state or lessen its power or good to God's elect. The source from which this Living Water emanates is GOD ALMIGHTY and it will never cease flowing as long as time on this earth continues. We see that those that used that water from the well, had to draw or bring it up by their own strength, and as Jesus said in verse 13, "Whosoever drinketh of this water (the water from the well) shall thirst again." We see that this Living water does not have to be obtained through the effort or action of mankind, for He said, "But whosoever drinketh of the *water that I shall give him* shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." It was to be *given* by Him, and was, and is to be continuous, not needing to be replenished.

In the woman at the well, we see represented the worldly unregenerated multitudes, who know nothing of the Living Water, and neither do they know that their minds, their innermost secrets, are known to God, — an open book, as-it-were. She had a form of worship, yet she was a very sinful person for she told Jesus a lie, saying — verse 17 — “I have no husband,” when she had had five husbands, Jesus told her, “Ye worship ye know not what,” and this is the state of the multitudes all about us today who have all kinds and forms of worship, too numerous to detail here.

We come to 4:23 where Jesus said, “But the hour cometh, *and now is*, when the true worshippers shall “*worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*” After Jesus had, we believe, revealed Himself to the woman, telling her He was the Christ (verse 26) she hurriedly went into the City and said to the men, “Come, see a man, which told me all the things I ever did: *Is not this the Christ?*” This seems strong evidence that she had been brought into *the spirit and the truth*. Then many of the Samaritans believed on Him, and they “Besought Him that He would tarry with them; and He abode there two days.” (verses 40 and 41) “And many more believed because of His own word.” They then knew that he was *the Christ*, the Saviour.

Now when Jesus said, “*God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth,*” He established the fact that unless the Father is worshipped *in spirit and in truth*, those worshipping Him otherwise, do so to no avail. How true this has proven throughout the ages since He spoke those words. The Lord’s elect can look about them, everywhere on the face of the earth, and see what goes on. The worldly churches can be found real often, openly castigating and criticizing these churches, even their own, for their lack of effectual spiritual worship and failure to Chris-

tianize the world. Before me is an official publication (or portion thereof) of one of the larger denominations, stating that in 1969 their U. S. members contributed a record \$133,730,777. This was under date of April 20, 1970. Also before me is a clipping from our local daily paper, dated May 16, 1970, and carrying the statements of two high heads — high officials — of this same denomination, on their departure to attend a big conclave of their denomination in Chicago. One said, “Lack of commitment and capitulation to gross materialism have reduced both *our* will to serve and our capacity for authentic witness to the Christian Gospel.” The other said, “Disunity, prejudice, fear, divisions between groups and generations, distrust and spiritual apathy and confusion abound among *us.*” Since they say “*our*” and “*us*” they refer to their own denomination, and apparently they went to the big conclave to try to remedy such a sad situation. This is strong criteria and not unlike other things seen in the Press, on TV, and heard over the Radio at intervals.

Now let us get down deeper into the meaning of the words of Jesus, examining each salient word separately.

First: — “God is a *spirit*,” which we know to be a supernatural being, invisible, without beginning or ending, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and Holy. Matthew 3:16 tells of “The Spirit of God, descending like a Dove and lighting upon Jesus.”

Romans 15:19 shows Paul witnessed “Mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.” Many other scriptures tell of wondrous signs such as Jeremiah 10:2 — “. . . And be not dismayed at the signs of heaven.” All those who have been “quickenened” by the power of the Holy Spirit can witness to the mysterious and effective manner in which it works.

Second: — We have the word *they* — “*they* that worship Him”; and it denotes a people separated in a specific group from the multitudes of worldly

unregenerated mankind, and they can be none other than those John wrote of in John 1:13 — “Which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, BUT OF GOD.”

Third: — The word “*must*” as used by Jesus means just what it implies, otherwise he would have said “They should” or “They ought to” or “They might,” He said they *must* worship Him, and so it is and so it will be as long as humankind is on this earth.

Fourth: — The shortest word in the text, “*in*” denotes that those worshipping Him are within, or inside of, or totally enveloped by that Spirit. This rules out any effectual Spiritual worship of God by anyone whom God has not quickened by His Spirit, regardless of how strong their desire, their natural spirit of worship and of what great means they resort to as individuals or as groups, large or small, poor or rich, in modest edifices or in great temples and synagogues costing much money.

It seems, too, that the Lord’s elect, are actually unable to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth during a time when He has, for his own design and purpose, withdrawn Himself from them temporarily. Such as was the case with King Nebuchadnezzar, told of in Daniel 4:31-35, when he was driven from among men and was among the beasts of the field, when a voice from Heaven said, “O, King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the Kingdom is departed from thee.” Read how he fared during this spell of time until “Mine understanding returned to me and I blessed the most High and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever,” etc. Also when Peter was left to himself, — void of the presence of the Holy Spirit within him, and swore that he did not know Jesus, etc.; and later went out and wept bitterly, when he was again brought to his senses by the return of the Spirit. And how about David when he was void of the Spirit and committed that terribly sinful act with Uriah’s wife, and had him put into battle unto his

certain death?

Fifth: — Again we come to the word “*spirit*” which appears twice in the text. It has a somewhat different meaning this last time, for we are treating with the effects of the Holy Spirit in man, as-it-were, in the worshipping of the Divine Being, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We do know that those possessed of the Holy Spirit, and not just of the natural spirit of man to worship, do worship Him in the same Spirit of which He consists. We see in Acts 20:22 that Paul said, “I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem,” etc. In I Cor. 14:2, Paul wrote, — “. . . Howbeit in the Spirit, he speaketh mysteries.” In Rev. 1:10 John wrote, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day,” etc. Thus we see that only the Lord’s elect people speak, act and worship in the Spirit, and they are accomplishing much. Ezekiel 13:3: “Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit and have seen nothing.”

Sixth: — Now to the last salient word “*truth*”: “They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in *truth*.” Here it seems clear that Jesus brought Himself, His Spiritual being, into the matter. Those who truly and effectively worship God are in both God and in Jesus and Jesus said unto Thomas in John 14:16, “I am the way, *the truth* and the light. Just prior to His crucifixion, when He prayed to the Father (John 17:21-22), He said, “. . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” Although there are other Scriptural references to Jesus being *the truth*, we feel that His own words are sufficient to establish this and show why he spoke as He did to the woman at Jacob’s well.

Concluding, it seems appropriate to say that all those that do not possess, or have within them *the spirit of truth*, are led by the spirit of error and their worship is entirely in that spirit and to no avail. In 1st John 4:5 we find, “He that is not of God heareth us not.

Hereby know we the *spirit of truth* and the spirit of error. Elder Gilbert Beebe, Sept. 1, 1880, wrote in the *Signs* — “But the spirit of error and delusion is the spirit of the world, and the world is in love with it.” And also, “The Spirit of *truth* is the Holy Ghost and the spirit of error is of the world and of satan.”

Jesus said in John 15:26, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the *spirit of truth*, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me.”

“In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.”

Also in John 16:13, “Howbeit, when He, the *spirit of truth*, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.”

“Thine inward teachings make me know
The mysteries of redeeming love;
The emptiness of things below,
And excellence of things above.”

One who feels so unworthy and unable to tell but little of the workings of the Holy Spirit, but who has a hope that he does worship God *in spirit and in truth*.

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

CIRCULAR LETTER
LEXINGTON-ROXBURY
ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association now in session with The First Church of Roxbury at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, September 16 and 17, 1970, sends love, greetings and fellowship to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

We desire to extend thanks to God for His goodness and mercy to us that

we have been enabled to meet again to honor, praise and proclaim His great and Holy name, and the great Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for food and encouragement, comfort and strength to the lambs and sheep that God has brought out of the world into the fold as witnesses of His precious truth as it is in Jesus.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Ephesians 2:1) In this Circular Letter we desire to address you as such. Through the operation, work and power of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, the stony heart has been taken away and you have been given a heart of flesh; a heart that is meek and tender; a heart that has mercy in it; a heart that has love in it for God; a heart that can love those of like precious faith in God; and a heart that can forgive. A heart that esteems other brethren better than himself.

Now the law of God being written in the heart of such ones, they know they are not worthy of the goodness of God. A heart that has been made to pray, and does pray. A heart that has been made to cry to God, and does cry to God. A heart that can hate sin. A heart that was dead in sin, but since quickened is dead to sin and alive unto God by the Holy Spirit. This heart now is rendering thanks unto God daily and hourly for the many blessings and much kindness that they receive, and are made to say, “Oh, Lord, only because it seemeth good in thy sight.” They are made to say with David, “What can we render unto the Lord for all of His benefits.” The writer in Ephesians 2:8 tells us about salvation, “For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”

Is it not true that when one is quickened and his blind eyes are opened, and the stony heart has been taken away, and his deaf ears unstopped, and he has been taught of the Spirit, that such one has learned that it must be of Grace or they are forever lost. How sweet to read from the Apostle

here that Grace and Faith so sweetly go together. Can we have one and not the other? We don't think so. Both are gifts of God. Dear ones, think of it; what a gift! If Heaven is ever our home and we see Jesus as He is and be like Him, and our vile body be fashioned like unto His glorious body, is it not certainly true, that it will be the Gift of God. To such sinners as we know ourselves to be by nature, let us not question the Word of God. No! No!

Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the throne of His glory with exceeding joy, to Him be all majesty, glory, dominion and power for ever and ever. In Jesus name and for His sake in a world with Him where joy and peace will never end. Amen.

Woodrow W. Bellinger, Clerk
A. J. Slauson, Moderator

CHURCH LETTER TO SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church to the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Snow Hill Church, sends greetings:

Dearly Beloved:

Through the goodness of the allwise God we have been kept through another year, and brought again to meet together in an association: to give praise and honor to His holy name. May it be in peace and meekness.

What a glorious blessing this is to a poor and afflicted people, whose very existence depends on the crumbs that fall from the Master's table to sustain them from time to time: — it is their meat and drink.

There have been many changes since we last met, changes that are frightening to us as we view the scenes around us; but we can be assured of one very important thing, one most precious to His little ones: God changes not and is still the God of Zion, wherein His subjects abide. There has been no

change in His Word, nor any change in the sweet doctrine of salvation by grace: no change in His mercy and grace and longsuffering towards His little flock.

He will continue to keep watch over the flock in the field, which he bought with a price, a great price: the life, death, resurrection and suffering of His only Son, Jesus Christ. What great love to His Bride, the Lamb's wife! We cannot attain unto the sacred and wonderful heights of His greatness, power and mercy. We are given glimpses of His power by the Holy Spirit from time to time; and in such moments how precious is every revelation the Lord has made of himself to us! Such sacred sweetness is ours for a little while, and is such that language can never tell it. We see ourselves as a tiny speck, and God so great.

When the Lord's humble poor are brought down, and made to seek a place in which to rest, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, they find no way in themselves to be delivered of their distresses. It is then He hears their cry, and leads them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. In their despair Jesus appears unto them as the Way, and through Him they enter into the gospel rest and peace, and become fellow-citizens with the saints. Jesus is to them truly the Pearl of great price. As they gaze upon the Way, the Lord of Glory, and see it open before them, their souls rejoice with "Joy unspeakable and full of Glory."

We are blessed to have our pastor Elder W. D. Griffin, come to us each 4th Sunday morning and 1st Sunday night, preaching Jesus sweetly and comforting to the little flock. We had on the 5th Sunday in May an all-day meeting, and were happy to have Elder Wallace Smith, of Burlington, N. C., with us. Also Elder H. C. Moon, from Alabama, was with us in June; and in September we were again blessed to have Elder John D. Wood preach for us.

In the year that has passed we have

lost a dear brother, Asa Pilchard, who suffered a lengthy illness, but bore it with much patience, manifesting the grace of God that had been shed upon him. Also, we received by letter dear Sister Nell Gaskill, who by her walk and talk manifests that she has tasted that the Lord is gracious. . .

Written by Evelyn Davis

GLAD THAT THE *SIGNS*
STANDS FIRM

P. O. Box 976
Swansboro, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I want to write and tell you how much I enjoy the *Signs of the Times*. . . . I believe in encouraging one of the Lord's servants.

I am not one that particularly enjoys reading a sermon. I know that one that is blest to preach sets forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, even when it is transferred to paper; but I love to be in the meeting when blest to feel the sweet fellowship of the Lord's people, and the Spirit of God freshly anointing one of His servants to preach in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. I believe it takes a special application at that particular time, to enable one to preach; and also a special application to enable one to hear. I know that God is able to apply a written sermon to the heart of a reader, but as far as preference goes, I would rather be there myself.

Reading the experiences of the Lord's people is my chiefest delight, because, although I have not had the same experience, I believe my experience witnesses in part with them. I also enjoy reading about one who is blest to defend the faith. So many today believe in a conditional God. I am glad that the *Signs of the Times* stands firm on the "absolute predestination of all things." Many do not believe this comforting doctrine. Paul said in Romans 15:1, "We then that are strong ought

to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Keeping in mind that I am one that is weak; but if not deceived, to me these are among the weak. In Amos 3:3 we read, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" I am not insinuating that we should fellowship all the beliefs of man or other religious groups: in fact, I emphatically deny that we should.

I talked with one the other day who believed that God predestinated everything that pertains to the elect, but not all things. He stated that if a cow walked out in front of his car and killed him, it was decreed by God; but again stated that not all things were decreed by God.

I believe our religion is a revealed religion, and only when it pleases God to reveal a spiritual truth to one, will he be able to receive it. This brother is precious to me, and he can't help believing what he does any more than I can. I'm glad that man's knowledge of the scripture doesn't determine his being a Christian or not. As long as this brother and others like him do not fight against me proclaiming this doctrine, I hope we will remain in peace.

I believe that salvation is of the Lord; and as much as I believe God decreed sin to enter the world, I do not charge God with my sins, for I am the only one that is guilty of them.

May God continue to bless you and the other brethren to stand firm on this precious doctrine, and to continue to publish the *Signs of the Times*, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Constantly in need of God's grace,

Robert H. Lyliston

208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

Dear Elder Wood:

In my opinion, the following articles were outstanding in the October issue of the *Signs*: Elder Smith's subject on predestination on pages 219-223, Elder

Lambert's article on "How Our Brethren Do," and Elder Beebe's article on Hebrews 4:1-12.

The remarkable part about Elder Smith's sermon (all the labor in preparing it for publication is very much appreciated and may the Lord be praised) is that he said in a few words the same things which I have been trying to say. I went at great length in trying to express my feelings; and it is possible that I have been misunderstood because I have made such a poor attempt in trying to express my views.

I went at great length in writing these articles: "The Fatalist Point of View" in the December 1967 issue, and "Predestination," in the February 1968, issue of the *Signs*. Elder Smith's remarks as mentioned on pages 221-223 summed the matter up much better than I could express them.

Your article in the June issue was very good and I have heard good reports from it: "Is Admonition Compatible With God's Sovereignty?"

We trust this finds you all well. Remona has recovered okay from her sinus operation on September 12th. May the Lord bless you all.

Yours in hope,
W. W. Hudson, Jr.

SEEKING INFORMATION

62 Elm Street
Mill Creek Trailer Park
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

Dear Elder Bocoek,

I am sending this letter to the **SIGNS**, as I would like it published and have your answer by way of the **SIGNS**.

I read your article in the August issue, and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it and heartily endorse every word of it. I have heard men preach that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, and I am glad you exposed that lie. You also spoke the truth when you said, "Articles of faith deny themselves." My articles of faith are the word of God: both old and new testaments, both that which I

understand and that which I do not understand.

I read in Acts 2:23, where the Apostle Peter referred to Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost with these words, "Him, being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And my Bible tells me that God cannot lie. So, since God had predetermined that Christ should be crucified, if Adam had not sinned then either Christ would have died for nothing or God would have had to lie.

You state, and I quote, "Those who advocate that God was disappointed and His purpose thwarted by the fall of man, cannot possibly believe that God is able to take a fallen wretch and make him incorruptible." Amen, Brother Bocoek; and those who advocate that doctrine do not believe that God is able to do that, unless man will cooperate. I believe the first commandment is violated more than all the others combined, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." You will notice that I spelled gods with a small letter instead of a capital, because their gods are indeed small.

Now Brother Bocoek, seeing God has given you a good understanding of His word, and seeing you are not afraid nor ashamed to preach it, (as some are) I have an important question on which I desire you to write and have published in the **SIGNS**. I am seeking information on a very important subject.

When Adam and Eve sinned they made themselves aprons of fig leaves to cover their nakedness, which is a symbol of self righteousness with which thousands are trying to cover themselves today. So God made them coats of skins and covered them, which, to me, signifies there was blood shed. That blood is a type of the blood of Christ, which He shed on the cross of Calvary for the sins of His people. The coats of skins are a type of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, with which His people are clothed. So here is the question that I would love to have unraveled. When God covered Adam the entire human race

was in the loins of Adam: so will you please explain to me how God could cover Adam while the whole human race was still in the loins of Adam, and not cover the entire human race? I have never heard this discussed, either by word or in writing. In fact, I have never heard it mentioned, but would certainly appreciate very much to have someone explain it to me.

A sinner, in hope of Eternal Life,
Roy S. Thomas

REPLY

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Mr. Roy S. Thomas

Dear Friend:

Your question, "How could God cover Adam's sins while and when the entire human family was in his loins and not cover them all?" I am not inclined to ignore your question directed to me, as Elder Wood speaks of you and says you often attend at Rock Springs.

The answer to your question is very simple. God has given no spiritual blessings since the world began. That which reaches the saints in this time world to bestow blessings, only bestows a taste of what has belonged to them "from before the foundation of the world." All spiritual blessings were given "before the foundation of the world." and therefore before the human family had any existence, — and before Adam was formed.

The blessings which are bestowed upon the saints in time, are a small foretaste of what is to be revealed to them at the last time, and that which is to be revealed is "ready" for it is that which was given them before the world began. (Ephesians 1) So what the false spirits make their goal post, is every saint's **starting post** as "ye are complete in him" is the truth yesterday, today, and forever, and nothing can be added to a thing that is **complete**. On earth where earthly Adam abode, God is revealed as the giver of life and breath,

etc. In the covenant and in the kingdom that is not of this world, God is revealed as the Gift: Satan knows the Giver. He knew God as the blesser of Job, etc., but Job knew the Gift. That Gift is unspeakable. It is like an ocean that is shoreless and bottomless, and from the fountain of it tiny streams reach His people to bestow upon them out of that vast treasure a sufficiency through faith. This that God bestows on saints on earth the Bible calls a **river**. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God . . ." That river reached Moses and he did drink from that Rock; but what Moses drank was for Moses, and was of no benefit to Joshua. The Lord said to Joshua, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee . . ."

This clearly shows that God deals with His people as individuals. The first man Adam was one of these individuals. What each saint owns, is his own and is like a "garden enclosed" and "a spring shut up," a "fountain sealed." All each saint has is through faith, and that same faith holds fast to what it has.

I hope this answers your question, because what I have written here are simple generalities which on every hand and in every place, are admitted to be the truth where the songs of Zion are heard and where the prayers of faith are heard; and where the Lord doth bless His gospel for Christ's sake.

Your friend,
J. L. Boccock

THE LORD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN
THE STAUNTON RIVER BRETHREN

Rt. 1,
Blairs, Va. 24527

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

We trust the great Jehovah is favoring you dear ones with health and happiness. My family is well.

We have enjoyed a wonderful Sunday at Malmaison Church today. Elder Tench preached wonderfully; also Brother Raymond Goad from Weatherford

Church. How refreshing to have gifts from our Heavenly Father in the Staunton River Association. We haven't had any new gifts for about thirty years, but the Lord has always blessed us with a preacher at every regular meeting of a church in the Association all of this time. So we can witness that the Shepherd has abundantly fed His flock as the hunger arose.

I am enclosing the ordination of my precious brother in Christ as well as in the flesh. We that have known him so intimately through the years, have no question of his heavenly call, as he has always been a very reserved person who would not put himself forward. Surely there are no volunteers among the true ministers of the Gospel of Christ. I believe the Scriptures speak of, how can a man preach unless he be sent?

We hope you have the space for the ordination notice in the **Signs of the Times**. This publication is a wonderful blessing to the Lord's people, and we thank Him for servants so intensely devoted as its editors.

Your brother in hope
Burnell B. Williams

(See notice of ordination this issue)

EXPERIENCE OF
ELDER WALLACE HARVEY

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 25918

Dear Editors, and brethren of the elect family of mercy, chosen in Christ before the world began:

I have much enjoyed the very good articles in the **Signs of the Times**. I call to memory the first **Signs** I ever read. It was published at Middletown, N. Y. When I was a very tender lad of eleven years. My father was a subscriber, and my anxious moments were when I could slip out with the **Signs** to some secret place and read for the purpose of filling an empty place. I was in so much trouble, begging, crying and pray-

ing to be filled. It seemed I would simply starve to death between issues from one month to the next.

I did not tell my father anything about my troubles, or anyone else, for it was a private concern. It went on for several years, and I began to notice people had begun to call me "Preacher," which cut me to my heart. I wondered what they could see in this mass of sin that they should call me such: I never had asked God to make a preacher out of me — I had only begged for mercy that I might be spared a few more days, for death was in my face and Hell was my certain doom.

I went on in this condition, finally decided that I was going to Hell anyway and be punished forever, that I might as well partake of some of the world's pleasures. So I started going to dances and parties of one kind and another, only to come away with more troubles than I had before encountered. Nothing gave me any relief — all my begging, pleading, and trying to pray was of no avail. I married hoping that my companion might cheer me on my rugged journey to a miserable death. I began to talk to her about my deplorable condition, and she only made it worse for she was of a different faith. I had added sin to sin.

I went on in this condition until 1944 when I could not eat or sleep. I saw my case so vile, so low down that there was no one like me. I had sunk so low mercy could not reach my case. But I knew God was just in his dealings with me, and "if my soul were sent to Hell, his righteous law approved it well." I came to that great gulf, and looked down into the bottomless pit where the flames came up in my face to consume me, and I looked through the flames when they had burned out my eyes in my head, and I saw a faraway shore; and I saw an innumerable company all dressed in white and all singing the same song: and that song was the Song of Redemption by the blood of the Lamb. I was delivered out and across that great gulf which no man could

span, and was placed in company with the saints of God on the faraway shore; and I immediately looked down and my robe was whiter than snow: and my tongue was singing the same song I heard them singing, with no effort by me.

I went to the church then and asked for a home, and was received and was baptized by the late Elder J. H. Gentry. For three days my troubles were over — I was the happiest boy this world had produced. But my troubles had multiplied and seemingly nothing could ease my troubled mind: I thought I had deceived the church, and told my God that I was to blame and to let me go on in my doom, and not hold it against the church. My father came to my home to take dinner with me, but I would not tell him anything about my condition. Somehow he must have read between the lines for we were not discussing anything scripturally: he just simply stopped eating long enough to say, "Son, someday you will have to preach." He only put more kindling to my fire.

I began to go to different churches to hear different ministers, all Primitive Baptists of course, preach the unsearchable riches of Christ the Saviour. I would not venture to tell any of my troubles; but was approached by some to tell me that they had heard me preach, when I had not made the first effort publically. Some of them that I met at associations told me they had seen me and heard me in a vision — men that I never saw before or afterwards. My wife sometimes at the breakfast table would say, "I was at church last night and guess who the preacher was?" I would reply, "I don't know," and then she would say, "You were the preacher."

I vowed I would die first, yet I still live today; but I had to submit to try to reconcile myself by going to the stand. And now I am in the fifteenth year of, I hope, a minister's trials and troubles.

An unworthy servant,
Wallace Harvey

READING THE SIGNS MANY YEARS

Rt. 1, Clearmont Ave.
Wheelersburg, Ohio

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is ten dollars for two years renewal, with the balance for the Indigent Fund. I have not missed a single copy. I have been taking the **Signs of the Times** for many years, and hope to take it as long as I live. Among all the other periodicals the **Signs** is first to me.

I am thankful that the Editors are as bold as lions in declaring the whole counsel of God — standing on the walls crying aloud and sparing not. I hope the Lord will bless all you editors to continue.

I was brought into this world in September, 1898, so am in my declining years, and will fall off at the appointed time, for my days are numbered as well as Job's days were numbered. I do not belong to any church, and never did, but inside I know I am an old time Baptist, for Jesus came to my house about forty years ago, and I was talking to him about the nail prints in his hands and the spear wound in his side; and I will never be able to tell what took place in me. When he was leaving my whole heart just melted away. I know I will never be able to finish telling all that has taken place with me.

May God bless all you wonderful editors, is my prayer.

William Sparks

GOD WORKS THE WILL AND THE DO

P. O. Box 441
Monticella, Ark. 71655

Dear Elder Spangler:

I greatly enjoy reading the wonderful letters and experiences of grace. I have reason to believe they are true inspirations of the Holy Spirit; for we are made to understand that the great

God of the whole universe, the Lord Jesus Christ, (and I hope He is mine,) works both the will and the do, according to his own will and pleasure, that which pertains to the spiritual and the natural. Without God we are nothing and less than nothing. God made the outward man a natural being; but before the foundation of the world He was pleased to choose a people for himself, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And these are they in whom he has implanted the Spirit of righteousness unto good works in love unto obedience; having predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Now we see a twofold being: the *outward man*, conceived in sin and born in iniquity, is dead in trespasses and sins. All that we say or do or think, without the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, is all vanity and against the law of God. But I see another, the *inward man*, which is the Spirit of Christ. "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." (Ephesians 2:4-6) Good works can not come by the will of man. We cannot find joy, comfort or peace of mind by taking up the Bible, and reading through the Holy Scriptures at our own will: but only if it be the will of the Holy Spirit, — that same Spirit that inspired the Prophets and Apostles to write the unsearchable riches of truth and grace. Then and then only can we read and obtain understanding and comfort for the poor, sin sick heart. Yes, not by our will but the will of the Holy Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the righteous.

Paul, the servant of God, wrote Titus concerning the difference between people who were chosen in

Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and the people whom I believe are referred to by the Apostle John as being antichrist. By the will and pleasure of Him who reigns forever, He has chosen to himself a people whom Paul said, "Are looking for the 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." They are the good works by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in us. I am fully persuaded that these are the people that are identified as sheep which were spoken of in Matthew 25, "And before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

Now isn't this plain enough and proof enough that the world at large never did, or ever will wear a crown of glory in the heavenly kingdom of God the Father? I have no doubt that the goats believe there is a God; I am sure that they do. But at the same time they deny him by professing that it is in their power to choose or reject God; to do good or evil, and able to obtain eternal salvation by their own works; while they deceive themselves and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect of God.

What was said of the non-elect in the thirteenth chapter of Jeremiah? "Then I went to the Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where

I had hid it; and, behold, the girdle was marred. It was profitable for nothing. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their hearts, and walk after other gods, to serve them and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing."

I certainly believe that it is just as easy for an Ethiopian to change the color of his skin, as it is for one to obtain eternal salvation by his or her own works. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God."

This is what the Lord said of his sheep, or people chosen in him before the world was, in Leviticus 21:24-26, "But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey; I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto me (not can if you want to be, but ye shall be) for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." In Matthew 1:21, we read, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for *he shall save his people* from their sins."

Dear Brother, I fear that I know nothing of the Holy Scriptures as I ought, and not worthy so much as to take the name of the precious Lord and Saviour between these sin polluted lips, to beg of him for that which I so hopefully desire; so may I ask of you, Elder Spangler, when you are before the throne of grace, if it is possible, would you remember this unworthy sinner in your prayers.

May the great God of heaven and earth keep us in the way which is pleasing in His sight. Enclosed you will find

\$4.00 for subscription to the *Signs of the Times*.

A brother in that sweet hope,
David B. Lawson

FEASTS ON THE WRITINGS IN
THE SIGNS

Pennington, N. J. 08534
4 Maple Lane

To the Editors of the Signs

Dear Brethren:

The simple word of truth is often the most precious when coming to mind while one is busy with the everyday duties of life.

I have been blessed to feast upon the editorials and letters all year long, which I know all of you have taken time out of your busy days to write, and I realize I have written all too few appreciative words of thanks to you. So I pray God may bless all of you most abundantly day by day as you go about giving courage to those who have found, that in themselves, they do not have the strength to carry their cross. May God bless all of you for all the time you have given to listening to some troubled souls, and then speak to them of the WORD with power to nourish their hope that God will always make a way where there seems not a way in His divine guidance.

May it be in His divine guidance to bless you for all the service your willing hands have rendered for the benefit of His little ones in the Household of Faith, that you may know your labours have not been in vain with the publication of the SIGNS, which so many of us look forward to reading each month.

In Christian love
Sister Mary Hellings

Tarboro, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I have been impressed to pen a few thoughts on what the Lord has done for me while in this flesh. In us dwells no good thing unless the Lord guides and directs by his Holy Spirit.

In my early childhood I had a fear of death and of the Lord. My parents were true Primitive Baptists and taught good morals; they both joined Lower Town Creek Church, and took Zion's Landmark. I read one article someone wrote that the following year might be the end of time, and I felt disturbed over my condition, knowing I was unfit to die. I consulted by father, who told me not to be afraid for no one except the Father knew that.

I had respect for Primitive Baptists, and my father and mother would often have their neighbors visit them. They were so happy expressing their love and relating their experiences. I felt, if I could only join in with them; but, Oh what a vile sinner I felt to be I can't describe. As time went on I tried to forget my burden and to reconcile my mind by reading novels and story books. My oldest sister would read the Bible instead, and I would question her as to why she read the Bible; and she would answer that it was a comfort to her. Later she united with the church at Lower Town Creek, and I wished that I could be fit to be baptized with her.

I commenced reading the Bible, and every chapter seemed to condemn me. I was so condemned that I gave up all hope, knowing that I was wholly dependent upon the Lord's mercy. I felt that destruction would be my doom. My husband was also reared in a Primitive Baptist Home, He was a violin player and enjoyed it to the fullest extent. Later he became disgusted with it and had to lay it down. He was blessed with an experience of grace and a sweet hope

in Christ, and united with the Tarboro Church August 4, 1929. I desired that I could feel the assurance he did and be baptized with him; but I felt so unworthy. I begged the Lord that if I was a fit subject for baptism He would show me. My mother and aunt spent the night with me, and as I was leaving their room, my every breath was begging the Lord to show me. A still, small voice spoke in my very soul, saying, "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." My burden was lifted and I felt there was not an obstacle in the way the next morning, and I was making every effort to get to old Tar River Church when they opened conference.

I tried to relate a little of my feelings to them; and I will never forget the voice of Elder Roberts when the church agreed to receive me into their membership. Elder Roberts baptized us. I have begged the Lord that I might show my faith by my walk and a godly conversation, and praying for grace that I may hold out faithfully until the end.

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. H. C. Brown

Rt. 1,
Delmar, Del. 19940

Dear Editors:

It is good to be able to renew these subscriptions . . ., for I feel it is a worthwhile gift to each of us. May the Lord give us eyes to read the comforting things found in these dear papers — and hearts to understand. May each one who has a part in arranging and publishing the material, be blest to continue on, and to search for the old paths ever looking for guidance from Him who doeth all things well.

Sincerely with kindest regards to all.

Irma L. Messick

Danville, Virginia February, 1971

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

(Hebrews 13:20, 21)

EDITORIAL

"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead." (Luke 9:60)

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." (2 Cor. 13:5)

I stood on the street and listened to a man of another order deny much of the written word. I thanked my God that I belonged to an order that had adopted the Old and New Testaments as their written creed. Soon I was gathered in an Old Baptist meeting, and to my horror I heard one of them give a garbled explanation of too many vital and living truths. Were these my people? Were these the people that I had gloried in while listening to somebody else in their wresting and twisting and misquoting and privately interpreting the sacred writings?

A sister in the South (who desires to remain incognito, and yet is willing to come to my defense if I am assailed) desires that I write an editorial on these two passages, and that I tie them together. The matter that disturbs her is the negligence and indifference of the Lord's professing people, and the curt dismissal by our ministers of the commandments given in the Scriptures, when the inquiring children ask for an explanation of them.

I do not think that I have made too many loyal supporters among the old

order of Baptists because of my contention about some of the things that I feel the Bible teaches, but I do have an abiding assurance that I have met the approval of my heavenly Father in that respect. I have said it time and again, and will now say it once more, to wit, If you really want to know how well somebody is established in the truth just you one time cross them in their nature and you will find out. I want to tell you about a case in point. It concerns one of our sisters, who will verify what I am saying. It was during the second world war. The pastor of the church travelled four hundred miles to serve them each month. The sister's son came home for a short visit, and, although she only lived a mile from the church and would have been separated from her son for a couple of hours, she consoled herself that it would be permissible for her to miss one meeting. She met the pastor next month and explained why that she did not attend service the previous month. He very kindly replied that he understood because that his son was at home from the army at the same time. Let it be said to her credit that she was so humiliated that she has been one of the most punctual members since.

"I believe in absolute predestination without any strings attached to it." How often have I heard that, and as often have seen (and at times felt) the wrath of those same people when the coming to pass of that which they believed had been against what they wanted. Some able minister declared that the high mystery of God's predestination should be handled carefully, and I would add that it behooves us all to be careful that we do not *bend* the doctrine to suit our fancy.

The occasion of the first text is heart rending to our nature. I do not have a reader that would be a good OLD Baptist, a child of God loving Him and doing His Commandments, on this occasion. We speak and we ask,

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;

You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.
As Jesus appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not,
So is God disposed toward you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot."

But if this was strictly applied to us, where would we be? Not many but what would be *yes* Christians if addressed as the man in our text. But all of our boasted following is blasted when we try to wait a while, when we introduce something that we desire to do first. My readers all think that this man had a feasible reason for waiting. Must I prove that? I can not, but Christ proved it there, and he will prove it to us. I dare not preach and write that it is permissible to neglect our natural household, to mistreat our earthly parents, to desecrate or violate the dead, but above that, and more important than that, and better than that, I dare not advocate, preach and write, that it is alright for me to disobey my Master to do that which belongs to nature.

If there is any certainty taught in the Bible, it is this: A man, any man, can not obey two masters. To those that act as though they can, they obey one and neglect the other. In my nature I am rebellious and stubborn, but I am not in such a strain to establish God's predestination of all things that I am going to call either one of them as being firm and established in the faith. If I am related to Christ, if I am in the faith, if I have been born again, I have, in that relationship but one Master. If I love God, I will do his commandments, and I will not bring up the doctrine of predestination or any other doctrine in order to have an excuse for not obeying God. It does not matter how many people tell me so, it does not impress me; God has not set some part of his government against the government of Christ. The rule is this: Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (Col. 3:17). If I have got to get out and whoop it up that this includes rape and drunkenness and gam-

bling; that when I am left to myself that what I do is in his name, I beg to be excused. I do not believe that, and I do not want to give it Godspeed.

If, in order to be what is known as an Absolute Predestinarian, I have got to bow down to would be dictators, to accept what these fellows are pleased to call that doctrine, to forego all admonitions, exhortations, encouragement to obey commands of God, then, by all means, leave me out of that group. I am delighted, however, to take my stand among the ablest predestinarians that have ever lived, knowing that they loved exhortation and a lively interest in their children (in the gospel) walking in all the precepts and examples laid down in Holy Writ.

According to the lesson left us by the inspiration of God, our service to the commandments of Christ come first. If a man or woman has not been made willing to forego every natural relationship for the cause of Christ, that person has not yet followed Christ; that person has not yet to become His disciple. Yes, but that is hard, that is cruel, that is inhuman. If you were telling me that what I said was all that, it would be of small consequence, but when you say that is hard doctrine you are talking to Christ, who is your Saviour; definitely, not to me, a poor weak servant.

I have wanted to pay homage to the dead; I have paid homage to my children, but I have never had a clear conscience in doing so. I have assayed the thought of staying at home because I was worn out, but it has never been in my mind that I was fulfilling the predestination of God by doing wrong; it has caused me to feel the fiery indignation brought about by my refusal to assemble together; it has caused me much anxiety in that I had paid homage to one other than *the One*.

It may not grieve anybody but me, but if so, then I am grieved. As we enjoy the riches of this perishing day, we are more inclined to first BURY OUR FATHER BEFORE WE FOLLOW

CHRIST. There is a greater tendency today to stay at home when the children come, or EVEN TO DRIVE ACROSS THE STATE TO VISIT THEM, than there was in the earlier part of this wave of prosperity (?). I have rebuked for this, and I have been persecuted for doing it; I have pointed out the scriptural way for parents and children to act toward each other, AND TOWARD CHRIST, and I have been called a softie and a conditionalist. I write on Absolute Predestination and many rise up and call me blessed; I write the next month on keeping the commandments of God and I am denounced as a fence-straddler, as being inconsistent. These unfair and unscrupulous attacks on the whole counsel of God is causing deep concern among our people. The passing of cruel, inhuman, unscriptural, ungodly judgment against everybody except a few that are sound in certain principles of doctrine is causing many heartaches, and that soundness is also a part of the judgment of the same parties. Our inquiring sister said, "Please tell me why that certain doctrines are contended for all of the time and that others are never mentioned?" Why is it thought that a man is sound that will quote Romans 8:28 and unsound if he quotes I Tim. 4:16?" And I have had to put my hand over my mouth, for I freely admit that I do not know.

This poor sinner and servant (if a servant) has been contending for the salvation that is in Christ alone since 1930, and for the sure and absolute predestination of all things as long. I expect to continue as I am given grace to be found doing just that. I admit (not freely, and yet unreservedly—not freely, because it is against my nature to admit being wrong, but unreservedly, because it is the way of God's Spirit to consume every false way, to bring it into judgment and to move it out of the way) that I have been contentious about those precious doctrines. Contending for the faith is commendable (Jude 3), but being contentious, *and contentions*,

are not commendable (Prov. 17:14; I Cor. 1:11; Titus 3:9; I Cor. 11:16) and the early churches did not have such a custom by commandment.

If we are led by the Spirit of God we will love God and we will serve Him devotedly; we will not be found eating a mess of green gourds, nor will we be found dabbling around in the mudhole of sin, alleging that God is as well pleased with our sinning as he is our obedience, that a fountain *does* send forth both bitter and sweet waters, that God is as much the cause of our filthiness of mind as He is our purity of mind. Being led (not led at) by the Spirit, we will be led to shun evil and to hold fast to that which is good; to try the spirits, as to whether they are of Christ or the evil one; to let brotherly love continue, even though differences arise, and to disagree as brethren, instead of acting and saying that the difference is between a saint and hell bound people.

I have had brethren and sisters in the churches that I have served that did not subscribe to the same thing that I did about the doctrines of Christ our Saviour. I have gotten down and washed the feet of one brother in particular that was an avowed objector to the predestination of all things, but he was a lovelier brother than I was or ever will be; I have been asked to pray at the bedside of Methodists and people of other denominations, but I have not prayed them to hell, nor did I condemn them to hell. I will continue, as God gives me grace, to comfort and instruct, but I refuse to be led into condemning anybody as being a captive of the devil and hell bound.

I point out to our inquiring sister that it is better to obey God than it is man, even if that man or person is my wife, my children, my parents, or any one else earthy; having all the desires of nature that anybody else has; loving the things of the earth (in my nature) as well as anybody and having a family, and relatives, and business obligations, have as much need to pay homage to the

earth as anybody; having, I say, all this I need the grace of God to enable me to let the dead bury the dead; I need to be brought away from perishing objects (family, friends, houses, etc.) and directed and led into the love of God that I give a drink of cool water in His name, or, if need be, to suffer death at the hands of the dead.

The taking of inventory is essential to the Christian as it is to the business man. The scriptures do not call it by that name, nevertheless, taking heed, being careful, examining one's self, all these, with many other like words, cover the same ground and are laid before (and wrought in us) for the same purpose, to wit, that we might discover our status before God. If we do not believe in examining ourselves as to whether we are in the faith; if we do not believe in endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; if we do not believe in being careful to maintain good works, in short, if we do not believe that a man that loves God will keep His commandments, what do we believe?

In conclusion, there are ample directions given by the judges (Isa. 32:1) for our conduct towards God and man, and those directions have not told any of us to "bury the dead" by paying homage to ANYTHING OR ANYBODY in the earth, but that what we do we do it in His name. And, further, NO sacred writer has condoned or lent sanction to loose, indifferent living by the saints, but rather a rigid examination as to whether God has required this or that or the other at His hand.

—W.D.G

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

August, 1878

The Red Stone Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Indian Creek Church, in Monongalia

County, West Virginia.

Dear Brethren: Through the abounding goodness of the all-wise and supreme Ruler of the universe, we have been spared, and granted another precious privilege of assembling again in an associated capacity, to see the faces of many of our brethren and sisters, which makes our hearts swell with emotions of joy and gratitude to our bountiful Benefactor.

Dear Brethren, in accordance with our long-standing custom, we present this epistle of love in the form of a Circular Letter. In writing to you concerning the things pertaining to our Master's kingdom, we wish to say something in regard to the church of God. The primary or principal design of all governments is to give security and happiness to those governed. To this end laws and rules are given; but while these laws may be just and good, and fully sufficient to accomplish the object aimed at, yet if the people be ignorant of them, and have no regard for them, they fail to accomplish their design. So the King of Zion has set up a kingdom, and has given the inhabitants of that kingdom laws to be governed by, and it is highly important that they should be understood and obeyed; that there should be no deviation nor departure from the rules laid down in the scriptures of divine truth. While they are strictly adhered to, they never cause trouble, nor any disturbance, but tend to build up the peace and enjoyment of the church of Christ.

During the apostolic age, the form of the christian church was truly glorious. With what amazing diligence, boldness, prudence and zeal the ministers of Christ published the glorious truths of the gospel. They were ready and willing to suffer, and to make great sacrifice, for the cause of their great and glorious Leader, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. The church of God is known by her practice in her primitive days. So strict and unwavering was she in the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, that the wrath and indignation

of ungodly men were brought down upon her; her members were thrown into prisons, and threats and persecutions were alike employed, to make them recant the doctrine and throw off their allegiance to the King of heaven. But this cruel treatment drove them closer to their heavenly Master. The true church was ready at any time to resign her worldly goods, the endearments of home, even life itself, for the cause of Christ. The framing of her conduct to suit the world, and to conform to its follies and fashions, was never seen or practiced by her. Her members looked forward with that blessed anticipation of meeting beyond this vale of tears, where sorrow and sighing are forever done away.

The church of God is called, "the bride, the Lamb's wife." The wise man asks, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" John, while on the lonely isle, in vision sublime "beheld the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Such is the language of inspiration toward that fair one, the church of God. Our blessed Savior condescended to come into this lower world, to suffer and to die, even the death of the cross, to redeem his bride from ruin, to cleanse her, by his blood, from her stains, and elevate her above all principalities and powers of this world. The church of God being the body of Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, was, by virtue of that relationship, redeemed from the demands of the law. When Jesus, on the cross of Calvary, cried, "It is finished," divine justice received full satisfaction in the person of Jesus Christ; for he is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

While in a state of nature, there is no manifest difference between the heirs of salvation and the world at large; for the apostle says, "Among

whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Christ's kingdom is not of this world, therefore she needeth not the fostering hand of the governments of this world, nor the aid of legislative bodies to assist her to carry out and execute her laws and discipline. All that the church of Christ needs at the hands of the temporal government is protection in the exercise of conscience, and the privilege and liberty to assemble, without restriction of time or place to worship God, without being molested or made afraid; and the church's obligation is to be peaceable, good and upright citizens of the commonwealth to which they belong, and be subject to the powers that be.

The church collective is a congregation of believers, called out of the world, and set apart for the worship of Jehovah. While the church of God exists upon the earth, the inquiry may arise in the minds of some, How is she to be designated from other institutions? We answer, by the doctrine and ordinances and practice that characterized the first gospel church that was constituted, at Jerusalem, which was made manifest by the teaching of Christ and his apostles. To show what was taught, we will quote a few passages of scripture, of their own writing. Paul, in the discharge of this great mission, says to the Galatian brethren, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." — Gal. i. 4. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." — Rom. iv. 25. "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." — Eph. i. 4, 5. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren,

beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." — 2 Thess. ii. 13. These points of doctrine referred to, with many others, show the will of God in regard to his people, before the creation of the world, resulting in their manifestation in time.

The church was ever God's delight,
He knew each member well,
And they were precious in his sight
Ere they in Adam fell.

Our relation to Christ, and to each other in him, is the constituent form of a church. Jesus Christ is the Foundation and Head. He said to Peter, "Upon this rock (having reference to his divinity) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No, brethren, not all the wisdom of this world, nor the institutions of men, nor the combined powers of darkness, shall ever prevail against the church of Christ, because it is built upon a sure foundation; a foundation that never can fail. Though heaven and earth pass away, his word will never fail. The church is called the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, the ransomed of the Lord, the light of the world. Various are the titles given her. Seeing such a beautiful structure, reared up by God himself, who has laid down certain rules for the government of his people, when assembled in church capacity, we see that she is under the rule and reign of her Founder, and the laws are spiritual and divine, because they originated from a divine source.

Dear brethren, we should, as the body of Christ, stand united, as much as the Lord will enable us; because the adversary is going about, seeking whom he may devour, causing divisions and troubles in churches, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. Christ said to his people, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He holds the keys of life and death. He holds the beginning and the end, the first and the last. He has all power in heaven

and on earth. We should take his word as the man of our counsel, trusting in him for grace to help in time of need. For he will not leave nor forsake his children, for they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Trust in the Lord, for he will bring you off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor. By his stripes we are healed, and he has forever perfected them that are sanctified, by his sufferings and death, his resurrection and ascension into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.

Dear Brethren, be not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let us endeavor to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. Dear brethren, let us strive to be of the same mind, and of the same judgment, united in the brotherhood, love one another, and pray for one another, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; striving with all the ability that God may give us to enter in at the strait gate, being careful to maintain good works, and to cultivate a friendly intercourse with the household of faith, knowing that we are poor, fallible creatures, and that there is no perfection in the flesh. May we look forward with joy to the period when we shall rise triumphantly to those unmeasured joys which God has prepared for those that love him. May the Lord of life and glory instruct you in divine things, and direct your hearts to the love of God, and may we meet where congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end. There will be no pain nor death felt or feared in that beau-

tiful land of rest, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Then shall Zion reign far above the reach of all her present sufferings and sorrows, in the peaceful bosom of her incarnate Savior, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit of all grace, be glory honor, power and dominion, both now and forever. Amen.

A. Winnett, Mod.
F. K. Cooper, Clerk

ORDINATION OF
ELDER WAYMAN G. CHAPPEL

In response to a request of the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn. while in conference October 6, 1970, a presbytery was called together November 8, 1970, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Wayman G. Chappel to the full work of the gospel ministry should they find him qualified according to the written word of God.

The elders and deacons of our faith and order present on the occasion were requested to sit together in the presbytery. Those present were, Elders Paul Poyner, H. R. Prince, C. S. Young, and R. H. Campbell, and deacons Elmer Prince, Warnard Lock, and J. W. Brown.

Elder C. S. Young opened the presbytery with song and prayer. Elder Paul Poyner was appointed Moderator, and Deacon J. W. Brown Clerk. The Moderator was appointed to examine the candidate. Elder Campbell having been appointed spokesman for the church. Examination of Brother Chappel was made using as the scriptural reference 1 Timothy chapter 3. The Presbytery being satisfied with the answers given by Elder Campbell, they proceeded with the laying on of their hands as the ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Prince.

Elder Campbell delivered the charge to Elder Chappel, using as scriptural reference 2 Timothy, chapters three and four.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder Chappel by the members of the Presbytery, and he was delivered back to the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an ordained minister of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church.

The Minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read for approval, adopted and ordered submitted to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

J. W. Brown, Clerk of the Presbytery

ORDINATION OF
ELDER JULIAN R. WILLIAMS
MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a prebytery met November 1, 1970 at 3:00 p. m. for the examination of brother Julian R. Williams, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun with song, "How did my heart rejoice to hear," page 140, hymn 343, Hymn and Tune Book and prayer by Elder D. V. Spangler. All Elders of our faith and order and all deacons of Staunton River Association constituted the presbytery. Those present were as following: Elders D. V. Spangler, Raymond S. Payne, Wallis A. Smith, P. E. Ingram, J. L. Smith, Cecil Turner, Kenneth Key, Haywood Wray, Rufus Brown, Leonard J. Brammer, O. K. Tench, Leonard Key and Donald E. Smith. Deacons: R. T. Holley, P. L. Holley, Wyatt Simpson, Richard Stegall, Clarence Stegall, Denver Simpson, Denver Gibson, Guy Willis, L. R. Willis and Burnell Williams.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder O. K. Tench as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elders D. V. Spangler and Cecil Turner were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Richard Stegall having been duly appointed by Malmaison Church in conference October 3, 1970, spokesman for the church delivered brother Julian R. Williams to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders D. V. Spangler and Cecil Turner. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Elder P. E. Ingram delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked deacon Richard Stegall if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Julian R. Williams and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained minister was delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church of Malmaison.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery dismissed with prayer by Elder Raymond S. Payne.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES
JACOB MERREL ADKINS

Jacob Merrel Adkins was born July 18, 1891, and it pleased the Lord to take him away from our midst on September 24, 1970. We bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God, believing that he is a righteous God and has an appointed time for all things.

He was the son of the late Jacob Merrel and Mary Emily Adkins. He was married on October 22, 1917, to Alice Laws who survives; and to this union were born three children who survive: J. Morris Adkins, Mrs. Alice May Fisher of near Berlin, Md., Mrs. Emma Katherine Esmark of Ridgewood, New Jersey. Also surviving are five grandchildren. The deceased has two brothers that survive Laurence Adkins of Parsonburg, Md. and Paul Adkins of Salisbury, Md.

The deceased was a faithful attender of the Old School Baptist meetings as long as his health would permit, enjoying the friendly hand shake of his many friends and the preaching of the doctrine that he believed. In his later years, his hearing was not very good but he always went as long as he could. There were gatherings in his home many times and preaching by different ministers who visited there and he always enjoyed it so very much.

We will miss him but we feel that he had spent his allotted time here. We desire to say, if it be God's will, may his companion, the children, his brothers and all that mourn the loss of this dear one be made to feel that their loss was his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin, Md. and his body was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery in Berlin, Md.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SISTER BESSIE GREEN

Sister Bessie Strader Green, age 75, died May 23, 1970, at Dundas Clinic, Dundas, Va. She and her late husband, Hilary S. Green, lived in the Monticello Community, N. C., for thirty-five years before moving to Dundas, Va. Born to this union were sixteen children, of whom fourteen survive. She worked hard raising this large family but was always patient and loving.

She and her husband joined the Monticello Primitive Baptist Church together in May, 1929. He preceded her in death in 1952. She manifested a great love for her church and enjoyed the preaching of the gospel of our Saviour, traveling from her home in Virginia to her home church many times when she was hardly able to sit up. She always entered the church doors with a smile on her face.

She was a wonderful mother, a good neigh-

bor, and a friend to all — to know her was to love her. It is hard to give our loved one up, but the dear Lord loved her best and called her home. She did not fear death and said "When the Lord calls, I am ready to go." She was in poor health several years but never complained. We believe her blessed spirit is resting in her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Funeral services were held at Monticello Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler; and her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery. There was much evidence of love, devotion, and friendship by the congregation; and many beautiful flowers. May the good Lord comfort all who loved her, especially the sons and daughters left to mourn their loss.

Vallie Chrisman, Church Clerk

MRS. JOHN B. PROFFITT

Roxie Mills Proffitt, widow of John Brown Proffitt of Christiansburg, Virginia, passed from this life on October 8, 1970. She is survived by three sons, Raymond, Ralph and Frank Proffitt, one grandson Randall Proffitt and one step-son Fred Proffitt. Funeral services were conducted by Elder Odell Thompson at the Richardson Funeral Home and interment was in Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg.

Mrs. Proffitt was born November 22, 1890. She was a devoted wife and mother who walked humbly through Faith in the footsteps of her Lord. Her flowers and garden received much of her devotion and she delighted in sharing the fruits of her labors with others. She saw in these creations the handiwork of the Creator of all good things and she enjoyed a communion through them often affirming the scriptural reminder that, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

Hers was a beautiful and loving spirit and her life was a blessing to all who were fortunate to know her. To know her was to love her.

Submitted by a friend and neighbor
Ruby Altizer Roberts

SISTER MAUDE BRINDLE

Sister Maude Brindle was born in Floyd County, Va., on July 8, 1898. She made her home in Danville, Va., for several years. Sister Brindle departed this life on August 14, 1970. She leaves to mourn their loss three daughters, Juanita Sizer and Sister Clara Cumbo of Danville, Va., and Sister Glenna Underwood, of Eden, N. C.; also seven grandchildren, two sisters Mrs. Maggie Priddy of Princetown, W. Va., and Mrs. Florence Ferris, of Wheaton, Md.

Sister Brindle united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 28, 1950, and was baptised by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. She was a faithful member and attended church as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood's Funeral Home by Elders Haywood Wray and Wallace Smith, and her body was laid to rest in Schoolfield Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by one who loved her.

Viola Walker.

IDA B. BUTCHER

Sister Butcher was born June 18, 1889 and was calmly and peacefully called to her heavenly home July 15, 1970, making her stay on earth 81 years. She was born in Rockingham County, North Carolina, the eldest child of the late T. W. and Sallie McKinney Scott.

In early life she was married to Turner Barber who preceded her in death by seventeen years. To this union were born nine children, seven of whom survive: daughters, Mattie Lou Sheffield of Greensboro, North Carolina, Neila Black and Naomi Pritchett of Danville, Virginia; sons, Claude T. and Calvin S. Barber of Danville, Virginia, Capers E. Barber of Reidsville, North Carolina and Thomas M. Barber of Ruffin, North Carolina. She also leaves to mourn their loss three sisters, Mrs. Blanch S. Cox, Mrs. Virginia S. Page, both of Ruffin, North Carolina, and Mrs. Georgie S. Snead of Danville, Virginia, thirteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren together with a host of relative and friends.

She was also married to Brother Ed Butcher of Danville, Virginia in 1962, also deceased.

Sister Butcher joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and was baptised by the late Elder J. F. Spangler. She loved her church and was a faithful member attending whenever her health would permit. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

A devoted wife and mother, she was loved by all who knew her. She bore her suffering without complaining and always had a smile for everyone. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be his Holy Name.

The funeral service was held from Swicegood Funeral Chapel in Danville, Virginia by Elder Raymond S. Payne, after which her body was laid to rest in the Danville Memorial Gardens beside that of her husband, to await the second coming of Christ and the glorious resurrection.

The floral offerings were many and beautiful.
Written by one who lover her.

Written by one who loved her.
Lelia Blackwell.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1971

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMEMBERING THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Chestertown, Maryland

Dear Brethren:

Since returning from the Salisbury Association much has been upon my mind. There are some who have asked me when I would write for the **Signs** again, but I seldom feel I can say anything that has not already been said, so I've remained quiet, letting those who have had the same experiences tell it better than I can. The travels of the Lord's people all tell the same wonderful story of God's abiding love and tender mercy. As I read the experiences of each one, I think of old Elder Jones. He loved to preach his experience, and often said if his experience was taken away from him, he would have nothing left. We wonder about God's love for us and why we love Him so. Then we are made aware of the fact that we love Him because He first loved us, when we were dead in sin and couldn't help ourselves. We do not merit such love.

At the Association there was much sweet preaching and I enjoyed all very much, but some even better than others. Since coming home, various parts of each service come back, time and time again, and I want to say a few words on my thoughts. When I say I "enjoy" hearing preaching, I know of no other

way to describe it, so just remember, I mean that I "savor the taste" — to the fullest extent.

Speaking briefly, I enjoyed Elders Wood, Key, Warren, Smith, Garner and Hollingsworth very much and would like to hear from them more often if it were possible. But somehow the ones that keep returning are from the other pastors' messages.

Elder Brammer spoke from the 15th Chapter of Matthew, 13th verse, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Does that make you think of anything? It did for me. Do you not see in your mind's eye the beautiful garden you planted back in your early life? Perfect rows of beautiful plants — each one planted carefully and cared for tenderly. Folks praised you for its beauty and you took pride in showing it off, as the work of your hands. Then one day the Lord began a work in your life and you began to see your garden with clearer eyes. That plant there which looked most beautiful had to be rooted out, for Pride had no place in it, and next to be rooted out, Hate, then Envy, Jealousy, Spite and Dishonesty. As each one was rooted out, a new plant, planted by the Father, was planted. Then the garden took on a new beauty, with the flowers of Love, Humility, Patience, and oh, so many more of God's beautiful flowers. All planted by His Hand and tenderly cared for. No feeling of self-righteousness there! Just praise and glory to a wonderful Father in Heaven and nothing of ourselves. As the Lord continues the good work in our hearts, one noxious plant after another is removed and where we once thought the garden in our lives was beautiful, we found it to be ugly. But now it has taken on a

perfection under the touch of His Hand. When He starts a good work in His children, He continues it 'til the day of our Salvation. A beautiful message!

Elder Spangler spoke upon the sweetness and beauty of the name of Jesus Christ, and how important it is for us to get to know Him better. To know more about what His will is for us. The importance of searching the Scriptures and finding where it says, "Thus saith the Lord." To study and heed the admonitions within the Bible. It seems that in view of all that is happening in our world today, we have more cause to look forward with keen anticipation to the Lord's return than any preceding generation. Events are shaping up quickly, that cause true believers to search the Scriptures faithfully and study them, to see how they compare with events today. The intensifying of those characteristics which the Apostle Paul declared would mark the "last days" signifies that the end is approaching. These things were in existence then (read 2 Timothy 1-3) and are increasingly so today. Our God has given us a costly treasure in his Precious Word, for there the riches of His Wisdom, Love and Grace are made known to us. All we need for time and eternity lies hidden in the blessed pages of the Bible, and as Brother Spangler so emphatically said, "**Well - read it.**" A little story I heard is worth repeating. A lady was entertaining her club one day and when the chairman was ready to open the meeting with prayer and Bible reading, she found she had left her Bible home. Asking the hostess for hers, she went to the stand where she usually kept it, but it wasn't there, and she couldn't find it. She called in her new maid and asked her if she knew where it was. The maid's face lit up with joy and she said, "Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord." The lady was amazed and asked her why she said that. She said, "Every time I start a new job, I always hide the Bible to see how long it is before they miss it." She had hid it in the linen closet under the sheets, and was happy she was in a home that

used the Bible.

I am so thankful the Lord blessed me with a hearing ear and a receptive heart all thru the meeting and even though I enjoyed the short messages Elder Griffin gave us between regular sermons, I was so thankful I stayed over 'til the regular meeting at Snow Hill on Sunday. It seemed as though Elder Griffin saved the best for the last — the "icing on the cake" as it were. He spoke of the difference between Grace and Mercy, a powerful sermon. When he was through I felt full, and ready to go home. "Grace" has been described sometimes as kindness bestowed upon the undeserving. Grace finds the sinner, a rebel, and leaves him as a child of God. Grace finds him wandering on the brink of destruction, at the end of the world, and leads him through the gates of Heaven. None of us would ever have sought our God, were it not for Grace. We can look about us at the dregs of humanity and say with compassion, "There but for the Grace of God, go I." We also thank God for His Mercy. His infinite Wisdom provided redemption, whereby salvation and redemption are provided a people which He in justice alone would have rightly condemned. Grace refers to the sins of men and Mercy to their miserable condition. God extends his Grace to us, because we are guilty and His Mercy because we are in a miserable condition. Maybe my wording isn't placed exactly right, because the thoughts have been faster than my pen, but I hope my meaning is clear. By Grace are ye saved, not by our works, lest any man should boast. But because He had Mercy upon our sinful condition. I feel when we hear the Word of God preached, it is not as the word of men, but it is in truth the Word of God, which always works effectively in those that believe.

Ah, my precious Brothers, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad tidings of good things (Romans 10-15). The troubles of the world seem far away when we meet together in love

and fellowship, in peace with one another, and I trust, with our Blessed Lord. Throughout the long winter months, I only hear preaching once a month and the weeks are long between, but if it is the Lord's Will, I do not want to miss even one of those seasons of feasting. When I am at the banquet table of the Lord, I feel to be as Mephibosheth — lame in both legs, and feasting upon the richness of God's Mercy and Grace to one so small and weak.

Please overlook any errors and if any part is not in accord with the doctrine and order, please omit and forgive.

A little sister
Ruth Lucht

HIS GRANDFATHER'S EXPERIENCE

115 Bayou Drive
Channelview, Texas 77530

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Please accept this money order for renewal of my subscription and use the remainder for the poor. The *Signs* started coming to me in July of last year. My father subscribed for me and I am not sure just when it will run out.

It is my desire to submit the enclosed article to the *Signs* for publication. It was sent to my mother last June from Mr. Pilgreen. I have done my best to write my grandfather's thoughts as nearly as possible. The pencil written tablet was well worn with time.

Robbie Holloway

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Written July 9, 1918)

By your permission it is my desire, if it be the Lord's will, to speak a word of spiritual comfort to those that are weary of sin and sorrow; to those who wander in the wilderness hungry and thirsty. If I am able to comfort you, it is evident that I have been

brought through thorny paths myself in the light of God's divine truth. I hope to have been given to see my exceeding sinfulness.

When I was a small boy, about ten years old, I heard a school teacher tell a dream of heaven. She told the dream to a class of young students. The dream was wonderful to me. Tears would flow in spite of me. Oh, how I longed to go to heaven when I died, but I thought such a sweet place is not for me. Something even then began to show me that I was a sinner and was condemned. Oh, such anguish of soul, I can not describe. Oh, that I were one of them that would dwell in heaven.

When school was out I went home with the others but in my mind I was alone in the midst of my trouble, — something suggested, if you will be a good boy, you will go to heaven when you die. I thought I could do this. Therefore I with a determined mind set out on a hard journey. I rebuked my little sister that night and told her if she would be a good girl she would go to heaven. Before I was aware my mind had grown cold and careless; so by and by I gave it all up, with the notion that I would be good when I got older.

As I went on there was now and then a serious thought about myself and the gospel. I loved to hear people talk about God and the scripture, but did not want anyone to know it. I wanted to read the Bible but was ashamed for anyone to know it. As I grew older I was considered a good boy by those that did not know me very well, but I was just as sinful as others. I was restrained from some bad habits, as I was raised by strict parents. For this I owe a gratitude that cannot be expressed.

I attended Primitive Baptist meetings and now and then would get some expressions that would stay with me. I was strange for some cause and other children my age did not seem to like my company. On one occasion when in the company of boys, I would not use profane language. Because of this, they called me preacher.

When I was about seventeen, all thoughts of a serious nature seemed to leave me. I became reckless and didn't care for anything. During a Missionary Baptist meeting, I felt better in my way of seeing and joined the missionaries. In a very short time it was revealed to me what a hypocrite I was. This brought me great trouble, with no peace of mind. I went out in the moonlight and knelt on a sandy place and promised the Lord that I was going to do better. Binding myself under a strict oath to that end.

As soon as I did something that I considered wrong, I went to bed in sorrow. In my sleep I dreamed the Lord spoke these words to me: "Now his oath is no good." This firmly condemned me. Oh, the sorrow and grief, trouble and misery, of a condemned sinner before God. After all my fig leaf apron has concealed nothing. I was made to understand that I was naked, guilty, and exposed to justice, which was well deserved. There was no place to flee, no hiding place, no refuge in the works of the creature. "Before the spotless throne of grace I fall, worthy to drink the wormwood and the gall."

Now for several years I was totally condemned without hope and without God in the world. I groaned under the yoke of bondage. I had no hope in the world to come. Yet at times I had great things in view for this life. I married at the age of eighteen which was a happy time, but I was distressed because of my unworthiness in the face of my Maker. I became disgusted with the conditional church which I had joined first. I believed the doctrine of the Bible and was not afraid to contend for it before anyone, although I did not feel to be included in all its glorious promises.

At this time my health failed me. I felt impressed to talk on the scriptures, but I would think every time I did it would be my last. I found that I was unable to quit. Finally my health got so bad, I was forced to seek the help of doctors. They said I had pellagra in

the last stages. I was so distressed I could not sleep; I could not keep from praying no matter where I was or what I was doing. Tears dimmed my eyes.

One night unexpectedly I fell asleep and dreamed of being in a very deep valley surrounded by high mountains. Everything looked dry and parched, no vegetation growing. I thought I was in the lowest part of the valley and no way to escape. Something caused me to look behind and I saw in a lower part of this great valley a beautiful spring of water. There was fire between me and the spring. Then I saw the fire taken away and the water clear as crystal; and seeing this spring in the midst of a desert took away from my mind the thoughts of the mountains and my face was towards the spring. I awoke without any great burden of guilt, praising God. It was impossible for me to restrain my mind from praising Him.

I felt impressed to go to the Old Baptists, but did not want them to know it. I also was impressed to believe at times that the Lord had bid me go stand in the temple and speak unto the people all the words of this life. I could never do this without knowing of a certainty that it was given me of the Lord. Once I was in great trouble desiring to know whether the impression was of the Lord or not. It fell on my mind all at once to open the Bible and read where it opened, and see whether it would condemn me or not. Where I opened it, the first passage I read was when the Lord said to the prophet, "Open thy mouth and swallow what I give thee." Somehow I felt this scripture applied to me, but did not feel that I ever would give in to it. I felt to be so mean. On one occasion I went in a store to buy a Bible and the young lady clerk passed the ordinary Bibles and brought me a minister's Bible. "You wanted a minister's Bible, did you not?"

I read my Bible and could see the truth so plainly, and I thought that anyone could. When I saw one take the wrong view of the scripture, I would try to convince them of their

wrong. People in the community began to call me the preacher. This did not suit me and I resolved to quit talking scripture. But before I knew it I would be at it again. I was so burdened I often asked signs of the Lord to assure me whether the Lord had given me this impression or not. I felt that if He would give me a sign, I would not doubt any more. So I asked for the sign, and as soon as I did this scripture came to me in fiery tones, "There shall be no sign given this generation." So this not only shook my confidence in its being of the Lord, but shook my hope also.

Not long afterwards I was restored to my former frame of mind to ask a sign. I saw where the Lord gave a sign of the dry fleece and wet fleece and so on, and I was encouraged to ask a sign. During this time I loved to be alone all the time. Sometimes I would take my little family to my mother's on Sunday. We lived nearby. Then I would go back home and stay there alone all day. Some of my people thought I was losing my mind.

One evening I desired to go fishing. My objective was to get where I would be alone. I had only four hooks and two of them had no lead on their line. While digging bait I asked the Lord if my impression was of him, that I might catch a fish to each hook. So I set the hooks. The hooks that had no lead floated up on the top of the water. I had no hope of anything being caught on them.

The next morning I went to the two hooks that had sinkers first, but did not expect to find anything on them, but I took two fine fish off the first hooks. I put new bait on the hooks and went on down the creek to get the other two. They had nothing on them. I took them up and came back to take the others up. I had caught two more fine fish. So the sign was fulfilled, I had caught a fish to every hook. I concluded it was a good time to fish and did no more toward asking a sign. Sometimes the same impression would bother me so much, I could hardly do anything. I

became dissatisfied where I was living. It seemed I would not have the trouble I was having if I could move. Consequently, I moved to a town called El Dorado, Arkansas. There I had my same burden but seemed to pass it off better for a while. My family got sick, my expenses grew heavy and I wanted to move back home. I was ashamed for anyone to know this.

Finally, I moved back home and began to go to hear the Old Baptists preach. I did not realize they knew I was a regular attendant. At first I would not go anywhere near the front of the church. To my surprise I was deeply interested in the preaching, more than I had ever been before. It was so sweet and comforting to me. I would find myself leaning toward the preacher. I read my Bible almost every time I had a chance. I became so interested that I would go quite a distance to the Old Baptist meetings, but did not think they would notice. One day the pastor of the church nearest home (Elder W. K. Smith) said, when he saw me at a district meeting, a long way from home. "Reason, what are you doing here?" I said, "I do not know." He replied, "I am satisfied you don't." Then he told another preacher brother, standing nearby, that I was digging after the truth. I wondered how he knew: He seemed to know more about how I felt than I did. At least he could tell my feelings better than I ever have.

Finally, the association was held at the home church and I made great preparations for it. The first day at dinner one of the old deacons said to me, "You just as well come on and be with us." I replied, "You don't want a hypocrite do you?" He said, "No." "I am afraid I am one." He said, "Well God's people shall be a willing people in the day of his power."

I became deeply troubled about joining and slept hardly any during the meeting. The preaching was so sweet to me. Finally, I became so willing on the night before the meeting closed next day, I promised the Lord that I would

join. The next morning, I was far from that notion, but when they began to sing I wanted to go. Something seemed to ask me what will you say if you go? Some power enabled me to trust the Lord for this.

I was received and Baptized by Elder W. K. Smith and I felt happy and free. I did not think I ever would be troubled any more. I was mistaken indeed, before sundown I was in deep trouble. I did not sleep any more until I was made willing to speak in the name of the Lord. As soon as I did, I hated that I had acknowledged my calling, but the next night I slept all night. It was the first sleep I had since the meeting began. Three weeks from the time I joined, I was given liberty to speak by the church.

I have felt at times that I was deceived and that I deceived the people of God. It was three weeks before I made any effort to speak in public. During this three weeks I dreamed of preaching to a large congregation seated all around me. The first effort I made in church was at Liberty Hill. It was the same congregation I saw in my dream, the pulpit being in one side of the house instead of being in the end. As they were all seated around me, it was given me to lose almost all doubt that the Lord was with me. By and by the flesh was puffed up over the idea of being a preacher. I knew it was a shame, but I could not or did not help it. I was exalted almost above measure. The Lord suffered me to go on.

Finally, I was called on to go to a place quite a distance from where I lived. I had never been there and the brethren had been told that I was a big preacher, and I knew it. I went on Saturday and found a big crowd of people. They had given me out and had already started service, but they stopped everything when they saw me. I went in the stand and was as dumb as a stump, as far as preaching was concerned I had to sit down; and Oh, how I did wish I was at home. My discom-

fort was so great that I thought I would leave that evening. The brethren would not hear of my going home. One of the old deacons came to me after service and said, "Well, Brother Rhodes, you made a failure today." I said, "I know it, Brother Bowen." He said, "Well I am glad to see you make a failure. I heard so much talk of your preaching and if you did not make a failure some times, I would be afraid it was not God's given gospel."

Nothing they could do or say helped my feelings. It was the first time I had ever been compelled to sit down without saying anything. I fully decided I was not a preacher any more, if I had ever been. That Sunday morning before service an older brother and I were nearing the church and talking. Some power strengthened me and made me feel reconciled over my failure. I feel that the Lord gave me sweet liberty that day. I went home feeling that the Lord had not utterly taken his loving kindness from me. This was a lesson which I was to remember. I have been made to feel glad that the Lord showed me where my strength to preach was, and I hope he will ever be pleased to keep me in an humble place, depending alone on his mercy.

Not long after this I said something in the stand at Liberty Hill Church in a way as if it had been scripture, but it was not. In substance it was the truth. A great pressure caused me to feel that I had sinned. Later on it came to my mind that if I had ever preached the gospel, it was by the Holy Ghost. Then, I was made to feel that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, which was unpardonable. Oh my soul, how miserable I did feel. There was no place of rest for me. This sin is not to be forgiven in this world nor in the next. I tried to pray but could not. These words would distress me. "All manner of sin and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men except the sin against the Holy Ghost."

I was sure I had committed this sin.

Oh, how dark was the path under this trial. There was no comfort for me anywhere but I hope the dear Lord heard my pitiful cry for Jesus sake. I could not keep from trying to pray to relieve my troubled and weary soul. Then the spirit of the Lord brought this beautiful meaning of scripture to me. "The blood of Jesus Christ His son, cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore, I was loosed out of the great prison wherein I was helplessly buried, and was made to rejoice in God my Saviour once more. I found it hard to stay at home; and do until this day. Yet, I feel that is where I belong, for I feel to be so ignorant and sinful and unprofitable.

(Concluded next issue.)

EXPERIENCE OF MANY YEARS AGO

1902 McCutchen Street
Shreveport, La. 71108

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

It is with much fear and trembling that I finally decided to send you a copy of my story. It is the truth if I am not deceived; and I hope and pray that I am not because it is the most beautiful thing that ever came to me; and though it came to me many years ago, I still keep it in my heart and feed upon it, and re-live it over and over; not being able to feel the power of God's hands lifting me, but just thinking upon it fills my heart.

Some have asked me to send it after I finally let them read it, but I am full of fear; and I guess I was afraid some might not believe me, but I can only say that it happened to me, and I hope and pray that I am not deceived in believing it came from God, for nothing less could have done this to a wretch like me.

I want most of all to give God all the praise, honor, and glory for giving this to such as I am, if it be the truth in me; but sometimes I am what might be called a "doubting Thomas," but I

am what God made me. My nature is of no good thing but if God has seen fit to save a wretch like me, then I hope to give Him glory forever and ever. This, if I am His child, is my anchor of hope: what I believe to be the hope of His calling.

Was it a dream? I was awake if I am not deceived. Was it a vision? I saw nothing but was filled with love, joy, and peace like I had never known. Whatever it was, I hope it was of God. If you find anything usable in it, you have my permission to use it, giving God all the credit, for in my flesh dwells no good thing . . .

I have been reading the *Signs* for some time, and it is full of love and comfort: the joy I have received from it is indeed a comfort and pleasure.

I was received into the church, and was so happy that they would have such as I am. I hope and pray that neither I or they are deceived in me. I loved the good old Primitive Baptist people long before I could ask for a home with them; but they have been so sweet to me and have comforted me more than they know. Do whatever you will with this, but please keep the good old *Signs* coming my way, for it is full of spiritual food for the hungry.

I wish to ask all of God's people to pray for me; and may God bless each and every one of you.

Just a poor, weak sinner saved
by grace, if at all,
Katherine Mathews

(Due to lack of space we are not including poetry. See next issue for the further writing. — J. D. W.)

A POOR SINNER'S EXPERIENCE

What we call society is in a very rapid pace of change. However, no matter how much change is going on in this world, I am thankful to God that his Word has and will remain unchanged from the beginning to the end. Because God said "I am Alpha and

Omega, the Beginning and the End.” We should be forever-more praising our God for the mercies which we have received, and for the hope of Eternal Life which we feel that we have been given which is to come after this walk or journey in the wilderness has been completed and natural man is finished.

Often times I feel that I may be a deceiver as Judas was, and I know that Christ knows those of his. Christ said, “I know My Sheep, they hear My Voice and they follow Me.” God having chosen his people before the foundation of this world, no man can take away or add to the number of Sheep in the Most Holy Master’s fold. I feel so unworthy of the love which my brethren have shown me that I often wonder how God could love one such as I, if I be in that number. But I hope I can witness with Paul when he said, “By the Grace of God I am what I am.” Knowing that only through grace could I have a hope of Eternal Life, because I am such a vile and weak being that I can do nothing, and am dependent on God to give me the strength to take my next breath.

I feel that I have been made to love the “Old Baptists” because the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace is so sweet to a poor sinner’s ear when God opens that ear. I can only have a hope of being lifted out of the depth of hell, and set upon that strong foundation with a new song in my mouth to sing and praise the Living God who has not forsaken his children. Sometimes, I feel that I should depart from the Old Baptists because I have nothing to offer them, but as Peter said, “To whom shall I go” for the “Old Baptists” are preaching Christ; and He has the words of eternal life. I hope that I have died and risen again with Him and His blood was shed for me.

I felt to be burdened to go to the Old Baptists and ask for a home with them, but knowing myself I could not go. Then in April of 1968, they were having a Wednesday night meeting. While

singing the hymn: “How happy are they who their Savior obey, and whose treasures are laid up above,” I could not stay away any longer and I was asking for a home with Pittman’s Grove Church. Also, my wife and a dear friend came up and were asking to be taken in. Oh, what a beautiful night that was! After being baptized the second Sunday in May, it seemed that I had been relieved of a great burden. However, it was not long before I felt to be burdened down again. At night when I tried to sleep, I could see myself standing before my brethren speaking to them of God’s Holy Word and praising His Name with an everlasting praise. It seemed to stay on my mind, and I would at times find myself speaking aloud when riding along the road. Finally, I told one of the deacons. The second Saturday in September I stood and spoke to the congregation. After speaking several times, I had a dream that I was telling my friends about it and they began to laugh and make fun. I said that I would never stand and speak again; then I plainly heard a voice which said, “Stand and continue to speak in My Name.”

The second Saturday in December, Pittman’s Grove Church liberated me to speak to the other churches. I hope that God has and will continue to bless me to speak Words of Comfort and proclaim Salvation by Grace, according to God’s Will. The world likes to proclaim Salvation by Choice according to man. The world cannot and does not know anything of Christ who came not to save the world but to save that which His Father gave Him. Through the manifestation of Christ Jesus dying and shedding His blood on the cross, He paid the Price of the Law of God which the flesh of man could not do. We all must die because of sin which abides in our flesh. “When sin is finished it brings forth death.” Also as Paul wrote, “If Christ be in you, the body is dead

because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.”

On the old rugged Cross He hanged
But death could not reign;
He died not for what He had done
Only to save that which His Father had
chosen.

The second Sunday in April 1969, I was ordained into the full work of the ministry. This is a high office and also at the same time a low office. Unless God has laid His hand of love upon me then it is all in vain. I know that Christ chose twelve and He knew one of them was a devil. Am I as one of the eleven or am I that devil? I have a precious hope that I am as one of the eleven and that a Crown of Eternal Life has been laid in store for me. I desire to be in a state of perfection, but, because of the warfare of the flesh, I often wonder am I a Child of God at all. I can only cry to God and beg for His rich mercies. “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion so then it is not of him that will-eth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy — For he saith to Moses . . .” (Romans 9:15-16). I continuously desire the prayers of all of God’s children and the love which I am so unworthy of. As Paul said, “of sinners I am the chiefest.”

Elder Curtis Rains

REMEMBERING FORMER YEARS

Swansboro, N. C. 28584

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Since our enjoyable visit with you sometime ago, we have had many pleasant thoughts concerning your kindness, love and hospitality manifested to us while in your good home. Hope that both of you are enjoying God’s richest blessings and that your health is still good, together with your loved ones. We have made slow but steady improvement since we were there. We hope to

be thankful that the good Lord has spared our unprofitable lives until now and we certainly have much to be thankful for.

Elder Wood, while looking over some old minutes of some of the associations dating back many years, I noticed one dated October, 1933 of the White Oak Primitive Baptist Association held with the Church at Sandhill, Duplin County. Elder R. W. Gurganous a highly gifted servant of God was the Moderator at the time. While looking over the order of the preaching we found that you were the second speaker on Sunday morning and your text was, Ephesians 1:1-5. When seeing you listed as one of the speakers I wondered if you still recall your visit in eastern North Carolina. This Church where the Association was convening isn’t very far from Swansboro where we live. Your text on that occasion was the same that I tried to speak from only a few days ago and enjoyed sweet liberty. The fourth verse was what impressed me very much, “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.” These are sweet words to poor sinners when the Spirit enables us to feel that we are embraced in the covenant that was ordered in all things and sure.

If indeed we know anything about the wonderful workings of the love of God in the heart of a condemned sinner, we realize it is according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. If we have ever been blessed to sing songs of praise to him or preach the gospel of the Son of God to his humble poor and to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, it is according as he has chosen us. Our experience has taught us that everything that we are in grace while we sojourn here, and what we hope to be in the world to come, is according as he has chosen us in his son before we ever had a being in this world. What a wonderful thought when we can see

through our past lives where the Good Lord has taken care of us through every valley and dark place that we have been called to pass, and blessed us with every natural as well as all spiritual blessings that we ever received.

While meditating after looking through these old minutes and the *Signs of the Times* and other sources of the past, it makes us feel sad when we see so many names of the old servants that have passed on to their heavenly reward, but still hold a sweet place in our memory. So many changes have been brought about among the Lord's people that have caused heart aches and sorrows between brethren that once seemed to love each other and the cause of Jesus Christ and the Church. We wonder if there will ever be a coming together and a revival in the churches. One thing is reassuring, the Lord is still calling young men to preach the gospel to the poor, and we believe he will continue to do so until every heir of promise has been brought into the militant kingdom. When this is accomplished we can think of no more use the Lord will have for this world as we know it. All it will take when the time comes to destroy this universe is for God to withdraw his power, or to say "Let it be" as he did in the beginning when he said, "Let there be light and there was light." He has told us that "My grace is sufficient." This is where our hope lies.

May the God of all grace keep and uphold his people and gather them together from time to time and make them rejoice in a Saviour's love.

We hope for both of you a joyous Christmas in the true sense, and not only for you but for them that you love as well as those that love you. We pray God's blessings upon you in the years to come, and may you be blessed to preach glad tidings to his people as he has blessed you these many years; and we would hope that it is in the providence of Him that worketh all things after the council of His own

will, for you to visit in our little Church and home sometime.

Your unworthy brother and sister,
Jabez and Vilma Rhue

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2

Smithfield, N. C. 27577

Dear Elder Spangler:

My desire today is to write my experience. Before I begin I would like to say that I cannot express by pen or any form of communication, even half of the mercies of God to this poor worm of the dust.

I cannot say, as I have heard others say, "I was raised in a Primitive Baptist home." I was raised in an Arminian home with wonderful and loving parents. I was born June 14, 1942.

As a child I often felt that I was lonesome, though I had many natural friends. I was not particularly concerned with my sins; in fact I had quite a good time, naturally speaking. I enjoyed the pleasures of the flesh. I was raised to go to this society, Arminian Church, and from time to time I would think about salvation, but I felt I could "get saved" when I chose to do so. I went to Sunday School; and enjoyed the pleasures of the world. I was happy in a world that I thought I controlled. I truly felt that I was the master of my own destiny: that I could choose any way I wanted. My sins did not bother me because I felt I was as good as most people, and even better than some.

I went this way for about seventeen years — then something happened. My world began to crumble, and I began to see things I did not want to see. I began to see Wayne Mitchell as he really was. Sunday school did not show me these things: never has and never will. I began to see a polluted, destitute, helpless, hell deserving sinner: it wasn't my neighbor, it wasn't my brother — it was me. As my world was crum-

bling, I began to try to patch it up. I had evil thoughts, so I tried to think good thoughts. I had evil ways, so I tried to do good things. My speech was evil, so I tried to clean up my words.

Brethren, I failed miserably. The only thing Sunday school ever taught me was that I had a *free will*. I found this was a lie, that I had nothing but a will to sin, a nature so hell bent that all the works of my flesh could not alter my nature. God showed me that of sinners I was the chief, the worst of the whole lot, and that I was not better than any one, but worse. I could not help myself: I could not keep the law of God; I could not save myself. Then I began to be afraid, for I knew I was lost and couldn't do any thing about it. I tried. I promised God everything I could think of, and I broke each promise. I promised or bargained with God that if He would save me, I would be better and help him save others.

Brethren, I did not know about a God that did not need any help. Then God showed me hell, and I was in it. I was afraid to go to sleep for I knew that if I died surely hell would be my home, and I knew that I deserved it because I had transgressed the law of God, and was a sinner eternally lost. And then, when it seemed I tried every scheme to extricate myself from this horrible pit, and failed, the Providence of God that I did not know about intervened.

I did not know anything about Primitive Baptists, nor the God they trusted in. As I intimated, I was at the end of my rope — my good works had run out and I felt utterly lost. My uncle, Ruffin Mitchell, lived close to me, and one Sunday morning something compelled me to call him and ask him to take me to his church. It was the fourth Sunday in September ten years ago. He took me with him to Upper Black Creek Church that Sunday. I got to the meeting house and went inside; and as those dear saints began to come in, I saw the most wonderful love within

them for one another. The expressions on their faces were truly touching.

They began to sing out of an un-noted Lloyd Hymn Book, and they sounded like angels. Around eleven o'clock Elder Gerald Pate stood up and welcomed the congregation, and opened the service with the most humble and at the same time glorious prayer. He prayed to an almighty God, a God that controlled him, and everything else. It was the first time that I had heard a man pray for spiritual blessings, and not give man praise for some deeds that men had done. But it was most glorious when they began to preach about a God that saved hell deserving sinners not because they were good, not because they had changed themselves for salvation, but simply because He loved them before they were ever born into this world. He preached to beggars, and I knew I was a beggar. He preached to people who could not help themselves, and I felt to be one of those. He preached of a hope of glory; and I felt a precious hope well up within my poor, trembling breast. It was a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

For many months after that Sunday I began to go to all the various Primitive Baptist Churches in our area. It seemed they all sang the same song of Salvation by Grace and Grace Alone. I had a deep desire to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church. Elder W. E. Turner it seemed knew me like a book. Every time I heard him preach it seemed he preached my experience and feelings in such a touching way.

Then one night I laid on my bed, but that bed could not hold me. I believe God made that bed too short for me to lie on: these words came to my mind, join the church *now*. I wanted to wait but could not wait; so I called my uncle and we went to Deacon Popes' house, and many of the brethren came there, and I told them my feelings, and was accepted into Pittman's Grove Church; which has been a wonderful home ever

since. I did not feel worthy then, and, Brother Spangler, I do not feel worthy now, but it has been so wonderful in my feelings to be in the church.

I do not know that I am one of His, I only have a hope that God has done something for me that I could not do for myself. I was baptized the second Sunday in November, 1961, by Elder W. E. Turner. Two years later Pittman's Grove Church called for my ordination as a deacon. Again I told them I did not feel worthy, but bowed to the mind of the church. While trying to serve as a deacon, I was again cast down; and I will now attempt to tell you of, I hope, my being called into the ministry of the God of all Glory.

It seemed to be a burden that I could not bear. I thought that of all the members of the churches around, I was the most unworthy for such a burden to be placed on. It came to me so plainly that I would have to preach, but I was not worthy to stand before the wonderful saints of God. I felt that surely they knew more than I, and what possible comfort could I give them. So I ran; and tried to run into the things of the world. Again I promised God that if I could wait a little while until I could accumulate some property and money, then I would preach. Again I broke all my promises to this merciful God. It then pleased God to take away all the natural wealth I had accumulated, and bring me to a poverty stricken nature. I will not hesitate to tell you that I had to go deeper into the belly of hell to preach than to join the church.

Again He taught me what I was in my nature. Brethren, I went to college to preach all right, but it was not the college of men but the college of experience, making me willing to be this great God's anything. I still worried about losing all my friends in a natural way, but I was taught that Jesus was the only real friend I had. He kept me when I could not keep myself; He loved me when it seemed no one else did.

It was Jesus that gave me a hope when all was despair and sorrow. These words seemed to be in my mind, "Take no thought of what thou shalt say, for it shall be given thee in the self-same hour." God then made me not to be ashamed to own his cause or to defend the doctrine of Grace; and I hope to preach it to the comfort of hell-deserving sinners, not giving praise to men but ascribing all the glory to Israel's God — the God of all Grace, Truth, and Love.

I have had many experiences in my young life, but to be blessed to baptize a precious brother or sister who has testified that he believes in this great God, and has a hope in Christ Jesus, is joy unspeakable and full of glory. In August, 1968, the church at Pittman's Grove called for my ordination to the full work of the ministry. Elder W. E. Turner and Elder D. B. Stokes participated in the ordination.

I hope and pray that I have preached the God of Love and Saving Power to the comfort of His little ones. I feel so unworthy in my flesh, for I am a sinner by nature, but my hope is in the Lord.

In hope of life eternal,
Elder Wayne Mitchell

SIGNS MEAN MUCH TO HER

Brampton, Ontario
Canada

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Am enclosing an obituary of a dear friend; also money-order for subscription for two years and balance for the Indigent Fund. My intentions were to write a letter for the *Signs* and have this obituary typewritten for you. How true the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak . . ."

Words cannot express how much the *Signs* have meant to me. May the Lord see fit to continue to have it printed in the future, and may He richly bless the

editors, writers, and those who enjoy the precious Word of God.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
Mrs. Verna Carscadden

A GLORIOUS MESSAGE

Rt. 1
West Frankfort, Ill. 62896

This is not a Christmas story. I do not write of days but of night.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." (Luke 2:8)

"I saw the tents of Cushan (or darkness) in affliction." (Habakkuk 3:7)

We surely are in a night of darkness and affliction as we travel this vale of tears, troubles, sickness and death on every hand. "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:13, 14)

What a glorious message! I hope my ears have been enabled to hear it; our printed word, the *Signs*, watched over by the editors. We travel far to hear the messages we love proclaimed by the earthly shepherds among the Old School Primitive Baptists, who travel far in sickness and in health.

The only things in my life on earth that matter are where we can speak to one another, and hear this dear message, "Peace on earth," the song of my hope. All other things fade into nothing. Not once a year, but all of a life lived in hope.

I had to write this feeling so unworthy to take up space or time.

A lone pilgrim,
Mrs. Cecil Neal

HER CUP RAN OVER

Rt. 2, Box 62-A
Ferrum, Va. 24088

Signs of the Times:

I write with the memory of my deceased mother, Betty Hatcher, whose membership was at Long Branch Church, Franklin County, Va.

On Wednesday morning before day, in a dream or vision, I was at Long Branch where a congregation had met for worship. During the service my mind was caught away and I was unaware of what was going on; when I became aware, we were shaking hands and my mother was standing beside me dressed in a long white dress or robe. She looked so very young and pretty that I cannot describe her beauty. While the people were rushing to get to her, I shook her hand and hugged and kissed her; and I was full of joy. Then I awoke.

Yesterday, January 3rd, was our regular meeting time at Long Branch. The roads were in some places icy but there were about forty people there. Brother Hale Terry and my pastor, Elder Amos Hash, were there to speak for us. They were so wonderfully blessed, and I was filled with the same joy that I was the four days before in the dream or vision. It was all so sweet to me that my cup ran over again.

Hattie Radford

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 5
Kernersville, N. C. 27284

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing some of my experiences that you may put in the *Signs*, if you see fit to do so.

When I was about ten years old I was standing in the yard, and all at once I was over shadowed with such a good feeling that I called to my mother and said, "Mother, I feel so good that I do not know what to do." It seemed to me that the tree branches were in praise to Almighty God. As the years passed by, I had a vision or dream in

which I felt someone lay his hand on my forehead, and I raised up to see who it was: It was Jesus standing at the foot of my bed. He wore a long, white robe, and his hair was as white as snow; and his eyes shined like gold. As I was looking upon this beautiful image, he went up. How good I felt! I felt that I would never have any more trouble; but how disappointed I was.

I went to hear the Primitive Baptists preach, and I enjoyed the preaching and singing — it was music to my poor soul. After I was married my wife and I attended the different Primitive Baptist Churches. I loved them so much that I desired a home with them, but did not feel worthy of such; and my wife's people being of another faith, I felt there might be a cross between us. But to my surprise, she joined the Primitive Baptists one Saturday when I was at home working. I had begged the Lord to give her a mind to join the Baptist church so that there would be no cross between us. After she joined she told me I would have to join too. I told her that I could not, and she said, "Yes, but you will have to." She said she had a dream that we were baptized together, and that an angel was standing in the water.

Oh, what a burden came over me! I had been begging the Lord to make my companion willing, and I would join also; and now I was rebelling against it. I got so burdened that I felt I could not live. It was a very dry time for it had not rained in a long time. It looked like everything was going to perish. I was so burdened that I went down to my barn, and went down on my knees and begged the Lord to send us some rain, — and a voice spoke to me saying, "Join the church and it will rain." I went to church the next meeting and when the doors of the church were opened, I went before the church and asked for a home, and they received me. That night I awoke, and it was raining so beautifully. I remember that small voice which spoke to me.

When I was baptized I was so happy that I felt the burden I had been carrying was left in the water. When I came out of the water there appeared a white streak about twelve inches wide connected to my breast that extended in the beautiful eastern sky; and wherever I went it went with me, and I felt so good. It has meant much to me, though I feel so little and unworthy to meet with God's people, whom I hope I love. I believe in salvation by the grace of God: one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism.

Sometime after I joined the church, they called me to serve as a deacon. I asked the church to call someone else as I felt it would be a great burden on me, and I did not feel worthy to do so. The Moderator said, "Brother Williard, the church has called you to serve them, and you should be submissive to the church." I went home with a great burden, and I told my companion that I would not serve as deacon, and that I would not let them ordain me. My burden got heavier, and I began to beg the Lord that if it were right for me to serve the church, to give me a sign; and I had a dream that I was standing on the church grounds, and heard a child crying at the foot of an oak tree that stood on the grounds. I started to go where I heard the child crying, and as I got near the tree, a fire appeared between me and the tree, and I could not move. A voice spoke to me and said, "Wilt thou do my will?" and I knew it was the voice of the Lord. I said, "Oh Lord, what is thy will that thou would have me to do?" At my right I saw a table surrounded by the brethren; and when I saw this, I was able to move. The fire went out, and the child stopped crying. I believe the child I heard crying represented the church, and the table represented the communion table; and the brethren were the ones that I would have to serve. I believe the fire burned out my unworthy feeling and made me willing to serve the church as deacon.

I could continue to write of wonderful things the Lord has shown me but time and space will not permit.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Gilmer L. Williard

CHRIST THE GREATEST PERSONAGE
(Song of Solomon 5:10,16)

The greatest personage that ever lived,
I said of Christ as I slumbered;
He is "the chiefest among ten thousand,"
And bless'd are they with his numbered.

Yea, he's the one altogether lovely,
We read in the scripture of truth,
And somehow I had kindly thoughts of him
In the far-away days of my youth.

I read the New Testament nearly through
When I was fourteen years of age,
And was provoked at the treatment of him
By his enemies in their rage.

I didn't know it behooved him to suffer
According to God's appointment,
That he was from the high courts of glory,
By the heavenly Father sent.

We read that it pleased the Lord to bruise him,
And that he hath put him in grief;
He suffered an ignominious death
Along with the penitent thief.

He "endured the cross, despising the shame,"
And did the moral law fulfill;
In active and passive obedience,
He always did his Father's will.

Now there are many things to divert the mind
From heavenly things here below,
But may I ever be mindful of him,
Who is eternal life to know.

And now that I have reached my fourscore
years,
May the remainder of my days,
In this changing world of sin and sorrow,
Be spent to the greatest One's praise.

409 New York Avenue
C. W. Vass
Elizameth City, N. C.

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER

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

Dear Elder Wood:

On behalf of Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Swansboro, N. C. we are inclosing for publication when you have space available, an account of action taken by presbytery called by our Church to convene October 9, 1970 during the sitting of our Association, The Contentnea, for the purpose of ordaining our young brother Robert H. Lyliston, which the Church felt had manifested a gift to preach the gospel of the Son of God. Many of our beloved brethren in the Contentnea and other Associations were present and sat with us and either participated or observed the work of this presbytery. We truly hope and pray that our dear brother and Elder will be led by the Holy Spirit and enabled to preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord and that he will be received in love and fellowship by our brethren wherever the Lord calls Him to go.

We invite you and all the other brethren to visit our Church when your mind leads you to do so. Done by order of Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church.

Vilma G. Rhue, Clerk

(See notice of ordination this issue.)

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky.

Editors of the *Signs*:

Jesus is Truth, and Truth is what your paper — and Our Paper — is standing upon.

We older ones may get to the place where we can't go to church services, and the *Signs* would be our "preaching services." We know, too, we could get to where we couldn't see: God alone knows what our lot in this life is. To be submissive is our desire, if we know ourselves.

Enclosed is a check for another two year's subscription.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

Danville, Virginia March, 1971

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St.
Winnboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

We wish to express through The Signs of the Times our sincere thanks to all who have so kindly remembered us on our Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary, as it is impossible to reply to so many individually.

*Elder George and
Sister Esther Ruston*

"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to

faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:15-17)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To January 1, 1971)

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 43:10

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

The above sentence came to our mind a few days ago when journeying from one of our appointments, and with it we experienced a deep humiliation, while considering what manner of men we ought to be in all holiness of conversation, yet along with that, a holy gladness that the Lord had so bestowed his abundant grace upon us that we should be a living witness of his blessed truth in this dark and cloudy day.

A true witness is one who cannot be turned aside either by flattery or the fear of displeasing others, and the witness of God testifies to the truth as much in his life and conversation as in

the pulpit. God's witnesses are monuments of grace, living epistles known and read of all men, in them God is glorified, for they show forth the praise of him who has called them out of darkness into his most marvelous light. A doer of the word is a witness of the truth, and we are commanded to do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. We are his workmanship, and it is written, God's works praise him. Man's words spring from a source that is polluted, and vanity is stamped upon them; God's work is perfect. Thus the dying thief was through sovereign grace a witness, for when all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled the thief cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

When priest and rabbi were laying snares and traps for Jesus the little children cast palm branches before him, and cried, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They were witnesses, as also was the woman at the well, for she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews Paul gives us an account of some of the many witnesses of God: an innumerable cloud, compassing us about as a great army, the army of heaven, for our comfort and instruction, witnesses that loved not their lives unto death, of whom the world was not worthy; and to-day where are we? *We are either witnessing to the truth or to a lie, to God or to mammon.* Paul was told by Ananias that he was chosen of God to know his will and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth. "For thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." John also was a witness and as such he tells what we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have

looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life.

In the courts of this world a witness is one who has seen or heard or handled, and heaven demands these qualifications. When so many ceased to follow after the Lord Jesus because of his hard doctrine, Jesus said to Peter, "Will ye also go away?" Peter said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." No life or comfort but from him, and Peter knew it. As he spake, the blind received their sight, the lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised and to the poor the gospel was preached. The brethren in the primitive church were enabled by grace to preach Jesus and the resurrection before a wicked and gainsaying people. To do so, with many of them, meant prison and death, yet in prison they witnessed; and in Rome, where many of them were slaves, they were cruelly treated, yet in those trials of cruel mockings and scourgings they were witnesses wherever they were, even to the very palace of Cæsar. If they were forsaken and alone, they were not alone, for the Lord stood by them, but while he was witnessed by them to their comfort, their persecutors saw him not.

To-day the world sees him not, neither does it know him, but he has not left himself without witnesses. John the Baptist bare witness of Jesus, he who was the faithful and true witness, went to John and was baptized in the river Jordan, and to-day there are witnesses who have received of the word of Life and have been shown by the Spirit's witness within what is the ordinance of God, and though man has sought out many inventions which have no truth in them at all, and sprinkling is one of them, yet they, as witnesses, go down to the watery grave as their Lord did before them. While those who cling to their sprinkling witness that they prefer the invention of Rome, the mother of harlots, to the pattern God's witnesses have seen in the mount. In this blessed ordinance they witness,

not only that they are dead to the world by the body of Christ, but they are also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. They witness by their walk and conversation that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. Should it be their lot to lie upon a bed of affliction, yet they will be his witnesses there. If it should be the will of their heavenly Father that they shall have reproach heaped upon them, they will witness even there.

What a wonderful blessing to be a witness of Israel's God in this dark day. It makes the face to shine, yet the world sees it not. Confess Christ as a present help, and the world says how foolish, and while to us it is just as wonderful that God's people live, swallowed up by this wicked world, as ever it was that Jonah lived in the whale's belly, yet if we declare it as a fact unshaken by science, falsely so called, it is laid to our ignorance. But what does the opinion of man, who has not seen, heard, handled, tasted or felt of the word of life, amount to? It is of no account. While we have for many years enjoyed hearing the witness of men and women who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have believed that their witness was true, yet the witness of God is greater, and the Spirit of God is in each and all of his witnesses, and the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Thus it is a blessed and holy calling to be a witness of God and his truth. The result of the effectual work, wherever seen, produces children that will not lie, of whom God has declared that *no* weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn.

Paul tells Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things

than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." He witnesses before Agrippa and Festus, and then must witness before Cæsar at Rome, and when he was about to seal his testimony with his blood he wrote, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The lives of the brethren associated with Paul in Rome must have stood out clearly like stars in a dark night. To-day darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, and the church of God stands alone, yet the Lord is with her; but she is alone as a witness of the truth, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. She is despised and rejected of men, yet honored of God, she stands now a witness that God does indeed dwell with man. Where is there any other people that love one another as they do? for they witness that they are his disciples, for they love one another. While other organizations progress with the world, they are satisfied and happy to build upon the foundation, Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and they will stand secure when this vain world in ruin lies.

May God bless us with grace to enable us to witness to what we have handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, and may he so bless those that see our good works that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven. This work of faith and labor of love is much seen in God's humble poor, who have a thorn in the flesh, yet witness that God's grace is sufficient for them; and who, though sorely afflicted, have the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. They confess that in them, that is, in their flesh, there dwells no good thing, and they stand not in the wisdom of men, but the power of God. These declare plainly that they seek a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God, and God is not ashamed to be called their God, though many and many are the times that they are ashamed of their poor returns, and

their life is one confession of poverty, sin and shame when speaking of themselves; and of glory, praise and power being unto their God forever, for he has redeemed them, they are his, and they witness to his presence, what it means to them here, and what it will be to them in a world that will never end.

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston June, 1930.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REMARKS ON MATT. 12:43-45

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Brother Joel W. Swain, of Florida, has requested us to give our views on the above passage, and, as the servant of all the flock of Christ, we will give such views as we have.

The text is given in the form of a parable, and addressed unto the carnal Jews, as unto an evil and adulterous generation who were seeking after a sign. In all his communications with them, Jesus spake to them in parables; because that unto his disciples it was given to know the things of the kingdom, but to them which are without it was not given. In the parable, the man out of whom the unclean spirit went was Israel after the flesh, or the evil and adulterous generation to whom the parable was addressed. The unclean

spirit which went out for a season, was, if we mistake not, the perverse and rebellious spirit by which the carnal Jews have always been characterized. The time when it went out was at the coming of John the Baptist. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." — John 5:33, 35.

This spirit of Judaism or legalism which had from their beginning characterized the carnal Israelites, was and is an unclean spirit, restless and polluting, but at the coming of John, from its misconception of the nature and spirituality of the kingdom which was at hand, *went out*, or so far released its hold on national Israel, as to allow Jerusalem, and Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, to go out unto John's baptism; and even those of them who could show no fruits meet for repentance manifested a desire to be baptized of John, in prospect of that kingdom which John said was at hand, and which they evidently supposed would be a restoration of national independence, and re-establishment of the throne of David, literally.

Now although this unclean spirit went out from the Jews for a season, it continued to be an unclean spirit, and could not affiliate with the spirit of truth and holiness of which John bore record, or that should pervade and distinguish the kingdom which was so soon to be ushered in; it therefore walked through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none. We do not understand that this unclean spirit of legalism went out of the scribes, pharisees and sadducees personally, for they were never divested of it; but it went out of the man, nationally, in the sense already explained, and in the persons of the pharisees and sadducees it wandered about. In the preaching and baptism of John it sought for rest, and were for a season willing to rejoice in it, but were repelled by John, who said

unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" And when it was told them that "Except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of God," they could find nothing in which the spirit which was in them could rest.

In all the preambulations of that legal, work-mongrel, unclean spirit, from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, that restless spirit has never found in Christ, his doctrine, his ordinances or people, any thing to give it rest, place or comfort. But the words of our Lord have been verified, "For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." How frequently did this unclean spirit bring those who were of it to Christ, seeking for rest; and when those who were led by it were fed bountifully on loaves and fishes, or had their selfish curiosity gratified by seeing signs, which they required, they were inclined to take him by force and make him their king. But the rest sought by this unclean spirit could not be found in any thing pertaining to the spiritual kingdom of our Lord. And when they were told that "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it? And from that time they went back, and walked no more with him."

"Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out." Back to Judaism, to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, to the law of a carnal commandment, and to those legal ceremonies in which they could rest. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself."

Chagrined and mortified when they found that the Messiah had not come to reign as a temporal prince, not to elevate the Jews as a nation, and having no desire to have such a King as he appeared to them to be, to reign over them, the unclean spirit which led them resolved to relapse into Judaism; but

in returning, this spirit, though unclean before, becomes seven-fold more violent and abominable than it was before; adding to the abomination of legality and rebellion, the spirits of blasphemy, bitter persecution, idolatry, and murder. By rejecting the Son of God as the promised Messiah, and Deliverer that should come out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, branding him as an imposter, blaspheming his sacred name, and wreaking their bitterest vengeance on him and on his disciples, and with wicked hands they crucified the Lord of life and glory.

The increased wickedness and violence of the Jews after the coming of the Messiah, is thus strikingly set forth in the parable, as in the accumulated abominations of seven additional spirits, more wicked than the former spirit that had hitherto corrupted the Jewish commonwealth. Now in the return of the unclean spirit with sevenfold reinforcement, he findeth the house perfectly prepared for his reception, with his multiplied auxiliaries. The house is empty. "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." The last elect vessel of mercy, or living child of God, called out, and none left of that remnant which is according to the election of grace. The new wine which was in the cluster, for whose sakes the nation had been spared so long, was gone. The Good Shepherd had called his sheep by name and led them out. Lot and his family had left Sodom. Noah and his family had entered the ark. The bare walls of the house of Israel were left, and Ichabod was written upon them, for the glory had departed. The house was now empty. The last vestage of former beauty and typical significance was swept out; the empty house was swept and garnished. The utter desolation of Jerusalem and Judea, in that day when the sword of vengeance should be bathed in heaven, (the Jewish heaven) is most strikingly set forth in prophecy.

"For it is the day of the Lord's ven-

geance, and the year of recompenses, for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever, from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof, and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate." (Isaiah 34:8-15)

God's people all called out, all Jewish ordinances now abolished, the handwriting of ordinances nailed to the cross, all types fulfilled and forever withdrawn, the house is desolate, empty and swept, and the returning unclean spirit has with him the cormorant, raven, dragons and owls, wild beasts of the field, the satyr and the vulture, making up the seven, who from the time of the setting up of Christ's kingdom, and the abrogation of all the rites and institutions of the legal dispensation, shall occupy all legal or work mongrel places of Judaism, forever and ever.

"And the last *state* of that man is worse than the first." Compare national Israel in her first state with her fearful end. "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bear you."

Trace the history of the seed of Abraham throughout their generations, and although the fleshly tribes were a stiff-necked and rebellious people from the beginning of their nationality, yet how much worse after they had ceased to be a type of the gospel church, and had become a type of Babylon the Great; and compare the judgments which she suffered from time to time for her transgressions, with her most terrible overthrow, as described by our Lord in Matt. 24, and the contrast by comparison will clearly appear.

"Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." These last words settle forever the application of the parable to the carnal Jews. And this was most fearfully verified at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus, when their punishment exceeded any thing that had ever before occurred on the earth, or that should ever again be witnessed of temporal judgments.

We have given such views as we have on this subject.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1871.)

ORDINATION OF ELDER ROBERT H. LYLSTON

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Hadnot Creek Church, Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1970. Conference was opened by Elder Rufus Brown.

Hadnot Creek Church, of the Contentnea Association, met in conference to ordain Brother Robert H. Lylston to the full work of the Ministry.

The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by Brother Jesse Rhue and Brother Stedmon Brown. Examination by Elder D. B. Stokes.

The Presbytery having found Brother Lylston, qualified, proceeded in the services. Elder Oliver Allen delivered the charge, and Elder J. T. Prescott delivered the ordination prayer. Laying on of hands was by Elders J. T. Prescott, Curtis Raines, D. B. Stokes, Wayne Mitchell, Henry Jones, J. J. Rhue, and Oliver Allen. Then Elder Lylston was presented back to the church by Brother Stedman Brown and Brother Jesse Rhue an ordained minister.

Then it was agreed that Elder Lylston go into the stand and preach the ordination sermon.

Conference was closed in order by Elder D. B. Stokes.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. CURRY KING

It is indeed with a sad heart that I attempt to record a tribute of respect to our pastor Elder W. Curry King. He passed away October 17, 1970, at seventy-three years of age. Elder King was ordained a Primitive Baptist minister in 1921, serving the churches in this area for almost fifty years. He served as part-time pastor beginning in 1957 until February 22, 1959, when he accepted full-time pastor of Prospect Hill Church.

We, the members and friends, felt blessed and highly favored of God to have Elder King as pastor. His gentle manner and humble character endeared him to all who knew him as minister or friend. He came preaching the things most surely believed among us, backed up by a "Thus saith the Lord." Many comforting words of truth were spoken of the sovereignty of God and the finished work of our Savior. Surely the Lord was his shepherd. His prayers, faith, hope and dependence on God was so unique, no one questioned his sincerity. He emphasized the inability of man to do good and was confident that the Lord ordered all his good thoughts.

Elder King's last sermon at Prospect Hill Church the fourth Sunday in September was very impressive. "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." (Acts 20:22-25)

These were Paul's writings, but we feel this scripture described Elder King's feelings on this occasion. He seemed to see the setting sun, the end of his life here. Seeing on every hand the evidence of God's goodness in the land of the living down through the years, he could, by faith, face anything that may befall him, knowing that God held the future and each event of life or death would be but the unfolding of God's purpose concerning him. Elder King spoke often of that world of perfect bliss and a great desire to see the

King in His beauty.

We will long remember this able and gifted pastor as we travel this journey of life. We pray that God will reconcile us to His will in this and all other matters, and bless us to dwell together in peace and love for one another. This was the principle theme of Elder King's preaching and careful consideration of everyone. We thank God for the pleasant association and fellowship that we have enjoyed with Elder King.

May God bless and reconcile his dear wife who has shared his joys and sorrows these many years.

Submitted in love, by request,

Etheleen B. Watson
Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Hallie Griswold, Clerk

ELDER OTTO TILLY

On December 11, 1970 the Lord saw fit to take home our beloved Brother, Otto Tilly. Elder Tilly was born March 28, 1891. He was first married to Delphia Sturgill, and to this union were born four children. She preceded him in death; and after her death he was married to Lily Easter, and to this union were born four sons.

Elder Tilly joined the Primitive Baptist Church May 21, 1921, and was ordained September 21, 1928. He was a faithful servant, being sound in doctrine, and was dearly beloved by all the brothers and sisters, and highly esteemed by all sound Baptists. He went in all kinds of weather, in heat or cold, snow or rain, wherever he was called. He preached salvation by grace and grace alone.

In the forty-two years he did not depart from the doctrine of salvation by grace. After the division in the Elkhorn Association, he went to the Pocatalico Association in 1964 and was received as an ordained Elder in full fellowship in the Providence Church.

Elder Tilly was laid to rest in the Goode Cemetery. Before his death he requested that Elder O'Neal and Elder Harvey preach his funeral. We all miss him very deeply but believe he is at rest free from all pain and sorrow, and some sweet day will be raised and taken to his heavenly home, to praise his Lord forever and ever.

Written by
Elder William P. O'Neal

JAMES WESLEY (BUDDIE) DICKERSON

James Wesley (Buddie) Dickerson was born in Rockingham County, N. C., May 21, 1905, and died October 18, 1970. He was the son of Alexander H. and Mattie Cox Dickerson.

He is survived by his widow, Thelma Davis Dickerson; one son, Claude Franklin Dicker-

son; four daughters: Mrs. Joe T. Moore, Mrs. Donald Ray Edwards, Mrs. Frank Meadows, and Miss Edna Lucille Dickerson of the home. Surviving also are two brothers, V. C. and W. H. Dickerson; and three sisters: Mrs. J. S. Lawrence, Mrs. B. J. Layne, and Mrs. Carl Edwards.

Brother Dickerson was received into the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in June, 1954. He was a devoted member, adorning his profession with an orderly walk. He suffered with a heart condition for several years before his death, but continued to attend the services even when, I am sure, he did not feel equal to the task.

He was blessed with a devoted wife and children. His wife attended the services with him. Though not a member of the visible church she always manifested that interest in the things of the Lord that bear the marks of His children.

I knew Brother Dickerson from the time I was eight years old. We played together as children, as my father was the pastor of Dan River Church at that time. I was blessed to perform the ordinance of baptism when he was received into the church; and we walked together in sweet fellowship.

The family, church, and community have lost a faithful one, but he has left evidence that his spirit has joined the redeemed of the Lord who have gone on; and his body awaits the coming of the Lord, to awake in His likeness and be forever with the Lord.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church, and interment was in the Dan River cemetery.

D. V. Spangler

GUY CREASON

Guy Creason was born October 13, 1903, and passed away January 8, 1971. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Creason, and is survived by his wife, Imogene Locke Creason. Also by one daughter, Marylin Blagg, two grandchildren and one great grandchild; her son-in-law, Bobby Blagg; one brother, Gilliard Creason; and four sisters: Grace Locke, Garvaline Riley, Ruby Mason, and Mary Chandler.

Guy joined the Soldier Creek Old School Baptist Church the second Sunday in March, 1965, and was baptized with one other brother, Willie Mathis, the second Sunday in May, 1965, by Elder Paul Poyner. He was a faithful and helpful brother in any way he could help materially. He had not been strong for several months before he died, but bore his weakness without murmuring or complaining. Guy enjoyed the church services and having the church friends and ministers visit in their

home. He will be greatly missed by the ones who meet together in his home church.

We, his church brothers and sisters, hope to bow in humble submission as we have learned how; and say, "God's will be done, not ours."

The funeral was preached Sunday, January 10th, at Linn Funeral Home in Benton, Ky., by his pastor, Elder Paul Poyner. The funeral director stated that the crowd attending the funeral was the largest he had ever had at a funeral, with the most flowers presented; which merely showed the esteem in which Guy was held.

This is written by the request of his wife, Imogene Creason.

A sister, I hope in the Truth,
Effie Bowden

GRACE LYLES

Sister Grace Lyles was born May 1, 1890, and departed this life September 21, 1970. She was the daughter of the late J. D. and Alice Chester Mathis. She had been a widow for several years without any children, but was blessed with faithful nieces and nephews; also three brothers, Luther, Other, and Willie Mathis, and their wives.

She had been a member of the Soldier Creek Primitive Baptist Church for several years; and her home was a home for the Baptists. Many times preaching services were held in her home, especially when our three-day meetings of the Soldier Creek Associations, and our Union Meetings were held with her home church. She attended services September 13th, and died September 21st.

Her funeral was preached by her pastor, Elder Paul Poyner, and by Elder Herbert Prince of the Memphis Church. She was buried in the Soldier Creek Cemetery near the church, by the side of her parents.

The beautiful flowers given by her relatives and friends were tokens of the high esteem in which she was held; but most of all, her church friends loved her for the truth's sake. She often said that she was reared by Primitive Baptists, but they did not teach her what she hoped the Lord had taught her by his grace and mercy. She depended upon Jesus Christ her Saviour to supply her with strength for the day, and the renewal of her hope in Him when it was his good pleasure; always willing for God's will to be done, not hers.

We are proud to remember her as a faithful sister in Truth.

A sister,
Effie Bowden

IN MEMORY OF
MRS. FLORA BELL FEGAN

"Flo" was the daughter of the late Mr. and

Mrs. Archibald McGugan, born December 11, 1883, at Poplar Hill, Ontario, Canada. She was the widow of Arthur E. Fegan. She passed away in the Riverdale Hospital, Toronto, March 25, 1970; and is survived by several nephews and one niece. Flo was a dear sister in our church and loved to entertain the Old Baptists; as her parents did. Her church came first in her life.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder George Ruston, assisted by Elder D. A. McColl, in London, Ontario.

Just before joining the church these words came to her. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed." The same day five joined the church and Flo was baptized in July, 1956. It just seemed "perfect love casteth out fear." Our loved one had many trials through her life. In a letter after losing her companion she wrote, "Blest be the tie that binds (my kindred friends,) and said, The morning after his funeral the words came, Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." Later she referred to a hymn, "It is not death to die," etc. She wrote telling me of Elder McColl's sermon being such a comfort to her. The text was, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right." This text was also used by Elder McColl when we were so sad to hear of the Hudson's being in the hospital on their way to Canada.

The text at her funeral was "My beloved is mine and I am his." She had requested that Song of Solomon 2:16, be used at her funeral. Flo left writings on "Passing Thoughts" with her pastor that are very lovely.

Written by request of Elder Ruston, and one who loved her. In hope of eternal life.

Verna Carscadden

ELIZABETH S. HALL

Sister Elizabeth Hall was born on Virginia's Eastern Shore, November 17, 1878, the daughter of Solon Clay and Sarah Carey Stevenson. She departed her earthly tabernacle July 25, 1970. She married Brother Henry Hall November 18, 1896, and from that marriage proceeded four children, May, Grace, Harold and Thomas. Grace, with whom she lived, died in 1957. The others survive her.

Sister Hall was not of Primitive Baptist family and for many years did not hold the doctrines "most commonly believed" by Primitive Baptists, but like the dutiful, faithful wife that she was, she attended her husband's meetings with him, entertained his pastor and brethren, provided for his meetings and did all the things customarily done by members of the Church.

Brother Hall died May 17, 1937, and for several years thereafter, she very seldom, if ever, came to meeting. I believe it was around

the year 1950 that we began to see her again, occasionally at first, but with increasing frequency. I sometimes observed her as Elder Spangler preached so beautifully Jesus the Savior of sinners, and from her glowing countenance, it was quite evident that she had been brought to glean in the field where "handfuls of purpose" had been left for her.

She joined the Church at Salisbury, Maryland, and was baptized the first Sunday in November, 1955. I never knew a more radiant Christian. Her son's wife, a Presbyterian, said she never stopped beaming from the time she was baptized. I visited her frequently and how I cherish the memory of our many spiritual exchanges and Scriptural discussions. Sometimes, when I would leave, she would say "Mildred, why do we spend any of our time together talking about things of this world?" I wondered too.

Sister Hall was always poor in the things this world has for sale, but she was enormously rich in the things money has never been able to buy. To know her was to love her and she had a multitude of friends, in and out of other denominations. We miss her sorely, but feel thankful to the God she loved and worshiped for the years we had her.

Her final service was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren in the house of her beloved Church at Salisbury, and her mortal body was laid beside her husband's, to await the glorious resurrection of "the dead in Christ."

Submitted in loving memory,
Mildred V. Dykes
Salisbury, Maryland

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT LEONARD S. HILL

Leonard S. Hill was born December 29, 1897. Died March 22, 1970. Joined the Primitive Baptist Faith and Order at Old Beechcreek Church near Atlanta, Texas, May 12, 1924. He moved his letter to Pleasant Hope Church July 27, 1935, and was ordained Deacon October 4, 1941. Was elected Church Clerk October 25, 1942, and Clerk of the Sulphur Fork Association on Friday, October 5, 1945.

He is survived by his wife, three children, three sisters, one brother and the entire Church Body.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain, for we believe he is awaiting the resurrection, and we do humbly submit to God's holy will.

Elders Lloyd Wall, E. J. Lambert, John Lee Smith, W. A. Winfred, and George W. Jones officiated at the services, with many friends and relatives present.

Written by his brother in the flesh
and a hope of the Spirit,
Elder Lloyd Wall, Moderator
H. S. Hill, Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

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DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1971

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Concluded)

Sometime this same year I had a dream of the resurrection. I thought that a powerful voice spoke to me, and with the power of that voice I was raised up out of death into life. I felt so guilty and sinful, yet I was trying to praise the Lord. My pitiful voice did not have any sound to it. It did not seem like anyone could hear me. I could not see the being, whose voice I heard, very plainly. I thought I was raised up under a shed or cover to my grave. Some deep place from which I was being raised. It seemed the power that raised me suffered me just to pause under this shed, then bore me out from under it. I did not have anything to do with lifting either hand or foot. It was just as real to my mind as if it had been so. When I awoke I was sad indeed, for I thought that if God's people did not feel clear on the resurrection, then I did not know anything about the truth; so my soul was cast down because of the dream for eight months.

When I dreamed again of the second resurrection, as I hope was the case in my first dream, I thought I was totally dead. I did not know anything until the voice spoke life into me, or me into life. I thought I was facing a graveyard but was not dead, in the sense

that I was in the first dream. Everything looked so dry and distressing and I thought that a close companion or brother was with me. Although I could not see him, I could hear his voice. All at once there came a great sound, the earth quaked and he that was with me spoke to me, and as quick as a flash of lightning I was changed to something that is impossible for me to describe. I felt free and clear of sin and guilt. I was praising God in a language that I now know nothing about. I saw or realized that those who were dead arose and ascended heavenward. I was lifted up with them and, Oh, how glorious was this to me.

Darkness and confusion was under our feet. The praise of the dear and blessed Lord was the joyful theme of my soul as I was lifted from the earth. Something caused me to stretch my hands upward, and my feet left the earth and everything about me was as white as snow. When I was quite a distance from the earth, beautiful clouds as white as snow came between me and the darkness. It was so plain and sweet to me. It is not lawful for me to utter these things for I am not able. If it were mine to give, He would enable me to utter them. I awoke and sadly found that it was just a dream. I have wished ever since that I could see and feel the same thing again. Oh, may it be the will of the true and living God to keep me and preserve me unto his blessed and heavenly kingdom. It will finally be that his children shall be taken to that peaceful and heavenly mansion.

This dream gave me great joy, and at the time of awakening, with the tears of joy still stinging my face, this scripture came to me: "Blessed and holy

is he that has part in the first resurrection, on such the second death has no power." It seemed that this scripture served to interpret both my dreams to me. Showing me that God's people when made alive from the death in trespasses and sin, are resurrected in the spirit to the love of God and true holiness. They are the same in body as they were before being born again. Only the strong man is bound and his goods are divided. He still has part of the goods, where he has had all of them till he was bound. Since that time the flesh is against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. They are still the subject of corporeal death the same as anyone else, and they do feel sinful indeed when they are made alive.

Paul describes it when he was made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death." He was one that heard the voice of Jesus and believed on him to life everlasting, but still had the body of this death, and desired to be free from it. Yet he was praising God as an Apostle of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This was the way I saw, and I hope it is the truth of, the first dream. If God's people go down in death corporeally, it would be denying the resurrection and purifying of the body to say that they have no part in the second. If I know anything about the truth as taught in the scriptures, the bodies are raised, for Jesus had his same body after his resurrection, — the same body that was nailed to the cross and was pierced with the sword. In Jesus' language, he describes it as a nail in sure place on this subject. When he says, "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." God's people hear the voice of Jesus, not the voice of the preacher, and this causes them to live, whether they lived in Jesus' personal days or not. For he said, "The hour is coming." Yes, still coming just as long as there is an elect here in the body of living death (flesh). Jesus was talking to men and women

that could all hear his natural voice. Yet he said to a certain class, "Ye cannot hear my word," but he said, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." So we see they that hear in spirit. These are the ones he had reference to when he said they that hear shall live.

He said, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming, (mark the words hour is coming) when all which are in the graves shall hear the voice of the son of God 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." According to my belief, both the righteous and the wicked come forth the same hour. So I felt to realize from the two dreams the meaning of this scripture, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." The wicked have no part in the first, but in the second. When God's people are raised the second time they go into their final and blessed destiny, life eternal. But the wicked undergo the second death which is the eternal fire of God's wrath. Not that they die from all sense or that they are burned up and are no more, but where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. This is my belief concerning the first and second resurrection.

Not long after this I got badly dissatisfied where I was living. I moved away from the home church, twenty-five miles away, soon after I joined the church. I did not feel that the brethren could have any confidence in me where they had known me all my life. I can't get that entirely out of my feelings, although they have treated me with all kindness necessary to make me feel at home. I did feel at home as far as my membership was concerned, but did not feel like it would ever do for me to try to preach at home.

After living away nearly a year my father moved me back. I made no crop that year and had nothing much, but the Lord has been very kind to me to provide me and mine a livelihood. Also my father has been very kind and good

to me. They are dear lovers of the cause that they believe I am called to serve; and may the Lord abundantly bless them and keep them, together with all our family; and also the many kind brethren and friends, for whom I feel to owe gratitude to the blessed Lord. This I can never express.

Just before I moved from this place I had a very serious dream. I thought I was going to quit preaching when I got back home. I dreamed of preaching to a great multitude of people who seemed to be deeply interested. They seemed to be getting nearer and nearer to me, so much so, I began to back away. I felt great liberty and as I began backing away to leave them, they did not say anything but kept following me until I turned my back to them. I was still preaching; and someone said, "He will have to go home and raise some feed." This dream has been a mystery that has bothered me ever since more or less. I hope it did not mean anything like turning my back upon the cause or the people of God.

May the Lord give me, if I am his servant in the ministry, strength and grace to ever trust him for both time and eternity; to be faithful even unto death to his blessed service, and never suffer me to shun to declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God in meekness and humble fear, in sincerity and fervent love, the power and blessed wisdom of the Spirit of almighty God.

I remember another dream I had not long after I was liberated to preach. Now, it is my hope that I do not put my trust in dreams too much. There is a filthy dreamer spoken of in the Bible and I may be one, but I feel that I have been comforted of the Lord in dreams, therefore I want to tell them for the comfort of others. The setting of this dream was a city inhabited by men, women, and children. The entire city was captured by well armed forces. I thought I realized that the sentence of death was passed on all of us, but I was not afraid in the least. They separated me from everyone except the guards

that kept me. Finally, they put me in the darkest prison, it surely was thick darkness, and it did not seem that I stayed there long before something opened the door. I felt to realize it was not a natural power but was from above. When the door could no longer keep me in, the same guards took me out. I thought I told them I must go and preach to a small congregation that was in sight, but the guards did not want me to go. As I left them I told them I would still be subject to them when I was through. They followed me to the place where the brethren were. I thought I saw tears of joy on the faces of the people as I went in the stand. I awoke to find myself puzzled, and am yet, to know what it meant, or whether it will ever come to pass or not in a literal way.

One night I was at Brother W. A. Patterson's, there I was in deep trouble, for I felt totally condemned. I could hardly stand the heavy burden of sadness of spirit. Indeed my soul was exceedingly sorrowful. He went to the room with me when I went to bed; and was so kind. I felt to be unworthy of his kindness and wished I was at home. When he left the room I blew the lamp out and was lying there mourning because of my condition, when something with a very kind and serene voice whispered to me. "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" My poor soul answered, "Lord that thou bless me," and the voice said, "Blessings I will bless thee." In a second of time my mourning was turned into rejoicing, my tears wet my pillow, and Oh how my poor soul was filled with love to such a merciful God, who is able to fulfill all his promises. I feel to say with David, "Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life." In so many ways he has blessed me a poor helpless worm that doesn't deserve anything but wrath and indignation.

I long to be free from vanity and sin, I hate my sins. I love the dear Lord, if I know myself, and his dear people.

We long to stand on the peaceful shores of eternity with the dear Redeemer and all the heavenly host, in unspotted garments that will never wax old or be moth eaten: Where there will be no more sorrow. Where the harp of the saints will not be hung on the willows any more. Where angels and archangels stand and sing the praises of the blessed Lord. Oh, may this be my happy lot when I am done with this world of tribulation.

About two years ago I became deeply troubled about myself and the whole church. I felt like some great calamity hung just over us. I felt that we justly deserved it and that there was no way to escape. Oh how my soul was borne down! Oh how I did pour out my cries to the Lord to lead us and cause us to be humble before him! I could not keep from praying no matter where I was or what I was doing. While in this condition, one day I was plowing in the field away from any dwelling. There was a cotton house in the field. A bad looking cloud came up and rained a big rain. Then the rain slowed and continued for a long time. My spirit was in prayer and I could not stop. After the hard rain was over I decided to get on my knees and speak out. I was afraid someone might hear me. Nevertheless it seemed like I just had to do it anyway. I went to the door and looked, then knelt down in the doorway. I never have been exercised so sweetly and earnestly since. I begged the Lord to show me his ways and enable me to walk in them. Then I felt that the church as a whole had grown so cold in love that the Lord would move the candlestick out of its place, or would spew us, in our sickening state, out of his mouth. Oh how I did plead with the Lord to give us repentance to turn us from all idolatry. To enable us to serve him without any desire to please anyone but him. To give us grace not to care what the world said about us. I don't know how long I stayed at prayer this time, but I think it was longer than at any other one time in my life.

May the Lord ever enable me to pray earnestly without ceasing, with the intercessions of the Spirit.

Dark and cloudy it seems has been my pathway most of the time; but I feel that it is the Lord's will that I suffer here in this life, that he has chosen me in the furnace of afflictions that he might cleanse me and bring me forth without the smell of the fire on my garment. I feel to rejoice when I can hope to be partaker with Christ in suffering as He suffered for our sins. We suffer from fears and a conscience that is alive to the fact that we are naturally sinners. Then if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

In the year of 1916 in June my home church saw fit to call for my ordination to take place in July. Following their calling I did not feel willing to go. In one way I was afraid it was not of the Lord, and also at this time I was enjoying sweet liberty with my preaching and I was satisfied to go on as I was. It seemed I was so cold and unconcerned spiritually when the time came, but I could not help it. One member of the presbytery, Elder Rawls, carried another member off to one side just as service was to begin. I did not anticipate being asked to preach but they requested me to go forward. I still felt so cold I could not think of a single hymn, but I got up anyway. I talked a little and they laid their hands on me without asking me a single question.

Since that time it has been my uppermost desire to be enabled to comfort and feed God's little ones. I feel to know that I myself am just a baby in Christ, indeed if I am in Him. When I hear an able doctrinal preacher preach it is so sweet to me, but I am not what would be called a doctrinal preacher, if I am one at all. I joined the church in September of 1914 at the age of twenty-two and I am the same poor weak needy creature that I have ever been.

There are many more things that I could mention but have already written more than I thought I could. Now may

the Lord bless and keep us and establish us in the truth. It has been my desire to relate what I hope to be the Lord's dealings with me, how he has led me in my short journey of life.

I have been requested to write this and have tried to comply with your wishes on the matter. I have covered pages with my weaknesses, but it is my desire to be fruitful to the glory of God and to be comforting to his dear people.

May the dear Saviour bless all that desire to trust in him, and keep us humble and at his blessed feet ever ready to comfort one another and to bear each other's burdens. Thus fulfilling the law of the blessed Saviour who said just before he suffered, "As I love you, even so love one another."

Oh, was He not full of love that he would stoop so low as to take upon himself our sins. Clothed with the likeness of sinful flesh, He became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief so that he was made to fall on his face the third time and to cry to the Father, sweating as it were great drops of blood, all because of his love for us.

Oh, that love that bowed down the blessed Son of God so pure and spotless, holy and undefiled. Yet for the great love the Father had for us he delivered him up to death, — even the shameful death of the cross. Yea, to die and to bleed for his people. That suffering fixed us in the everlasting covenant of redemption. Love that laid the spotless robe of the holiness of Jesus on poor sinners. This gift of love causes them to be holy and without blame before him in love. His love causes poor creatures to love Him and his people. This love is so great that I cannot describe it. All praise, honor and glory, dominion and power be unto God and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

Yours in a hope that is sometimes sweet and precious to me and is indeed more to me than this world. I could not

give it for the world.

R. W. Rhodes
Randolph, Louisiana

(Submitted to *Signs of the Times* for publication by Robbie Holloway, a grandson. It was written July 9, 1918. Elder Rhodes' present address is Spearsville, La. 71277.)

"LONGING FOR PEACE —
SEARCHING FOR AN ANSWER"

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Ga. 30083
December 13, 1970

Dear Elder Spangler:

Last night I lay awake many hours burdened and beset with a troubled mind. I feel I must write you for help — for guidance.

It seems there is no rest for the weary, no balm in Gilead, and I know not where to turn, — except to one who has been given an ear to hear and a heart to understand: one such as you. I have been brought down to the depth of despair, to the keen awareness of my vile state. I have prayed, and in my feeble way have attempted to probe into my soul, and search for an answer. None comes.

I have a hope, a priceless, precious hope, fleeting though it be at times. Yet I know God has known my thoughts from afar off; He has known my comings and goings, my every action; and I cry unto Him: "Teach me the way, O Lord; deliver me for my sufferings are great and my heart is smitten with grief."

We read comforting words in Psalm 102: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer . . . For he has looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; when the peoples are gathered, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord . . . Of old hast

thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands."

I know the Lord sleeps not. He hears our pleas in the bold sunlight of day and the black silence of night's hours. He searches our souls, and He is ever our strength in weakness and our light in darkness. I feel I wander much of my days in a barren wilderness — forlorn and forsaken. Yet, I feel a penetrating longing in my heart for assurance, for peace and for spiritual rest.

David cried in supplication: "Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law. Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word. Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes. Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord: quicken me according to thy judgments." (Psalm 119:153-157)

Notice the words "quicken me" used in these verses. Unless our hearts be quickened by the Lord, we cannot see him nor keep his statutes.

Yes, the Lord's children are truly afflicted — poor, weak and worthless; they feel a deep need for God's sustaining hand, and for his enduring mercy.

I stated earlier that I have longed for peace, and searched for an answer. More and more I cannot suppress the desire within me for a church home. I yearn to be numbered among those who believe the comforting and beautiful truths firmly held by the Old Line Primitive Baptists. I look with love and fleshly envy upon the faces of Peggy and Elder Poole each Sunday morning, for I know there resides in them the sweet knowledge and comfort that they have a home; — I do not. And, Oh how glorious was our visit there this summer, and how moving an experience for me when Peggy was received into the church. Perhaps a church home would calm my troubled breast, and drive dark fears from my soul.

We know God purposes everything

under the sun: He brings us down in order that we may see our sinful natures, and abhor the wickedness of the flesh. We know, also, He lifts us up and carries us to the highest summits; and all things He does according to His will, for his glorification.

Elder Spangler, if it pleases you, please let me hear from you. You are a wise and prudent man: I need your comments and advice.

May we be granted, through his enduring mercy, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. (Phil. 4:7)

Katie Kilby

REPLY

Danville, Va. 24541

December 18, 1970

Dear Mrs. Kilby:

Your letter was received yesterday, and I was glad to hear from you. I had thought of you several times lately, and was inclined to believe that the unerring hand of a covenant God was leading you.

I have carefully read your letter several times, and, if I am a judge in the matter, it bears the marks of one whose face is toward Zion. I would refer you to the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah, tenth and eleventh verses: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Here we have the marks of one of God's people, who has exercises of soul unknown to those who trust in themselves. "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Here we have the picture of those who walk in the light of that they have produced.

What a blessing when God turns our minds from self, to the work of our adorable Redeemer! No wonder the poet has said

"When I turn my eyes within
All is dark and vain and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child."

It is the living that cry, not the dead. When a child is first brought into the world, soon we hear a cry go up. What a wonderful sound it is to the parents! for they know the child is alive. Hunger and thirst follow the birth, even as day follows night.

I noticed your expression: "I have a hope, a priceless, precious hope, fleeting though it be at times." A few markers might be of benefit as we journey toward the Heavenly City: "We have passed from death unto life if we love the brethren;" "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;" "It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom;" "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;" "They that sat in darkness hath seen a great light."

The Promises are suited to our needs. Is it any wonder that Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

If one promise from the Heavenly King has been sweetly applied to our poor souls, then we should take courage.

I was not surprised to receive your letter; and I would bid you to take up His cross and follow him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

In sacred bonds,
D. V. Spangler

(See next issue for further correspondence.)

"EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN HIS TIME"

"He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." (Eccl. 3:11)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. He created the sun, moon, stars, plant life, fishes of the sea, fowl of the air; and man to inhabit the world that he had created by his mighty power and infinite wisdom. It is recorded that when the heaven and the earth were finished and all the host of them, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." It was well pleasing unto him and, as all of his work, it was perfect for the intent and purpose that he had in the creation of it. This is evident in the perfection of the universe: the moon revolves around the earth, they both revolve around the sun, and all of the planets of the solar system move in a predetermined path according to the determinate counsel of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." These are constant, present reminders to God's children of the awesome majesty of their Heavenly Father, and of the beauty and glory of his power.

God's promise to Noah was, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." The times and the season are still one following the other according to this promise, as we witness each year that we live. God, the wisdom, power, glory, and sovereign of all of his creation, established this covenant with his chosen people, and promised that it should stand as long as the earth remains. This will be as long as he has a work to perform in the bringing forth of his elect, making himself known unto them and completing the work of grace in their hearts.

This is the hope of those who believe from a pure heart, and is beautiful when viewed with the eye of faith by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart of believers. Their trust is in the shalls and wills of Almighty God, as they experience seasons of his mercy and grace which sustain them through the encounters with the adversary in

this life. They trust in him because they are made to depend upon him for all things; and they feel to know that nothing can alter or deter the purposes of God, because he has ordained them to his eternal glory — and therefore they are sure and steadfast.

Solomon was the son that was given unto David to sit upon the throne of Israel after him, and who was to build the house of God. David had thought to build the house, but God had told him, "Thou shalt not build an house for my name because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed much blood." (1 Chron. 22:8) "Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father."

These things were all ordained of God before Solomon was born, but they all came to pass according to the promise of God. God appeared to Solomon in a dream, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee," and Solomon's request was, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart." The Scriptures record that it pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing, and God said, "Behold, I have done according to thy words: Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart: so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after shall any arise like unto thee."

Solomon wrote many proverbs, and sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. "And 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 men to be exercised therewith." He was given to see all the works that are done under heaven, and was made to acknowledge that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. He saw that man in his best estate and all his labor, is vain and selfish. We can see therefore that the writings of Solomon were truly inspired of God. The wisdom that was given him caused him to write, "He hath made

everything beautiful in his time." Solomon, in this wisdom that was given of God, was blessed to see that all the work of God is beautiful in his time. Not just the deliverances and seasons of peace and joy, but also the seasons of trial and afflictions: they also are beautiful in his sight.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Solomon listed twenty-eight things for which there is a time for them to occur. Some are what man would call great events, and some he would call trivial. In his nature man tends to call those things good which he desires, and to call those things evil which he does not like. Among other things Solomon said, There is a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. Man will quickly tell you which of these things are good and which are evil, but Solomon said, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time."

According to this, all of these things are alike good in the mind and purpose of God. Everything for which God set a time and has a purpose, (and this includes everything,) is good in his time, because it is but another part of the perfect work; as was the creation of all things. These things are good and beautiful to all of those who, as Solomon, are given wisdom to view them as the handiwork of God; and this is done when they are given the mind of Christ. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ." And again, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." This is the only way that God's children behold his work and the beauty of it.

As we view the travels of Joseph on his way down to Egypt, we can see many things that happened to him that, to the natural mind, are hard to understand. It was shown to Joseph in a dream that his father, mother and brethren would bow down before him;

but it does not say that it was shown him how this would be accomplished. Surely, if he thought on this dream in his travels, there must have been times when he despaired of it being fulfilled. This is true of each of God's children in their pilgrimage in this life. They have been blessed to see things beyond the comprehension of the natural mind, and given a hope in things eternal, but there are times when present trials and troubles of this life press so heavily upon them that they almost despair; and they fear that their hope is but a vain wish of the flesh. Solomon said it this way: "Also, he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." The world is so set in their heart that, in the flesh, they can never push it aside and get a clear view of the work that God is performing in their heart and life.

We can read the experience of Joseph in a few minutes and learn the end of the matter, and see the handiwork of God in it. We see the dream and the fulfillment of it, and believe that all the steps were ordered of the Lord. Joseph could not see this along the way, just as God's people cannot see the end of their way until they reach it. When Joseph experienced the fulfillment of the dream, then he could say to his brethren, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." When he was sold to the Ishmaelites, put into prison and forgotten of the butler for two years, it would have been difficult for him to see any beauty in the work in progress; but in the sight of God these times were also beautiful. They were but another part of Joseph's trial of faith, which in the eyes of God, is much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, as Peter said. And it is common to the experience of all of God's children in all ages of time.

These trials and afflictions are for the teaching, purging and purifying of

the child of God so that they will be vessels of honor fit and meet for the Master's use. Job when in his trials, although he knew not the way he took, was made to cry, "But He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." This is the time when, as recorded in Malachi, "And they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." The jewels are precious in the sight of God; and the things that make them precious in his eyes are beautiful in his time; although they may not be to the natural mind, and to this body of flesh. The trembling child of God cannot see their way clearly, nor see the end of their way, but neither can they deny the hope that burns in their breast.

"But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This is a promise of God that had been foretold by the prophets in all ages, and was fulfilled in the birth of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This promise was fulfilled by the same wisdom, power and determinate counsel and foreknowledge that created this world, and that has sustained it since the beginning of time. It is a beautiful and precious work in the mind of those who have been anointed with that holy spirit of promise, and have been blessed to behold it as their only hope of eternal life. They are the only ones who are blessed to see their own wretched and undone condition by nature, and to see and feel their need for a daysman betwixt God and man, that could lay his hand upon both of them. This they then believe God's Son to be; and they know their need of a redeemer.

John said, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." No man can teach any of these things to another, and it would not benefit them if they could. It is not the knowledge of these things, but rather the anointing which separates the chil-

dren of God from the children of the world. This anointing is of God through Jesus Christ; and it is to those, and only those, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace: to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." There would be no beauty in these things unless they were sure and certain to someone. There would be no beauty in them unless the one who promised these things was able, beyond any possibility of doubt, to fulfill them according to his own will and pleasure: The God who created this universe is able. Faith is the gift of this omnipotent Creator, and by his own grace and mercy he places his own Spirit within their hearts whereby they cry, Abba, Father. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." These are the ones who are anointed of God, and are the ones to whom these promises were made. And these promises, (not as the one made to Noah: as long as the earth remains,) are eternal.

When given a mind directed by the Spirit, to meditate upon these grand and glorious promises of the great I Am, his children can witness with Solomon that, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Everything is beautiful as it is seen as a part of the whole. A poet once wrote, "The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skilled hands, as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned." You must view the whole work before you can see the picture, and then it is beautiful in the eyes of the beholder. They can remember their times of being shut up in prison with no light: troubled on every side yet not distressed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed. They see all the things that they have been confronted by, and yet they continue; so it must be that they are one of those for whom all these things work together for good.

By faith they see that all of these trials and tribulations of this life, are but for a short moment as compared to the vast immeasurableness of eternity; and are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in them. Then they are made to long for the time which Christ speaks of in Revelation: the time when he says, "Behold, I come quickly," and their prayer is, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Come and receive us to thyself, that we may praise thee as we ought; that we may behold the beauty of the finished work, and see the glorious perfection of the salvation of the saints of God as treasured in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

WOULD NOT EXCHANGE HIS
HOPE FOR THE WEALTH
OF THE WORLD

130 Talbot Street, Apt. 107
St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

The first paragraph of Elder Wood's Editorial in the January *Signs* just received, is how I would love to greet you now; and the last paragraph is my prayer for you and all those connected with the publishing of the dear old *Signs*, and those who write for it; and those who read it and are comforted and edified by the wonderful truths declared in their writings.

So many of the dear ones who write their experiences tell mine better than I can tell it myself; and this is a very great tower of strength. Although my first conviction of what a terrible sinner I was came to me at about eight years of age, now at eighty-four I grope along in the dark so much of the time, and almost envy those who write of such beautiful experiences; and yet I would not exchange the hope God has given me of His mercy and love, for all the wealth of this world that man

could give me.

I want to thank you for printing my dear wife's obituary in the January *Signs*. I must have omitted one line while copying it from a rough sketch I had first made. Immediately following her father's name on the eighth line, it should read, "and Sister Ella Virginia Beebe."

For several months I have been visiting with my son and had asked you to send the *Signs* to his address. I now have moved into an apartment and would thank you to send the *Signs* to me at the address on this letter. Also send me six copies of the January issue if they are still available. I enclose \$15.00 postal order to pay for two years' subscription, the extra copies, with the balance to use as you wish.

It has been about thirty-five years since I met you and heard you preach here in Ontario, and now that I am living down here, I hope to see you and hear you again. It is a great blessing to be near the meeting places again, and I enjoy listening to our dear Elder Ruston and Elder McColl.

Yours in hope of eternal life through God's love and mercy.

James W. Black

(You had not included the omitted line, Brother Black, and we are glad to publish it as you mentioned above. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED SISTER DYKES' WRITING

Rt. 2
Athens, Texas 75751

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew our subscription for the *Signs of the Times*; and I just want to say that we do enjoy the *Signs* so much, and look forward each month to its coming.

We especially enjoyed the letter that Sister Mildred V. Dykes wrote in the December issue on the 23rd Psalm. We have received much comfort from that chapter in years past: "The Lord is my

shepherd, I shall not want." Her writings struck a soft spot in our heart. What a blessing it would be to meet and talk with Sister Dykes! and also see the other wonderful writers of the *Signs*.

Enclosed please find \$7.00 for two years' renewal; and may God bless you all.

Mrs. J. C. Allen

PLEASE NOTE: Due to lack of space, the further writing of Katherine Mathews will appear in the May issue. — J. D. W.

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations . . .” (1 Peter 1:3-6)

EDITORIAL

TREASURES, — NEW AND OLD

“Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then saith he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.” (Matthew 13:51-52)

It is the same old sun that has been sending forth its brilliant rays for thousands of years which gives a new light and new heat today. The sun is giving this part of the earth fresh heat and light while I am writing now. Last night it disappeared from our sight which caused darkness to cover this part of the earth. This part of the earth became darker and colder until its re-appearance this morning. While it was night here another portion of the earth was experiencing a new day with a renewal of fresh heat and light. The sun is always sending forth new heat and light somewhere. Somewhere now a new day is dawning. Somewhere the sun is rising.

Somewhere now the Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, is arising in the souls of those who have been made to fear the Lord. This fear comes only to those who feel the depression of darkness and are aware of their coldness. They are also aware of their inability to better their condition, they become very sick and hopeless. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, Night comes before the Day in every Christian's experience. We read in Genesis 1:5, “And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” The darkness comes first. Sensibility of this darkness causes fear. “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.” (Malachi 4:2)

The disciples could not see very clearly while Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes. They must have realized this darkness in their souls and their lack of understanding as they heard Him speak. They wanted to see, feel, and understand more clearly, sensibly, and definitely each and every one of the particulars of these precious things. They asked Jesus to shed more light upon them. They asked for an explanation. These shining truths must have been at their greatest brilliance in the hearts and minds of these disciples when Jesus asked, "Have ye understood all these things?" Their answer, "Yea, Lord," proves that Jesus' explanation was complete and effective. His word returned not unto Him void, but accomplished that which He pleased and prospered in the ears and hearts of those to whom He was speaking. The light of eternal truth had caused the darkness of ignorance to flee away. They did not say that they understood all things. They did proclaim that they understood the particular things of which Jesus explained.

Jesus had spoken to the multitudes but even though they heard it naturally, they did not really *hear* it: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." (14th V.) In the 13th verse Jesus makes it plainer: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." This explanation caused these disciples to understand why that Jesus speaking did not have the same effect upon all alike. Jesus' explanation of the parable of the sower gave the disciples to understand that the seed sown was *The word of the kingdom*. They further understood that the Wicked One snatched this word of the kingdom away from those who did not understand. They understood that tribulations and persecutions would cause those who had not root in themselves to be offended because of the word. They un-

derstood that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches was powerful enough to choke the word whose treasures were here upon this earth. The tree must be made good before the fruit is good. Jesus said, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for 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. 12:33-35) Jesus said these things above quoted to those who accused Him of casting out devils by the prince of devils, Beelzebub.

The explanation of the parable of the tares is so plain that none could successfully prove that even angels could transform a child of the wicked one into a child of God. Angels are sent to gather His children — not to make them. Read Jesus' explanation of the tares and wheat in verse 37-43; also, the parable in verse 24-30 in 13th chapter of Matthew. The sower of good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world. The good seed are the children of the kingdom. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil. The tares are the children of the wicked one. Even the children of God are not to be gathered until they are ripe. The reapers are the messengers of God who are especially chosen, ordained, sanctified, and used by Him for this specific purpose. There is not a time when the harvest is at an end everywhere in the world. Somewhere the harvest is ripe *now*. When Jesus appointed the seventy and sent them forth into every city and place where He would come, He said unto them, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

The parable of the net made it very plain that both good and bad would be

gathered into the position of being members of the churches upon earth. These disciples were given to understand that the final separation would be according to character, not position. Judas had a position with the chosen twelve. Neither Jesus, nor the eleven, cast him out. He rendered his service in his position, yet Judas' characteristics proved that he was a devil. Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve." (John 6:70-71) Neither Jesus nor the eleven had to exclude him. Judas committed suicide. Judas had charge of the money. He must have loved his position. He loved thirty pieces of silver more than he loved his Master. This proves the statement to be true, "The love of money is the root of *all* evil." Both the parable of the net and that of the tares plainly teach that there is no time when the wicked shall turn to God. The net is the Gospel. Casting the net is preaching the Gospel.

The words that head this article is another parable showing the responsibility in regard to the truths these disciples had received. He, Jesus, termed these disciples to whom He was speaking as, *Scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*. A scribe is a learned man. These scribes, instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, are not to be classed with those who made up the Sanhedrin with the Pharisees and priests. The Sanhedrin united all their strength and learning in order to entrap Jesus. They tried to ensnare Him in every possible way. A scribe is one who has learning sufficient and enough ability to write and speak publicly as one having authority. Ezra "was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given." (Ezra 7:6) God's scribes today are learned both in the law of Moses, and in the law of Christ Jesus. These scribes readily speak publicly and write for publication as God in His providence opens the door. They

have learned — and are yet learning — from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed: the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The written Word of God includes the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as of the New. Christ was as much man's Redeemer in the beginning of time of man as He is today. It is *now* in Eternity whether it be six thousand years ago in time, or one thousand years hence.

Jesus likens the scribe to an householder. A householder is not necessarily a house-owner. Of course, Jesus owns the kingdom of heaven. Pastors of churches could be termed as churchholders when they follow the specific instructions of the church-owner, Jesus Christ. Ministers are authorized to hold meetings, conferences, baptizings, communions, etc. God-called scribes are especially gifted to teach, advise, counsel, exhort, encourage, admonish, and reprove both publicly and privately. They publicly engage in singing, preaching, praying, and teaching. They bring forth from their treasure things both old and new.

The storehouse of all the precious things of the kingdom is Christ Jesus. Until He is formed in us as the hope of Glory; they are all mysteries. When Jesus takes up His abode in our hearts these mysteries begin to be unfolded. The radiance of the whole truth is so brilliant that the rays must be tempered to suit our weak eyes. We cannot stand too much revelation at once, it is given to us just in little bits. We cannot stand mid-day at midnight. We receive these treasures in our hearts in the degrees of abundance as our hearts are prepared of the Lord to retain them. Jesus teaches His apostles and ministers to avail themselves of what is old in teaching what is new. He used natural things, which were old, to illustrate spiritual things, which were new to them. The gospel is the blossoming of the law. Both the law and the Gospel are from the same source. The law must

be known before grace can be appreciated. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ Jesus. The law does not lead away from Christ but toward Him. We must consider the law as holy and binding before we can appreciate its fulfillment in Christ.

A treasure denotes a collection of things. Riches accumulated or possessed such as gold, jewels, precious metals, and other material things to hoard by the owner would be considered as natural treasures. To retain carefully in the mind collected knowledge and wisdom would be considered as mental treasures. Spiritual treasures consist of a collection of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, ambitions, and desires which make happy the *spirit* that is ruling in the hearts of those doing the collecting. The countenance, conversation, company, actions, and characteristics; — all make manifest the *spirit* ruling the collector's hearts. Whatever is treasure to the wicked is considered trash to the righteous; whatever the righteous consider as precious treasure, the wicked consider vile. The wicked will not treasure as truth the word of truth, but the righteous see, believe, and treasure the word of truth. Jesus said after He had commanded the woman to go and sin no more; "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) Those whose Father was the Lord, believed Him. Many believed on Him as He said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (V. 28-29)

Jesus then said to the believers, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus said many things to those who did not believe but boldly accused Him of telling untruths. Suffice it to

quote Jesus' answer to the devil's theory, "*We have one Father, even God*": "If God were your Father, ye would love me: For I proceed forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it . . . He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Please read 8th chapter of John. You will see how boldly these children of the devil tried to defame Christ's actions, preaching and person. They went so far in their accusation as to imply that He was of fornication! (V. 41) Do not be surprised at the accusations that are brought against you to defame your name and effectiveness. Unbelief produces despair, but faith produces assurance. Jesus taught His eternal existence in saying, "Before Abraham was, I am."

Treasures both old and new are continuously brought forth by God's instructed scribes. Old experiences of Grace are made to shine forth as new experiences are realized. Old knowledge is brought forth to light as new revelations unfold. All who are recipients of the Gospel message into the hearts will long to relate it to others. They desire to proclaim their experience by stating each and every step of the leadings of the Holy Spirit. They want to tell of how the Lord led them from the first time they realized their hungerings and thirstings for the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, step by step to the present. They want to tell of their result in praying, searching the Scriptures, soul agonies and Christ's words to them. As dear children, they wholeheartedly trust the Lord to lead them, provide for them, protect them, de-

liver them, save them, and finally receive them into their eternal home of perfection, which is beyond this period of time. As dear children, they desire to please the Father by worshiping Him in Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Feeling their own inability, they deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Jesus.

Even the things of nature become precious treasures when the Holy searchlight shines upon them. Your bodies become temples of God, the earthen vessels in which these treasures are hid; the living sacrifices to be presented unto the Lord; and your hands, feet, ears, mouths, tongues, hearts, and minds: are all to praise and glorify God, as well as serve the brethren. Trees of the forest, flowers of the gardens, birds of the air, fruits of the orchards, plants of the fields, and the fish of the sea; — all are precious from which God's children garner an abundance of treasures. All these manifest God because they have life. Even every creature that is without any appearance of life is a source of inexhaustible treasures which are used to better inform those instructed unto the Kingdom. Some of which are: the grains of sand on the seashore; water of the seas, oceans, rivers, streams and springs; rocks of the hill and mountains; the atmosphere which envelopes the earth; ships that sail the seas, airplanes that scan the sky, rockets that penetrate beyond the atmosphere into outer space; the planets, stars, and other heavenly bodies; as well as air we breathe, and everything else in God's creation, which are under His strict dominion. "All things are beautiful in His time." God so minutely times each and every event that they each fit exactly in place as fragments fit in a jig-saw puzzle.

God so minutely timed a telephone call from Elder Durwood Bradley of Lubbock, Texas, that it came precisely as I was writing of things in space. When I answered the telephone my mind was soaring into space. It did my

heart good to hear him tell of the wonderful "*lifting up*" that he experienced in meditating upon the paper entitled, *The Missing Day*. (Please read it as copied on page 17, January — 1971 issue of *Signs of the Times*.) This proves that research in the space program is a blessing of God which brings to light that the Bible is God's true history. It proves that the Bible contains answers to things that cannot be proven scientifically. It proves God's dominion of the sun. It proved that God hearkens to the voice of man in manifesting His greatness: "The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hastened not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of man: for the Lord fought for Israel." (Joshua 10:13-14.) The Lord hearkened unto Hezekiah to convince him that Isaiah was a true prophet from the Lord, and that God had answered His prayers as you shall read in 2 Kings 20:9-10. God works miraculous wonders to prove that He hears the prayers of those who are in the furnace of afflictions. He opens the windows of Heaven and pours out blessings upon all who use their talents to Glorify the Giver of every good and perfect Gift.

We beseech you, brethren, to heed God's commands and promises. Just as certain that He is the sovereign God, He will exactly fulfill each and every promise. May God bless the 3rd chapter of Malachi as living words spoken by God through the prophet to you. How dreadful and terrible are the experiences of those, His children, who are tempted to rob God. Curses come upon His people when they use their gifts and talents to glorify any other than God. You cannot escape the chastening rod of God when you misuse these precious talents. Pray God to enable you to use them rightly as you cannot do so of yourselves. Pray to know God's

will concerning you and walk in the path accordingly. Listen to God: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10) May we be enabled by God's power to bring forth treasures both old and new into the churches of Christ. We are fully persuaded that to the degree this is done, yea — to a greater degree — will the windows of heaven be opened by God, and we shall receive in abundance happiness, joy, peace, and salvation. What a foretaste of the Eternal Heaven from our Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALMS 116:12

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

The above expression of David has rested upon our mind of late, and although we have no gift to expound Scripture, yet if the Lord will enable us to express the reflection we have had upon this text, so as to convey to our brethren some of the comfort it has afforded us, we shall feel that our writing has not wearied them.

The psalmist doubtless is here personating the Savior, and the primary meaning of his writing is prophetic of the suffering of Jesus in his advent to the earth, but as all his saints are to follow him in all things pertaining to their salvation, the language applies equally to the experience of every individual saint, and it is in this light we propose to treat the subject.

The question is asked, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his bene-

fits?" The inbred nature of man is to feel that he must either render some service to God to obtain his benefits, or to compensate him for favors past. This is perhaps one of the hardest delusions the saints have to struggle with. They seem to forget that every sin that an elect vessel of mercy has ever committed, or may ever be permitted to commit, was atoned for by Jesus upon the cross, and that in the sight of God they stand in Christ as holy as God is holy, and their heavenly Father has given them every blessing in Christ, and these blessings were all stored in Christ before the world began, so that they are not contingent, nor do they depend upon some *service* we are to render. If we are not to render service, "What shall we render?" We are not left in doubt how to answer this question, for David himself answers it. He says, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

What is this cup of salvation?

It appears to us that the Savior had reference to this cup in his answer to James and John, when they came to him with a request to be especially favored: "Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" And they said, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of." As said, this cup that Jesus speaks of is, to our mind, the cup of salvation that we are to take.

What is in this cup?

Let us go to the garden of Gethsemane, and we will see what was in this "cup of salvation" when our blessed Savior took it, and called upon the name of the Lord, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Never have any of the children of God been called to drink so bitter a cup, but they all must drink of this same cup. "The cup which our Father gives us shall we not drink it?"

Every child of God that has been long on their heavenward journey knows from their own experience what this

cup contains, better than it can be expressed in words.

In our pilgrimage in this world we are daily called to pass through trials, and meet with losses and crosses of a temporal nature, and sometimes it seems that our troubles are more than we can endure, and it seems to us that these things surely can have nothing to do with our salvation in Christ. But, dear child of God, they are all in this cup. You never had one pang of physical pain, nor met with a single loss of earthly goods, nor been bereft of a loved one, but what it was by the purpose of God placed in this cup to wean you from the world, and to bring you to "call upon the name of the Lord."

These are the temporal trials and afflictions that are in this cup, but every subject of grace knows of deeper trials, which they have to endure in the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, spoken of by Paul when he says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." When cast down and mourning an absent God, have you not often felt to say, All these things are against me? and has it not appeared that with his own hand he seemed intent to aggravate your woes, so that you felt hope was well nigh gone, and your faith could not lay hold upon the promises. Then what did you do? Did you not resolve to do better, be more obedient, and by this means strain some of the bitter dregs out of this cup, so that it might be more agreeable to your natural taste? This is the course carnal reason would suggest, but David said, "I will call upon the name of the Lord."

The psalmist was permitted to go as deep in sin as it is possible for man to go, and therefore knew the depravity of the human heart, and was prepared to say with the prophet, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." There does not appear to be any thought in David's mind of what he should do to court the favor of

the Lord in the future, but he was wholly actuated by a spirit of gratitude, and desire to render acceptable praise to God for his benefits toward him in the past, and at the present time. This is just the difference between carnal service, and the fruit of the Spirit; the first is actuated by a selfish desire, to obtain favor, and the other by a desire to render unto the Lord the tribute of a thankful heart for the benefits already received, and when we are influenced by the Spirit, this gratitude and praise is rendered to God without any effort on our part; it flows from the heart, as the odor is emitted from the flower, and like the flower, the more bruised and crushed it is, the more fragrance it yields; so is the child of God, when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, the more bitter and crushing trials there is in his cup, the more he "will call upon the name of the Lord."

May it be the pleasure of the Lord to pour out of his Holy Spirit upon us, that we may each take the cup he has prepared for us, "and call upon his name" for strengthening grace to enable us to say with our dear Redeemer, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Benton L. Beebe

(Benton L. Beebe was a grandson of Elder Gilbert Beebe and co-editor of the *Signs* with Elder Chick until his death in 1904.

— J. D. W.

GALATIANS 5:4

"Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

The churches of Galatia had been assailed by Judaizing teachers, preaching to them that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law; and some of those converts who had begun in the Spirit, were so far bewitched as to entertain the idea that they were to be made perfect by the works of the law, and thus they became involved and entangled with

the yoke of bondage; a yoke which neither they nor the fathers, not even the patriarchs of Israel, were able to bear.

The apostle proved very conclusively in this epistle that no man could be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law, and because they could not, therefore Christ had redeemed them from under the law, was delivered for their offenses, and raised from the dead for their justification; that he had set them free from the law, as a yoke of bondage, by himself becoming the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and hence they were saved by grace, and not by works of their own. Having fully, clearly and irrefutably, established his position of justification alone, and freely, or graciously, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he admonishes them in the beginning of this chapter, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage, and in urging this admonition he testified that if they resorted to the law for life, that was a rejection of Christ. If they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses, they thereby pledged themselves to perform the whole law themselves, and thus leaving Christ entirely out of their justification, he shall profit them nothing. Of what avail that he died for them, if their justification was established on their own works, and not in his redemption?

Again, in the text under consideration, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost he testifies that whosoever of them were justified by the law, to them Christ had become of no effect: they were not saved by grace, but by works, as he had elsewhere testified, that if it were by works, then it was no more of grace. Salvation could not possibly be jointly of grace and of works, for if it were of the one then it was not of the other. *We, if saved at all, must be saved either wholly of grace, or wholly of our own works,* and if it were of the latter,

Christ was made of no effect, and they were fallen from grace. That is, as grace is infinitely higher than legal works, so salvation by grace transcends salvation by works. Not that Paul either allowed that any could in reality be justified by the works of the law, which he plainly declared was impossible, nor that those who were saved by grace, could ever possibly lose their interest in that grace, which is equally impossible, but *on the supposition that any were saved and justified by the law, then they were not subjects of grace, nor were they interested in Christ.* Descending from grace to the theory of legal works, is truly a fall, and the depth of the fall is as great as is the distance of grace above works.

The great design of the inspired writer is to show that we cannot consistently hold that salvation is conditional, and by the works of the law, without rejecting Christ as the Savior, and grace as the principle on which that salvation is extended to any of the fallen sons of men.

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

DOES NOT GET TO MEETINGS

545 N. 6th Street
Fairfax, Okla. 74637

Dear Brother Spangler:

I have just received my *Signs of the Times* and have read all of it, and enjoyed it all. I see my subscription is out in February, so I enclose my check for another year.

I read the letter from Willie (Green) Smith from Mangum, Okla., and I am wondering if her folks are related to B. M. Green, an Elder of years ago. I knew him well. He baptized my oldest son in 1925, who is now an elder; also at the same time baptized my youngest son. He also helped in my little girl's funeral in December, 1928. She was thirteen years of age. He loved her lots because she loved the church,

and because she would not cut her long hair or use make-up as many of her friends urged her to. She said she hoped to meet her blessed Lord some day and would want to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair; and could not do it if her hair were short. She said that the Bible said that women should not pray with their heads uncovered. Dear Brother Green wrote her obituary in December, 1928.

I hope the Lord will bless all to keep the good old *Signs* coming. I am eighty-six and don't get to go to church, and I miss it so much.

May God see fit to have mercy and forgive a sinner saved by God's amazing grace.

Mary E. Hendricks

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY LENA SMITH

Sister Mary Lena Smith of Mt. Vernon, Texas, passed away November 20, 1970 at Terrell State Hospital. She was born January 14, 1879, in Franklin County, Texas. She was ninety-one years old. Survivors are two daughters: Mrs. Bernice Kates and Mrs. Tom Jordan; one brother, Mr. Mat Moore, and one sister, Sister Kate Anderson.

Sister Smith was a member of Providence Church in Franklin County, Texas, and was very attentive to her church as long as she was able to go. I believe she was as well versed in the scriptures as any sister I ever talked with; and was blessed with a wonderful spiritual understanding. She was loved by everyone who knew her, and was as humble a saint as I ever knew.

I would like to say to her children and all that knew her, that I feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer, Loyd Wall, conducted her funeral, at which there was a large and attentive congregation.

Loyd Wall

LUCH JANE CARPENTER

Once again it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst one of our loved ones, Luch Jane Carpenter, a daughter of the late Asa and Ann Harper Carpenter. She was born January 1, 1907, and died November 23, 1970.

She leaves to mourn her passing two brothers, Hubert and William Carpenter, Hurricane, W. Va.; one sister, Mildred Lambert of Durbin, W. Va.; and a host of relatives and friends.

She had been in ill health for several years, but never complained. Although she had never united with the church, she was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were held in the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church by Elder Veldon Linn of the Tygerts Valley River Primitive Baptist Association; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by ones who loved her, and miss her very much.

Mrs. Vera Bird

Mrs. Callie Higginbotham

NORA W. LANCASTER

In loving memory of my foster mother, Nora W. Lancaster, who passed away November 23, 1970. She was born on September 4, 1890 to Elijah and Nancy Smith Williams. She married James Thad Lancaster on February 13, 1912. He died on December 19, 1967. Six children were born to this union, of which five survive. They are Martha L. Brake, Norfolk, Va.; Myrtle L. Proctor, Elm City; Lessie L. Lancaster, James D. Lancaster, and Alvin E. Lancaster, all of Rocky Mount, N. C. In addition to their children, they had room in their home and in their hearts for my brother and sister and myself. They treated us as their own. I loved them dearly.

She united with the church at Pleasant Hill on September 23, 1933. She loved and looked forward to going to church. She was able to attend Pleasant Hill on Saturday and Sunday before she died on Monday. She loved to be with the members, her children, and her friends. She manifested humbleness and patience, and she had a sweet smile for everyone. We miss her very much, but we feel confident that she is at peace and at rest from all her pain and labor. May we all be reconciled to the Lord's will and His promise that He will come again at the last day to raise these bodies from the grave, to reign with Him in that Eternal City.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Henry Jones and Elder C. L. Coker. They spoke very comforting. Her body was laid to rest in Upper Town Creek Church cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers.

Written by order of conference December, 1970 by

Fannie Mae Calhoun

OBITUARY OF
ELDER WILLIAM CURRY KING

As I prepare to write this obituary, it is with much sadness. I feel to be at such a loss as what and how to say the things I would desire to say about one so great and highly esteemed among the household of faith. Elder King was born in Caswell County, North Carolina on May 6, 1897, to his parents, the late William J. and Alice Roscoe King. Departed this life October 17, 1970, making his stay 73 years, 5 months and 11 days. Leaving to mourn his departure is his wife, Sister Bronna King, together with a host of near and dear relatives and all those who knew and loved him.

His father passed away when he was only 14 years of age. I have heard him tell how saddened and what a loss he had sustained and how he begged God for mercy and counsel that he might carry on, yet knowing and feeling that God knew best. As he grew into adulthood he labored hard to provide for those whom he loved. He told of a desire he had to become a lawyer but his lot was cast with the poor and afflicted of Zion and we see that God had a greater work for him to perform. Having become acquainted with Miss Bronna Mae King, we see that God brought them together in such a way that she was to become his faithful and loyal companion and they were united in marriage on May 4, 1921, by the late Elder John W. Gilliam. Unto this union there were no children, yet there were many who came to him for counsel and advice as that of a father.

Elder King professed a hope in Jesus Christ and offered to the church the 2nd Saturday in May, 1917, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church by the late Elder Ben F. McKinney and remained a faithful and loyal member until death. Having been burdened with more than a desire for membership of the church; he asked liberty to speak at his home church in their July meeting, 1917, at the age of 20 and was granted that privilege. The church seeing and recognizing the burden and the gift which God had placed upon him, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, the 5th Sunday in July, 1921. Going forth from that time forward preaching the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It seemed that God looked upon him with a favoring eye to bless him in all his endeavors both natural and spiritual. He soon became a great and useful minister being blessed to stir the minds of God's people and to feed the sheep; many were strengthened under the sound of his preaching. He was called to serve churches in our association and among those in which he served were McCray, 1924-1970,

Greensboro, Assistant Pastor 1927-1932, Pastor 1932-1970, Bush Arbor 1929-1970, Prospect Hill 1959-1970, Gooch Memorial and Country Line. Elder King being blessed with such integrity, judgment, counsel and having such an oversight over the flock wherewith he was called, having the interest and welfare of his brethren at heart, he was chosen to serve as moderator of the Upper Country Line Association in the year 1933. In the year 1942 he was reelected and served this office with such meekness, humbleness and love having a desire for and maintaining peace and was annually elected moderator without opposition until death.

His early labors saw him as a farmer, tobacco warehouseman and later was employed by Smith-Douglass Company and retired, having worked for them twenty-seven years. Yet being so efficient and gaining the confidence of his superiors that not one time was he denied the many calls he had for funerals and visits to the bedside of the sick which he administered unto so untiringly with love and patience.

However, there were lean years in his early ministry and one experience he related I shall never forget. He had a meeting coming up and it was some distance away. He did not have money to buy gas to go and fill this appointment but he was greatly concerned as to how he would get there. Early on the morning of this appointment there came a man to his home and asked if he had any seed corn. The reply was, "yes," and the corn was purchased. Elder King said, "God has provided my way." How many times have we heard him say, "God will provide for his little ones."

He was blessed to declare the truth for more than fifty-three years among the Household of Faith, gaining fellowship and love as he went forth, truly being loved and esteemed by those who knew him. It seemed he was one of the favorites among our people and called upon far and near to pay last respect to those whom God had called from this life, having served in as many as three funerals in one day.

During his ministry there were no doubt many highlights, I am sure. One of these must have been when he baptized his dear companion into the fellowship of the church in November, 1941. Other baptizings we would like to mention were that of the blind, deaf and some even in chairs. He also baptized six men and later served as moderator in the presbytery and saw them ordained into the full work of the ministry. They are in this order: Elders Ernest F. Oakley, J. Harvey Smith (deceased), Wallis A. Smith, Kenneth Key, Donald E. Smith and Leonard Key, so we feel the fruits of his ministry shall re-

main with us for years to come. He was blessed to baptize many believers into the fellowship of the church during his ministry.

As we saw his ministry coming to a climax and age overtaking him he was approached many times concerning his health and his physical strength and his reply was, "I prefer to wear out rather than rust out," and we saw him pressing on as a faithful soldier of the cross, neither murmuring nor complaining but trusting in God. Elder King was a man that believed in peace and indeed a peacemaker. He was blessed to carry the banner of peace and to walk softly and humbly among our people. We find in Matthew Chapter 5, Verse 9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

The last text Elder King read and preached from, was on the second Saturday night in October, 1970, from the 110th Psalms, Verse 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." On the second Sunday in October, 1970, which was to be our communion service there were several ministers present and some of whom he had baptized. Elder King as always being considerate of his ministering brethren declined to speak. After preaching service all ministers present were seated around the communion table as we prepared to take of the bread and wine which is symbolic of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Elder King arose and began to speak and in doing so remarked that there were some present at this service that may not be present to enjoy the love and fellowship of a service of this kind again. To reassure us of the promises of God and of that sweet hope which God has placed in the hearts of his people. It was as though he was trying to tell us his time was short. Little did we know that it was the purpose of God that it would be the last supper our beloved pastor would have on earth with us. I cherish the sweet memories that God being so complete would bless him to finish his course in this manner.

I feel the example he set before us shall long be remembered and his voice shall echo in the hearts of those who loved him for years to come. As we look at the churches in which he served we can see evidence of his leadership. He contributed heavily in a financial way so that the buildings would be more comfortable for those who would come to worship.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, North Carolina on October 19, 1970, by the writer, assisted by Elders D. V. Spangler, H. W. Wray, E. F. Oakley, Kenneth Key, Leonard Key and Donald Smith. The church did not accommodate the enormous crowd that gathered to pay respect. There were many

beautiful floral wreaths, also being a token of respect. I do not feel that this was the last token of respect, for each time we think of the life which God blessed him to live in our midst, it will be a token of respect. If we know our hearts we humbly thank God for having had the privilege to walk in sweet fellowship with one so meek and humble. I feel he could have adopted the language of the Apostle Paul, 2nd Timothy, Chapter 4, Verse 6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May God in his rich mercy bless all those that mourn and may the vacancy in which we have in our hearts be filled with the love of God.

BE IT RESOLVED, a copy be sent to Sister Bronna King, one sent to the *Signs of the Times* and one kept for church records.

Written by request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith

Read and approved in their conference meeting on February 13, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF ELDER KING

Yanceyville, N. C.
December, 1970

Much has been written about our dear Pastor, Elder W. C. King, since his passing a few weeks ago. Many fitting and appropriate remarks have been made; all, I feel, in appreciation and thankfulness to an all wise God who saw fit to call him home.

I would like, if I may be blessed to do so, to pen a picture of a dream I had of Elder King not more than a couple or three weeks before his death. At the time I thought of it as just a foolish dream, and even made some statement at the breakfast table the following morning. But since he has gone from our midst this dream has, at least partially, unfolded for me and become precious.

In this dream there was a fairly large rectangular shaped building sitting on a small hill, the building running lengthwise up and down the hill. I was on one side of the building in a shaded spot seemingly trying to read.

On the opposite side and a little farther up the hill I saw a white goat and a black animal. The features of the black animal were not clear but it was heavier than the goat though not much, if any, taller. These animals were standing upon the base of a statue. The statue was not clear but was about as tall as an average size man. The goat was standing on one side of the statue and the black animal on the other. These were live animals. I could see them move their heads a little, also their feet occasionally but they never left the base of the statue. At the same time I saw Elder King and a brother of the Church walking, with their backs to me and to the animals, going toward a small grove of trees on a flat area below us, though close by. They were the only people I saw and though I did not call to them I thought they should come back and do something about these animals. They never looked back. I was a little afraid and felt so helpless knowing I could do nothing myself.

There was a road that led to the right of this grove of trees and on out of sight behind it. In my dream I thought, "Well, they are just going to go around this grove and turn around," as might have been necessary if driving an automobile — yet they were walking. I watched them as they went and waited for them to appear on the opposite side of the grove but they never did. Meanwhile a lady appeared, vaguely, in the picture with me, but it was not at all clear to me who she was. Nevertheless, I complained to her because Elder King and this brother did not come back and do something about these animals. I did not receive an answer from the lady — and all was gone as dreams go.

The picture is yet unfinished. I want to fill in. I wish I could picture the two men for you as I saw them, also the pretty little dirt road. The men were looking toward each other as they walked but I was in the direction that I could see more of Elder King's face than the face of the brother. He seemed to be talking and in a jovial, happy, even elated mood. The brother, smiling a little, seemed very attentive and interested in what Elder King was saying.

Once when I told a sister about my dream she immediately remarked that the black animal represented the sins of the world that Elder King was leaving behind. This I believe. The goat (the world) never caused him to swerve. Nor had he time for idols and false images, not even to the last. Neither could any of these things follow him, they kept their place in the background. Of the animals, I like to think of there being no sheep in the picture, to me representing his work of tending the flock was over.

Another thought has just come to mind.

Could the lady I saw vaguely represent his church he was also leaving behind? Or was she just an outlet for me to pour out my complaints upon? Or was it you, dear Sister King, knowing you to be the constant and loyal companion you were — also knowing you were standing by when your husband entered into this path of no return. Though it was not a path I saw. It was a narrow road, a pretty little dirt road. I was under the shade of some trees, but the road looked clear and bright as if the sun was shining upon it.

It did not take this dream for me to feel our dear Pastor rests in a better world. Nevertheless, I thank God for this picture of him, walking in brotherly love, going home; leaving all ugliness behind.

Mary Gordon Blaylock

ELDER DILLARD R. PYRTLE

The Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Forsyth County, N. C. desires to write a Memorial of their beloved brother and Elder, Elder Dillard R. Pyrtle.

He was born in the Stokes County to David R. and Nannie King Pyrtle the 28th day of September, 1890, and departed this life September 3, 1970.

He leaves behind to mourn his passing his wife, Sister Gracie Shephard Pyrtle; four sons, Wilbert Jethro, John Dillard, Benjamin Nathan and Samuel David Pyrtle; six daughters, Mrs. Guy Coe, Mrs. Levi Hayworth, Mrs. Rachel Wray, Mrs. Dixie Eaton, Mrs. Dorothy Lyndon and Mrs. Anne Minor; one sister, Mrs. Minnie Owens; one brother, Mr. Rufus Pyrtle, and twenty grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren. All that loving hands could do was administered to Brother Pyrtle by his loving wife and children.

Elder Pyrtle joined the Church at Bunker Hill in 1929, and remained a faithful member until death. During his ministry he served the following churches, Mayodan, N. C., Pleasantville Church near Reidsville, N. C., and Toms Creek Church near Denton, N. C. He was blest to also visit many churches and associations in various parts of the country.

This hymn recorded in the Lloyd's Primitive Hymnal expresses our feelings and belief concerning Elder Pyrtle's ministry more than we could say or express.

"His death we mourn who lately stood
A Herald of the Mighty God;
Proclaimed the Savior of our race,
And bore the message of his grace.

Laborious in his master's cause,
His view not lucre nor applause;

To spend and to be spent resigned,
If soul's thru Christ salvation find.

With pointed language, flaming zeal
He to the conscience did appeal;
With terror sought the soul to move,
Or draw it with the cords of love.

But all his labors now are o'er,
And we shall hear his voice no more;
His dust lies silent in the Tomb,
He's gone to Heaven, his final Home.

Jesus, tho earthly shepherds die,
Do thou thy Church still supply
With gifts instructions to impart,
Pastors according to thy heart."

Written by the request of the Church and
his family.

Zennie L. Rhue

MRS. SALLIE PICKERAL

Our dearly beloved Sister Sallie Pickeral was born March 15, 1884, departed this life December 6, 1970. She was the oldest member of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the Church in September, 1908, and was faithful to attend her meetings as long as she was able.

Besides her husband, Brother Lee A Pickeral, she is survived by three sons, Morman, Henry, and Acy Pickeral; six daughters, Mrs. Bernice Atkinson, Mrs. Ora Floyd, Mrs. Virginia Harmon, Mrs. Lois Pallonte, Miss Grace and Nora Pickeral; two brothers, one sister, fourteen grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and many friends and loved ones to mourn their loss, but we believe their loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers at Gretna Burial Park.

Written by Marvin Brumfield

MARY L. GORDY

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our God who was pleased to take from our midst our very dear friend, Mary L. Gordy on September 30, 1970. We hope to be blessed to say with one of old, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be his name."

The departed one was the daughter of the late Larry C. Brittingham and Eva C. Brittingham who survives. Our dear friend had been married twice, first to Glen Calhoun, who passed away in 1942, and later to Reese Gordy

who passed away in September of 1968. There were no children by either marriage. There are, however, two brothers, two sisters, and three step-children who survive. She was not a member of the visible Church but always attended when she could, and we feel had a strong belief in salvation by grace. The writer well remembers calling her sister and her answer was, "I wish I were."

We all miss her so very much but feel that she had spent her allotted time here, and the Lord, who doeth all things well, was pleased to take her away from the cares of this vile world. It is the prayer of the writer that it may please the Lord to reconcile all who mourn the loss of this dear one, to feel that their loss was her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Windsor-Disharoon Funeral Home in Laurel, Delaware and her body was laid to rest beside her first husband in the cemetery at Laurel, Del.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. ANNA LAWHEAD

Mrs. Anna Lawhead was born October 13, 1885, at Turners Station, Ky., and died September 20, 1970, at her home in Hurricane, W. Va. She is survived by her husband, Joseph Lawhead, and one daughter, Cecelia Ransdell, both of Hurricane. She was a daughter of the late James and Sarah Humston Russell, both Primitive Baptists of Cane Run Church, Turners Station, Ky.

She united with the Cane Run Primitive Church in November, 1902; and in 1932 Cane Run Church was amalgamated with Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Church, Campbellsburg, Ky. She was a faithful member there until her death; making it a total of almost 68 years. She was the granddaughter of the late N. A. Humston who served the Sulphur Fork Church from 1862 until his death January 26, 1890. This church was organized in 1801, and she loved it dearly for it stood for all she believed.

Her funeral was held at Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church at Culloden, W. Va., conducted by her pastor, Elder Woodrow Lake; and burial was in Culloden Cemetery.

Her daughter,
Cecelia Ransdell

(We can add that Sister Anna Lawhead was a much loved and faithful member of the Old School Baptist Church, and we enjoyed sweet fellowship with her when we visited in her home many years ago, and since then by correspondence. We loved her.

Elder George and
Sister Esther Ruston)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1971

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HAPPY TO SEE
THE CHILDREN BELIEVING

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I enclose check for \$7.00 for two years renewal. I enjoy it so much; and appreciate the large printing, as my eyes are failing. I have had to give up some reading. I have a Bible with good print — it and the *Signs* are about all the reading I can do. I am so thankful for them both. I am now past my seventy-sixth year, and I am not sorry about that. Times are fearful now and none of us know what the morrow will bring.

The dear Lord has been so good to me: my hope and trust is in him. We are few in number here but have meetings each Sunday except three Sundays in October when we omit our meetings and as many of us who can attend associations. I have been blessed to go to several associations in Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Lots of our brethren have gone on before and we older ones are still here awaiting our time to go.

How happy we are to see our children believing this doctrine that is hated by the world. My oldest son is an ordained minister now: Richard Campbell; and my nephew Swayne

Young. I feel sad about the suffering that will be in their way, but God in his sweet mercy will uphold them and give them grace sufficient for their day.

The sweet writings of the *Signs* are so precious. We feel to know the writers though we have not met them. Won't it be a glorious time when we all meet in heaven and be with Christ, the Lord forevermore.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

"A GARDEN ENCLOSED"

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." (Song of Sol. 4:12)

A garden is a lovely spot that is a thing of beauty and a source of pleasure. The world is full of ugliness, caused by man's destruction of nature's beauty, in his search for life's needs and pleasures. However, even man has reserved to himself gardens of beauty, tracts of rich, cultivated land for growing selected or rare plants.

These gardens are usually fenced, hemmed in or shut up, so that prowlers and intruders cannot destroy them. They are peaceful, restful, beautiful and truly garden spots for enjoyment, and they lift us above the turmoil of daily surroundings. The plants may be for beauty, or for food, or experiments, etc., but they are selected and grown with care.

I have been feasting on the garden, spoken of in the Song of Solomon lately, especially the way it was chosen, set apart and enclosed for God's purpose and pleasure. It teaches in beautiful language his election of the sheep, and

the passiveness of the sheep as he made them await his calling, his wooing and his redemption. As the husbandman selects the plants and nourishes them, so our God chose the plants that fill his garden and comforts, directs and leads them with the song of his love.

I believe the garden spoken of in the song, pertains to the whole of God's church that will be eternally saved; all of his chosen ones from before the world began; that host that no man could number, made up of every kindred, nation, people and tongue under heaven. It is all contained in the love song to his bride, by the Groom, who will come to claim her, when he takes her out of time, into that glorious eternity for which she waits.

His love is so great, so deep, so all enveloping it encloses this entire garden. Still, it reaches into the hearts of each individual plant within its wall. "How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." We cannot fathom the great scope of his love for so great a host, at the same time we see him heal a leper or save a beggar. A vast sea of mercy, grace and love spreads out before us.

The life of the plant is provided for by this Gardener from the time he places each seed in the prepared soil, through its cultivation and growth, until it reaches maturity. How we try to reach upward for the sun and rain and the sustenance wherewith we are fed. It matters not the longings and yearnings within us. We are as the helpless plants uplifted toward the sky and are taught by his love and care, to stand still and wait upon the Lord. This love is meted out to us by seasons. As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud; so are we, the plants of his garden, watered and caused to find peace and comfort from his manna sent from on high. We cannot feed and water ourselves. The sun and rain are too high for us to reach. They are sent down to us in his own time, as he sees we stand in

need of it.

His garden is not only nourished by his love and mercy, but is set apart and enclosed also. He has hedged it, hemmed it in and encompassed it in such a way that intruders, prowlers and destroyers are kept out. No briars nor brambles are allowed to grow there. Even though wolves in sheep clothing rise up among his children, they prosper for a short season, and die trying to survive on their own food and drink. Their own works do follow them as they are cut down, leaving his plants untainted because of His watchcare over them. They seek other gardens that contain their own kind of food. Isaiah says, "The wicked shall be confounded for the gardens they have chosen." Notice gardens is in the plural in this writing. There is but one garden, one bride for our Beloved. Also the wicked do their own choosing. We hope, Oh how we do hope, to be a selected, chosen plant in his garden of love and mercy.

We believe the hedge round about his garden is made up of the shalls and wills of Jehovah God, and that it is kept by his promises, which are yea and amen. It is an enclosure that will last as long as the great I Am. It is also kept as the apple of his eye, as he envelopes it so tenderly, and it is as firm and secure as, "a nail in a sure place."

Just as the Lord shut Noah in the ark, and caused it to ride upon the water that destroyed everything else on earth, so are the people of God always shut in and protected, while other plants in the garden are consumed. "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13)

His kingdom, which is the garden in the Song, is likened to a pearl of great price, the great price being the life of his darling Son. No wonder it is so dear to him. Never in time or eternity has anything been bought at so great a price as the garden of his choice. For his kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field, for which a man sells *all* he owns to buy the field, just for the treasure

in it. How costly the garden enclosed in his love.

One of our dear late elders often asked, "Aren't you glad, when you are *made* to be glad?" That is the way I feel about the garden being shut in from the world around it. I hope I am *made* to be glad it is so. One of the meanings of *shut* is: to close so as to hinder egress or ingress. He who opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open, keeps us in (if we are included in that Eden spot) as he shuts the world out. The outgoing or incoming is in his hands. Our beauty is in and of our Beloved. His countenance shines through his planting, as he works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. If we are among that number who will ask, "When did we do these good things," it will be because we are his right hand's planting and his Spirit within us causes us to do those things. The plant in the garden grows, buds and flowers as it is fed by the Gardener. How desolate it becomes, how dry and wilted, when he withholds himself for a season.

He sings that the enclosed garden is his sister. A sister is one who is of the same parentage or a joint-heir. Paul says in Romans 8:17 that his children are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. What a precious heritage. That he should descend from glory, take on sinful flesh, and die for the sins of his people; then love and call this same people his sister, his joint-heir. She will share with him the same glory, when he comes back for her. How we sorrow and grieve because we fall far short of so great a love. It is beyond our comprehension. He comforts Zion by telling her, "He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord."

We try to pray, while in the wilderness and desert land, that He nourish and lead and instruct us, as he comforted his sister.

He called his garden by many names as he comforted and edified his people in the song. The same God who called

her his sister, spoke to her as his spouse. So she is also married to him. The love of a groom and his bride is consummated in marriage to make it legal and binding; to make the bride secure and safe, in his love. Whereas a sister denotes a sharing of things heired from the Father, as a joint-heir with the Son; his spouse is protected by his name and taken into his bosom as his first love, as the fairest among women. He bestowed his love on the church, and through the Son, she returned it. He tells her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." He perfects her in love and salvation, and tells her, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." What a perfect union with his spouse.

Tell me, dear ones, is there a safer place? The joy unspeakable and full of glory that goes on and on forevermore between them, seems as far away as the heavens are above the earth at times; as unattainable as the plant food. But again it comes as the rains upon the tender herb and as the dew upon the grass. It refreshes us again and makes us know that he is God.

A spring and fountain are sources of water springing up, in this case the water of eternal life. The source of supply is shut up and sealed in the garden. They are cut off from the world by the same hedge that shuts them in the garden, therefore the spring and fountain are for the enclosure only. They refresh the garden as it waits for its beloved.

Those he has enclosed in the garden find comfort and joy in his song of love, as he sings the endearing names to her all through the Scriptures: sister, spouse, spring shut up and fountain sealed, join the sheep fold, city on a hill, and many, many more for his little ones to rejoice about as they come from the lips of their Husband.

To feast on the comforting beauty of God's song to his bride is a blessing seldom enjoyed by the writer. My thoughts are often gone astray after the things in the world. However, my hope is, though small at times, to hear

a still, small voice within me say, "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away." If I am ever fair it will be because the spring, the fountain of living water washed my sin sick soul.

The promise to his love, the lost sheep, the strangers in the world is that their souls shall sorrow no more, for they shall be like his garden, that drinks of the water of life.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La. 71277

HAS BEEN READING
OLDER SIGNS

Star City, Ark. 71667

Dear Editors:

I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs* as it will be due soon, and I don't want to be late; also a little extra to be used as needed.

I look forward to receiving the *Signs* each month, as well as the letters I get from the ones I hope to be my kindred in Christ. Without this good reading I would be very lonely. My efforts at writing are very poor, and I do not always know how to express my feelings.

During the past month I have been reading some of the older *Signs*, dating from 1919 to 1940, and have found some good reading in them by some of the older brothers and sisters and elders that I knew, or knew of. One sister wrote, "Can one who is such a sinner have any part in anything like this? who has done things, and do continually, that she would condemn in others." I feel this way about myself. I truly believe the Lord is our Refuge, and that without this guiding care we of ourselves can do nothing — only stumble along in our blundering nature.

Paul said in Philippians 1:27 and 29, "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand in one spirit, with one mind

striving together for the faith of the gospel . . . For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." This I hope to believe: that God rules all things, and that God's little ones do suffer. God is an all wise God and does his will in earth and in heaven; and does not need man's help. But I need his saving Grace.

"When sorrows encompass me round,
And many distresses I see,
Astonished, I cry, Can a mortal be found,
Surrounded with troubles like me?

Few seasons of peace I enjoy,
And they are succeeded by pain;
If e'er a few moments of praise I employ
I have hours and days to complain."

When left to myself I do complain,
yet I know I have much to be thankful
for, if I only knew how to be thankful.

In hope of a hope,
Mrs. Hovis Donaldson

SENDS OBITUARY
FOR PUBLICATION

733 7th Street
Hollister, Cal.

Dear Elder John D. Wood:

Our subscription is up in March so am enclosing renewal. Also am sending an obituary of our dear beloved Brother William Echols.

As he had so many friends and brethren that are subscribers to the *Signs of the Times*, I would like to give you a little information concerning this dear brother. My father, the late Elder John F. Tipton baptized him when he joined the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, held in the Jaybuckle School near Reed, Oklahoma, in the year 1912. My father was a subscriber to the *Signs* from my earliest recollection until his passing away September 15, 1928. His funeral was preached by the late Elder Shipman, whom I knew and dearly loved, both he and his wife. And his obituary was in the *Signs* February, 1929.

As the members passed away and

others moved from the Hopewell Church, those that remained now belong to the Little Flock Old School Baptist Church, Altus, Okla., where Elder C. M. Haygood is pastor. My father and the late Elder W. N. Green were yokefellows — whom his daughter mentioned in the January, 1971, *Signs*.

I have from a child been made to believe that God foreknew and predetermined all things. If God will give me grace, I will always declare that God is the first cause of all causes, either directly or indirectly. It is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Also, "... for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." (Exodus 9:16)

It is written, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." Webster's Unabridged Dictionary says concerning the word cause: "Cause, that which produces or effects a result; that from which anything proceeds, and without which it would not exist." The Scriptures prove this from beginning of Genesis through Revelation; and we cannot deny the Scriptures.

This dear brother, who was baptized by my father, being a deacon, asked to assist in my baptism; also was in the presbytery in my ordination as deacon. Everyone that knew him, loved and respected this dear brother, William Echols.

A brother in hope,
Austin M. Tipton

GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN

2402 N. Main Street
High Point, N. C.

Dear Elder Wood:

I want to try to write about some things that have been on my mind lately. Sometime ago in a conversation with you, if I understood correctly, you said something to this effect: Some would try to use the doctrine of absolute predestination as an excuse for their acts. My reply was that at that time I had never heard a Primitive Baptist do that; but since that time I heard one preacher in a group conversation say that God made and predestinated everything, and anything we do God makes us do it; and went on to say that he believed God was the author of sin.

This has caused me some thought and searching of mind and scriptures, as well as inquiring among preaching brethren, who all quickly rejected this, as I felt they would before I mentioned it.

Paul, writing in the sixth chapter of Romans, asked, "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" In other words Paul was asking what shall we advocate or preach? or what shall our conversation be concerning this wonderful truth that he spoke in the previous chapter; that is, "That the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now I feel that if one is in that blessed number that has been given a hope of forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus, his eyes have been opened and he is turned from darkness unto light. One thing I believe this light does do, is to show him that he is completely undone and a totally depraved sinner; and is absolutely void of any strength within himself to be freed from that condition.

I can't see that when one is brought into the light of the knowledge of the law of sin and death, how he could say,

"God predestinated all things, therefore he made me sin." Such a one is brought, as I understand it, under the law of sin and death, brought into captivity of the law of sin which is in his members: that is, his flesh. This sin has been there all the time, ever since Adam: and I would say that before the law of sin and death is applied, he is alive to the law of carnal commandments; that he feels that he is capable of himself to do things that would justify him in the sight of God. The Apostle said that as touching the law he was blameless; that he was alive without the law once, but when this holy law came, (that is, written in his heart and mind,) sin revived — it was set in motion, it became exceedingly sinful. It was there all the time, but now abounded in his sight to the proportion that it engulfed him; and he was given to hear the sentence, "The soul that sinneth shall die."

Speaking of the New Covenant that he would make with his people, the Lord said, "Behold the days come, (meaning to me an appointed time,) saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." (Heb. chapter 8) Jesus told his people (16th chapter of John) that it was expedient that he go away, that if he went not away the Comforter would not come; but if he went away, he would send Him unto them; and when he is come he would guide them into all truth. This Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, was sent and the laws were put and written in the minds and hearts of his chosen people. The law of sin and death (the rod) to kill to sin to the extent that they could no longer live in it. The application of this law makes the sinner cry, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" This is done over and over in the experience of the child of grace, as long as he occupies this earthen vessel: Paul said he died daily.

Jesus promised he would not leave

them comfortless. As He came as the end of the Old Covenant, to fulfill the demands of that holy law, He comes now under the New Covenant as the "law of the Spirit of his life in Christ Jesus," (the staff) to deliver, to set free from the law of sin and death. He does not send sin into the hearts of his people, (or anyone for that matter) but the commandment to awaken to sin already there.

So Paul's answer to the question, "What shall we then say, shall we continue in sin that grace might abound?" is, "God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein." Paul is saying, as I see it, we shall not say this: it is not the truth for sin is not the strength of grace: it is not the moving cause of grace — God's love is! "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins . . . (by grace are ye saved)." (Ephesians 2:4, 5) "But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7) So we shall not say, "Let us sin that grace may abound." The truth is grace abounds according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Now as to the principle of God's predestination of all things, we believe it to be the truth; and are made, I hope by the Holy Spirit, to love it. That He does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, is only truly believed and appreciated by those that have had a similar experience to that of King Nebuchadnezzar: That is, they that have had the law of sin and death applied in their hearts.

Now shall we say we sin because God predestinated it, and therefore makes us do it? I say God does not, nor ever has made anyone sin. We should not say that He does. "For by him (even Christ the Word) 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. 16, 17)

Now for the reason that I would say, "For so it seemed good in his sight," He purposed that all (all he gave his Son before the world began) be concluded in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. (Romans 11:32) In his wisdom and purpose He created and ordained a power capable within itself, to preach a lie to Eve to beguile and deceive her, saying, "Thou shalt not surely die." Therefore setting Adam (the creature being made subject to vanity and therefore could not stand,) for the fall. And sin entered into the world by this one man, Adam. "Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." (Gen. 3:1) Eve was deceived by the subtlety of the serpent, and the serpent or Satan was the cause.

"Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle," etc. Now here is the power of darkness created by him and for him. In this power of darkness is the mystery of iniquity. In Thes. 2:2, Paul speaks of this mystery of iniquity "that doth already work . . . with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness and unrighteousness in them that perish." "Only he that now letteth (God that created this power) will let, until he be taken out of the way." That is, when God's purpose is accomplished. Jesus told Pilate "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

The one that had the greater sin was Judas, and Satan entered into Judas and Pilate and the others, to gather them to do, "Whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:28) So this power to devise sin and to deceive, is in Satan himself. And if there be, or rather should be, an answer to the unscriptural question, Who is the author of Sin, it would be the Devil himself.

I am persuaded that the question it-

self is one invented by this power of darkness. I see it as a foolish question designed by the Devil to gender strife among the saints of God: an effort to, if possible, defeat the very truth that God did absolutely predestinate, ordain and purpose all things; and works them after the counsel of his own will.

In conclusion, one that has had the New Covenant laws applied in his heart and mind, will not, when he is exercised by them, use them as an occasion to the flesh for an excuse. The knowledge of law of sin and death works a work of repentance: (Oh, wretched man that I am," or "I am vile.") This is a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance; and the blessed children of God recognize these fruits in a brother or sister that comes begging for forgiveness; and they readily forgive them if they have an exercising within of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

These are some of the things that have been on my mind, and I wanted to write or talk to you about them, Brother Wood.

In Christian love,
Paul Morton

REPLY TO ELDER SPANGLER

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Ga. 20083
December 21, 1970

Dear Elder Spangler:

I received your letter yesterday. I had awaited it with great anticipation for Elder Poole told me yesterday that you had written me.

I cannot express the joy I felt in my heart upon reading your comforting words of encouragement. I wrote to you with fear and trembling. I know what I want; I know the truth I love, but words are poor conveyors of inner feelings. I so wanted your confidence in me, your sanction and your blessing — and these your letter provided. I have read and re-read it many times today with untold joy.

There is not a single doubt in my heart about what I believe and what I want, — that is, my love for the gospel and the truth as held by the Primitive Baptists; and my desire to unite with Dan River Church. There are, however, so many doubts about my fitness, my worthiness. I would not for all the world add a single spot or blemish to the church. I know the church is sacred — it is without flaw, and I am not.

Although I look forward to this weekend with the deepest joy I have ever known, I know not how to tell the church what is in my heart. It is a somber and serious step — receiving a member into the church. They must search me and judge me. I know myself to be totally sinful, totally depraved and dependent upon God's mercy for my very breath.

How do I tell the church I love the brethren with an everlasting bond? How do I tell them I am in dire need of their fellowship and their acceptance? I know they have no need of me for I have nothing to offer. How do I tell them I cannot say with assurance that I am a Child of God? I can say, however, that all that I am, all that I have, whatever it be, is given me by the grace of God; and that my life, as everyone's is, is the fulfillment of God's divine providence.

Again, I am grateful and humbled by your letter. I will treasure it always. You bid me to take up His cross and follow Him. God willing, I will be with you this weekend and attempt to keep his commandments, and do as you bid.

May God bless you and sustain you always,

Katie Kilby

(Sister Kilby attends the services of Elder James Poole in Atlanta, Georgia. She visited with the Dan River Church at Mayfield, N. C. when Elder Poole was ordained to the ministry there. After attending the service she was burdened with a desire for membership in the church, and at our December,

1970, meeting she came before the church for membership; and was baptized the fourth Sunday in December.

Sister Kilby is the daughter of Sister Florence Gibson of Atlanta, Georgia, and a niece of our deceased brother, Douglas Alston, who is remembered by many of our readers.

D. V. Spangler)

HOPE FOR A SINNER

As I look back upon the vision or whatever came to me that night so long ago, I have to go even farther back and examine myself before and afterwards to piece together what seems to be the meaning.

If I am not deceiving myself, and I hope and pray that I am not, because just a hope of being one of God's little ones, brings joy to my heart and peace to my soul. Though I know I am not, nor ever will be worthy of being any part of His Bride, I do feel that I have a small hope of that precious promise that Jesus made to all that God gave him — which on that great day will be His Bride.

Long before this happened to me, I had many days of loneliness and heaviness, never knowing what was causing my depressions. I hated sin with all that was within me, yet I seemed to be the blackest sinner of all. It seemed I could not do anything right no matter how hard I tried, and couldn't understand by feelings nor my thoughts. I hated myself and every part of my being. I felt as I imagine Paul did when he said, "Oh wretched man that I am." and again when he said, "That I would, I do not; that I would not, that I do." He could not seem to do what was right; nor could I. But now I know that it is not I that do it but sin that dwelleth within me.

One day a lady came by to see me from a church nearby, and asked me to visit their church. Without hesitating, I said I would go that night; and even then I did not understand because

I never felt to be of church material. I didn't even know or care what they believed. All I knew was that I wanted to respect them and that maybe they could help me, and somehow show me the way to peace. But I know now that only God can do that. There is only one way, and that is through the blood of the Lamb.

After the lady left I found myself in the bathroom closet praying to God to forgive my sins, and bring me out of this wilderness of which I had become captive. I don't know how long I prayed, but that was the beginning of my search for peace. Not only did I go to church that night but I joined before I knew what I was doing. The preacher was saying, "Come all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest." These are the words I had wanted to hear for so long, and it seemed that God was on his throne with outstretched hands waiting for me. I went; but what was puzzling was the fact that I could not speak answers to their questions. None of this do I understand to this day; but when the time comes if it be God's will, I will understand.

I was baptized, and for a little while seemed to be at peace with God and with the world and all that was in it. I read my Bible every moment I could, and seemed to understand things that before had no meaning. It all seemed to have a new light and I could not seem to tear myself away from that Holy Book.

It didn't take many visits to the church to know that my belief was not their belief. I will not go into all of that because there are many churches and many beliefs, but there is only one God. I'm sure there will be many in denominations that will have part in the resurrection, — I can only hope that I might be among them. I do feel that unless you are truly in accord with others, that you should not take a part, because in so doing you bring confusion to yourself and others as well. I was getting more and more in confusion so I decided to go it alone with my

Bible, and try to work out my own salvation: Maybe God would lead me out of the wilderness.

I read my Bible and I prayed in low places, and occasionally in high places. Many times when I would read something that struck my understanding, that is to say gave me light on the subject, I seemed to receive scraps from the Master's table, and seemed to be in high places. My heart would overflow with pure joy, and although I read alone, I seemed not to be alone but that Jesus was bringing me through.

I had dreams several times of something chasing me through woods, and in most dreams I would find my way unto a people clad in white, with a look of loving and caring, but I never felt good enough to be a part of them. Though I had dreams of that kind, it never occurred to me that it had anything to do with religion, — to me they were just dreams and meant nothing. I felt much depressed because I could not seem to find anyone with the understanding of what the Bible seemed to be telling me. They all had a different view than mine. No one seemed to care or even talk with me about it: I guess I was boring my family and friends, because all I wanted to talk about was the Bible and its teachings. I could not get my mind on anything else.

On this particular day I felt so terribly low, and my depression had almost reached bottom, and my hope was almost gone. I prayed over and over again on bended knees, and when I would arise I would be in trembles. I remember a thought that came to my mind: The devil feared and trembled also; so in my mind I classified myself with the devil, for I seemed to be the blackest sinner ever. I prayed for peace most of the night because I could not sleep, but I must have slept a little while because my husband awoke me at 2 o'clock in the morning to get his breakfast. His job called for early morning services and I always prepared his breakfast before he left. I got him off to work, and after locking the door

went back to bed; but again could not sleep.

Suddenly out of the quietness of the early morning, there came a knock at the door; and I was afraid. I tried to move but could not move any part of my body. It was like I was paralyzed. I could not understand what had happened to me. Somewhere in the back of my mind I knew someone was going to kill me, and that I could do nothing to prevent it. I heard another loud noise and it sounded like they broke through the door. Then quickly, after I could feel the presence of someone near my bed, I thought I was dying, but could not understand because I felt no pain. I lay there a little while quietly, then decided to see if I could move my legs. I moved over to the edge of the bed, then decided I would get up; but when I started to raise up, I was lifted up by some powerful force. I did nothing of myself but was lifted to a sitting position on my bed.

I had a feeling of quiet peace but still couldn't understand that without any effort I was raised up. Then I started to put my feet on the floor and my toes pointed like a ballerina dancer just lightly touched the floor, and bounced me upward, and I began to go slowly around and around into midair. I saw nothing but was so full of joy. My cup ran over, but I kept going upward and around, and each turn I made seemed sweeter than the one before. I thought, Lord this is too much sweetness for a sinner like me. I was as light as a feather, and I seemed to be in a cloud of love, joy, and happiness like I had never known before. I don't know how high I went but finally I thought about my family, and wished they could be with me.

It was then that I found myself back on my bed just as before, but I could move and was not afraid. I just wanted to sing praises to God, and to meditate on what had just happened to me. There are no words that I know of that can

express the lightness, the love or joy I felt while I was on my journey. I would love to take that trip again but haven't been able to.

My hopes are that I have been born again, that I was killed in the flesh and buried with Christ. The old waxed away and a new hope given me, for I hope I look for new heavens and new earth; and this is worth more than all the riches and wealth of this world to me. If I am not deceived God has manifested in me the promise that he gave Abraham and his seed. I can only hope this is so, but even a hope is most precious to me. If I understnad what I read in the Bible and what I feel, I hope that I was slain as a sinner and have passed through the old law, and entered into His New Law, and am preserved in Christ Jesus. I am still a sinner, and will be as long as I live in nature, but I hope I know that it is not I that do it but sin within me, and that God has forgiven me, and my sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He will chasten us with his rod because it takes his stripes to heal us, but if he did not chasten us it would prove we are bastards and not sons.

I still have low feelings and sometimes high feelings, but as I understand God's love and the Bible, which is not the Word of God but the letter of the Word, for His Word is the Holy Spirit entered into our hearts: God's Spirit in us. I hope I know that if I am God's child nothing can separate me from Him and his love.

I am no good at quoting scriptures, but only know what is in my heart and mind. My prayers are that I might take that sweet journey again and have all my loved ones with me; and the next time go all the way for our last journey to Home Sweet Home.

In sincerity and hope of eternal life,

Katherine Mathews,
Shreveport, La.

"IT IS MARVELOUS
IN OUR EYES."

2761 Cochese Cove
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

Dear Elder Wood:

I am enclosing the minutes of the ordination of a very dear brother to the full work of the gospel ministry. Elder Chappel has been a member of the church in Memphis for four years, but has been attending and believing the doctrine for several years.

He lived in Memphis for several years, and we would meet about half way between our offices for lunch and talk of the things that we love and believe. These are seasons that I will remember as long as I live and have a rational mind, it seems. We agreed on the things that we believed as much as anyone, I guess, and seemed to have a special kindred feeling for one another. I always felt that some day he would be ordained, because he has a deep understanding of the scriptures; and this is the opinion of all who have known him and talked with him.

Then he moved to St. Louis, Mo., being transferred by his company, and began attending a small church in Illinois. He began to talk for them, and they requested that we ordain him since his membership is still in the Memphis Church. Everyone knowing him as we did, and each being persuaded in his own mind that it was but the fulfillment of something they had anticipated, the church called for his ordination so that he could serve the church he is attending in Illinois. Elder Wade Chandler, whose obituary was in the *Signs* recently, was the former pastor of this church.

When we see such as this happen before us, we can but say, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Incidentally, this church is the one that had no pastor for several years before Elder Chandler was called as

their pastor just before he died; but the members would meet, sing songs and have dinner on their regular meeting date for several years. Seeing the faith of these brethren and sisters, and the things that have fallen out to them, strengthens the hope and belief that God is still reigning and watching over his children in this day and age, as in times past.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

(See notice of ordination in the February issue.)

MANY FAITHFUL MEMBERS
HAVE PASSED ON

Prattsville, Alabama

Dear Brother Spangler:

I enclose check for the following renewals, including my own . . . Please change my mailing address to Rt. 2, Deatsville, Alabama 36022. You may use the balance of the check to mail the *Signs* to others who may not be able to pay.

I would like to suggest that if you are planning a trip to Florida or other part of the southeast around these times, that you consider visiting us at Elam the second Sunday in March, or our District Meeting (Union) the fifth Sunday in March. Elam was constituted in March, 1830 . . . We would make other appointments in the area if you could be here long enough to fill them. Let me know if there seems to be a possibility you can come this way.

We have lost some of our dearest and most faithful members at Elam since you were here last. I am not enclosing obituaries of these brethren and sisters, but I would like to name them and briefly describe what they meant to the church. The brethren and sisters who have visited in this area will recognize them and know what we mean. If you care to publish all or part of this letter, you may.

Brother Homer P. Folmar departed

this life December 16, 1969, after having been a member of Elam Church for more than seventy-three years. He joined August 8, 1896, and was the oldest member at the time of his death: he had been a member more than half of the life of the church, which was constituted in March of 1830.

Sister Mattie Davison passed away November 25, 1969. She joined the church at Elam July 9, 1905, and was a member of the church more than sixty-four years. Sister Davison's husband, John M. Davison, was a member of Elam from 1905 until his death in 1959. Brother and Sister Davison were just as faithful to visit other associations in this area, as they were their own Conecuh River Association.

Sister Mary Folmar passed away August 25, 1970. She joined the church at Elam July 9, 1927, and had been a member for more than forty-three years. Her husband, J. L. Folmar, joined the church on the same day she did. Brother Folmar was ordained as a deacon of the church in 1928; and predeceased his wife on May 27, 1950. Brother and Sister Folmar lived almost in the church yard at Elam, and many Old Baptists found a welcome in their home.

Brother Milton C. Carter was the church's most recent loss. He and his wife, Mary Alice, joined the church at Elam together on August 8, 1954. Brother Milton was ordained a deacon a short time later. Practically all the ministers from a distance who have visited in these parts, have spent some time in the home of Brother and Sister Carter. Brother Milton died of a heart attack November 16, 1970. His wife and four children survive.

These brothers and sisters admirably fulfilled every purpose that God had for them in this life, and now they are gone to their well earned rests. No one will ever come along to fill their shoes. Our prayer is that God will instruct, guide, guard, and uphold us who remain, and those who follow after us, to the extent that we may fill our own shoes as well

as these brethren who have gone on before us.

A brother in faith, I hope,
A. C. Carter, Church Clerk

CORRECTION

Richmond, Va.

Dear Brethren:

By request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, please publish a note of correction in the *Signs*. In the January issue the time is listed in the Church Notices as 10 A. M. for the Sunday morning services. Please change this to 11 A. M. for the benefit of our beloved ministers and brethren who came from afar.

This little church extends a heartfelt welcome to all the believers of like faith, and especially to our ministers who have been given a mind to come and worship with us.

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15)

Elder C. N. Bunn, Pastor
Mrs. Wm. L. Lee, Clerk

THE BLACK RIVER UNION

The next meeting of the *Black River Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Black River Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971.

The church house is located on the east edge of Dunn, N. C. and east side of I-95 Highway.

Our invitation is extended to all who are interested.

C. D. Turner
Rt. 3
Dunn, N. C. 28334

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with Wilmington Church, fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1971. The church is located in Wilmington, North Carolina, on Castle Street.

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

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Staunton River Union Meeting* will convene (D. V.) with Strawberry Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971. The meeting house is located on State Road 750 one mile from Wood's Store off Highway 41 north of Danville, Va.

All of our correspondents and lovers of the truth are invited.

Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* is appointed to be held with the Rose Mary Church. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The church is located on East 14th Street, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

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

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Red Banks Church, Pitt County, N. C. the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1971.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

BOOK WANTED

A sister desires to secure a copy of Elder Durand's FRAGMENTS. If you have one you will sell, please write me giving the price.

John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186
Manassas, Va. 22110

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with White Oak Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1971.

The Meeting House is located on highway 222 in Saratoga, N. C. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203
Stokes, N. C. 27884

Danville, Virginia May, 1971

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EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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"As I besought thee to abide at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

(Timothy 1:3, 4)

EDITORIAL

*"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."
(Romans 14:23)*

Two outstanding tenets of the doctrine of grace is made manifest in this part of scripture. First, it is clear that what we do when not under the dominion of the Spirit that it is sin. This excludes any thought of God being the author of sin. When not in possession of a living faith we sin always. Secondly, it is conclusive proof that all that we do in following the Lord is the result of His Spirit in us. We are as much in the wrong when we lay our sins on God as we are when we take any credit for our righteousness.

John Newton sang,

*"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."*

and the man or woman that sings that without meaning what it says, is singing as much a falsehood as they would to sing that our eternal salvation is in our hands. There is not any escape from this dilemma. If God is not our present salvation (not a part of it, not some of it) we have not come thus far on the merits of grace nor will we get home on its merits. Thanks be unto God that grace saves us now, and that it is the grace of God, and that He is the God of all grace.

If our present salvation is dependent on us, then, by all means, we should trust in ourselves. Do we have any Bible characters trusting in themselves? Who? More than one hundred times the Holy Ghost uses this precious word.

Each time that it is used it either tells us to trust in the Lord or gives us examples of what takes place when we trust in an arm of flesh. What a distinctive difference that is made between those that trust in God and that trust in man. Thus saith the Lord, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." In the last forty-five years I have had it confirmed time after time that presenting these vital truths to those that have not been exercised in the truth will not produce anything except gnashing of teeth. If I am of God (I John 4:6), those that are also of God will hear me. I am sure that the justification of the publican did not tenderize the heart of the Pharisee, although the same system of salvation was there that was under consideration in the above quotation, and I am equally sure that my presenting time salvation as being altogether the work of God will not tenderize anybody's heart. To those taught of the Lord I write, even though some of them might be in the same condition that the Galatians were in Gal. 3:1, 4. My feelings are truly set forth in Paul's question to those bewitched brethren. (Gal. 4:16)

Jeremiah truly presented to us the prophetic picture of one that trusted in an arm of flesh, and what the consequences of that trust were (they were cursed), and he truly gives us the prophetic picture of one that trusts in the Lord (he is blessed) and what the results of that blessing are. (Jer. 17:5, 8) In all the lids of the Bible there is not one word said about trusting in ourselves, but it is condemned time after time.

My home in heaven is a gift of God. In no sense of the word do I detract or reflect or minimize His glorious work in that gift. From His eternal design in the unfathomable mind of God to my being carried home to eternal glory, I lift my feeble voice and weak pen to praise His holy name for it all. God

has not changed His mind during time but He has changed dispensations. His declaration of His everlasting love was first revealed to ancient Israel and later spoken to us by His son. (Jer. 31:3; Heb. 1:2; Rom. 9:13) I have to sadly confess the inconstancy of my love, but I joyfully speak of the constancy of His. I would have this love through green pastures and mountain tops, but since He is my Father and knows more than His children, He sheds this love abroad in our hearts in devious manners. Entering the kingdom, as well as reigning in the kingdom, is through suffering and tribulation. This accompanies our entering, as well as our reigning. We never are able to lay aside our belief any more than we are able to lay aside our suffering with Him.

He saves us in time according to His purpose. This is not a compromised purpose; it is not a secondary matter; it is not a makeshift purpose. This purpose is not predicated on our works. It was given according to the riches of His grace; it is revealed the same way. Both the gift and the revelation are according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. 3:11) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:2, 3) If the choice was based on our foreseen merits, then, also, that much and no less, were we blessed in Christ according to our merits. But if the choice was based on the purpose of God; if our sins were imputed to Christ; if our sins were all laid on Him in covenant, then, by all means, logic, scripture or what have you, our welfare in time, and all after time is in Jesus.

Many have thought that ancient Israel represents the whole household of God's people, with the brethren representing the militant church. Speculating as to the pro and con of the type

and anti-type we will leave to those that speculate. However, I feel as much that I sent my Saviour into Egypt (darkness) as Joseph's brethren felt that they had sent their brother into Egypt; they sent him to prison and to judgment; they sent him that his feet be hurt. (Psa. 105:17, 18) Why is such a sad thing laid down in the Book of books? Why all the gory in the life of the type and the anti-type? It had to be in their lives; if it had not been in their life, it would be in our eternal abode beyond this life, for, mark my words well, the shedding of blood could not be avoided, even though I have heard men say, in their misguided zeal concerning predestination, that the wicked which slew our Lord did not have to do it.

Someone had to walk this road from Israel down into, and up out of, Egypt. It had to be Joseph or it had to be the brethren. God's holy law had to be kept, and Jesus had to do it, or I had it to do. Somebody had to walk to a jot and to a tittle; it either had to be Jesus or it had to be me. As we are blessed doubly, so, likewise, He had to suffer doubly. Somebody had to walk for us; somebody had to suffer death for us *not walking*. Somebody must walk the straight edge of the law for us; and somebody must have their feet hurt because we did not walk.

God has said, "Then will I sprinkle clean water up on you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. 36:25, 27) Every shade of opinion in our divided ranks will agree that God puts His spirit within us. Every editor and every minister will agree to that much truth. Many of these are precious in the sight of the Lord and believing children, but,

according to what they say, they believe the part of prophecy that they want to believe. If half of prophecy is believed I strongly think that not any more of the New Testament will be believed. The Bible teaches that God puts His Spirit in the children of God, and that this spirit *causes* them to walk in His statutes and judgments and keep them. I would avoid the spirit that tells me that God is the author and approver of sin. But since I am commanded to not believe every spirit, what am I to do with the spirit that tells me that God's spirit does not cause me to walk right. Let me repeat (with kindness and good will) that I would avoid the spirit that tells me that God causes my sin. I do hope, with godly determination, to likewise avoid the spirit that tells me that God does not cause my righteousness.

Hundreds of times the gospel writers speak of the work of God. Not the first time is there a hint of weakness about the work of the Spirit. Talk to me about the sovereignty of God, and at the same breath mention that He stands in jeopardy in regard to our time salvation you at once throw me into confusion. God is not a sovereign if He wants things different than they are. We are indifferent towards the laws of God, but He is not indifferent towards us in obeying them. In the last forty-five years I have gone over the ground of God's sovereignty time after time. Two things keep me from avoiding the mention of them again and again. These two things are the need for showing John and his brethren that Christ *is* Christ, and the fact that people, even those that tell a lovely experience, are continually denying His sovereignty.

If there was one that God desired to be in the elect of God that He could not get in, or if there was one in that number that He did not desire to be there, I have not read of it. I would like to hear from those that have found this out. In the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, I have not read of one that the Father chose that was not in the redemptive work of Christ, nor have I

read of one being added to the number chosen. If any of my readers have heard of such monstrosities I would appreciate hearing from them. But what about the work of the Spirit? Is it weak? Is it a failure? What difference is there in the Spirit failing to confirm and His failing to bring to Christ? What difference is there in making sport at humanity because that they have God trying to save eternally and at brethren because they picture God as wanting to save the born again children?

The choice of God was made in eternity. But the salvation of God's people is made in time. God finished His work; Christ finished His work; and I believe with all of my heart that the Holy Spirit is now engaged in confirming those chosen and saved. We are given the Spirit from God. It is given for a specific purpose. What? That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (I Cor. 2:12) Will this fail? Will the purpose fail of accomplishment? No, dear brethren, no, not that.

The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. (Rom. 11:29) God gave us the Spirit; it is freely given to us that we might know the things of God. We are taught that all the children of God will know Him (Isa. 54:13), and in the same verse to know what will be the result of that teaching. The teaching to know Him is, I suppose, the first or beginning of God's work. Will it be biblically said that He does not teach all of them? Who will say that? Is not the peace that is to follow also from the Lord? Is it not as sovereignly effective as the teaching to know Him? If so, is not their salvation at the beginning, as well as their peace which is to follow, both alike from the Lord?

God works in His people. Sometimes along the way I find the strangest twisting of good language that I have ever seen. There is not in the Bible an account of God being effective in this but not in that. There is not one

unfinished building in the kingdom of heaven. There is not an account of God determining the cost of a building and then not doing the building. He works effectively the will and the do. Not, readers, that He works *at* it and leaves the outcome to our fleshly nature. He works to will and to do in us. Look at it. He works, so everybody will say, the will, but He works *at* the do. The will is wrought in a sovereign manner, but the do is worked towards, and left for us to work out. What a mix-up. The will to do wrought, but the doing of what the will is bent towards is left unfinished, and left to the weakest being named in the Bible — a poor sinful man and woman. This is salvation by works pure and simple.

Salvation is by grace. John Newton sang it that way. Jonah found it to be that way. Joseph's brethren found it to be that way. Jeremiah found it to be that way. The children of Israel found it to be that way at the sea. They found it to be that way when water gave out. They found it to be that way when food gave out. Jacob found it out in the wilderness. Ruth found it out as she journeyed in a strangers field. Esther found it out before a strange king. Paul found it out first on the Damascus road and had it proven time and again in his eventful life. His salvation was a present salvation or a time salvation. He said, The life that I live (present tense) I live it by the faith of the Son of God, and this is the same faith that enables us to perform that which is acceptable to God. He further tells us that what he was at the time of writing, that it was by the grace of God. (I Cor. 15:10) I rest my case here. I am, also, with Paul, still a sinner (I Tim. 1:15), but what joy it gives me to join with that eminent apostle and declare throughout Christendom that salvation is in the present tense. At the time of this writing I look back through the midst of my weaknesses and temptations and I am not prepared to say that any of my salvation comes about by helping or

hindering of this natural mind of mine. I freely feel some delight and satisfaction in trusting in God that raised the dead; that He has saved me even in instilling in me the sentence of death, for had I not had that death sentence instilled in me I would trust in myself. This is such a clear doctrine, such an universal doctrine, such a comforting doctrine, that my poor sinful feeling is, how does anyone sit in judgment against it. Is it because that the sentence of death is not yet clear in us?

This trust being in God, we look to him for our salvation in the past, presently, and for all time to come. (II Cor. 1:9, 10) Paul mentions this saving nearly one hundred times. *That is what he mentions.* It is not a grace that goes part of the way and leaves the balance to us. It is not failing grace, but *it is saving grace.* There is not a grace of conditions by us, but of performances by the Lord of all grace. This is what he petitioned the Lord for in the behalf of all churches; this is what he commended all of them to in the conclusion of his letters. Trusting in God, as I hope that I do, and desiring to be like unto the pattern unto all that believe after his day, I pray, if I pray, for one and all that that grace be applied to you from God, and beseech Him that it be our final blessing here.

But why go over this ground again? You have often been over it ere this; why be so persistent about it? I do not mean to be persistent nor contentious. I am feeling day by day the advancing years and the toll that is being taken of my faculties of body and mind. I desire to say at the approach of the close of my ministry that salvation is of the Lord, and to join with Peter that, "He has begotten us 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." The receipt for this inheritance is in your heart

(the new heart, the place where God dwells and works), the inheritance is in heaven, and you are kept ready through faith, and faith is the gift of God, an abundant fruit of His prevailing Spirit; and through it and in it we live by it, thus being in such a saved and kept state that any attempt to claim a salvation that is not by grace is sin.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ATONEMENT

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?"

If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?

And why is all our suffering here on account of our sins, if he has atoned for them all?

Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?

Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?

Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerated, and after this we atone for them ourselves?

What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?

And what is meant by the intercession of Christ?"

REPLY

The above questions were presented to us by letter some time ago, with the request that we would reply to them at our earliest convenience. They call attention to most solemn and weighty matters pertaining to the religion of Christ, and the hope of the believer. We do not feel at all able to write in reply as the subject demands, but yet this is the theme of all gospel ministry, and if one is called to preach at all, this theme must engage his attention, and still more, if one has been called to a good hope through grace, these questions and their answers have be-

come most important to him, and must be the subject of his most earnest thought. Still further, upon the right conception of these matters must the hope and faith of all such ones rest. These considerations have induced us to present some thoughts upon this matter in this public way, rather than by private letter.

"Did Christ atone for all our sins?"

There can be but one answer to this question; the Bible is clear upon this one thing, if upon anything: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "Himself bare our sins in his own body." This text suggests no limit to the number of them. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "And he bare the sin of many." "He was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification." In the great type of atonement under the ceremonial law once a year, the sins, every sin of all the people of Israel, were confessed upon the scapegoat which was slain, and the one that was sent away into the wilderness, and not one sin remained upon all the people when this was done. So also when the red heifer was slain, every sin was covered in all Israel. From all these Scriptures it is clear that Christ did atone for all the sins of all the true Israel of God. None of the above Scriptures suggest any partial atonement, either as regards the number of sins covered, or the completeness of the covering, and there is no Scriptures that speak of the atonement at all that could be twisted by any argument into the idea presented in the question above. An atonement that did not cover each and all our sins, would be as good as no atonement, seeing that one sin unatoned for would condemn any one of us to everlasting punishment. One transgression of our first

parents plunged not only themselves but all their unborn race in condemnation, guilt and unending woe. If sin then was such an exceeding sinful thing, it is no less now. So that one sin left unatoned for would plunge the guilty into irrevocable destruction from the presence of the Lord. We cannot be too careful or too earnest in insisting upon this; the whole scheme of the gospel hangs upon it; the good hope of the believer, which is through grace, hangs upon it; the very doctrine of salvation by grace hangs upon it. If not saved by grace, through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, from all sin, then there is no salvation at all except through works of the creature. If by grace, it must be by grace all along the line, and the atonement must cover every sin. If our work, our repentance or our faith must be considered as the ransom price for any sin at all, then these things must be the ransom for all sin. If by grace, it is no more of work, and if by work, then it is no more by grace. The testimony is clear upon this in the word. But the apostle leaves no room for cavil, for he says it is by grace. Therefore the atonement of Christ must cover all sin, if it covers any at all.

The atonement lies at the foundation of all the gospel, yea, it is the very substance of the gospel. If we are right in the view we have of the atonement, we cannot be far wrong in any other principle of the doctrine of grace. If we are wrong in the view which we have of the atonement, we cannot be right in anything that pertains to the gospel. It is therefore all important that we have right views of the atonement; the glory of God is involved in it; the exaltation of the crucified and risen Redeemer is involved in it; the comfort, peace, happiness and security of the believer is involved in it. Except Christ did indeed atone for all our sins, his death was utterly in vain, the wisdom of God was at fault, and there is no certain salvation for any one; nay, it is then certain that no one can be saved. Surely every believing humble heart must shrink

from the contemplation of such awful consequences as the above.

"If so, why do we pray to him to forgive our sins?"

It seems to us only necessary to say that if we pray for the forgiveness of sins, it can be only upon the ground of the atonement. It was upon the ground of the atonement under the ceremonial law that the high priest made intercession within the veil for the sins of the people. When he came within the veil, provision was made that he should come there with the blood, as full evidence that the required atonement had been made. It was the same with every prayer made by the priests for the transgressor: all was founded upon the blood of atonement. So when now we come before God as priests unto him, our intercession for not only forgiveness, but for every needed blessing, must be upon the ground of full atonement of Christ, and all our prayers must be in his name, God will not hear them otherwise. And Jesus, our true High Priest in the heavenly places, pleads before the throne for all whose sins he bore, upon the one ground that he has himself died for them, and put away all their sin by the sacrifice of himself. There would be no use to ask for any forgiveness or any other gift had not Jesus died. The law knows no forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the precious gifts received for the rebellious when Jesus ascended on high and received gifts for men. Were it a fact that we ourselves must make satisfaction for sin, and could we make such satisfaction, then indeed there would be no room for forgiveness, seeing that we had paid all our debt against the law of God, but as we do not and cannot pay this debt, but Jesus does pay it, to us forgiveness comes upon the ground that he has died and risen again, and only upon that ground.

"Why is all our suffering here on account of sin if he has atoned for them all?"

Our sufferings here are not for atonement, seeing that a whole eternity of

suffering could not atone for one sin. In no sense is suffering on account of sin here an atonement for it; then indeed would the atonement of Christ be nullified, and all his work would be shown to be useless. But suffering is often for a trial of faith, and often as chastisement, to correct. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." And again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." The sons of an earthly father are chastised, but not to atone for their transgressions. The stripes inflicted upon a child are not payment for wrong which he has done, but for discipline, that he may learn not to transgress, and this is for his salvation and good, not to satisfy any demand of obedience from his father. The father having chastised his child, does not therefore remit the duty of obedience, as though the stripes inflicted were in place of the obedience. So God chastises his children, not to atone for their sins, but to correct and to lead them in the way of peace and blessing.

"Why is Christ interceding for us, if a full atonement has been made for us?"

This we have in substance answered in our reply to the second question, concerning prayer for forgiveness. It is only needful that we repeat that the very ground of the intercession of Christ is his own atonement. He pleads his own work in behalf of his chosen ones. He says in substance, Father, I have died for them. He does not, as the advocate, seek to extenuate their sins, or to make excuses for them. He at once confesses before God all their vileness and foul transgressions, and that they are without excuse. There is not one charge against them that he does not at once confess as being true. He does not plead for mercy upon the ground of the smallness of their guilt, or of extenuating circumstances. He pleads not for small sinners, but for great sinners. One said in former days, "O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it

is great." He pleads for his own because their sins are many and great, and therefore he pleads his own wonderful work upon Calvary. His plea for them is all summed up in the words, I have died, and so his intercession avails always for them. Had he not died, he could not be our intercessor. The atonement is the sole ground of intercession. Instead of the atonement doing away with the need of intercession, it is the only ground upon which any intercession can be made, and such intercession is effectual always.

"Are we mistaken when at the first in our experience we feel that we are condemned sinners?"

We answer positively, No. At the first in experience the law of God is doing its work, the commandment has come to us, as it did to Paul, and sin revives and we die. The law is to us then as a schoolmaster unto Christ. We are then hearing the voice of God in the law, and the law of God, holy, just and good, can but condemn us. When applied to the conscience by the Spirit, at once sin becomes exceeding sinful. The glorious gospel has not yet come in, and the sinner hearing only the law, feels its condemnation. He is not mistaken under the work and sentence of the law; he is condemned and he dies. It is needful that we travel as did Israel, first of all by Sinai, and hear its thunderings filling our souls with fear. This is a needful experience, otherwise we could not understand the gospel of salvation, or rejoice in it. God has thoughts of peace to us in all this experience, but we are not yet prepared to receive the knowledge of this, or to understand in its fullness just what the atonement of Christ means, nor just what infinite mercy, which provides the atonement, means. To gain some conception of these things there must be first a knowledge of our condemnation and need. To appreciate bread we must be hungry. To understand what redemption in Christ means, we must feel the burden of sin and condemnation, and in mercy God leads us into the knowledge of the con-

demnation, that we may come to rejoice in the salvation afterwards, he leads us one step at a time, he shows us one thing at a time.

“Did Christ atone for all our sins, or only for those committed before we were regenerate, and after this we atone for our own sins?”

We do not need to repeat what we have already said in reply to this question: Christ atoned for all sin; all our sins, past, present and to come, were laid upon him; he bore them all away forever, and before God and his judgment bar not one of them shall ever arise to condemn the elect. We do not atone for sin after we believe, any more than for those committed before. If we sin, it is still true that we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus, who is the propitiation for our sins, these present sins which we commit now, as the text just referred to clearly shows. Beside, as said before, if one of the least of our transgressions be not embraced in the atonement of the Lord, we are forever without hope. But as all was embraced in his atonement, when we sin we are privileged to come, asking to be forgiven, and pleading as the justification of our plea, that Jesus has died, and that he has cleansed us from all sin by his one sacrifice.

“What is meant by the forgiveness of sins?”

As the atonement blots out all sin in the sight of God, so forgiveness blots out all sin from the conscience. The atonement regards sin as it is in the sight of God. Forgiveness regards sin as it rests upon our own heart and conscience. There can be no redemption without the atonement from the curse of the law, which says, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” So there can be no peace of conscience until there is an assurance of forgiveness applied to the sin-burdened heart and conscience, and this assurance, as said before, comes only through the one fact that Jesus has died, and that full atonement has been made. Forgiveness brings us home to God in our own experience, recon-

ciled, penitent and humbled. First there is conviction of sin, then there is confession of sin, and then God gives to the burdened soul the assurance, “Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee.” Literally the word “forgive” in the original Hebrew and Greek means, “to put away,” “to let go,” and sometimes “to cover.” The word “pardon” is from the same Hebrew and Greek words, and means the same things as forgiveness. The thought seems to be this, when assurance of forgiveness comes to a soul, it means that he is shown that his sin is taken away from him, as the scapegoat carried to a land of forgetfulness the sins of Israel, or that it is covered, as a robe covers all the body with all its deformity and uncleanness. Thus the very meaning of the word “forgive” involves the taking away of sin, or the covering it out of sight, and this is the work of the atonement alone.

“What is meant by the intercession of Christ?”

This is also already answered in substance, but we will add that an intercessor, as the word is used in the Scriptures, signifies one who stands between two others, bringing them together. Jesus stands between God and the humble sinner, and in him they are one. Redeemed unto God is an expression in the word that presents the full consummation of all the work of Christ, and through him we look to God and come to him, and through Christ God bestows all answers of prayer, and all spiritual blessings, and final glory upon all the redeemed. Jesus by the Spirit presents to us the love of God, and his glorious salvation provided for us, and he presents before God his loved ones in his own righteousness, and with the single plea for them, “I have died.”

(The above was by Elder F. A. Chick, July 1, 1903.)

OBITUARIES

WOODY THOMAS CHAMBERS

Brother Woody Thomas Chambers was born

September 21, 1895, in Person County, N. C., and passed away January 5, 1971. He was married in April, 1919, to Mary Alice Bullock. He is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters: Clarence B. Chambers, Creedmore, N. C.; Woody T., Jr., Oxford, N. C.; Garland L., Hampton, Va.; John W., Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. Lola C. Russell, Durham, N. C.; and Mrs. Cyrena Howerton, Rougemont, N. C.

Brother Chambers was a World War One veteran. He had been in declining health for sometime, but was blessed to attend the last meeting at his church. He was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. We will miss Brother Chambers, but feel our loss is his gain.

His funeral was conducted at Gooch Memorial Church by his pastor, Elder Donald Smith, and Elder D. V. Spangler. He was laid to rest in Granville Memorial Park.

May God bless his family and the church he loved so dearly.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church in conference February 13, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

SISTER BERTHA MEADOWS

Sister Bertha Meadows was born April 12, 1896, and passed away January 14, 1971. She was the daughter of Henderson and Virginia Philpot Meadows. Her only survivors are nieces and nephews.

Sister Bertha united with Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 7, 1965, and was baptized August 8 by Elder Wallis Smith. She was a faithful, loving, humble sister, always filling her seat when able to attend. She was confined in a rest home for sometime, but bore her afflictions well.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor at Eakes Funeral Home, and her body was laid to rest in Community Gardens, Stem, N. C.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we, the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, thank our Lord for the gift of this lovely sister; and pray for grace to bow in humble submission to His holy will; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be sent to her nephew; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*; and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church Saturday, February 12, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

HETTIE HESTER BULLOCK

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my dear beloved Mother, Hettie Hester Bullock, who departed this life January 20, 1971. Mama was born November 24, 1883, making her stay on earth 87 years. She was the daughter of William Simon and Cornelia Brooks Elexson and the widow of the late L. A. Bullock. She is survived by the following: Mrs. Etheleen Watson of Prospect Hill, N. C.; Mrs. Irene Strickland of Oxford, N. C.; Mrs. Nancy Allen of Roxboro, N. C.; Andrew and Lucious Bullock, both of Oxford, N. C. Also surviving are five stepchildren: Mrs. Alice Chambers, Mrs. Anne Jackson, Johnnie Bullock, Sim Bullock all of Stem, N. C. and Norman Bullock of Durham, N. C.; twelve grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

Mama asked for a home with the church at Gooch Memorial October 4, 1925, was received and baptized that afternoon by Elder B. F. McKinney. She was given to love and serve so faithfully as much as her health permitted, being blessed to attend the last meeting before her death. Mama was not known for much speaking, but was the type of person whom to know was to love. She always looked forward to the meeting days with the people and at the place she loved. (Micah 6:8) "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Her daily walk and conversation demonstrated her desire to walk humbly in the footsteps of the Blessed Lord in whom she put her trust. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and lived daily in the hope of some day being numbered with the redeemed of the Lord and to sing His praises forever.

Elders Donald and Wallace Smith conducted Mama's funeral using a portion of Proverbs 31:10-31. "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." Elder Donald Smith compared her faith to that of Sarah and her courage to that of Joshua, and I would liken her patience to that of Job.

I feel sure that Mama is with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Ps. 116:15) "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be his Holy Name. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God, who makes no mistakes and controls all things from the least to the greatest.

Submitted by one who loved her dearly, her

daughter, Nancy B. Allen.

Approved by the church in conference Feb. 13, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Asst. Clerk

WILLIAM ECHOLS

William Echols was born in Texas September 5, 1877, and departed this life November 13, 1970, at his home in Chowchilla, Cal., at the age of 93 years. He just fell asleep no more to suffer pain or sorrow. As it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We thank God that this dear brother is asleep in Jesus. He was almost like a father to me.

His membership was in the Little Flock Old School Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church, Bakersfield, Cal. He joined the Hope-well Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church held in the Jaybuckle School near Reed, Oklahoma, in the year 1912, and was baptized by my father, the late Elder John F. Tipton. He had many friends and brethren who mourn his passing. All that knew him loved him. He was a faithful member and deacon in the church. Through the grace of God he lived according to the commandment received and given by Jesus Christ. "For I have not spoken of myself, but the father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49, 50) "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Brother Echols believed in the true and living God, who foreknew and predetermined all things, declaring the end from the beginning. He loved to hear the preaching of the wills and shalls. It is written, "I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people." Also, "All that the father hath given me shall come unto me." And, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

He is survived by his wife of sixty-five years, Exta Lee (McMinn) Echols, five daughters and two sons: Mrs. Rmead Calmels, San Francisco; Mrs. Blanch Mann, Daly City, Cal.; Mrs. Mary Crowder and Mrs. Ulave McColister, Madera, Cal.; Mrs. Willie Lee Crader, Chowchilla, Cal.; Albin H. Echols, Fresno, Cal. and Roy S. Echols, South Lake Tahoe, Cal. Surviving also are one sister, Virginia McMinn, South Gate, Cal. and nineteen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

Services were conducted by Elder T. R. Jefferson, assisted by Austin M. Tipton, and

burial was in the Arbor Vitae Cemetery, Madera, Cal.

Written by one who dearly loved him.

Austin M. Tipton

NANCY ANNIE GILMORE

Sister Nancy Annie Gilmore was born March 3, 1884, in Union County, Ark. It pleased the Lord to call her home from the trials and sufferings of this life November 17, 1970; making her stay on earth eighty-six years, eight months and fourteen days. She was the daughter of the late Elder Henry Craven, and wife of the late Brother Preston Gilmore, who preceded her in death a few years.

Although she suffered much she bore it with patience and was resigned to the will of our Lord whom she loved. She was given a sweet hope in Christ as her Saviour at an early age, and was baptized into the fellowship of Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Union County, Arkansas, at the age of fifteen years, by the late Elder Archie, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace to the end.

She is survived by two sons: Charles P. Gilmore, Jr., Campbell, Calif.; and Quinton R. Gilmore, Monroe, La.; three daughters: Mrs. Cora Williams, West Monroe, La.; Mrs. Ina Newsom, Rayville, La.; and Mrs. Mary Gibson, Bastrop, La.; and by four brothers and five sisters.

Funeral services were conducted November 19th at Good Hope Church where her membership was, by the unworthy writer and pastor, and Elders David Turner and R. W. Rhodes to a host of relatives and friends. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, a token of the love in which she was held, there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, to raise these mortal bodies changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body; when we shall see Him as he is and be like him. This was her hope.

Her children have lost a wonderful mother and Good Hope Church a faithful member. But we believe our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and reconcile us to His holy will.

Elder G. W. Jones

ARTHUR M. McDANIEL

My husband, Arthur M. McDaniel was called home January 8, 1971. Please insert in the *Signs of the Times* notice of his passing, as he was a deacon in the Good Hope Predestinarian Baptist Church.

Yours in hope,
Nancye Johnston McDaniel

ALICE McCALL LYNCH

We bow to the will of our heavenly Father in removing from our midst our dear sister, Alice McCall Lynch, who was born to John Peter and Laura Dudley McCall, September 14, 1893 and passed away July 10, 1970.

She was married to Posie Lester Lynch October 13, 1915, and to this union were born six children, three boys and three girls.

It can truly be said, Sister Lynch was a true wife and mother and above all a sainted mother in her church. Sister Lynch is greatly missed by all who knew her. And more by Rocky Mount Church, of which she was a member. She united with Rocky Mount Church June 24, 1927 and was baptized by Elder Randolph Perdue the following fourth Sunday.

Let us who knew her, thank the Lord for having known her for she was so kind and gentle to all that met her. So much could be said, but instead, let us all humbly bow before God and hope to meet her in that sweet rest she longed so to enter.

Following are her survivors, husband, Posie Lester Lynch, sons, Cecil D., Guy T. and Posie Lester Lynch, Jr. all of Rocky Mount, Va. Daughters, Mrs. Wilford Thurman, Mrs. Guy Woody, both of Rocky Mount, Va.; and Mrs. Hughes McBride, Roanoke, Va.; two brothers and one sister.

Funeral services were held at Lynch Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Va., by the writer before a large congregation of friends and relatives and then laid to rest in the family cemetery near the home to await the coming of her Lord.

Written at the request of her husband by her unworthy pastor.

Cecil E. Turner

LESTER S. VANDYKE

Lester S. VanDyke, son of the late Andrew T. VanDyke, passed away February 13, 1971 at the age of 76. His wife, Hattie Vaughn was a sister to the late Elder Charles W. Vaughn, who was pastor 34 years at Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, New Jersey. To this union were born one son and three daughters, all of whom live in the Hopewell area. He, too, lived in Hopewell, having only recently moved to a new home in Crestwood Village, Whiting, New Jersey.

His father was a member in the church for many years. While Lester never asked for a home in the church, he was a devoted and faithful friend, serving as trustee on both the church and cemetery Board.

The funeral service was conducted by the pastor Elder Arthur R. Warren in the Old School Baptist Church, and interment was in

the Church cemetery adjacent to the Historic Meeting House.

Mary L. Hellings, Church Clerk

JAMES WESTLEY BOWEN

James Westley Bowen, aged 92, of Benton, formerly of Tinsman, Arkansas, departed this life November 26, 1970. He was born October 13, 1887, at Tinsman, and was married to Belle Speer December 25, 1903.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, six daughters and two sons: Mrs. Marvin Erwin, Mrs. Willie Bennett, Mrs. Vila Williams, Mrs. Jessie Johnston, and Mrs. Jean Melton, all of Benton; and Mrs. Annie Lue Dunn of Tinsman; Burnett Bowen of ElDorado, Ark.; Gaylon Bowen of Haskell, Ark. Also a brother, Charlie Bowen and two sisters: Mrs. Mary Douglas and Mrs. Ada Nutt, of Tinsman; fifteen grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Burial was at Watson Cemetery, White Water Baptist Church.

Written by one who loved him, his daughter,

Jessie Johnston

A MAN OF GOD

A man of God from young in life,
A comfort through the storms of strife,
One who fed the flock in need:
Speaking what his God decreed.

Pastor, friend, and neighbor too,
Seeking always God's will to do
With words of calmness and of love:
The peace that comes from up above.

He humbly walked in bonds of Grace,
Willing always the task to face,
Trusting in God to see him through;
And seeking His hand in all he'd do.

He preached of boundless love to man
And how God had a purposed plan:
He trusted in this God to save
His people from cradle to the grave.

Now his earthly race is run;
He will be missed for years to come.
He meant so much to people of God,
As the path of servant he humbly trod.

He is sleeping now in silent peace,
Where Satan's temptations must cease,
And awaits the day when he can rise
To meet the Host of Heaven in the skies.

He will see his Saviour of whom he spoke,
And know the fruits of wearing the yoke:
He will share Christ's glory where angels sing;
This was the man Elder Curry King.

C. B. Davis, Jr.
Roxboro, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1971

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REST BEYOND THE SKIES
(Heb. 4:9)

A few more storms, a few more sighs,
And saints shall rest beyond skies
With Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And with all the heavenly host.

They'll no more feel the stinging smarts
Of the devil's poisonous darts,
By which he'd drive them to despair,
Eternal death with him to share.

They'll be free from all that annoys,
By grace filled with celestial joys,
And clothed with robes of snowy white,
While surrounded with heavenly light.

Here they are burdened with many cares,
And would avoid the devil's snares,
But in heaven no troubles they'll know,
Being far removed from every foe.

How wonderful to contemplate
The joys of the heavenly state,
To view the Saviour with delight,
When the soul from earth takes its flight.
It will soar to the mansions above,
Where all is done away but love;
Faith and hope we'll no longer need,
For we shall see the promised Seed.

See him in resplendency shine,
And know that happiness divine
In the fullness of it up there,
In that celestial city so fair.

How great it must be to be there,
With no more grief and woe to bear,
To reign with Christ for evermore,
The precious Saviour we adore.

C. W. Vass
409 N. Y. Avenue
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"CANNOT DENY A LOVE
FOR THEM"

2768 Clifton Ave., N. W.
Roanoke, Va. 24017

Signs of the Times,
Dear kindred in the Lord:

May I thus address this periodical which has given testimony of people who speak of the Lord's dealings with them, feeling that I am not worthy to address them, but cannot deny a love toward them. The Scriptures speak of an unfeigned love and unfeigned faith, and I feel to see this in the precious Old Baptists that receive the Beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased.

I view these as knowing a new song — the Redeemed that feel the song of Redemption, with no guile to be found in their mouths. They look to the Lamb standing on Mt. Zion; they, as in 1st Peter 2:21, look to Him. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." The testimony is that there were some that followed the Lamb whithersoever he went. These evidences bloom as a beautiful rose along the rough pathway of weary travelers: They rest only in Him that left the example. They desire to be good soldiers that follow a dear Captain. These people are ever a target for malicious arrows of such as delight to wound. The Captain knows the way and has, is, and will lead the way. "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

I do not see any other acceptance than through the Son, and I cling to this precious hope that came into my

very heart, because there is none other than the Lamb of God to look to. "Beloved" was a word that fastened deep deeply in my heart and mind about forty-four years ago. About forty-eight years ago, one cold, icy winter day as I stood looking at the beauty of nature: One particular tree became so centered in my view that I lost sight of all else. Suddenly it became something alive, and seemed to move from the field to where I stood. I felt a presence that was so holy and pure, and the beauty, majesty and powerfulness of its demands seemed to consume me. I fled from the spot, for I could not stand before it because I was too polluted. As much as I wanted to be near it, I was cut off by its purity and demands of purity.

It became such a burden to me that I found myself often looking to the end of days from time to time, as the sun set in the western sky, as being my last — and forever gone: I could never be near this that I wanted. Then one day while I tried to care for my little sister, brother and niece, I looked again to the setting sun, and an awful, desperate feeling came over me: "Lord, how poor I am." The word "Beloved" came so suddenly with unexplained joy, and I felt loved, and to love that appearing. I have carried this along these past forty-four years without fully understanding. Do I understand even now? Yet recently "accepted in the Beloved" came so forcibly to mind that I looked up the words; and rest hovered around me several days. I cannot retain this rest, but I am glad it does appear to me from time to time.

There is testimony that in days of old there were a people who searched the Scriptures daily to see whether certain things were so. While we cannot search out this "Life," Jesus draws us in such a manner that causes a searching that is a daily search, — "Give us this day our daily bread."

I hope the year 1971 will be one that brings many evidences to His people everywhere of His gracious care and

keeping to them. We desire to see the steps of Him that had no malice, no guile, no reviling, but gave himself for us; by whose stripes we are healed.

The Great Shepherd leadeth.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

"SIGNS STILL PRECIOUS"

Box 294
Salida, Calif. 95368

Dear Elder Spangler:

My time is due to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I love to read all articles — I feel so at ease while reading them. I have been acquainted with the *Signs* since in my teens, and it is as precious now as it was then: so full of good food to read.

We are having precious meetings here: they overcome me many times, just like a real beautiful garden of beautiful flowers. I sometimes wonder if I have a right to be with them; yet I couldn't live without them. It is more precious than gold to be with them and hear the word of God proclaimed in its fullness. God is the Word and reigns supreme. He is our Master Pilot and needs no help. "No help in self I find, though long I sought it well." Oh, dear Lord, how great thou art!

I feel so unworthy of a seat in the meetings, yet I don't want to miss any. They fill my hungry heart and soul, which the tongue can never taste, yet heart and soul relish. Sometimes I feel to have no "New Life" in me, and it grieves me. Several years ago I felt there was nothing for me: I didn't deserve it, yet it was precious to feel His love. At twenty years old I was given a vision; I was in a heavy burden. When teaching school, I walked among some beautiful trees to my boarding place. I longed to be a tree for they look so peaceful, but it seemed there was no peace for me. I went to my room, and looked at the full moon shining on the trees — all so calm and

peaceful. I was anything but calm, my burden being so heavy. Finally I went into a troubled slumber: I was in total darkness, lost and no way to go; until all at once I saw in a vision, a small place all fenced in, and a beautiful white ray of light shown from above inside the fence. I made my way to it and looked over the fence, — I was still in the darkness where I was, and saw some grain just through the ground, which was so even and pretty. As I looked on it the light became brighter, and a gentle rain in tiny streams came down on the grain; and it sprang up in "New Life"; and the vision was gone — also my burden was gone, I thought, forever; but, alas, it came back. Yet I was free of it for a little while. If I ever received "New Life" it was in that vision, and it stays with me all these years.

I became a member at twenty-two years of age when I for a moment forgot myself. I felt I had deceived the best people on earth, but the tie does bind and cannot be severed, and I do not want it to be severed. The meetings are as a beautiful garden, a garden walled around, chosen and made peculiar ground. We have enjoyed a good meeting at Ceres the fifth Sunday. Four elders were there and eleven deacons, who assisted in the ordination of a deacon. I feel the glory of God was upon us all. Many were there from miles away. We were having low, thick fog but all arrived safely. "God is good."

May God bless you editors in all your efforts to publish the good paper.

A little one in Him I hope,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

LEFT BY ONE "GONE HOME"

Many years ago an aged minister gave me the following, saying it had been found on the desk of another minister above 90 years of age, who had just "gone home." One time when Elder Spangler was in my home, he came

across it in my Bible and stated he would like to see it published in the *Signs*:

"GETTING READY TO MOVE"

"The owner of the tenement which I have occupied for many years has given me notice that he will furnish but little, or nothing more for repairs and that I should expect to move at any time.

At first, this was not a very welcome notice. The surroundings here are, in many respects, very pleasant and were it not for the evidence of decay, I might consider the old house good enough. But even a light wind causes it to tremble and totter, and all the braces are not sufficient to make it secure, so I am getting ready to move.

It might seem strange to many how quickly one's interest is transferred from the old to the prospective home. For some time I have been avidly gathering all the information I could of the new home and the description of its inhabitants. One who visited it has returned and from him I learn that it is beautiful beyond description. Language breaks down when attempting to tell of what he saw and heard while there, even stating it was unlawful for him to utter them. He says that in order for him to make an investment there, he has suffered the loss of all things he loved here and even rejoices in what so many others call sacrifice and suffering. Another, whose great love for me has been proven by the greatest possible test (sacrificial death), is now there. He has sent me some clusters of the most delicious fruits and after tasting them, all other foods taste insipid.

Two or three times, I have been down by the border of the great river which forms the boundary of that beautiful country and have wished myself to be among the company who were singing praises to the King on the other side. Many of my friends and dear ones are now there. Before leaving here, they spoke of my coming later and I have seen the heavenly smile on their faces

as they passed out of sight.

Sometimes I am asked to make some new investment here, but in every case my answer is, 'I am getting ready to move'." — End.

It is now almost thirty-five years since the above was given to me; I loved it then, I have read it over and over again, and I have loved it more and more as the years have passed; and now, I want to add:

"Going home, going home, I'm just going home;
Quiet like, some still day, I'm just going home."

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

I desire to acknowledge with deep appreciation, the many letters, telephone calls, visits and the expression of Sister Allen in the *Signs*, received concerning my article in the December issue on the 23rd Psalm. Whatever of comfort anyone received, let us all remember that I only put it on paper — the Lord dictated it, I hope.

Mildred V. Dykes

ENJOYS THE *SIGNS*

62 Elm Street
Mill Creek Tr. Park
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see I have let my renewal run past due a bit, therefore I must take care of that because I do not want to place any other burden on the good Editors than those which you already have, neither do I want to be without the good articles contained therein. Many times one article alone is worth the price of a year's subscription, and I hope to be able to have access to your good paper so long as I live in this wicked world of turmoil, sorrow and

heartaches, (and especially) so many "Winds of FALSE DOCTRINE." But by the Grace of God I can say with the Apostle Paul, "NONE of these things move me."

I am sending my check in the amount of \$10.00, seven of which is for two years' renewal and the remainder to be used as you see fit. Perhaps I can help to get the good paper to some deserving soul, who is not financially able to procure it for himself or herself. Many of the aged who love sound doctrine are not in a position financially to afford it, so if I can help to cheer some old soldier of the cross on his or her journey down the rugged pathway of life by helping to get the *Signs* to them, the glory shall be His.

May God bless our good Editors who are so faithful to their tasks. And may God see fit, after they have passed off the stage of action, to give us others who will stand on the walls of Zion and sound the alarm: that *The Signs of the Times* may continue many years to come in the promulgation of "The Faith which was ONCE delivered to the Saints." And let us pray God that He will send us the "Latter Rain," because we certainly have had a long drouth.

In hope,
Roy S. Thomas

WRITES HER EXPERIENCE

Box 183
Stockdale, Texas 78160

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,
All Writers and Readers:

It has been some time since I have tried to write you, but I have been blessed to read the *Signs* every month. Of late I have been reading the old copies that I have been saving for twenty years or more.

I have never written my experience for publication before. At first I was eager to tell it, but then I found a few dear ones who seemed to feel badly because they felt they did not have much

to tell, so I hesitated on that account. However I always loved to read the experiences of others, so am made willing to share with my dear brethren what has been given me.

I am so thankful for being allowed to live near a church of this faith and order, and for letting me read our papers, and for the happy privilege of associating with the Lord's people and worshipping with them. While my husband was not a member, he was a believer, and we spent many happy hours singing the songs of Zion and talking of the things we both loved so much.

I will be eighty-four years of age on April 6, 1971, and have many things to be thankful for. One thing I must mention: Mt. Olive Church has allowed me to act as her Clerk for nearly fifty years. I feel this is an honor, not as the world honors, but something I could do for the church.

I am renewing my subscription for two years. Farewell, and may our dear Lord bless every one who calls upon his name.

Lela Culpepper

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER CULPEPPER

Dear Household of Faith:

I was born April 6, 1887 of W. L. and Mattie Dykes Hawk near San Marcos, Texas. My parents and grandparents, save one, were Old School Baptists. This did not make me better than others, but I grew up with a natural respect for them, and loved to hear them talk on scriptures from my earliest recollection.

When about grown I began to find fault with them because they were so few and mostly older people, even arguing with my mother and told her once that the Bible might be just a book of fiction like some books I had been reading. How this sin has lingered in my memory and hurt me all the years of my life.

Soon after this I went to live with my uncle and aunt, Elder E. B. Ault's

parents. Elder Ault was under conviction then and talked of his trials, etc., quite a bit. Then on the second Sunday in October Elder McAdams came to visit the church in Martindale. I can still see and hear him in memory as he arose in the stand that morning. "The Lord has all power in heaven and earth." These are the words he quoted. I had heard them before, but they had never impressed me so.

At the close of the conference my mother and father went forward to put their letters into the church: they had moved from Mt. Olive in Lavaca County. When they reached the preacher, it seemed the whole back part of the church moved back with me in it, leaving space between them and me. I felt separated from all heavenly things from then on. That night I didn't sleep much, but when I did, I dreamed. Once the devil was after me. I would run and run, and everywhere I went he was right behind me. In the dream I tried to get under the house, and he was there; on top of the house, and there he was beside me. I tried to hit him with an iron rod, and it would just bend before it hit him.

This lost and condemned feeling stayed with me from the second Sunday in October until February 11th. It went to school with me and everywhere: I could not hide from it or get rid of it in any way.

At last I dreamed that I heard a voice say, "Your sins are forgiven." However this brought no relief, except for me to wish it were true, until afternoon when I went to the attic room where we went to read the Bible and *Signs*. Immediately before my eyes were these words, "I slept and dreamed. I awoke for the Lord had sustained me." At once the burden was gone and the most beautiful light came down through the little skylight in the roof, — it seemed to come from Heaven straight into my heart. It was a time for rejoicing: even the birds in the trees played in the rain and acted happy. Later I found this scripture in the 3rd Psalm: "I

slept and dreamed," etc.

All this was followed by a desire to be baptized in the San Marcos River, whose waters looked so good to me. However I had the mistaken idea that I must wait as long as possible. Then circumstances kept me from the meetings until I felt guilty of disobedience, and began to fear that some of my family would be taken from me, to make me willing to obey my Lord who had been so good to me. Finally the opportunity came and I went before the Bethlehem Church at Martindale, Texas, and was received. I was baptized by Elder J. B. Bowden three weeks later. This was an awful long three weeks to me; but such a happy ending. It was April and a wet Norther blew up that morning, which made me feel like it was a sign I had no business in the church and should not be baptized, but it cleared off and by afternoon was warm and sunshiny.

The memory of that day, the dear ones gathered around the water, and dear old Brother Bowden is still fresh and precious to me. I am so thankful that I was brought into the church when I was young and did not have to live with the guilty feeling of disobedience I had every time I went to meeting and left without going before the church. Let me just speak a word to all who are waiting to become fit to unite with the church. Do not wait for fitness: you will always feel more unfit and be farther from it. There is much love and fellowship in the church.

Love to all the household of faith.

Lela Culpepper

MATTHEW 22:14

"Many are called but few are chosen."

Jesus spoke to many by parables. "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching *us* (that is the many members of Christ, the Church,) that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should

live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world . . ." (Titus 2:11, 12). I believe that God's salvation has appeared to all men, but not in the Spirit of Grace, but is directed only to the generation of Jesus Christ — those that are in Christ Jesus and chosen of the Father before the world began.

According to the Scriptures there are many called but only of the gods of this world, which are many; and further, too, by the traditions of men. "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matthew 24:24) "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

The God of heaven is a holy God, and certainly he has called his people with an holy calling at the appointed time, when it has, or will, please Him to manifest his great love to them. A man may call his flock or sheep even when they are quite a distance away, and they that hear know the voice of their master, and will begin their journey home. This is the experience of the Lord's little children, the called of the Lord; the ones to whom Jesus spoke, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This is just one of the sweet promises that has brought God's little ones to rest in that blessed hope of eternal life. But those that did not really hear the call, began to move, for they were being left behind, only with a mind to go and feast on that natural food. So when they arrive at the feeding place, there is a man at the barn to purchase a few sheep. He chooses the best out of all, for the price is good and precious, but leaves the ugly and undernourished. These are the ones it has not pleased the heavenly Master to raise up and nourish with the sincere milk of the word. "Many are called but few are chosen."

"But ye are a chosen generation, a

royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:0) ". . . like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just." (Matthew 13:47-49) Remember how Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes, and his disciples gathered up the fragments which were twelve baskets; and after all were filled, how that He departed from them all. And afterward many began to seek him, and when they had found him, he said unto them, you seek me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled. (John 6:26) These were typical of the multitude of the world today, following for the natural food, pride and idolatry. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of God. From such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:5) All these things which are not of God shall perish with the world.

I believe John was baptizing true believers, but when he saw 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." (Matthew 3:7, 8) I do not see that John baptized the vipers. My brethren, these generation of vipers were some more of the many called, but not by the spirit of grace; else they would have come bringing the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith.

How great, my brethren, to have that blessed hope of eternal life: a precious hope that Almighty God has laid up in heaven for you from the foundation of the world! We trust through this hope

that we have been given a spiritual ear to hear the voice of the Son of God; though we were dead as Saul of Tarsus was, when it pleased God to shine within him that spiritual light, which made him cry out, Who art thou Lord? (One of the few chosen) "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."

Written by a very weak brother, but hope when I am weak, I am strong.

In bonds of sweet fellowship,
Elder C. D. Turner
Rt. 3
Dunn, N. C. 28334

THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH HIS PEOPLE

Rt. 7, Box 287
Dothan, Ala 36301

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I have neglected my renewal to our Grand Old Paper until now so am enclosing renewal for two years.

I shall try in my weak way to express a few thoughts concerning the dealings of God with his people. I recall that when John the Baptist was baptizing in the River Jordan, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge

his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:7-12)

The fire that John refers to, is the wrath of God which burns up or consumes all self-righteousness. His saying that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham, manifests the sovereignty of God and the helplessness of the individual.

We read in Isaiah, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge and showed to him the way of understanding." (Isa. 40:13, 14)

"He sayeth to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:15, 16)

I am so encumbered with doubts that I am made to know that if it were not for the mercies of God, I would have long since been banished from His presence. All our afflictions and our disappointments are for, or redound to the glory of God. Paul says in the 18th chapter of Romans, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

He goes on to say that whom he predestinated, he called, justified and glorified; and that he had spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, should with him also freely give us all things?

He gives us grace. He gives us mercy instead of justice. He gives us forbearance: in fact all our blessings come from his bountiful hand. He gives us hope, and is the author and finisher of our faith. He makes us to know and

trust him whom to know is life eternal. He is everything to his beloved. In him all fullness dwells.

If I could (as the arminian says) just put my trust in him and keep it there, it seems I would be more reconciled; but doubts and fears come into my mind and, for the time, crowd out all thoughts of a spiritual nature.

With best wishes to you editors and the household of faith everywhere, I will bring these rambling thoughts to an end.

Sincerely,
Elder J. A. Tew

"GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD"

"And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

These words were directed from Jesus to the eleven apostles. Notice that this commission or command was given after Jesus had risen from the grave. (Judas had already hanged himself.)

We have a prayer in our heart that God will bless us to rightly divide the word of truth. As the Lord enables us, let us first consider the setting. This commission was different from the first commission that Jesus had given the apostles.

The first commission was limited to the Jews in the flesh. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" (Matthew 10:5-6) We may wonder, why did Jesus tell them not to go into the way of the Gentiles? First, let us notice that Jesus was born under the law. He said that he had come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

Under the law, only the Jews enjoyed the ordinances, ceremonies, etc. "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and

the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Romans 9:4-5) The promises under the *law* did not embrace the Gentiles. The only exception we know of is any who desired to be adopted among the Jews. Notice Exodus 12:48-49. The Gentile or stranger would be under the law as the Jews and he would be circumcised, and then he would be as one that was born in the land. (Notice the 48th verse and you will see that this is adoption.) The Children of Israel in all their generations were commanded to observe the passover. The expression, "No stranger shall eat thereof" has reference to the Gentiles. (See Exodus 12:42-43.)

"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually." (Exodus 28:29) Notice that Aaron, the first high priest under the law, was commanded to only bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart. The Gentiles were shut out! This is a type of Jesus making intercession for Spiritual Israel, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Verses 15 thru 28 gives the description of the breastplate. We call your attention to the 21st verse which states that the "stones shall be with the names of the Children of Israel, twelve, according to their names —"

To sum it up, we can see that the priests under the law did not minister to the Gentiles. For example, notice this command: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the Children of Israel, saying —" (Leviticus 4:1-2) If you read on, you will see that this is describing the procedure for the sin offering. The expression "speak unto the Children of Israel" is in Leviticus 1:1. In Leviticus 9:3 we read, "And unto the Children of Israel thou shall speak, saying, take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and a calf and

a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering."

The address to the Children of Israel reminds us of the Epistles in the New Testament. How about Ephesians 1:1 for an example: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." This Epistle of Paul was not to the world in general, but it is directed to the church at Ephesus and also embraces God's people in this day and time. Why? Because Paul stated that this Epistle was also written to the "faithful in Christ Jesus."

Also, the Gentiles were classified as heathen by the Jews. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that *we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.* (Gal. 2:9) We can see that the primary mission of Paul was to preach to the Gentiles. Remember, the circumcision refers to the Jews. (see Rom. 4:9, Gal. 2:7, Eph. 2:11)

The first commission, which was limited to the natural Jews, was under the law. Remember that all the ceremonies under the law was limited to natural Israel.

The second commission ("Go ye into all the world") embraces both Jews and Gentiles. The apostles were commanded to go and preach, and God would direct the preached word to the hearts of his people.

On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4) Many were amazed at this, but some said the men were full of new wine. Now Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost when he preached, and God prepared the hearts of those to receive the preaching, and they were pricked in their heart. Now, all that heard Peter's preaching were not pricked in their hearts. Some that hear the

preached word in this day and time do not get anything out of the preaching because their hearts have not been prepared to receive it. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1)

At this point we must be careful, and trust that God will enable us to enter into these deep treasures. Now, let us ask ourselves this question: Does this second commission only embrace Spiritual Israel? "Go ye into all the world." What world does this have reference to?

Let us examine John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We believe that this Scripture has reference to God's people. One definition of world is: "A class of persons regarded as a body and distinguished by some characteristic." John 3:16 certainly cannot have reference to the universal world, because there is a people that God does not love, "— Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:13)

"I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9) The word *world* in this Scripture and the word *world* in John 3:16 cannot mean the same. Why? Do you not believe that Jesus would pray for a people that he loves? Therefore, the *world* in John 17:9 means the universal world. Jesus only prays for his people, and we do not read in the Scriptures that Jesus prays or makes intercession for all of mankind. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because he maketh *intercession for the saints* according to the will of God." (Romans 8:27)

To sum it up, the *world* in John 3:16 means God's people, and the *world* in John 17:9 means all of mankind.

"Go ye into all the world." If this only means God's people, how were the Apostles to know who were sheep and

who were goats? Man looks on the outward appearance, but it is God that looks on the heart. (see 1 Samuel 16:7) If the *world* here only means the "sheep world," why did Jesus say, "he that believeth not shall be damned." Do not we believe that all of God's people shall be saved and not one of them shall be damned? What about the parable of the sower? (Matt. 13:2-23) Some seed fell by the wayside, some in stony places, some among thorns, and the word did not bear fruit in these places. Yet, it did bear fruit in the good ground, and we believe it was prepared by God. (see Proverbs 16:1)

The apostles were commanded (We believe this also embraces the ministers of God in this age.) to preach where God has impressed them to go — and not to limit themselves to the Jews, but to go into all the world, which means both Jews and Gentiles. It is God that gives the increase. "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. 3:6)

"Go ye into all the world." We may think of it this way: Beforehand, the Gentiles were shut out, but now the door is open. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46)

As the Lord enables us, let us put the pieces together: The law was given to natural Israel, and Jesus came to fulfill that law. (see Matt. 5:17) "He went unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) The priests under the Levitical priesthood only offered sacrifices for the children of Israel. The priest bore upon his breastplate the names of the Children of Israel. Jesus, our high priest, bore the sins of his people upon his shoulders. He offered himself as a sacrifice for his people, both Jews and Gentiles. His blood has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. (Eph. 2:14)

The command that Jesus gave: "Go ye unto all the world," implied that the Gospel was to be preached both to the Jews and the Gentiles. The Gentiles were no longer shut out. The new covenant embraced God's people among both Jews and Gentiles.

God sent Peter to preach to some Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. (read Acts 10:1-48) We will quote verses 44-47: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word, And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received Holy Ghost as well as we?" We understand this to be the first sermon that was preached to the Gentiles. Notice that the Jews had first received the Holy Ghost. (2nd chap. of Acts) The 45th verse proves that some Jews went with Peter to the house of Cornelius. These Jews were astonished that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles.

This is a broad subject, and we have tried to be brief. We ask the reader to carefully study the Scriptures and see if my views meet the test of the Scriptures.

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

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

"Preserved in Jesus Christ and called." (Jude 1:1)

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:18)

Elder F. P. Branscome, very dear Brother: I wish to make some comments on the two scriptures quoted

above. When was the beginning of being preserved? We can not tell. The scriptures says, Our names "were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8)

Perseverance belongs to this life, and is a manifestation of the faith that is in the children of God. The saints will continue to persevere until the dissolution of their mortal bodies.

But being preserved in Jesus Christ does not only reach back before the world was, but continues to the end of our pilgrimage, and is the foundation of all our persevering. It is said, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) This preservation and keeping are closely joined together; and this is the reason the "Old Ship of Zion" has never been found aground on some dreadful sandbar, but is yet afloat above all the corruptions of this life that we are incident to, and will, ere long, land the last one of her passengers into the everlasting port of eternal peace. Then all of our pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," will be ended; and then our armour will be laid aside. But we are now "Soldiers of the Cross" and must endure the hardships of war.

What makes faithful soldiers? It is the love they have for their country, or the cause for which they fight. I saw this proven more than forty years ago. So, likewise, if we have love in our hearts for the cause of Christ, we will be good soldiers of Jesus. The love of God in the heart is a living principle and causes such to persevere; and, without this love, all of our zeal will be as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. So salvation is of the Lord, from first to last, and all the practical godliness that we manifest is a testimony that we are God's children; and it also glorifies God, which is one of the great causes why the church is preserved here on earth: for it is said, "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have

created him for my glory." Again, "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."

It is a very pleasant thing to be clothed upon with the obedience of Christ. When this is the case we cheerfully wait upon the Lord, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light: and this is one of the reasons why we love to go to our meetings. Often when we meet together, our strength is renewed in the Lord; and, then, what we find for our hands to do we do with our might, even "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." So we endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus.

Paul not only admonished the brethren to pray for one another, but also to pray for him, that he might speak as he ought to speak. It is a great comfort to the church when preachers are blessed with the Spirit of the Lord in preaching; and without the Spirit, though our words may be ever-so-sound, it will have but little weight. When the gospel is preached, it is in much assurance of the Holy Ghost, and with power. Paul said, "For I neither received it of man, and neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." God's ministers are taught by the same power, even to the present time, and will continue to be taught in the same way as long as time shall last.

Paul was an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. There is a savor of life in the gospel, but a savor of death in the law. By the law is the knowledge of sin. Also, by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. But justification comes by the law of faith; and this embraces the Gentiles as well

as the Jews: for it is said, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This "all Israel" is the number that John saw, while on the Isle of Patmos, dressed in white robes down to their feet.

Dear Brother Branscome, may you and I be in that number; for, if so, when we leave time our sorrows will forever flee away.

Yours in hope,
Asa D. Shortt

(The above appeared in *The Message of Truth* of February, 1906, and re-published by request.)

ENJOYS THE COMMUNICATIONS OF THE BRETHREN

33 Hillcrest Ave., N. E.
Roanoke, Va. 24012

Dear Editing Brethren:

Oh how glad I am that God has spared the *Signs of the Times* to His praise, as has been said many, many times by those who read it. It is so much comfort to me for it contains the communications of the saints.

Among those to whom I have loaned my copies are Mr. and Mrs. Herbert C. Dooley of Roanoke, Va., and am sending \$4.00 for their yearly subscription.

Thanks be to our merciful Lord for all your efforts who write for the *Signs*, and for the publishing of it, and for the Editorial writings.

With Christian love, I hope,
Mamie Rose D. Ferguson

PAPERS FULL OF TRUTH

Carbon Hill, Ala.

Dear Editors:

We are late in renewing our subscription for the *Signs*. We love the *Signs of the Times* and have been taking it for many years: my father took it as

far back as I can remember. These papers are full of truth and are so needful in these troublesome times in which we are living.

We are both in our seventies, and our health is failing, but we hope to be thankful for these good papers to read. We get much comfort from them and feel to be wonderfully blessed for having the editors to write for us.

May the blessed Lord give you health and strength to continue on. These truths are food for our souls in this world full of sin.

In love we hope to all of you,
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Scott

OUR FATHER'S WILL

1231 Pecan
Channelview, Texas 77530

It is so wide we can't get around it. It is so high we can't climb over it. It reaches beneath the bottomless pit. Where does it leave us poor sinners? We are in this will.

This will demanded justice. Justice was paid by our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a will of mercy, love and peace. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. This is a will of all power in Heaven and on earth. This will in the past has been perfectly fulfilled. This will is being fulfilled now and shall be fulfilled as long as time lasts on earth. This will shall reach into Eternity. This is a perfect will. It cannot be changed. It cannot be broken. It is so powerful that man can't turn it. It is so gentle and so designed that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. This will is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed in part to babes. All events, times and places are in this will.

God who rules the times and seasons,
Doubtless for the best of reasons,
Has been pleased to visit Zion
With afflictions sore and trying.

When, O when, will Christ the Savior
Come, His little flock to favor?
When, O when!

Earl W. Hall

LETTERS TO
ELDER AND SISTER HUDSON

Rt. 1
Yanceyville, N. C. 27379

Dear Brother and Sister Hudson,

. . . Leona and I and the children were real glad to see you again this spring and especially glad to have you visit in our home again along with Elder and Sister King. In your letter you said something about enjoying the visit with us and also enjoyed the walk across the field on our farm. I feel like the enjoyment that you had while walking in the fields was spent in fellowship with the Spirit. The reason is I have walked many times in the fields that you were speaking of and, if not deceived, I hope in sweet fellowship with the Spirit of the Lord and Savior. There is nothing sweeter.

You also wrote about receiving a strong impression on this last trip that our doctrine is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; That it is the doctrine that the Apostles stood for even in the face of persecution and opposition. The people that stand for the doctrine today certainly face persecution from the world . . .

Brotherly love,
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

Rt. 1
Yanceyville, N. C. 27379

Dear Brother and Sister Hudson:

. . . Each year about this time I prune the few apple trees that we have in our yard. While doing this Monday my thoughts were something like this: How that our keeper has to prune us; in other words, hew us down to keep us from getting too big and boastful.

For the big, boastful looking tree does not always have the best fruit. This pruning is something that has to be done over and over again. I feel like I am not getting my feeling and thought down on paper as sweet as it was to me. After looking back over what I have already written I noticed that I was calling myself one of His by saying our keeper has to prune us.

I must say that I have a precious hope that I am one of his children. I do know that I have to be pruned to keep me down. So after the pruning was done the brush was hauled away to be destroyed. I think of how it seems to hurt when being cut or pruned, but it is for the good of the tree. Thereby in the same way it being good for earthly man. We also have a grape vine that has to be done in the same way. My thoughts were on the Scripture where Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The branches are of no value without a vine. In fact, without the vine, there is no branch. I know there is a lot here that I cannot bring out in writing. I hope that you can get a little of the feeling that I did from this.

Also after this pruning, then the trees need food to heal and to bear fruit. This being done all by the Husband of the land, or representing the free Grace of God to his people, gives the spiritual food to nourish them back after the pruning. I hope this hasn't been dull and boring to you. I have been tending these few trees and the vine for several years now. Each year my thoughts are in the same manner. This being the first time that I have ever tried to relay my thoughts to anyone else on this.

Brotherly love,
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

Danville, Virginia

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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EDITORIAL

2 TIMOTHY 3:7

“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

It has been requested that we give our views on the above Scripture, and while we do not know the reason why we are asked our views, we feel to comply, hoping that God, who is the giver of wisdom, will enable us so to do, for the comfort and edification of his children.

In this chapter Paul prophesies of the last days, that there would be perilous times, “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 those that are good, traitors, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” Now we quote the foregoing Scripture as it is given in connection with the professing churches in the last days. Such characters as described therein have always been in the world, the world was full of such, and worse, when Paul wrote his epistle, but for such to be found under a garb of religion, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, was a matter of solemn warning of Paul to Timothy and those who should live in the last days. We feel that the last days are upon us and that they are per-

ilous times, deception is on every hand, and the words of our Lord are being fulfilled when he said, “For false Christs and false prophets shall rise. and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.” — Mark 13:22.

In the days of the apostle such characters were found among the heathen, but such are the present times that all these evil doers practice their seductions under the garb of christians, and in truth they have almost monopolized the name, for do we not see that the truly godly almost fear to be called by that name, while they who can be called legion for numbers would be greatly insulted if they were not recognized as christians of the first rank? These are the evil men and seducers spoken of in verse thirteen, which Paul there says shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. The church is sometimes referred to as a house, as Paul in the preceding chapter, twentieth verse, says, “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor.” The vessels of gold and silver are vessels to honor, they have passed through the furnace and been refined; these vessels of wood and earth are in their natural state and are vessels to dishonor, which set forth the men spoken of in Jude 4: “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” They creep into houses, Paul says; they creep in unawares, Jude says, and Jude also writes to the saints exhorting them because of these men, that the saints should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto them. Paul also tells Timothy that if a man purge himself (by contending earnestly for the faith) from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every

good work. (2 Tim. 2:21)

We have shown that the house often refers to a church, so does also a woman. Thus there were wise virgins and foolish virgins, so Paul could tell the Corinthians, "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," and knowing that the woman was deceived, he continues, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." These seducers were to creep into the house and lead captive silly women, laden with sins. Silly or foolish women set forth the churches in this apostasy of to-day, loaded with sin or error in their departure from and hatred of the truth of the living God. Paul in verse eight compares such men to Jannes and Jambres, who were two of the sorcerers and magicians that withstood Moses when he went before Pharaoh (Exodus 7:11), mimicking the servants of God, but they could not proceed further, for Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. Their deceptions could not be carried beyond that circumstance in which they contended with a man of truth, so Paul would stir up the godly that they contend earnestly for the faith; in doing so the folly of these men and their seductions shall be manifest unto all as was that of the foolish magicians. Paul counsels Timothy to turn aside from such men; in other words to have no fellowship with them. The churches, or women, who are led captive by them he calls silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, and says they are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Not satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, they have, after their own lusts, heaped to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall turn to fables. (2 Timothy, fourth chapter.) So they turned away from the truth to believe a lie.

This can be said of the churches mentioned in the New Testament, one by one, as Paul had declared they were led away with divers lusts.

Thus from the foregoing it will be seen of whom our text is spoken; it is of the foolish churches and their teachers. God's children, it is true, are ever learning, but they learn of Jesus. He is the truth and the things they learn about themselves are true, that they are poor, vile, helpless sinners, not able to take a right step or do any good thing. These, being taught of God, come to the knowledge of the truth, that there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, and one of the evidences that they love him is that they love to hear the truth preached and Jesus' name exalted. Their delight is to learn of him, and there is no place to them so dear as where he has recorded his name. Yes, they are ever learning of Jesus and his love, yet the half has never been told, yet, as they learn, they prove they have come to Jesus and Jesus has come to them.

But let us return to these who are beguiled; they have been led astray by men. Even in the apostles' day the Galatians were led astray, so Paul cried, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Who were these that had bewitched them, but men of perverse minds, who would bring them back under the works of the law, and so under its curse, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." They would turn the Galatians from being justified by faith to the works of the law for justification, and he tells them that before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore, saith he, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us (in its teaching) unto Christ. So under the law they were ever learning, but after faith is come (and faith cometh by hearing,

and hearing by the Word of God) we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for such have come to the knowledge of the Son of God. There is no such thing as beginning in the Spirit and being made perfect in the flesh, and faith presents every man perfect in Christ. Thus there was a tendency among the Galatians in that early day to be drawn under the law, which worried the apostle, for he knew and taught that the law made nothing perfect, and only by faith, the gift of God, could any one come to the knowledge of the truth.

We have spoken of the Galatian church as an instance in Paul's day of the evil influence of men creeping in that church to the distress of all who would live godly, but Paul spoke of the last days, therefore we are bound to take this Scripture to ourselves and our own time, and we would pray always that our God will give us grace that we might be found faithfully preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, standing fast in the faith, defending it against those who have crept in or those many who are without. If there are any of the legalists within, we are to turn away from them, not receiving their testimony nor wishing them God-speed. Whenever one teaches that there is anything that the creature must do to obtain Christ, or to get a covenant blessing, such an one is trying to establish a condition which shows with all his learning, that he has not come to the knowledge of the truth. Under the power of a God-given faith his children know that the body is dead because of sin, yet strange to tell, these are the only ones who add to that God-given faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For (saith Peter) if these things be in you, and abound, *they make you* that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such, and such only, come experimentally to the knowledge of the

truth. Now the one who is ever learning and never comes to such knowledge is spoken of by Peter in these words: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." He turns, like a sow, that was washed, to wallow in the mire, and as a dog returneth to his vomit, so the fool returneth to his folly. (Prov. 11:11)

In this brief article we have neither space nor time to trace the history of the churches mentioned in the New Testament, or of the apostate church of Rome, who, during the dark ages, sat as a queen, making the nations of the earth drunk with her fornications, or of the churches that sprang from her in the reformation, proving in time that they were daughters of the mother of harlots. We know that at best they were led by man and carried along with them much of the bigotry and error of the mother of harlots. We rather want to dwell upon the last days, which we think are here, bigotry and persecution have decreased, the beast which was like a leopard (quick to pounce upon its victim) whose feet were like the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion (Rev. 13) has disappeared, but there has another one appeared out of the earth, and he has two horns like a lamb (more gentle), but he speaks as a dragon. It was this dragon that beguiled Eve through his subtilty, and it is he that deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, they are led captive by the devil at his will, yet such is the day we live in that Satan does not appear as a dragon; if he did, men would not be found in his company. No, it is rather as an angel of light, undermining by his subtilty the declared word of our God, making the meritorious life and death of our Lord to be totally unnecessary as a way to heaven. No, saith the devil of the last days, you need not be born again, begin right with a babe and raise it right and when it is old it will not depart from the right way, and when he dies God will have to take him to

heaven. The devil, as an angel of light, is very well satisfied with the wonderful progress of a religion that has a form of godliness, yet denies the power. The devil hates electing love, that is why such truth, revealed from heaven, as election (Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated) is denied and hated all the world over to-day. Yes, these are perilous times, times in which universities, schools and the public press are ready to give the people what they want. The word of God is presented as a myth and solemn truth ridiculed to please the crowd. These are days when study, printing and the making of books are colossal, people are ever learning, but with all their learning and all their schooling put together they cannot make one person "wise unto salvation," nor can all their delusions (and the world is full of them to-day) stop one of God's children from coming to the knowledge of the truth. Blessed be God. All the schooling of the Egyptians could not stop Moses at the right time (God's time) from remembering his brethren, even if they were down in the brick yards, "hated of all men." The multitudes on the plains of Babylon with the *wonderful music*, combined with the threat of a fiery furnace, could not bring the three Hebrew children to their knees, for they had a God-given faith that kept them and sustained them even in the furnace. Now we would not put the blame of this on the multitude, but upon their teachers, who, Peter says, are *willingly ignorant*. (2 Peter 3:5) They are lovers of their own selves, etc., pleasing themselves, rather than trying to please God, and they certainly do despise the people of God. Leaving the well of salvation, they have swallowed the flood cast out of the dragon's mouth, which the dragon meant to overtake the elect of God, but the earth helped the woman and swallowed the flood. Now if this was only found in the earth and not in the church to-day, there would not be so much need for alarm, but Paul says, "Of your own selves shall men arise,

speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." God bless us with faith to be strong in the Lord, giving no quarter to error, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reproving them. James Hervey, the man who stood valiantly contending with John Wesley and his free will doctrine, said his father sent him to college for three years, but God sent him to a poor plowman, and Mr. Hervey learned more in one talk with the plowman than in the three years at college. Their wisdom, which is of this world, comes to naught, whenever there is one of God's children entangled by it, the moment God says "*Loose him, and let him go.*" With such a God his servants can boldly say,

"Is there a lamb in all thy fold
I would disdain to feed?
Is there a foe before whose face
I'd fear thy cause to plead?"

G. R.

(The above by Elder Ruston was first published in February, 1939.)

NEWS FROM ELDER GRIFFIN

I would like to tell the people of God what my state of health is at this time (April 11th). I am doing reasonably well to have passed through the trying times of being separated from the saints of God around Baltimore, Welsh Tract, and the Eastern Shore, together with the ordeal of moving a thousand miles. I will never live long enough and eternity will be too short for me to render the praise due the Lord God Almighty and His beloved saints for the kindness shown us in the time from last July until the present. It has been more than a match for my dull understanding of divinity as to how that such mercy is shown to such a sinner. Since I am at such a loss of words to give expression to my feelings, I will just say that Lois and I will remember every act of kindness as long as we have our reason.

As to my present condition, it re-

mains the same as far as the seat of my trouble is concerned. The doctor at Darlington, Maryland, has been able to control in a great measure my tendency to black out, although he did not hold forth any promise of mending the damage already done. I am trying to live quietly and slowly, which is hard on anyone to do that has led an active life. I have not quit the ministry at all, even though I am as dependent on the God of grace and providence as I was the first time in the pulpit. As I am given grace and strength I will still be going forth in His great name, although I do not have any expectation of being able to resume my former laborious tasks. I will, as blessed of God, continue to write.

W. D. G.

(Due to the state of his health, Elder Griffin resigned the care of churches in Maryland and Delaware and moved back to Alabama. The brethren will be glad to read the above from him, and hope his health will soon be greatly improved. His new address is Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Alabama 35555. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

VITAL UNITY

"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (Genesis 2:23)

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26)

Having been requested to write upon the subject embraced in the above Scripture, we shall endeavor to do so with such ability as the Lord may give us. The subject is vast, sublime and of the greatest importance to the Lord's children, though many of his children have failed to see clearly this vital relationship between Christ and his people, so wonderfully set forth in the Scripture at the head of this article. That lack of sight, however, does not make them less the children of God, nor does it make

this point of doctrine less God's eternal truth. The truth of God is an endless chain, so to speak, taking in every point of doctrine, order and practice. Anything, therefore, outside of this chain cannot be connected thereto, nor can anything of the chain be taken from it. It is just as the Lord made it, and will stand as made.

Adam was created and made according to God's purpose and plan, regardless of desire, willingness or objection upon his part. He was "the figure of him that was to come" — Christ. It is perfectly understood that Adam in his creation and formation knew nothing of Christ, hence it was not by choice upon his part that he was the figure of Christ. It should be remembered that the definite article (the) is used in that record of him; not a figure, as one of many, but "the figure." "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God created he him; male and female created he them," "and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." There has been much discussion with reference as to the image of God in which man was created and made, but there seems no room for debate on that subject, as the Scriptures just quoted declare plainly that the union between Adam and Eve was the likeness of God, and in that union, or unity, was Adam, male and female, the likeness of Him that was to come. In their creation they were one, and their name one — "Adam." In formation they were one, male and female, or, in other words, Eve was in Adam; hence one life, making separation between them impossible, either in life or death. Eve being in Adam when the law was given, received that law and was as much accountable to the law as was Adam. When she, therefore, ate of the forbidden fruit she transgressed the law. The unity between Adam and Eve, his wife, was so complete that her sin was his sin, and had not Adam partaken of the fruit personally he would have been responsible for her sin and one with her in the transgression. The

union between Adam and his posterity was such that his sin was their sin, or, in other words, when he transgressed all his children transgressed in him and all were under the same curse.

Adam and Eve were one in creation, one in formation, one in life, one in receiving the law, one in transgression and one in death, hence the figure of Him that was to come. God, the eternal Spirit, had chosen in Christ his people, or bride, unto salvation, before the world began, that they should live with him in glory, rather than in Eden. The choice of God of his people in Christ, thus giving them to Christ in union, to be his bride, made them one. In order that the world be peopled and the choice of God be manifested, the creation of Adam and Eve was necessary. In order that those ordained unto eternal life be saved and become manifestly the sons and daughters of God, sin must enter the world and death by sin. Hence the law was given, temptation came, the law was transgressed, and in consequence the bride, or God's chosen people in Christ, were condemned and the children of wrath, by nature, even as others. These things are all links in that endless chain mentioned already. The unity of Christ and the church (bride) as between Adam and Eve, was so complete, inseparable, that her sin was his sin, though he personally sinned not, and was responsible to the law for her debt. This we have shown in "the figure," that had Adam not partaken of the fruit himself, he would have been responsible for the sin of Eve. The law demanded perfect satisfaction for the transgression. That satisfaction meant perfect obedience to the law, even unto death. Adam transgressed and brought death to his race, or children; Christ was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross, and brought life and immortality to the chosen of God. He was made of a woman and made under the law of sin and death, to redeem them that were under the same law.

In the coming of Christ the love of

God was made manifest, yes, love to sinners, not because they were sinners, but because he loved them in Christ before the world began, and his love changed not when they were dead in trespasses and sins. Inasmuch as the children of God were sinners, the law demanded the life of Christ, the husband. Paul, in speaking of the unity of Christ and the church, calls attention to the union of husband and wife, the two being one, then adds, This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the church. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. At the appointed time of the Father Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him, and that will was that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. Therefore because of the unity of Christ and the church, and in obedience to the law, Jesus died upon the cross, paid the debt his bride owed to both law and justice with his own life, or blood, was buried and arose for their justification, and presented them without spot, blemish, wrinkle or any such thing to God the Father.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was his obligation as the husband of the church, it was the Father's purpose, plan and will. Inasmuch therefore as it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the whole church must answer his question and say, Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and to enter into his glory. The church is the glory of Christ, and in the midst of her he sings praises to God for the gift and for the purpose he purposed in himself before the world was, that through his blood she should be holy and without blame before the Father in love. These glorious matters of redemption were not revealed to Moses, the Israelites and their children, but were secret things known to God in that age of the world. They had the law, and legal things were revealed that they should do all the works of that law, but the redeemed bride has the

glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was because the old covenant did not have and reveal gospel things that the disciples were fools and slow of heart to believe what the Scriptures declared, in prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The term "fools" means without understanding. After saying these things to them, Jesus began with Moses and opened the Scriptures, which had been hid from the beginning, to their understanding. In this he made darkness light, crooked things straight and rough places smooth.

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

(Editorial by Elder H. C. Ker October 15, 1920.)

ORDINATION OF
BROTHER WILLIAM EVERETT
TO THE FULL WORK OF THE MINISTRY
December 13, 1970

A Presbytery was formed of the following Elders: Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder C. N. Bunn, Elder Henry Jones, and Elder Curtis Rains, along with several deacons and the many churches represented.

It was moved that the Presbytery go into conference. Conference was opened with praise and prayer by Elder Curtis Rains. Moved and agreed to call Elder D. B. Stokes as Moderator. Moved and agreed to call Nina Pearson as Clerk.

The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by the deacons of Falls Church. The candidate was questioned by the Presbytery. Elder Rains spoke to the candidate and church of the rough path ahead of him, and where his help must come from. Elder Bunn spoke of his feeling of being elated with the candidate, and had no questions — he was satisfied and prayed God would give him strength and provide a way; may God grant his companion and son courage and faith to be with him in all trials.

Elder Henry Jones had no questions, and felt just as close as at the beginning, and was completely satisfied with the candidate. Elder Stokes said he was satisfied with his preaching, and had two questions to ask him: 1. How do you feel concerning the Eternal Predestination of God over all his creation? The candidate replied that he believed in the absolute

sovereignty of God. 2. Did predestination ever save a sinner? The candidate replied that predestination never saved anyone: the blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing that saves a sinner. Elder Stokes read from Paul's letter to Timothy of the qualifications of a Bishop. He charged the candidate to preach Jesus; visit the sick and afflicted no matter where they are. Elder Stokes spoke to the candidate's wife of the lonely hours ahead and the problems that will face her, and prayed that God would give her strength to endure: May God bless you both to get on your knees, and go forth in life and serve the church of God.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in prayer, praying that God would give him, his companion and son courage to endure all trials in this life.

It was moved and agreed that the Minutes be read, and it was moved and agreed that the Minutes be received as read. It was moved and agreed that the Minutes be turned over to the Falls Church as a permanent record. The candidate was returned to the Falls Church as an Ordained Elder.

Moved and agreed the Presbytery adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER JOHN T. EVERETT

Elder John T. Everett departed this life January 21, 1971. He was ninety-one years old.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in early life, and lived a consistent member thereafter. He was ordained a minister about 1919, and shortly after his ordination he was called to pastor the Antioch Church, which he served as long as he was able. He also pastored several other churches in the South Arkansas Association. He was the nephew of Elder T. Peterson who was well known among the Old Baptists.

He was married four times, and outlived all of his wives. The writer never knew his first two wives. He married Miss Ada Patterson about 1913, and to this union were born four children: J. W., Bernard, Margarete, and one child that did not survive.

Words cannot express the esteem, love, and fellowship the churches of the associations held for him. He was loved by all that knew him in the church or out. He lived to a ripe old age, and we do not mourn for him as those that have no hope. We feel that he has gone to be with his God whom he loved and adored so much.

THEREFORE, Resolved that a copy of this be recorded in the records of the church; and

a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the church while in conference.

E. J. Lambert, Moderator
J. M. Proffitt, Clerk

CHARLIE WILLIAM BURGESS

Charlie William Burgess was born May 6, 1903, and died March 30, 1971.

A kinder, better-hearted man I never knew. Deep are the providences of God wherein Charlie Burgess was born into the world, and afterward made separate from the world with the truth revealed in his heart; and wherein he was joined in holy wedlock to his wife, Sister Iva Carter Burgess, who survives him.

His dear companion, at whose request this is written, has much cause for her grief, and this is not forbidden, yet she has cause also to rejoice in the Lord; and the affectionate brothers and sisters have lost an affectionate brother: A very serious loss this is, but since his name from all eternity was written in the Lamb's Book of Life, he was the Lord's before he was yours. Your every effort to save Charlie from the grave brings to view yet another proof that only God can save.

Charlie Burgess told me on his death bed, "Julius, I'm not afraid." And I saw plainly that dear Charlie Burgess was being favored under the bedewing of the Comforter, as when He comes down into the hearts of his children, to transport them across Jordan to that land of pure delight. His suffering was great but only for a short while. To the family and to the precious Sister who is now his widow, and to the hundreds of Primitive Baptists who deeply mourn his loss, I would say:

May He who tempers the wind to the shorn lambs, remove the burden of grief from our hearts, and enable us to say, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral service was conducted by Elder William Holland, assisted by Elder D. V. Spangler and the writer. The Lord sent several other preachers too; yea, and a large congregation of His saints to weep around the grave.

Our sorrow is all because we loved him.

In sadness,
J. L. Bocock

To the above we would like to add that Charlie Burgess was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Boones Mill, and lived in that vicinity all his life; and his friends were legion. He was a dear friend of ours for more than twenty years and a brother-in-law, having married Sister Wood's sister.

Charlie was deeply taught of the Lord. He loved the church and was always ready to do anything he could for its welfare. He loved to travel among the brethren and attend other meetings. He made lasting friends everywhere he went.

His closest Primitive Baptist meeting was at Little Creek, Franklin County, and he seldom missed a meeting there. There was scarcely a weekend that he and Sister Iva did not attend a meeting somewhere.

His funeral was held at a funeral home in Rocky Mount, Va., and his remains were buried in the Mountain View Burial Park, a short distance from his home.

John D. Wood

EDWARD RALEIGH CARTER

It pleased The Heavenly Master to remove, by death, from our midst our dear brother in Christ, Edward Raleigh Carter, on July 19, 1969.

Brother Carter was born in Scurry County, near Snider, Texas, on October 19, 1890, the son of the late Raleigh and Lou Ella Carter.

The Carters moved to Hunt County near Quinlin, Texas, and there our subject was married to Miss Bertha Williams on February 15, 1928, and to this union one son was born, Oliver Gene.

This little family moved to Dallas, Texas, in August, 1947, where they have made their home to date.

Brother Carter united with the Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, upon confession of faith, and afterward baptism, in the year 1951. He was a faithful member to the end. He loved the church, the doctrine and all they stand for. Could say with the psalmist: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty God hath shined." To know Brother Carter was to love him. He made his friends welcome in his home, and his love, advice, and good wishes shall ever be a memoir to those near and dear to him.

His sight was impaired and in 1949 it completely left him, leaving his last twenty years in a darkened world, except for the sunshine of a Savior's love and the gentle love and care from his dear ones around him. Other complications arose along his life's path which finally led him to the Veteran's Hospital in Dallas, Texas, where he sweetly went to sleep to awaken on the resurrection morning when all of God's children shall meet to be ever together, where no more pain, sorrow, or disappointment shall ever come to mar the blessedness of that Heavenly Home.

Left to mourn the deceased are his wife, Sister Bertha; his son, Oliver Gene; and his wife's sister, Essie; who stood tirelessly by

the bedside administering all that human hands could afford. There are four grandchildren, Keith, James, Rebecca, and Theresa; one sister, Mrs. Mary Harrill of Quinlan, Texas; and one nephew and one niece.

The funeral was conducted in the Saints Rest church building at 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas, with the Dudley M. Hughes Funeral Directors in charge, by the Pastor, W. W. Taylor. Interment was in the cemetery beside the church building in Cash, Texas.

Written by request of Sister Bartha. One copy to go to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; one for the Church Record.

Pearl Lee

IN MEMORY OF
J. GLENMO RICHARDSON

Brother Glenmo Richardson was born February 8, 1914, the son of George T. and Ella Williams Richardson and was taken out of his suffering by death on January 30, 1971.

His immediate kindred to survive him are his wife, Sister Doris Stegall Richardson, two sisters, Mrs. Maria Adams and Mrs. Ruth Burnett. Also two brothers, William Richardson and John Richardson.

Brother Glenmo greatly enjoyed the fellowship of his brethren. Although not physically able to attend the services in his last days he rejoiced in the visits of the church members in his home. We can fully believe his last days were very sweet to his soul and he passed this life giving thanks to the Lord that he had lived to carry out a desire of many years: that of being identified with the militant church. His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Julian R. Williams at Malmaison Church and he was buried at the family cemetery at Callands, Virginia.

As he bore evidence of being one of God's elect, I believe Brother Richardson's soul is in the paradise of God to await that glorious resurrection day when his body and soul will be reunited and he and all the bride of Christ will be presented to the Father to forever praise Him in eternity.

Written by request of
Malmaison Church while
in conference February 6, 1971
Burnell B. Williams/P. W.

BROTHER D. D. HARBOUR

We, the church at Rosemary, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in taking from our midst Brother E. D. Harbour. He was born April 26, 1887, and

departed this life December 5, 1970. He was married to Luddie Boaz January 14, 1922. He left to mourn his passing his wife, Sister Luddie Harbour, one daughter, one son, and four grandchildren.

He joined Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church in September 1962, and was true and faithful member. His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Handy and he was laid to rest in Cedar Wood Cemetery. We feel that our loss is his gain.

Done by order of conference in session at Rosemary Church, Saturday before the first Sunday in March, 1971.

Elder B. D. Handy, Moderator
Eula Johnson, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the Church at Reedy Prong, desire to write a few lines in memory of our dearly beloved sister, Hazel Hynes Dunn. She was born October 25, 1914, and died December 28, 1970. Making her stay on earth 56 years, 2 months and 3 days.

She joined Reedy Prong Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1944, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder Lester E. Lee.

In October, 1955, she was chosen Assistant Clerk of the Church, and then Clerk of the Church in October, 1967, and served faithfully until July, 1970, when she had to enter Cape Fear Valley Hospital for surgery. Sister Hazel was a faithful and true member. Not only was she blessed with a wonderful hope, but she was blessed to comfort those in need of a kind word. Her life was adorned with many graces, being humble, and unassuming. She was well established in the doctrine of grace.

She was the daughter of Mrs. Annie West Dunn of Route 2, Dunn and the late John P. Dunn. Survived by her mother, a brother, Thell Dunn and two sisters, Mrs. Leon Stevens, Jr., and Mrs. Lester E. Lee.

Sister Hazel requested a graveside Memorial Service to be conducted by her nephew, Joseph Boyette, who read some of her favorite scriptures and offered prayer. Her great nephew, Richard Boyette read a poem, "Crossing The Bar." In lieu of flowers, the family suggested contributions be made to the Cancer Fund or to the Duncan Shaw Owen, Inter-Faith Chapel at Cape Fear Valley Hospital.

We desire that a copy of this writing be recorded in the church book, a copy be sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Reedy Prong Church.

Sister Mary Bryan
Sister Addie Lee
Committee

BROTHER JESSE W. WOODRUFF

Brother Jesse Wade Woodruff, son of the late John J. and Molly Daniels Woodruff, was called home by our Heavenly Father, September 16, 1970, after a long illness. Brother Woodruff was blessed by God to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church February 8, 1969. He loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and attended his Church as often as was able. He had been in ill health for a long time, and was blessed by God to be reconciled to his trials and tribulations, looking to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his help. His faith and trust was in Him, and he loved to talk with the brethren about the wonderful way he felt the Lord had dealt with him.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Margaret Jones Woodruff; three brothers, Ennis, Nick D., J. D. Woodruff, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.; three sisters, Mrs. Annie H. Smith, Mrs. J. T. Blanford and Miss Bessie Woodruff, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Funeral services were conducted from the chapel of Johnson Funeral Home, by his Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes, where the many flowers and friends gave evidence of the love that was felt for Brother Woodruff.

He will be greatly missed by all of us who loved him, and especially by his devoted wife and family.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*; one to the family and one for the church as a permanent record.

Done by order of conference November 1970.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

BROTHER GRADY STYLES

Brother Grady Styles, son of Mrs. Martha Wells Styles, was called home by our Heavenly Father August 8, 1970. He was born October 7, 1908, making his stay on earth sixty-two years.

Brother Styles was blessed to unite with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church on October 6, 1968. He loved the church and enjoyed visiting in the homes of the brethren. Though he was not blessed to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church until late in life, he had been searching for something, not knowing what; and in coming to the Falls

Church, he felt his search was over. He was able to attend the church until a few months before his death. We all loved him and he will be missed, but we have a hope that he is resting in the arms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Martha Wells Styles; his wife, Mrs. Kate Hammond Styles; and one sister, Mrs. Frances Jolly, all of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Graveside services were held by Elder D. B. Stokes from the Battleboro Cemetery, where he awaits the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one for the Church as a permanent record.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

ANNIE COMPTON

Sister Annie Compton was born February 4, 1888, and passed from this life in a Lynchburg, Va., hospital February 8, 1971, at the age of eighty-three years. She was the daughter of Ferdinand and Mattie Brumfield; and the widow of George R. Compton, who preceded her in death several years. They made their home at Gretna, Va.

Sister Compton joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church July 25, 1909, and was a faithful member, always concerned about the welfare of her church; and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She went far and near to the meetings and was well known and loved.

She leaves three daughters: Sister Myrtle Shelton and Mrs. Lois Pendergrass, of Gretna, and Mrs. Carrie Brown of Danville, Virginia; also several grandchildren, one sister, Sister Susan Holly, of Danville, and a host of friends.

Her funeral services were held at Springfield Church by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial was in Gretna Burial Park by the side of her husband. Many beautiful flowers and the large congregation spoke of the high esteem in which she was held.

May the Lord reconcile her family to their great loss, together with Springfield Church where she will be missed. We feel she is resting in the paradise of God until the resurrection of all His saints. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Annie Tosh

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1971

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

WAS A SUBSCRIBER
FOR FIFTY YEARS

Box 11

Meadow Grove, Nebraska 68752

Dear Elder Spangler:

My mother, Mrs. Walter Black, has asked me to write a few lines and send my father's obituary to your good paper for publication if you have space.

Z. I. Jones, mother's father, took the *Signs* for probably 50 years before his death in 1952, and my parents have taken it since somewhere in the '30's. We feel it is one of our family papers and the principles are the ones we try to uphold.

My father would read the *Signs* over and over and there are many pencil marks on the front and on the pages where some passage or article especially touched him. He loved the doctrine of predestination and although very few of his friends understood his religion, the huge attendance at his funeral was a wonderful tribute to the respect and love they had for him. This was my first close experience with death and I never realized how kind people were to one another in a small community. The food, cards, calls and memorials were so touching. Certainly it is evident to us of God's working in people of all walks of life and all

denominations for we have lots of different churches here.

Mother is enclosing a check to the paper for you to use as you think best. They subscribed to three different papers and are dividing the memorials equally between them. We feel this would please Dad.

If it be God's will, I hope we meet again in this world. I remember hearing and enjoying you expound the grace and love of God and His Precious Son when in Washington state in 1965, I believe. I also have some recordings of that and other meetings that our dear Brother Ben sent me.

I pray you and your wife are in reasonable health and that you will be given health to carry on. May God's richest blessings be yours.

A sinner,
Lois Cloud

(We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of \$50.00 from Mrs. Myrtle Black in memory of her husband, Walter Black, who was a subscriber to the *Signs* for many years.

Editors)

"HOPE TO THE END"

Dear Brethren:

The salvation of the church all originated in the mind of God before the mountains were brought forth, or ever He had formed the earth and the world: — it is this that comforts them in life, supports them in death, and will constitute their "joy unspeakable," which in that City whose Maker and Builder is God, can never be fully experienced, for it is eternal.

The Lord has provided all of our salvation, and He will continue to apply

it to all for all for whom He died; and none of them shall ever know the extent of His blessings for He is determined to share heaven with them, and to inhabit eternity with them. The blessings of God and the things that God has prepared for his people, can never be fully seen or known for they have no end, and are eternal and unending.

The end which God declared from the beginning has reference to time. The end of time shall come on the last day. Peter writes, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

If we possessed all the grace that God has promised to bring us, we would not need to hope for it, "For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" So when any saint dies his, "flesh shall rest in hope," (Acts 2:26) of the grace that is to be brought unto us when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear.

To be "sober minded" is to know the way home. All therefore who know that Jesus is the Way must be sober.

If any of the saints reach heaven before the last dispensation of the grace of God is "brought unto you" at "the end" (see 1 Peter 1:13) when the Lord shall come to make up His jewels, then, I say, if a single saint was in heaven prior to "the end," then the doctrine of Satan, "Ye shall not surely die" would be so. However, God is true and Satan is a liar. Death is certain and is appointed by Almighty God. The Christian's hope is truly said to save. "For we are saved by hope . . ." However that is experimental only to the saints who are led to hope through sanctification. As the called from death to life, these new creatures are "constrained (forced) by love" to walk the King's highway of holiness; and every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Experimentally, hope becomes the power to save when we brush the dew of Jordan's stormy banks, and our nature shrinks back and

at best just "casts a wishful eye," but the unfailing faith which God has given to us, is ever profitable to cast anchor in the Rock — thus "we are saved by hope." It is under the sovereign leadership of the Spirit that saints are led in the way of sanctification to hope in the Lord.

No man will ever preach a gospel sermon except he preach to Resurrection of the Dead. It is this the entire church is hoping for; it is this that all the dead in Christ are resting in, and waiting for.

Through faith we understand that the inheritance is reserved for the saints, and it is ready to be revealed to them who are kept (by virtue of the power of the prayers of Christ) through faith unto salvation at the last time — the end of days — not before. This is immensely good. Dear dying brethren, how sweet are your prospects! On the last day your sun will rise to set no more: then you will receive a palm of victory and a crown of glory. You, and you only, ought to rejoice, though, if needs be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations. You may be poor naturally: you must be poor spiritually; you may be tired in body and mind: you may be sorrowing, but look up, your redemption draweth nigh.

It is Jesus that was, and is, and is to come: that precious Stone that is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is precious in the valley of humiliation; He is precious on the high mount of communion, and unto you that believe, He is precious. Now reader, if you have passed from death unto life, how came it to pass? Did God find you on your knees doing kingdom work? or did He find you in league with Satan, and in love with sin? Yea, He found us in the depths of death and sin, and but for the fact that His grace is omnipotent we would all have resisted it to our own destruction.

All false spirits advocate work for rest which labor cannot give. No evolutionist can see that every living thing

must die, and the dead things cannot produce life. No conditionalist can see that God is a very present help in trouble.

We all need mercy, brethren, for we all have a nature so vile that we will sometimes hum the tunes of this world which are destined for hell and everlasting burnings. To belittle the power of the blood of Christ is a far worse crime than murder. The blood of Christ is title clear to eternal glory. However, the Lord works in His own way and time.

The time to see glory for the saints of God is at the "last time," when time shall be no more; this the Bible truly and properly calls "the end." Until the end comes Satan will continue to advocate that we will not surely die. The servants of Satan desire an office in which to do their good works. From their office they proclaim, "Pea is not here, only the pod; pea shelled out and went home to God." Not so, false, untrue.

Meantime, the servants of Jesus Christ who desire the Spirit (not an office) in which to worship, (1 Timothy 3:1 is a warning) will continue to defend the glorious doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead. The dead in Christ will come forth in the last day, and they are destined to dwell forever and ever where none of the inhabitants shall ever be heard to say, "I am sick," for the days of their mourning ended when the end came.

Now Jesus "humbled himself to behold the things that are in heaven," for none are "like him." But when He comes to bring grace to us, to fit and prepare us to stand before his face, our hope will end, because there is no prayer for more. There is no hope for more than, "Prepare me gracious God to stand before thy face."

The God of Israel and Zion has never needed anything, or lacked anything, or hoped for anything, and is therefore "satisfied."

To awake with His likeness at "the end" is our hope.

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

"THAT AMAZING GRACE"

Rt. 2
Stamford, Texas 79553

Dear Editors:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription, so am sending \$7.00 for two years and \$3.00 for the Indigent Fund. It is good to read the letters and writings of all brethren and sisters in Christ. May the Lord continue to bless the writers of the *Signs*, and all that are in Christ Jesus.

O what food it is to hear one preach that salvation is of the Lord! That amazing grace! "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." How sweet to the ear of the hungry soul. "Ye shall know them, by their fruits." May we, I mean the elders, be blessed to continue to feed the flock of God, as written in 1 Peter 5th chapter.

He was exhorting the elders to feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly. Not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. So may it please the Lord to continue to bless his ministers to preach Christ the Saviour of his people. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Your brother I hope. "Christ in us the hope of glory."

C. L. Ely

"EVERYTHING IS IN HIS HANDS"

Rt. 2
Kenly, N. C. 27542

Dear Brother Spangler and Editors:

For twenty-seven years April 1st the brethren at Cheeches Church have given me a home. I cannot tell you the comfort, joy, and strength the good Lord has blessed this poor sinner with since; nor what the church has meant to me.

The Lord has seen fit to give me a hope — a dear, blessed hope, even though so very small at times it seems I almost have to hope for a hope. It is precious and sweet to me; and is my life, my all.

Many things have been revealed to me, if not deceived; and the grace of God to this poor sinner has led me to search the scriptures. The comfort I find in the experiences of the prophets of old, and the chosen disciples of Christ, as recorded in Holy Writ, have been my rod and staff to comfort me. How wonderfully comforting when we can witness one with the other! This is an unmerited favor, for of myself I can do nothing: I am a dependent creature; but all things are possible with God.

My life has been mixed with joy and afflictions, but God is a just God and everything is in His hands. Oh! if I could bear my cross willingly as Christ did. I am weak and often falter along the way, and stand in need of grace and mercy all the time. Please remember me as you go to the throne of grace.

I enjoy reading the dear *Signs of the Times*. The articles this year have been especially good and comforting. The Editorial Treasures, both new and old, meant so much to me, and came just when I needed it so much. That seems to be the way things happen to me, dear Christian friends — or should I say, the pattern that has been chosen for me? I have never been cast down so low that help from someone or somewhere didn't lift me up. I believe it to be mighty, wonderful working of God. I know I can never thank Him enough, but do try in my feeble way.

Enclosed you will find a check for ten dollars. Renew my subscription and use the balance for the Indigent Fund.

May God bless you to continue to publish the dear paper for the comfort of God's humble poor.

A little sister saved by grace and grace alone, if saved at all.

Mrs. John Edd Pope

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE
SALISBURY ASSOCIATION
1970

As it has pleased the Lord to gather us together in another annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, and as it has been the custom to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with much fear and trembling, praying from our hearts that it may please our God that something may be written fitting and comforting to the saints of God.

We feel that the God of all grace and mercy is pleased from time to time to comfort his little ones here in this wilderness of woe to feel that though the pathway is not always a smooth one, it teaches us every day that we cannot direct our steps. It also teaches us that we are not our own keepers. We feel that it is a blessing from above when our minds are from time to time lifted above this tabernacle of clay and we are blessed to feel that there is the Eternal Power who created all things and for his pleasure, we are told in his holy word, they are and were created. We feel that being gathered here at this time is in accordance with that which our Eternal God knew and predestinated before the beginning of time for we the Old School Baptist believe in the God of knowledge for one of old has written "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah 46:9, 10) We feel that the scriptures were written

for the Lord's chosen people to confirm them in what they have been made to believe by the indwelling of the spirit of our God. We believe that no one has ever learned the things that we feel to have been taught by the teaching of man but by the grace of God we feel to have been made acquainted with what we are by nature, and in meetings like this feel it to be a joy and comfort to be blessed to sing from our hearts praise to him who has made us acquainted with our sinful nature, for we are told in God's holy word that Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

We feel it to be a blessing of our eternal God when we are blessed to meet together in meetings like this and exchange the handshake of fellowship and love for one another, being made to feel a love for each other, a love that binds our hearts together like as the poet wrote many years ago.

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

We hope to see and be made to feel that love in this meeting, that we may have a season of rejoicing together; for the Apostle Paul said in Philippians, chapter 4, verse 4: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say Rejoice."

We feel that there is rejoicing in our hearts from time to time when we are blessed to think upon him (God) and to feel that he is a just God and doeth all things well. We cannot understand God's ways for his ways are past finding out. We do hope, though, that in this meeting we may be given a mind to feast on heavenly things and that it may please our God to bless all the ones that are called on to speak to us that they may be given words of comfort to our thirsty souls. We believe that man cannot make himself thirsty, that too is the work of God but we believe that God creates a thirst in the hearts of his saints here in this life and then gives them water to drink from that

well that never runs dry. We read from the words of one of the prophets of old, Isaiah chapter 12, verse 2, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." We believe that the prophet was speaking of the present day.

We read in the Bible "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." (St. John 3:27) Therefore believing, as we do, that man cannot preach the Gospel unless he be given from Heaven words to speak and that one cannot hear unless he is given ears to hear, we would pray to our God that in this meeting, the ministers present may be given words fitting to us and that we may be given ears to hear, that we may feast on that Heavenly manna and drink from that well that never runs dry. Amen.

Arthur R. Warren

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT BY SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

We, The Salisbury Association, bow in humble submission to the Holy Will of God in calling from our midst Sisters Mamie Williams and Elizabeth Hall of Salisbury Church, Sister Ida Benson of Little Creek Church and Brother Asa Pilchard of Snow Hill Church; these dear sisters and brothers stood firm in the faith that was delivered to the Saints. They are sadly missed by all.

Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator
William S. Adkins, Clerk

Written by Frank A. Holland

UPON THIS ROCK (Matthew 16:13 through 18)

Down through the years, there seems to have been differences of opinion as to what is the ROCK upon which Jesus in this Scripture, declared He would build His church. Some of our people have said it is the rock of revelation; others have believed it was Christ Him-

self, which belief I held; some have held that it was the man to whom Jesus spoke, Peter.

For quite a while now, I have not felt entirely satisfied with any of these interpretations in their entirety, although I felt there was a good deal of truth in all of them. So I went to the Scriptures with a desire to find anything I could which would throw any light on the matter, and especially regarding this man called Peter. As a result, I hope and believe I have been shown something I had not seen clearly before. It is now my belief that this ROCK is the new creature in the man called PETER, as representative of the new man in every born-again object of God's electing grace, that it is, in Paul's words, CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.

In order to build a better foundation for my belief, let us go just a bit into the background of this man SIMON who was to be called PETER. As far as I have been able to ascertain, the first encounter this man had with Jesus is recorded in John 1:41 through 42: "He (Andrew) first findeth his own brother SIMON and saith unto him 'We have found the Messiah,' which is, being interpreted, the Christ." And he brought him to Jesus and when Jesus beheld him, he said, "Thou art SIMON the son of Jona: thou SHALT BE called CEPHAS, which is by interpretation, a STONE," or rock. The words CEPHAS and PETER are synonomous, Cephas being the Hebrew word for a stone, while Peter comes from the Greek word PETROS, meaning a little rock. It is highly significant that it was not PETER whom Andrew brought to Jesus, it was SIMON; but, said Jesus, "Thou shalt be called CEPHAS" or PETER. Let us bear that in mind as we go along.

When Jesus asked His disciples whom did men say that He, the son of man was, they said, "Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias; and others Jeremias or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye

that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him . . . And I say also unto thee that thou art PETER and UPON THIS ROCK I will build my church," etc. Now, the old SIMON had a new name. We read in Isaiah 62:2, "And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory AND THOU SHALT BE CALLED BY A NEW NAME WHICH THE MOUTH OF THE LORD SHALL NAME." What a beautiful and perfect instance of the new birth is shown here! SIMON was the same old Simon, only now his name is SIMON PETER. The new birth does not change, reform, improve, clean up or make righteous the old man. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again (not reborn), he cannot see the kingdom of God." Also, He says, "That which is born of the FLESH is (not was) flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

When the new birth takes place within the heart of a man or woman, he is forevermore two people, two personalities, totally apart one from the other AND THE BATTLE IS ON. It never ends while we live in this world. Never again will that one be satisfied with the old man whom only a while ago he thought was a pretty good fellow. Never again, I believe, will the truly redeemed of the Lord boast of his good works or plead his cause on that foundation. Never again will he consider himself better or superior to the least of God's children. Always he will be longing and striving to be more like his blessed Lord, yet so very aware of the old man whom only the Lord can put in his place.

If ever there was a paradoxical figure, a "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," it was this man SIMON PETER. We see PETER trying to defend his Lord by smiting the ear of the high priest's servant with his sword; a little later we see SIMON cursing and swearing, "I know not the man." We see PETER in true sincerity and adoration, declar-

ing that although all men forsake Jesus, yet he would not; just a while later while Jesus agonized ALONE in Gethsemane, SIMON peacefully slept. One moment PETER was bold and fearless, the next SIMON was cringing with fear like a trapped animal. So SIMON DID NOT BECOME PETER! PETER was not a converted and polished Simon and all his life he was deeply aware of the fact that he was two men. It is very heartwarming and significant that he starts his second epistle, his very last letter to all of us, shortly before his death, "SIMON PETER, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that hath obtained like precious faith," etc.

When PETER, adoring his precious Master, declared that though all men forsake Him, yet he would not, Jesus, knowing him so well, said unto him, "SIMON, SIMON (not PETER) Satan hath desired thee that he might sift thee as wheat *but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.*" Jesus, who knows the thoughts and intents of every heart, knew that PETER loved Him devotedly, regardless of what the old SIMON said or did, and He was compassionate, loving and tender with him. He knew that PETER went out and wept bitterly after his base denial, and after His resurrection, Jesus's very first special message of love was to that erring one: "Go tell my disciples AND PETER that He goeth before you into Galilee." Those immortal words will ever comfort and sustain the hearts of all who mourn for sin!

On another occasion, when so many turned back from following Jesus, He asked His disciples almost wistfully, "Will ye also go away?" PETER answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go, Thou hast the words of eternal life." I expect he little thought how those very words would be the cry of untold millions down through the ages when burdened with sin and guilt, and no place to go but to Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

Brethren, have you ever known any-

one like this man SIMON PETER? I have and I do! The one person I know best in all the world is so much of the time thinking, saying and doing things which cause the new creature in her to grieve and groan. For a long time, I was confounded and perplexed by the verse of Scripture found in 1st John 5:18, "For we know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." It troubled me because, if this were true as I then interpreted it, I could not possibly be born of God, for I knew that I was and felt I always would be a sinner; yet I felt deep in my heart that the Lord had drawn me to Him with no effort on my part, made me to love Him and had spoken to me the words of eternal life. But the day came when the Lord showed me that the new creature, born of God, did not sin; it was my old self who did the sinning.

So, it seems perfectly clear to me now that this ROCK upon which Christ is building His Church is not Himself alone, not His elect alone, but Him IN His elect, the bridegroom and the bride. Some may and I expect will disagree and some may think it very strange that I did not see it all the time, but God reveals to us what He would have us understand, in His own time and way.

My love to all who love our Great God and who are "*Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,*"

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Mermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

ARTICLE BY
THE LATE ELDER F. W. KEENE

"*And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.*" (Genesis 32:24)

The life of Jacob is most interesting and instructive. His pathway, amidst the providence of his God, was a succession of changing scenes, wherein he proved the faithfulness and compassion

of the Lord. The future scenes of our lives are hidden from our view. We know not if the dark or bright shall be our lot; if that wherein our soul's delight be best or not. Today our portion may be in paths of pleasantness, tomorrow the storm may overwhelm us. Says Job, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came." (Job 3:26) This was God-sent trouble, else it never could have touched Job.

All the vicissitudes of our lives are in the hands of our God, who apporions to each one according to the good pleasure of his will.

This chapter from which our subject is taken gives us a glimpse of some of the varied scenes which God's providence accomplished in the life of Jacob. Having parted with Laban, his father-in-law, "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of the place Mahanian."

This day had a gladsome beginning for Jacob. God's host escorting him on his way. "Are not the angels all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them."

Jacob forthwith sends messengers before him unto Esau, his brother, to acquaint him of his coming. "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, we came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed."

The day dawned with every encouraging prospect, and now dense clouds are gathering, and before the night enfolds the earth in its dark mantle Jacob is in trouble indeed. He exhausts all his wits contriving for the safety of his family, but in all his troubles he is graciously helped to pour forth his distresses unto the Lord.

"And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father

Isaac, the Lord which saith unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saith, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."

"Jacob was left alone." His family and all that he has have passed over the brook Jabbok, and now in the darkness of the night there remains the solitary one.

I suppose he felt he could not pass over with the rest of the company, he could not lodge with them that night. In the deep distresses of his soul he chose to be separate from all earthly intercourse.

It is not uncommon to those who fear the Lord to feel that their peculiar case separates them from their former companions, and beneath the chastenings of the Almighty the child of God "sitteth alone, and keepeth silence." (Lam. 3:28) He feels unfit to associate with the family of God.

Isolated by temptations, distresses or guilt from all the kindred, he spends the night in pensive disquietude. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness, I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop."

"Jacob was left alone." There was no friendly one to whom he could appeal for help, and like David when in the cave Addullum he could say, "I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."

Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, his cogitations troubled him. How tossed to and fro was his soul!

What will the morning bring forth? Truly we know not what shall be on the morrow. Will it be dark or bright?

All now looks dark: Esau and four hundred men are coming to meet him. He remembers his brother's threats to kill him. (Gen. 27:41) He remembers how because of Esau's anger he fled from him to Padanaram. His conscience accuses him of his guiltiness in supplanting his brother, the deception he practiced upon his father Isaac, and now he cries out, "Deliver me I pray thee from the hand of my brother Esau: for I fear him." It was night.

"'Twas in the night when troubles came
I sought my God for thee,
But found no refuge in that name
That once supported me."

There was darkness without, of that Jacob was not afraid, for often times in the darkness of the night he had kept watch over his flocks, and sleep departed from his eyes. (Gen. 31:40) But there was a night felt within. His soul was laid in darkness in the deeps. His fears and unbelief, the remembrance of his sins, the accusations of Satan all combined to make this night the hour of darkness to Jacob left alone.

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it," (Jer. 30:7) Was Jacob also for a little while left alone by the Lord? Did God hide his face from him? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

Jacob was left alone, but not for long. In the shades of the night there cometh one that layeth his hands on the distressed solitary one, and or ever he is aware, Jacob is in his grasp, and this one begins to wrestle with him.

"There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Is it Esau that has stealthily approached in

the darkness that now has Jacob in his grasp? Once he struggled with his brother (Gen. 25:22-23), and Jacob was the stronger. No, it is not Esau, it is the angel of the Lord in human appearance. (Hosea 12:4)

This was not, as some have erroneously taught, the pre-existing manhood of Christ the Son of God. For the manhood of Christ was the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, which when the fullness of the time was come (Gal. 4:4) was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and she by the power of the Highest overshadowing her was the mother of the manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is far better to abide by the clear testimony of the Bible concerning the manhood of Christ then by a perversion of the Scriptures to build up a fanciful theory of an everlasting pre-existing manhood. The angel said unto Mary, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus." The Virgin Mary was Christ's Mother according to the flesh. "He sucked the breasts of his mother." (Psalm 22:9-10) "When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," and this time was, "In those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed; and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria," (Luke 2:1-2) How explicitly stated.

But let us return to the wrestlers. The man took hold of Jacob, then Jacob took hold of him.

We never take hold of God, we never wrestle with the Lord until he takes hold and wrestles with us. We never come to the Lord except he draws us. (John 6:44) We love him, but it is because he first loved us. (John 4:19) We are apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12) Then we reach forth to apprehend the things which are eternal. We are arrested by the reigning grace of God, and the result of this grace working in us is that we lay hold

on God, on Christ, on eternal life, and by a divine power we wrestle by faith and love, with prayers and tears until the blessedness of Christ is imparted to us.

The Lord wrestles with his people to bring them down in the dust. He overthrows Jacob, and raises him up Israel. He is humbled in the dust, a poor, sinful, unworthy worm, but is so marvelously strengthened by the blessing of God who wrestled with him, that he arises strong in the Lord and the power of his might as "a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff." "I was brought low and he helped me."

There are times when the Lord has a controversy with his people. (Hosea 12:2) There are seasons for trial of our faith; he pleads with his people. (Micah 6:1-2) Yes, in various ways the Lord wrestles with his people; by his providence they find themselves in straits, in afflictions and temptations.

The Scriptures afford us records of such wrestlings. Paul had such a wrestling (2 Cor. 12:1-10) Moses also. What a wrestler he was for the tribes of Israel. (Exod. 32)

The Lord wrestled with Job, and as he approached him said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." And when Job was abased, and cast to the earth he answered the Lord, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Again the Lord challenged him, and took hold of him. (Job 40:3-7) And again, Job is prostrated, and he answered the Lord and said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 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."

As the Lord wrestles with his people, and bringeth them low, they are enabled to lay hold upon his promises, to plead with the Lord his own immutability, and the honor of his name. This is a divine miracle that a sinful creature should wrestle with the Lord. A miracle of God's own invincible grace in the heart of a poor sinner.

Draw near and look with sacred eyes at Jeremiah wrestling in prayer with God, "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? Hath thy soul loathed Zion? Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We look for peace, and there is no good; and for a time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us." (Jer. 14:19-21)

When the Syro-Phenician woman came to Christ in behalf of her daughter, he wrestled with her, and she wrestled with him. First, he answered her not a word, then again he answered, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she still clings yet the more to him, and worshipped him, saying "Lord help me." But Jesus replied, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Is she not now cast from him, overthrown, a dog in the dust? But like Jacob she wrestles still, she clings to Jesus still, and her faith is saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me; and she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the Master's table." She prevailed, and Jesus blessed her there, and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt, and her daughter was made whole from that very hour." (Matt. 15:22)

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in deepest straits;
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

(To be continued)

Elders W. D. Griffin and Brock, from Fayette, Ala. will preach at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Friday, July the 9th, at 7:30 p. m.

The annual meeting held the fourth of July each year at Pine Creek Church, five miles east of Floyd Court House, Virginia, just off Rt. 221, will be held Monday, July the 5th, this year. Service to begin at 10:30 a. m.

ALL DAY MEETING
AT SLATE HILL, N. Y.

An all day meeting of Gospel preaching is appointed to be held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Slate Hill, N. Y. on the first Saturday in August.

All lovers of gospel preaching are invited. Lunch will be served.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred forty-sixth annual session of the *Pigg River District Association* will be held, the Lord willing, in the Franklin County High School Auditorium, Rocky Mount, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August and two days following — July 30, 31, and August 1, 1971. Sandy Level is the host church.

Those coming from the north on Highway 220, turn right on Route 40, and the school house is on the left about one-half mile. Those coming from the south will turn left on Route 40.

All correspondents and lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

Leonard J. Brammer, Pastor
John D. Wood, Assn. Clerk

WE SHOULD LET OUR LIGHT
SHINE BEFORE MEN

Elder F. P. Branscome
Dear Brother:

One of the brethren has requested me to write for the *Messenger of Truth* concerning our people using intoxicating drinks. We should let our light shine before men that others, seeing our good

works, should glorify our Father which is in heaven. We should be examples to the flock, not only in refraining from the use of intoxicating drinks, but we should be men of veracity, so much so that our words would not be questioned. When this is the case we glorify our Father which is in heaven. We are commanded to let brotherly love continue. The way to let it continue is to walk orderly before God. I contend that the church loves me as much as I deserve. Whenever we see Jesus in others then we love them. We have no control over this love, for it is involuntary. John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" We are his by birth, and shall also be his by adoption. Adoption has reference to the body.

It is said, "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." The body is not now, manifestly, redeemed. But yet the Spirit that is within us keeps our body under, lest, after we have preached to others, we ourselves should be castaways. The salt then has lost its savor and is fit for nothing, but to be trodden under the feet of men. When we love God we love our brethren also; and why? It is because we see the image of Jesus in them. Why is it our love is set more on some than on others? It is because we see more of Jesus in some than in others.

We should exhort to love and to good works, and not to love in word only but in deed and in truth: for it is said, "Behold, how they love one another!" "Perfect love casteth out fear." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And this is the way the love is fulfilled in us. Then we are justified from all things which we could not be by the law of Moses. Jesus was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. Justification came because of the

raising up of Jesus from the dead. So we are interested, not only in the delivering up of Jesus unto death, but in his resurrection as well. Jesus is yet the resurrection, which will continue through time, and this is the reason why we are justified. Justification is the product of God's love being shed abroad and in our heart. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Jesus): for it is said, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he (Jesus) is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Brother Branscome, may the Lord restore you to health again.

Yours in hope,
Asa D. Shortt

(The above appeared in *The Messenger of Truth* of April, 1913, and is published by request.)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The sixty-fifth session of the *Upper Country Line Association* will be held July 17, 18, and 19, 1971, (Saturday, Sunday and Monday the third week-end) with Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church, at the Dan River Church.

Dan River Church is centrally located between Eden, N. C. and Danville, Va. on Highway 700, approximately 12 miles southeast of Eden and 11 miles southwest of Danville, in Rockingham County, N. C.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren and friends of our faith and order to visit with us.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Staunton River Association* is appointed to be held with Mt. Ararat Church July 9, 10, 11, 1971, the second Sunday, Friday and Saturday before.

All travelers should proceed to Danville, Va. and turn on to the Mt. Cross Road off Highway 58. The Meeting House is located on State Road 750 about 6 miles west of Danville.

All of our correspondents and lovers of the truth are urged to meet with us. We especially invite the ministers of our sister associations.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

Danville, Virginia

July, 1971

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BUSINESS OFFICE

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The Pleasant Grove Church, Naches, Washington, has changed their meeting time from the second Sunday in each month, to the fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 a. m. They meet at the home of Sister Daisy Baker.

E. J. Attebery, Pastor

Marguerite Simpson, Clerk

1306 Fairview Ave.

Yakima, Wash. 98901

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To April 1, 1971)

George F. Benson, Del.....	\$ 3.00
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EDITORIAL

CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

We are about ready to start traveling so that we may attend the Pigg River Association, where we hope to join with the brethren in the worship of our God; and we are thinking of what a blessed privilege it is to want to be with the brethren, and what a privilege it is to be able to be with them. For many years we have had this pleasure, and many have been the enjoyable seasons.

Our thoughts being turned to the subject of associations, we feel to give some of our reflections concerning them. There is no doubt but that the Lord's people have always loved their assemblings. We read in Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Those who brought the brethren together in various places in church organizations, as given in the New Testament, were careful that the churches were constituted of believers in the Lord. Their doctrine was the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles; and this doctrine included faith, order and discipline: for all these make up the "doc-

trine of God our Saviour." These things were "set in order" by the Apostles. By personal visits and epistles, the Apostles instructed the brethren what the doctrine was. When any turned away from these things, they perverted the doctrine; then the Apostles reprovved them, and admonished them to continue in the things they had learned, and to mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine; and avoid them. (Romans 16:17) We believe that there was perfect direction of the Spirit in all that was delivered by the writers in the New Testament, so that there has never been need for additional instruction in order to maintain gospel churches. The doctrine is there: If any question of faith should come up, it is there; if any question of order, it is there; if any question of discipline, it is there.

The Apostles of the Lord did not continue to live, but that which they were empowered to deliver to the churches yet lives with us with as much authority as when they personally delivered it. We hear the Apostle Paul saying to Timothy, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." And Peter, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

Each church was separate and distinct in her organization: her members were bound together in the things of the gospel as an independent body, subject only to the commandments given by their great Head. She was then, and is now to look well to the guidance of the Spirit in all things, as given in the record of their Saviour and the epistles of his Apostles; and which now comprise the New Testament. She is to acknowledge no other authority for anything, but is to maintain these things

faithfully. Jesus instructed his Apostles as follows: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." There is no authority for leaving off or adding anything whatsoever.

And, while each church was separate in her own organization and government, there was, and is now, an inseparable union between them: They have the same Lord, the same faith, and the same baptism. As it is written in the Acts, "As they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." As they had the same faith, and "common salvation," they had a deep interest in each other's welfare, and there was much communication between them. We read in the Acts, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren than came shewed or spoke any harm of thee." To the Corinthians Paul wrote that he desired Apollos to come to them with the brethren, and said, "All the brethren greet you." And Paul commended the Thessalonian brethren for their love toward all the brethren of Macedonia. To the Corinthians again he wrote, "Whether any inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you; or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." And we have the accounts of the contributions sent for the poor of the flock.

These associations together continued among the churches; and then there was a gradual assuming of certain authority on the part of some who were associated together during and second and succeeding centuries, to the extent that their associations together became legislative as well as judicial bodies. These, it is needless to say, were those who were departed from the faith and rule of the gospel, and corrupted to such a degree that they were no longer churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be understood, however, that the

apostolic churches maintained communication and association together for their mutual comfort and for the worship of God, either by letter or personal visits.

We believe, therefore, that associations of churches together within a conveniently located territory is proper, and that there is nothing wrong with their being thus associated. But care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any legislative power over the individual churches composing the body: for all the laws or commands to which the churches are subject were long since laid down for them; and care must be had that no association as a body ever assumes any judiciary power over the churches composing the body: for the right and duty to maintain such laws or commands is entirely in the power of the churches themselves.

This is a particular point which all brethren and churches should always bear in mind, for, otherwise, there is a departure from the old order of things. Any body organized as an association of churches is a creature of the churches; and the churches have no right ever to place authority in the association to assume any sort of power over them. If there is a departure in this, the fault is in the brethren composing the churches, for the churches are composed of the brethren. The churches composing the Pigg River Association when it was formed in 1825, made this statement, "This association assumes no legislative jurisdiction over the churches but acts merely as an advisory council. When a church wants its assistance she must make her wishes known either by query or request, and, if not deemed unreasonable, the association will pay respectful attention to it."

It is right, of course, for an association of churches to have a moderator and a clerk: the moderator to preserve the decorum which the association deems necessary and has adopted; and the clerk to record the proceedings of

the body. This is the sole duty of these officers. They are not in any sense superior officers with some kind of authority over brethren, but rather, they are but servants of the brethren in their associated capacity. They have individual rights as any other of the brethren, but no more. We remember an old elder who had been moderator of an association for many years, said, when asked to what he contributed his success as a moderator, and was held in high esteem by the brethren, "I have always let the brethren rule themselves."

An association is not a continuing body. That is, there is no association except when the body is in session. These officers cannot speak for the association: the churches through their messengers do all the speaking.

It is also right, of course, that individual churches (or brethren) consult with each other if they have some difficulty on which they feel to need some counsel. An association of churches may, if asked, give counsel to one of her churches; and, if such church should refuse to heed the counsel in matters affecting the fellowship of brethren, and decides to maintain her own ideas of what is right and wrong to the disturbance of the sister churches, then the association of churches may refuse to recognize such church in order, and discontinue their fellowship and association with that church until such time that she sets herself in order. It is regrettable that this action should ever have to be taken, but it is necessary if such circumstances arise. Certainly all other churches and brethren should recognize and heed any just and proper action taken by a church, or any just and proper action taken by an association of churches. Failure to do this has given rise to those who call themselves Old School or Primitive Baptists, but whose faith and order is different from those whom they have left.

The main purpose of churches meeting together in an associated capacity is for the worship of God in singing,

prayer and preaching. It gives opportunity for brethren to meet brethren whom they would seldom if ever see; and it gives opportunity often to hear elders from a distance preach whom we would seldom if ever see or hear. It is good to meet together and learn how our brethren are getting along, and join in the worship of the true and living God.

These are some of the thoughts we had while contemplating our visit with the brethren, and some of the things we feel make for good order. We pass them on to our brethren.

J. D. W.

(The above is re-published from the October, 1953, *Signs*, and continues to express our thoughts on churches and associations.

— J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

SANCTIFICATION

Perhaps no part of the great work of the salvation of Adam sinners is more complex and involves more profound mystery than does the application of the work of grace to the needs of the individual, and the bringing him into the experimental knowledge of its virtues. So numerous and varied and unnatural are these experiences that the expressions employed by the Holy Spirit to describe them are such as could apply only to the work of God, which they are declared to be: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." — Psalms 102:18. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is called a deliverance from the power of darkness, and a translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son: a baptism

into the death of Christ, and a rising to walk in newness of life; being taught of God; writing his law in the hearts of men, and putting it in their mind; making them his sons and daughters. All of these expressions are descriptive of the work of grace as it experimentally affects sinners whom God eternally predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; whom Christ at the appointed time was made under the law to redeem, and did redeem from all iniquity.

The purpose of God to save, and the work of Christ in redeeming, justifying and atoning for sinners, did not in any way affect the manner of life or conduct of those for whom all this was done. While it indeed was a work of grace, and performed a definite service for all for whom it was wrought; but it was done outside of them, and independent of and entirely detached from any will or choice of their own, or forseen merit or worthiness in themselves considered. It was theirs only by the will and choice of God, the obedience, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, and was purely a gift of grace, which was yet to be translated into the experience of each heir of the promised salvation.

Thus we see there are three phases of this great work of the salvation of sinners, all of which are by sovereign grace: *First*, the purpose and will of the Father to save, and the settlement of every detail of the plan, even to the choosing and naming the individual beneficiaries in that purpose and will before any creature of God had been given being. *Second*, the work in time of Christ, the Son, in redeeming, justifying, reconciling, adopting and pardoning those chosen by the Father and given to the Son; which he did when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. (Isaiah 63:3) *Third*, the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing in the hearts and translating into the lives of men "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (1

Cor. 2:7), by taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us. (John 16:15) This last mentioned phase of salvation is experimental, and terminates in the practice of godliness in the fruit of electing love manifested through reigning grace, and is in no sense conditioned upon the merit or performance of the one who receives it. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of God." (2 Thess. 2:13, 14)

The primary aim in this article is to treat this last mentioned phase of salvation, designated in the sacred word as "sanctification," and as it is also mentioned in the quotation above. Sanctification may be defined as that work of the Holy Spirit in man which conforms him to the image of the Son of God, and from which all acceptable duties naturally flow, and which are but the necessary expressions of that divine principle of love shed abroad in the heart. Sanctification and justification differ in these respects: justification respects the person in a legal sense, is a single act of grace, and terminates in a relative change; sanctification regards him in a physical sense, is a continued work of grace, and terminates in a real change, first, in feelings, habits and actions, and finally of the whole of his being from mortal to immortal and from the glory of the terrestrial to the glory of the celestial. The former is by a righteousness without us, the latter by a holiness wrought within us. Justification deprives sin of its damning power, sanctification of its reigning power.

The various expressions in Holy Writ, such as "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;" "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses

and sins;" "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness;" and many kindred expressions are descriptive of that change which is being wrought in man by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to fit him for the service of God, by bringing him into spritual union with Christ. Until this work of the Spirit is begun in him he is the servant of sin and free from righteousness. (Rom. 6:20) But as he is experimentally made free from sin he becomes the servant of righteousness, the servant of God, and has his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Rom. 6:18, 22) Notice the apostle here does not afford us the slightest ground to conclude that the man, who is first the servant of sin, is not the same man who is made free from sin and becomes the servant of God and of righteousness. He is the same man, the man who sinned and whom Christ purchased the freedom of, both soul and body, and sent the Holy Spirit to open the prison doors and set the prisoner free. Jesus says he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.

The terms "old man" and "new man," "outer man" and "inner man," as applied to God's children, are descriptive of the mental and physical activities of the Adam man as he is led and influenced by his human nature and life derived from his earthy head, Adam; or by his divine nature and life derived from Christ, his spiritual head. It is not intended to set forth two separate and distinct men, but rather one man with two lives and natures, the activities of which are ever in conflict, and therefore a perpetual warfare is being waged in the person of every child of God. Paul says, "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." And then cries out, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And adds, "I thank God through Jesus

Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:23-25)

To make my understanding of this point clear, let me suggest that Christ, during his continuance in this world under the law, was in all things like unto his brethren, the children of God. He united in his person two lives and natures, a human and a divine, which constituted him the Christ, and made him equal with both God and man. He was God before he came into the world, but became man by his incarnation. This was necessary that he might be the Mediator between God and man: he must not only know the things of God as God knows them, but he must also know the things of man as man knows them; his mission lay along this line. He lived in perfect conformity to each of these lives and natures. Every natural act he performed was in perfect obedience to the law of his human nature, and likewise every spiritual act was the fruit of his divine nature. But Christ's human nature was not corrupted by sin, as is the nature of his people, whom he came to redeem, though he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. (Rom. 8:3) So it is with the children of God: they possess a human life and nature which proceeded from Adam, and they possess eternal life and a divine nature as the gift of grace through Christ. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." (John 10:28)

In this human relationship to his brethren and divine relationship to his Father, Christ did all that law and justice required to present his brethren faultless before his Father's glory. In him they were redeemed, justified, sanctified and made clean and holy, yet in themselves, before they were called, were unclean and unholy, both in their lives and conversation. But by powerful reigning grace through sanctification of the Holy Spirit, they are called unto the fellowship of God's Son: that

is, equality in all he has done and inherits. By his Spirit he dwells in them and makes them partake of his divine nature; they are made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. They are not only called by grace unto the fellowship of the saints and church on earth, but unto the fellowship of the Son and into spiritual union with him in his holiness, and shall share his grace and glory. In this grace and holiness they are confirmed by God unto the end, so they shall be blameless when their Lord comes again. Their own imperfections and imperfect acts cannot so stain and corrupt the works of grace wrought in them and performed by them under its reigning power as to attach blame to the actor, nor as viewed in fellowship with Christ, from whom the virtue, by which they are confirmed, is derived. (1 Cor. 1:4-9)

Christ gave himself without spot unto God as the redemption price for his brethren. He purchased them and brought them into union with himself. Both their body and spirit are his, not only by creation, but by the Father's gift of both unto him, by his espousal of their whole persons unto himself, and by his redeeming them from death and ransoming them from the grave. (Hosea 13:14) From the spiritual union of Christ with his children all of the joys of salvation flow, and it will finally bring them into the full blaze of God's glory in the heaven of eternal delights; but the joys of salvation make up only a small portion of the experience of the children of God as they travel through this world, in which they are warned by the Savior they shall have tribulation. Hence no treatise on the experimental phase of this subject can be complete unless it takes into consideration that relationship to Christ in which the major portion of their experience is found. This is that relationship which was established when Christ assumed the human nature, was made

in all things like unto his brethren and became us under the law. In this relation he became their Elder Brother, and they his brethren: "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11) This was a physical union and preceded the spiritual union, and paved the way for it to be consummated; for Christ must be made to be sin for us before we could be made the righteousness of God in him. Neither could Christ become the author of eternal salvation to his people until he was made perfect through suffering. (Heb. 5:8, 9) The suffering and death of Christ in our flesh is what made it possible for him to bring us to God. (1 Peter 3:15)

Those who are called unto the fellowship of the Son of God are not only called unto the fellowship of his holiness and joys, but are called also unto the fellowship of his sufferings and death; and as all of his sufferings and his death were in the flesh, so must his children experience in their flesh his sufferings and death, and that, too, before they can share his joys. Jesus, 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; and his children are told if they suffer with him they shall also reign with him. If Christ as the representative of his children could not bring them to God without suffering in their flesh, which he assumed, neither does the Holy Spirit bring them to God experimentally without them experiencing in the flesh the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. With these unions definitely established, the children of God are called upon to "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit affects the persons of the saints, both spirit and body, and lays the obligation upon them to glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits, which are God's. (1 Cor. 6:20) This cannot be done except they are led by the Spirit of God; and "as many as

are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They glorify God in their body when they present their body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service: and be not conformed to this world. (Rom. 12:1, 2) By punctually attending public worship, by maintaining a becoming course of behavior, both in conversation and in actions, by bestowing freely, cheerfully and generously of time, strength, thought, labor and substance for the cause and honor of God; by enduring with patience hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and suffering for his name's sake; by filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh for his body's sake, which is the church. (Col. 1:24) By bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. 3:10, 11)

As the child of God is led by the Spirit into the performance of these duties and this service, he not only glorifies God in his body, but the life of Christ is also made manifest in his mortal flesh, and he is thereby owned a child of God, and enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge by his grace, and the testimony of Christ is confirmed in him, which causes him to patiently wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 1:5-7) God is glorified in the spirit when the child of God is led by the Spirit to set his affections upon things which are above and not on things on the earth; when he is led to meditate upon the manifold mercies and goodness of God, and joy in God through Christ; when he is brought to the footstool of mercy, and is given faith to resign all to God's will, feeling as did Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" when he can lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race set before him, looking to Jesus for every supply of faith and every other grace; when he can count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations; when he can glory in tribulations, and can accent cheer-

fully the trial of his faith, though it be tried in the fire; and can receive with thanksgiving the spoiling of his goods.

As the child of God is led to glorify God in his body and in his spirit in his varied physical and mental service, all of which is spiritual, because he is led by the Spirit in their performance, he not only becomes experimentally acquainted with the sufferings of Jesus, but also experiences the power of his resurrection. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. 1:5 The sufferings of Christ could abound only in the bodies of his saints, for all his sufferings were in the flesh; and the abounding of the sufferings of Christ in us is what we understand the Savior meant when he said, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you." The life of Christ is only made manifest in those who are delivered unto death; who bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus in their body. At the very time and place, dear child of God, where you experience the dying of the Lord Jesus you also experience the manifest presence of the life of Jesus. This all transpires in your mortal flesh. No one can experience the victory over death until they first experience death, therefore Jesus brings all of his children in their experience to his cross, and makes them drink of the cup which he drank of, and baptizes them with the baptism with which he was baptized; then by the power of an endless life, which is Christ in them a quickening Spirit, he quickens their mortal bodies and raises them up to walk in the newness of life. This is not done just a single time, this is the daily experience of his children. Paul said, I die daily. When you present your body a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, the life of Christ is at the same time made manifest in your mortal flesh, for it is only by the life of Christ within you, taking control of your mind and thereby directing the actions of the body, that you would ever present your body as a sacrifice of any

kind, and it is certain that it could not be presented a *living sacrifice acceptable unto God*, without the life of Christ both moved you in the service and sanctified the sacrifice. God accepts nothing from any except as they are in Christ: "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." — Eph. 1:6. Out of him there is no acceptance of any person or service. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." — Gal. 2:20

We are not to understand that the Paul which was crucified with Christ was destroyed. He survived that experience daily, but it was done that the body of sin might be destroyed (not the sinful body), that henceforth he should not serve sin. (Rom. 6:6) It is the "old man," the man in his relation to Adam, who is crucified with Christ, and by virtue of Christ being crucified in the same relation, and Paul's crucifixion being included in the crucifixion of Christ, so also was Paul's living included in Christ's living, for He said, Because I live you shall live also. As certain as it is that the same Christ that was crucified is the Christ who lived afterward, so certain it is the same Paul who was crucified with Christ lives afterward. Not by virtue of the Adam life, which only leads to death, but by virtue of the Christ life being in him, which he has as a grace gift, and which he lives by faith. When the "old man" is crucified with Christ experimentally, the body of sin is destroyed and he is freed from sin: "For he that is dead is freed from sin." — Rom. 6:7

In this experience the child of God drinks of the cup of suffering which Jesus drank of and is baptized with the baptism of death with which he was baptized, and by faith is given to view the sufferings and death of Christ as the destruction of his sins, and he is comforted in the assurance that his

warfare is accomplished, his iniquity is pardoned, for he hath received at the Lord's hands double for all his sins. They are led to look upon him whom they have pierced, and believe "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." "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Both the dying and living of the people of God are experienced in the fellowship and union with Christ. This fellowship and union can never be dissolved. The Spirit of sanctification does not destroy the inbeing of sin in the children of God in this life, but it does take possession of them and frees them from the bondage of sin, and leads them into the experimental knowledge of those things which the Savior endured in his suffering and death for them, and a foretaste of the joys that they are to have through him. It does purge their conscience from dead works to serve the living God; it does call them away from the practice of sin, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this world; it does subdue and restrain the activities of our human nature, but does not destroy it; it does work in the child of God to will and to do of God's good pleasure, even when he cannot find how to perform that which is good; it does lead him in the paths of righteousness for Christ's sake. But it is equally true that when he would do good, evil is present, and the good that he would he does not, and the evil that he would not that he does. And so the conflict goes on in the experience of the children of God throughout this life, as it did with their Elder Brother until the curtain of mortal death was let down and closed the scene.

All the way they have been led has been through the valley where the shadows of death have constantly fallen across their pathway; and it has been a journey of trusting and doubting, of

hope and despair, of courage and fear, of being set on high from their afflictions only to be cast down into the pit of mire where there is no standing. But their Elder Brother, whose right it is to receive the double portion, has preceded them in the conflict with death, has met and conquered death, has run through a troop and leaped over a wall; still in physical and spiritual union with his brethren, the children of God, and having gained the victory he gives it to them. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It was through death that Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14, 15)

Christ has brought you, dear child of God, through many conflicts and deliverances by the Holy Spirit, leading you into the experience of Christ's sufferings and death in this life; but when you are brought to experience mortal death, by virtue of the victory which Christ gained, who was representing you, and with whom you are in union, which neither death nor life can dissolve, you also are given the victory through Christ, and you will as certainly be made to experience the passing through death in your body and in your spirit, which are God's, as it is certain that Christ, your Elder Brother, passed through death in his body. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." — Rom. 6:5 This is the victory which God has given you through Christ, the crowning work of salvation by grace. The Spirit will in the resurrection of the purchased possession complete its work of sanctification by changing our vile bodies and fashioning them like unto Christ's glorious body, clothed with immortality, made incorruptible, swallowed up of life, and made, not a spirit, but spiritual; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

J. R. Hardy
Dallas, Texas

(The above by the late Elder J. R. Hardy is taken from the *Signs* of August, 1939.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ELMA LOU SIMPSON

Sister Elma Lou Simpson was called from our midst March 20, 1971, at the age of seventy-two years; was born May 12, 1898. She united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church June 8, 1940, and was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend.

She was the daughter of Joel and Nancy Jane Simpson, who were also members of the Primitive Baptists. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Woodie Barbour, with whom she made her home; and one brother, David Simpson of Gretna, Va., and a host of relatives and friends. She was well known and loved, and always welcomed her church members and friends in her home. She remarked to her sister a few days before, if she could go to Springfield on Sunday she would be satisfied: and the Lord blessed her to be there. She was called home the next Sunday — where we feel she is at rest, to suffer no more pain; and will be raised to join the saints of God to sing praise to Him forever.

Her funeral was held at Springfield Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Leonard Brammer. Her body was laid to rest with other members of her family in the Weatherford Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers.

We will miss her. May God reconcile the family and the members of Springfield Church, to say, "Thy will be done."

Annie Tosh

ELDER JOHN T. EVERETT

This meek and humble, upright, God fearing servant of God was born in Dallas County, Arkansas, June 24, 1879. He lived a few months short of 92 years upon this earth, passing away January 21, 1971.

The last several years of his life were spent in the Dallas County Rest Home, in Fordyce, Arkansas.

My wife and I were privileged to visit Brother Everett quite a number of times during his stay in the rest home, and not the first time was he heard to murmur or complain at his lot. He appeared at all times to be perfectly reconciled to the will of God.

The records show that Elder Everett, united with Chapel Hill Church, Dallas County,

Arkansas, in October 1901; that he was ordained April 25, 1925; and was called to serve Chapel Hill Church the following month. He continued in this station, actively, until a few years ago, when the writer was called in connection with him, due to his advanced age, and to the declining state of his health. He also served other churches in his area.

To know him was to love him indeed. He was possessed of many lovely admirable traits of character, both as a man of God and as a citizen of this world.

He was a very sweet, uplifting, firm and soul-warming preacher of the Gospel; and few ministers in my contact, have excelled or equalled him in deep, rich, fervent prayer. He was also an excellent singer of the beautiful hymns of Zion; and his lovely melodious voice will long be remembered, while engaged in that holy avocation. Let Israel's God be praised for such a life and such a gift to the churches; as doubtless he must have been the product of God's sovereign, all-sufficient, reigning grace.

He was married four times; His first two wives only lived a short time; the third wife was the mother of his children, and a member of Chapel Hill Church. His last wife also preceded him in death. He is survived by three children: W. J. of Jackson, Mississippi; Bernard of Denton, Texas; and Mrs. Robert Hartsock, of Montrose, Colorado; also several grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends to mourn his passing.

The writer was called upon to conduct the funeral services, which were held in the Chapel Hill meeting house, January 23, after which the body was laid to rest in the church cemetery nearby.

He will be greatly missed, both in and out of the churches; but we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May God comfort all who mourn the passing of this noble man. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

(Elder) John Lee Smith

AGNES FLOY (MITCHELL) JONES

Our Heavenly Father saw fit to take our beloved Sister Jones from us December 21, 1970. She was born February 28, 1897, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and came to Texas in 1901.

She united with Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Lawn, Texas, in May, 1954, where she remained a faithful and lovely member until death.

She is survived by three children, two brothers, one sister and seven grandchildren. Her husband, R. J. Jones, and one son preceded her in death. Although we will greatly miss her dear presence, we feel our loss to be her eternal gain; for we believe she is awaiting the resurrection, in which she was a firm be-

liever.

Services were conducted by Elders C. L. Ely and C. M. Haygood. She was laid to rest in Dewey Cemetery, Lawn, Texas.

Written by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Mod.
Nola Stewart, Clerk

SISTER BIRDIE STALLINGS

Sister Birdie Stallings was born May 17, 1888, and died January 27, 1971. She was the daughter of the late William Green and Martha Susan Dix. She was married to the late Will W. Stallings. She had no children, but was survived by one sister, Beulah Dix Weatherford, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Stallings was received in to the fellowship of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church December 27, 1957. She attended the services at Dan River Church as often as she could, she enjoyed the singing and the preaching of the unsearchable riches of our God, and the meeting with members and friends. She was taken ill in August of 1967, and spent the rest of her natural life confined to the bed in the Anne Penn Memorial Hospital, Reidsville, N. C., and The Triangle Nursing Home, Durham, N. C.

I always enjoyed being in Aunt Birdie's company for she seemed to enjoy life and what it had to offer. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God. In all of her suffering God in His appointed time called her away to await the resurrection of the Saints, and sing His praises forever more.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder David V. Spangler, and interment was in Dan River Church Cemetery.

A nephew and brother in Christ I hope,
Larry Weatherford

EVAN S. HALL

My earthly brother, and I believe also a brother in the Lord, passed away rather suddenly on Monday, March 22, 1971, in Crescent City, California, and was laid to rest there to await the coming of the Redeemer.

He was born December 9, 1885, in Floyd County, Kentucky, the third one of ten children born to the union of Wilburn Hall and Elizabeth Frasure Hall, who were staunch members of the Old Primitive Baptist Church. Our family migrated to northwestern Oregon in 1902, finding one of the Old Baptist Churches in Oregon City, near Portland, with which our parents affiliated, and later with another one fairly close.

Brother Evan, like the rest of us, had but little contact with the Old Baptists from his early years on until well up in years. Twenty

years or more ago, he was given the Light to see their doctrine and worship to be that which the Bible taught, and he became an avid reader of the *Signs* and the Bible and seemed to seek diligently after the TRUTH. There being no Old Baptist Church within hundreds of miles of his home, his preaching was almost entirely from the pages of the *Signs*. He did hear one sermon preached by our older Brother, Elder John Hall, when he visited them and preached in the home.

Then after he passed the four score age mark, he drove alone a hundred miles or more each way from Crescent City, California to Grant's Pass, Oregon to be with a little group of Old Baptists when an Elder would come from California to hold service there. In his letters to me and in conversation, he always held to the Old Baptist Doctrine and although not a member of the visible church, he truly and diligently tried to follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in his late years.

Submitted by
Wm. O. Hall

ORIEN PETER MELLOTT

Orien Peter Mellott was born at Pleasant Ridge, Fulton County, Penna. April 17, 1897, the son of David R. and Elizabeth (Mellott) Mellott; and died in the Fulton County Medical Center February 18, 1971, at the age of seventy-three years.

His first wife was Susie Thomas of Leesburg, Va., and to this union was born one daughter, Dixie Sue, who survives, along with two grandsons, John and David Fix. (David was killed in an auto accident since his grandfather's death.) On November 24, 1960 he married Alice Yocum of Huntington, Penna., who also survives, along with one sister Rosa Mellott, of Mt. Union, Penna.; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Brother Mellott united with the Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1921, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. He was a deacon and church clerk for many years, and served well in these capacities.

Brother Mellott had not been well for a number of months, and suffered much for several weeks before his passing, but he was given patience in his suffering, and was made willing and anxious to go at the Lord's time. He was a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God and loved to hear the gospel of his salvation preached. He was an interesting talker on the scriptures and will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Funeral services were held at Sideling Hill Primitive Baptist Church February 21, 1971, by his pastor, Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the adjoining cemetery. A large

congregation of friends and neighbors were in attendance, and there were many flowers; all of which showed their respect and esteem. He has passed on a little before us, and is now awaiting the coming of the Lord the second time, when he shall be conformed to the image of his Saviour in the resurrection and fitted for eternal life along with all the redeemed of the Lord.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Sister Mellott and all of his surviving family.

John D. Wood

OTEY G. DALTON

Brother Otey G. Dalton was born August 1, 1894 and departed this life March 1, 1971, in the Altavista Nursing Home, Altavista, Virginia.

Brother Dalton united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 22, 1962. He was a faithful member as long as he was able to attend.

He was the son of the late Robert Dalton and Octavia Dalton, and the husband of the late Nannie Vasser Dalton.

He leaves to mourn his passing three sons, Gene, Robert, and Morris Dalton; two daughters, Mrs. Claude Dalton and Mrs. Houston Dudley; two brothers, Noel and Tillman K. Dalton; four sisters, Mrs. John Short, Mrs. Robert Shelton, Mrs. Richard Fitzpatrick, and Mrs. Oscar Pickeral. He also leaves sixteen grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Brother Dalton's funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. He was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a lovely mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by
Marvin Brumfield

WALTER W. BLACK

Brother Walter W. Black passed away from this life March 29, 1971. Brother Black was born August 22, 1883 at Scranton, Iowa. He and Miss Myrtle Jones were united in marriage September 16, 1908 by Elder F. M. Wattenberger at Olathe, Colorado.

Having lived in Iowa and Colorado they moved to the Meadow Grove, Nebraska community in 1916. In 1934 he joined the Deer Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Battle Creek which he attended until his death.

Brother Black is survived by his widow, Myrtle; two sons, Rodney W. of Knoxville, Iowa; Glen C. of Meadow Grove; three daughters, Sister Irene Jewett of Pittsburgh, Pa.; Sister Lois E. Cloud of Meadow Grove and Sister Sara R. Cody of Detroit, Mich. Also surviving are 9 grandchildren, four great

grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p. m., Wednesday at the Tilden Funeral Home in Tilden, Nebraska. Elder Clayton Berkeypile of Minden, Nebraska conducted the services. Burial was in Prospect Hill Cemetery at Norfolk.

The saints of God await the morn of the resurrection to see Jesus and be like Him.

Elder Clayton Berkeypile, Pastor
Deer Creek Primitive Baptist Church
Battle Creek, Nebraska

MEMORIAL OF ELDER W. CURRY KING

By Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church

Elder King was seventy-three years old when he passed away, departing this life October 17, 1970. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." We still weep and mourn his passing.

He began visiting with Greensboro Church in June, 1921, with her pastor Elder O. J. Denny. He was called as assistant pastor in 1927. He served with Elder Denny, in this capacity, filling appointments much of the time by himself until 1932, when the mantle was laid more heavily upon his shoulder. Elder Denny, aging and becoming less able to serve, gave up the church and Elder King was called as her pastor.

As a true servant of God he continued to serve Greensboro Church. We feel his ministry here was a fruitful one. During these years he was blessed to feed the flock, and as an example before them he walked in a beautiful manner, meek as a lamb yet boldly declaring the whole council of God. Many members came home to the church under his ministry here as well as two ministers have been ordained; Elder Kenneth R. Key, and Elder Leonard Key. He was blessed always, it seemed, to be able to say the right thing at the right time. His words of comfort were soothing and he was never too busy or occupied that he was not ready to go when called. He loved the people and had a desire to share with them in their sorrows as well as rejoicing with them.

The church has maintained a stable membership through the years and others would come from far and near to hear him preach. He loved the doctrine of salvation by Grace. He would often say, "I count my life not dear to myself," but was willing to spend and be spent in defense of this doctrine. He not only had a good report within the church but also without. He was able to live and get along with all men. He was loved not only at home but abroad. He was always welcomed and well received in other associations and churches from the east to the west and from

the mountains to the sea.

As we speak of the ministry of Elder King, we want to acknowledge also the faithfulness of his loving wife Bronna. Never two people walked closer than they. She answered many calls with him to sick beds and where death had come. Without a word spoken, just their presence when they came together seemed to bring comfort to us. We share with her in her loss and pray God's continued blessings to abide with her.

Now may the same abiding Grace make us submissive that we may press onward, and that it might be said of us when we too depart this life, that our eye was not dim and that our vision was cast toward that eternal city whose builder and maker is God.

Submitted by Elder Kenneth R. Key, as requested by the church in our last conference meeting. Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT LURA MAUD MATHEWS

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, feels keenly the loss of one of our members, Sister Lura Maud Mathews, who was born December 7, 1890, and died Monday, February 22, 1971, at the age of eighty years, two months and fifteen days.

She is survived by five sons, five daughters, one brother, thirty grandchildren, fifty-eight great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild, and a great number of friends.

Sister Mathews was a beloved member among the Primitive Baptists for over thirty years and a member of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church since April 30, 1960. She attended her church faithfully until ill health in later years prevented her regular attendance.

Her funeral was conducted at Saints Rest Church on February 25, 1971, by her pastor, Elder Carey C. Morris, and it was attended by a great host of her relatives, friends, neighbors and loved ones who mourn her passing.

Burial was at Parkdale Cemetery in Arlington, Texas, beside the mortal remains of her husband, George W. Mathews, there to await the resurrection day.

We, the members of Saints Rest Church, extend our sympathy to the family of Sister Mathews in their loss, and hereby express our undying respect for her.

BE IT RESOLVED, That one copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one copy to the *Signs of the Times*, and one copy become a permanent part of the church records.

Written by the direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church during the regular quarterly conference on March 7, 1971.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1971

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE VENERABLE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY"

By Mary L. Hellings

The famous Meeting House in Hopewell is the oldest Old School Baptist Church in New Jersey, and figured prominently in events during the Revolutionary War. Every since the church was organized within these walls it has stood firm on the fundamental principles of doctrine and practice of the apostolic church on which it was founded.

Through the life-trials of its history many and varied have been the stirring and momentous events. Time has mellowed the old brick walls; it has had a new slate roof; and a Trust has been established to preserve and care for it. Many of the benches are now vacant when the congregation assembles for meetings. I can well remember the downstairs benches were filled when I was a little girl, and used to count the window panes to keep awake during the long sermons.

Now the history of this venerable house is even richer since Colonial lore in the Valley where Elder John Gano, a chaplain in Washington's army during the Revolution, was a member in this church; and John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, donated the land on which the meeting

house was constructed.

Today we stand upon the threshold of another era, and face other forms of turmoil and strife, and a falling away of those seeking a home in the household of faith; still within its walls the old charm is ever present, and time has not changed the long abiding peace that never seems to grow old or commonplace. To some it may seem quaint and old fashioned, to another, a haven of rest within its strong walls.

(The above was published in the *Hopewell Valley News* of July 1, 1971 for the Fourth of July Celebration held around John Hart's monument on Monday, July 5th.)

APPRECIATES HIS HOME WITH THE BRETHREN

11458 Hartley Road
Houston, Texas 77016

Dear Brethren Spangler and Wood:

You will find enclosed check for \$10.00 for two years' renewal, and balance for use as you see fit.

I am poor in spirit and do not feel I am gifted to write as some of the brethren and sisters write. They write such wonderful letters. I think at times that I do not know what I would do without the home I have with the Primitive Baptists.

I just attended a wonderful Primitive Baptist meeting at Altus, Oklahoma — Brother C. M. Haygood, Pastor. After the meeting, as I began to tell them all goodbye, several of the brethren cautioned me to be careful on the road, as I was four hundred and seventy-five miles back to Houston. The Lord brought me back safely through two awful hail storms about

seventy-five miles apart. I expected most any time for my windshield to be knocked out, or the windows of the car. There was much lightning and rain with the storm. As I kept driving, it seemed there was a presence with me which made me have no fear. Later the Lord did reveal it to me in the 23rd Psalm: "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."

My love to all the writers and readers of the *Signs*. A little one living with the hope the Lord has given me.

C. L. Berry

ENJOYS READING THE *SIGNS*

902 Maple Ave.
Torrance, Cal. 90503

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find money order for four dollars for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. I do so much enjoy the good reading each month. My time is growing shorter for I will be 86 in November, and I do not want to miss one copy.

As long as I can remember it came to my mother's home, and was of much comfort to me. It contains the truth written by those to whom the dear Lord has revealed the truth.

I would love to meet the eastern brethren again as I once did at our associations. I have been living with my son and family here for nearly six years. Have met some dear brethren here and enjoy our meetings.

May the blessed Lord give you all health and strength to continue the *Signs of the Times*. It seems that such good reading is needed more now than ever.

Sister Neva Brooks

EXPERIENCE

211 Riverview Street
Rocky Mount, Va.

Dear Editors and Readers of
The Signs of the Times:

I will try to write something of what the Lord has done for me, if He will guide me.

My father and mother were Primitive Baptists, but that did not make me one, if I am one; I hope and pray that I am. My mother died March 5, 1893. Many times do I remember hearing her sing, "Won't that be a happy meeting when we all get there?" Surely it will be a happy meeting if we are blessed to be there. My father died December 3, 1932. (Elder S. O. Plybon — Ed.)

I was eighty-three years old November 27, 1970. I have had five operations, and my finger off besides; but I tell it in the stand and out, that I thank the good Lord that I am able to get around. He is the one to thank.

When I was just a boy, many times did I get down on my knees and beg the good Lord to have mercy on me a poor sinner. I did not beg for justice at all. On the 28th day of August, 1907, I was in the field at work, and I felt all the morning that I was going to die and be forever lost. It got so heavy on me that I got down on my knees and laid my face upon the ground and begged the Lord for mercy. I raised up singing "Amazing Grace." I went to the house thinking that I would tell papa, but I could not tell him at that time. That night I was upstairs lying on my bed, and I heard pretty singing. There were three little angels dazzling over me. They were white and just alike. When they went out I was so happy.

The next morning when I went out of doors, it looked like the leaves and everything were praising the Lord for me; and I was so happy. I had never seen a morning like that before. After that I dreamed that papa and I were

out in the river and the water was so pretty and clear. I looked back at the bank and there was a crowd of people there.

Papa told me at the breakfast table to go to the mill: He would measure the wheat while I hooked the horses to the wagon. I finished eating and went to where papa was measuring the wheat. He said, "Son, why don't you hook up the horses to the wagon?" I went up to him and put my arms around his neck, and said, "Papa, I want you to pray for me." Tears were running down his cheeks, and he said, "Son, I have tried to pray for you many times." He told me not to join any church until I was sure which church I wanted to join. I told him I hadn't believed anything but the Primitive Baptists for several years. That was the appointed time for me to tell him, and I could not tell him until that time.

The 14th day of September, 1907, was meeting time at Lynville Church, and papa announced an "open door" for the reception of members. I did not feel worthy but I went up and offered to the church, for I wanted a home with them. I was received and was baptized the morning of September 15, 1907. When I got to the water, it was so pretty and clear just like I dreamed. Papa and I went into the water; and I looked back at the bank and there was the crowd as I had dreamed seeing it. When papa raised me out of the water, I was so happy. It was communion and feetwashing time there; and it was a happy day for me.

My dear readers, so many times I have tried to pray and didn't feel it went as high as my head; and again sometimes I am made to feel that I did pray. What is prayer? A sincere desire and preparation of the heart: and the good Lord is the only one that can give us a heart to pray.

Not long after I joined the church I felt a burden to preach. My dear wife and I were married December 15, 1909. The burden got heavier and heavier but I did not tell my wife until June 12,

1922. I was cutting wheat and she was binding it. The wind was blowing, and I set my cradle down and said, "We can't do anything but be still and know that He is God." We went to dinner, and when I sat down at the table something happened to me. When I came to myself my family had me lying on the bed, and the heavens were opened to me. I said to my wife, "I have died to the ministry, I have got to preach." She said, "I saw you in a dream or vision preaching before we were married."

Many times I went into the woods, got down on my knees, and said, "Lord, I had rather die than go to the stand." One day I was in the tobacco field by myself. I hope the good Lord was with me, for He made me willing. I said, "Lord, if you will spare me until the second Saturday, I will go and do the best I can with the ability you give me." I got easy then.

When the second Saturday came, at the breakfast table my wife asked, "Are you going to the meeting this morning?" I told her I was going to plow corn. I went to plowing, thinking I would get out of going to meeting. Oh, I felt so unworthy! I said, "O Lord, if I am deceived in this matter, deceive me." I asked Him to make the burden heavier on me if it was for me to preach the glorious gospel. I got in such a fix I thought I was going to die if I didn't go to the meeting. My wife and I went, and papa was in the stand when we got there. He motioned for me to come to the stand; and I went. He told me to pick out a song and to introduce the services. I did, and found relief. That was July 8, 1922. We sang, "God moves in a mysterious way." I don't remember what I read for a text.

The good Lord gave me a hope, and I wouldn't exchange it for this whole world's goods, if I could. That hope reaches far beyond this unfriendly world. The 40th chapter of Isaiah says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Preaching the gospel is to feed the sheep and lambs and com-

fort them. God makes the sheep, and He calls his servants out to feed them. The 40th chapter also says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever." I believe that the good Lord is the only one that can save a poor sinner. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." I hope I have been born again of that Spirit. Sometimes I am made to believe that I am, but for nothing I could have done to deserve it. The Lord did it all for me. He left nothing undone.

Sometimes I am down in the valley, and when I get there I have to stay there until He raises me out at His own appointed time. How sweet it is when we can feel that Jesus is nigh. When He makes us happy there is nothing that will come up to it.

It has been on my mind for some time to write to the *Signs of the Times*, so I have written of some of the wonderful things I feel the Lord has done for me. If you think them worthy to print you can put them in your paper.

In bonds of love,
Elder Posey Plybon

ENJOYED THREE MEETINGS

Bassett, Va. 24055

Dear Elder Spangler:

If it is the Lord's will I would love to tell you a little of how I enjoyed the wonderful meetings I have been blessed to attend.

At the Martinsville Meeting House Elder Stokes and many other dear ones were there. Elder Ingram was blessed greatly in prayer. The songs were sweet and wonderful to me. Elder Stokes was blessed to preach the truth, as it is in Jesus, and it was food to my poor, hungry soul; and I feel so unworthy of such blessings. These blessings are given to God's chosen people, and I often fear that I am not one, but it is wonderful to be with them and hear them

preach, pray and sing.

Then we met the dear ones at Reed Creek Church, and it was good to be there. Then we were at the Riverview Meeting. There were seven Elders there, including Elder Wayne Mitchell, who was wonderfully blessed to preach Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

I was given the sweet pleasure of meeting with the brethren at these three meetings in April; and I thought that it was too wonderful for me as vile and sinful as I am. Yet I was filled with His great love until I thought, O the great love of God, it is so sacred it fills me to overflowing; and I felt that my sorrows, trials, ups and downs, were nothing to compare with such great love.

Dear Editors of the *Signs of the Times*, please pray for me who am less than the least, if one at all.

Callie Clark

IN MERCY GIVEN

A few minutes ago, as I sat meditating on the goodness of the Lord to me in the years that are past, suddenly an experience of long ago came to my mind with sweet remembrance: It was a cold, grey, sunless day almost immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and our declaration of war. Only three weeks before, my brothers and I had buried our father and just a few months before, our mother. Now I had just come from the train where I had said good-bye to my brother with whom I had lived all our lives and to whom I was deeply devoted. He had been called to war to the same military installation where my older brother died in October, 1918, expecting to be sent overseas almost immediately. As I returned to the house, alone and with an aching heart, I faltered at the steps, feeling I could not go in, but of course, I had no choice. As I entered the house, the awful silence seemed unbearable and I turned on the radio to a station where I knew that from time

to time during the day, some of our grand old hymns were sung. As the sound came on, a voice was beginning to sing the third verse of NEARER MY GOD TO THEE:

"There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given."

I shall never have words to express what those lines meant to me at that moment, — the healing balm they brought to my sore heart. Deep in my soul, I felt it was the voice, not of the singer, but of the Lord who spoke those words to me. It was just what I needed and He always supplies our *need*. He promises to do this and His promises are, like Himself, immutable. Does anyone, *can* anyone believe it just happened that those words were sung at just that moment? Not the whole world could convince me that it was not the Lord who spoke to me that day, and almost before I knew it, I was singing through my tears, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." In the years that have passed since that day, I have learned, — no, I have been taught, — that each circumstance of life, whether of praise, joy, peace, comfort, benefit resignation to God's will — or pain, trial, conflict, sorrow, loss, even periods of spiritual emptiness, *all* are from the Lord and are *in mercy given*.

It seems that ordinarily we think of our trials as being chastisement. Not always so! Many times these experiences are given to restore our souls, to renew our faith, to bring us to His dear feet begging for His grace, begging that He will send refreshing showers to enliven His garden of love, imploring His indulgence that we be kept close to Him and humble before His people. I have lived a long time and have, I hope, made many observations, one of which is that those of the Lord's people who have suffered most, who have known the deepest sorrow and loss, who have been "down to the sea in ships and done business in great

waters," are the very ones in whom the light of God's mercy and grace shines brightest. These have seen "the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." I have also observed that the very same thing which will harden and embitter the unbeliever will soften, sweeten and make tender the Lord's own.

I am thinking at this moment of our dear Sister Mollie Fooks, who has seen the grave close over the forms of her parents, all her brothers and sisters, her husband and one by one, all of her three children. Yet I think I know of no one in whom the light of the indwelling Spirit shines more brightly. It has seemed that with each trial and loss, her faith has been strengthened, her testimony made clearer. I have known others: a friend who has lost two husbands. At the death of the first, she felt bitter and questioned why the Lord had done that to her. Between then and the time she lost the second, she was brought to see the hand of the Lord in all things, and although she loved him fully as much as the first, she bore her sorrow with resignation, with no question as to the wisdom and goodness of the Lord in taking him. A sister in the church, who, with her little boy, her only son, at death's door, besought the Lord to spare him and as she prayed, the Lord showed her that He was just as gracious in taking the child as in sparing him. Oh, my soul, what a Savior!

Of course, these things seem strange to one to whom the goodness and mercy of the Lord has never been revealed, but to us who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious"; who so many, many times have felt the gentle, tender wooing of the Holy Spirit, know that our God is working ALL THINGS for our eternal good and whether we dwell in the sunshine or in the cloud, ALL THINGS are from Him who loved us unto death, who is now at the right hand of the Father in our behalf and who is COMING AGAIN to "receive us unto Himself, that where He is,

there we may be also." This "earnest of our inheritance" is that which enables us to "press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If God has ever looked upon us in mercy, we have that "high calling" and press toward the mark for the prize.

We read in the book of James, "Every good and perfect gift is from above," and so on, but we do not always recognize the dealings of the Lord as good and perfect gifts *at the time*. Many times I have been denied things I thought I wanted and needed, only to be shown, sometimes years later, that the denials of the Lord were also *in mercy given*.

I do not know, none of us know, what lies ahead for us while we stay in this unfriendly and ungodly world, but if only we may be blest to see the Lord as our Shepherd, to believe in our hearts that "our times are in His hands," that all things proceed from Him and are *in mercy given*, then "we shall not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Psalm 46:1)

May we be given to follow the Apostle's exhortation "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

My love and a deep feeling of kinship to everyone, everywhere, who loves my dear Redeemer, my Savior and my Lord.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

ELDER WINFREY PREACHES IN NACHES, WASHINGTON

On Saturday and Sunday, May 29th and 30th, the little Pleasant Grove Church of Primitive Baptists in Naches, Washington, met to hear Elder W. A. Winfrey of Liberal, Kansas, preach forcefully to those gathered there from hundreds of miles distance from points in Washington and Oregon. Visiting Elders seldom come into our State, other

than Elder D. V. Spangler who has, in late years, come west to the Pacific Coast to be amongst the few (30 or more) scattered members in Washington and Oregon. His last trip west was in August last year.

Elder Winfrey and wife were visiting in Kalmath Falls, in the extreme southern part of Oregon, and he graciously gave of his time to travel some 400 miles to reach Naches, after being invited to preach there.

Attending the meeting was our dear Elder Ernest Attebery and wife from Hermiston, Oregon. He is physically unable to stand and preach but it was so good to have him with us.

Brother Ben F. Preston of the Dalles, Oregon, a member of the Church in Naches and a Deacon, also gave the little Church, inspired words on the Scriptures as he was blessed to understand them.

The Saturday services were in the home of Sister Josie C. Mitchell, and on Sunday the little group gathered in the home of Sister Daisy Baker. Both these dear Sisters are nearing their 90th year in age and some other members are well up in their 80's. It was most wonderful that the Good Lord directed Elder Winfrey's footsteps to Naches to preach to those gathered there the unsearchable riches of God and of His Love and Power in keeping His little ones in His everlasting arms here and in the world to come when He calls them home.

Wm. O. Hall
Mt. Vernon, Wash.

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION IN 1902

(Written by Elder Asa D. Shortt)

We will address you by way of a Circular Letter, calling your attention to the words, "Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1) Love is not only one of the graces of the Spirit, but it is also one of the attributes of

God. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and on love hangs all the law and the prophets. When we love God supremely great, we are sure to love the household of faith, for in it they are inseparately connected. When we fail to let brotherly love continue, it should be a testimony unto us that the love of God is not manifesting itself in our hearts. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Why is charity the greatest? There are several reasons, and we will speak of some of them. "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins," and will enable us to love one another freely for Jesus' sake. It also enables us to bear persecution; and when we are reviled, to revile not again; and, also, to open the bowels of our compassion to the poor and needy of the household of faith: it, also, makes us willing in every particular to bear one another's burdens.

Another reason why charity is greater than faith and hope is, because it is the producer of both faith and hope: for all the gifts in the church ere long will fail or pass away except charity, which is the love of God. Charity will not only abide with us here, but, when we quit the stage of action, we shall realize it in full, and then that which is in part will be done away. Love is the mainspring of all our obedience to God, and to one another. When this love is manifested in our walk, brotherly love is sure to continue. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to skirts of his garments."

This is typical of the anointing of Christ and the church. For Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and the fellows are every child of grace, or the bride the Lamb's wife. So, in a wonderful sense, the bride and her husband are one. This is why God's children love one another. It would almost be an impossibility for one to hate a member of his mortal

body, though it be ever so uncomely. So, in like manner, when the love of God is in our hearts, we love every one that bears the image of Jesus, though their mortal body may be ever so uncomely. When the church meets together in love, they, in a most wonderful sense, are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Then none of them are the greatest; and why? When the question was asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus set a little child in the midst of them and said, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Then we should desire to be humble: for true humbleness is a blessing bestowed upon us by the Lord.

We wish to call your attention to what Jesus said in another place. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This embraces everything that is commanded in the Scriptures for the children of God to do. One commandment is, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." If we fail to assemble ourselves together often, it shows that we are in a lamentable condition. Again it is said, "Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." There is no better way to do this than to be brought face to face while talking one to another, that we may behold in each other's face the sincerity that the love of God produces, and which sometimes makes a lasting remembrance in our minds. Some have thought that this is that book of remembrance, and we think so too: for it is said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." One reason why we love to assemble ourselves together is, that we may behold the face of Jesus in the church; and another reason is, we are command-

ed of the Lord to do so. In conclusion we will say, May the love of God abide in your hearts to the glorifying of the name of Jesus.

(Republished by request)

EZEKIEL 34:19

“And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.”

Throughout the entire writings of the Prophets of old the children of God are referred to as sheep. What are some of the distinguishing characteristics of sheep which can be compared to the characteristics of God's children? Being humble, easily led to slaughter, and depending upon the protection of the Shepherd, are comparable to each. God's children have been scattered throughout the earth and are depending upon Christ to protect them from their enemies. Christ has not forsaken his people but has led them into places where they can eat and drink of God's Holy Word.

The world has trampled the Doctrine of which the Child of Grace has been made to eat. We could compare the world to a goat which eats of anything which is pleasing to nature. The Word of God is trodden down and rejected. The Sheep of God have to eat that which is rejected by the world. A lamb can survive on a pasture after the cattle have moved on because they could not eat any more of the grass. But the sheep can nibble a bunch of grass down to the roots. God has given his people a mouth with the ability to taste of the word which man cannot receive. God's children are made to seek for that precious Food when there seems to be none.

Christ through his servants has cast the sound of the Gospel Trumpet. When a sinner has heard this sound, he is made to desire more; and this causes him to search the scriptures. When only one note of that sound is heard, what

a feast it is. This gives a weak sinner strength and causes him to praise God. He is given a new song and is able to lift his eyes toward the hills of Zion to praise the Eternal Father.

One day the Shepherd shall come to gather his flock and carry them into a pasture which has not been trodden upon by man. Christ promised this when He said, “In My Father's House are many Mansions, If it were not so I would have told you. I go away to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, then surely I will come again and receive you unto myself.”

John was blessed to see the revelation of things to come. He saw the Holy City, a new Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, as a bride prepared for the marriage. The Groom is Christ Jesus and I can only hope that I shall be called into that Holy Ceremony.

Through the Blood of Christ, the chosen children of God have been redeemed. Man could not pay the law which the first man Adam disobeyed; because, natural man cannot discern the things which are Spiritual. While John the Baptist was preaching, he knew that one would come after him to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

The flock of God has received that baptism and no one can take one of these little lambs out of that flock nor add one to it. That flock shall be complete and shall be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ. These have tasted of the flesh and drunk the blood of Christ. When Christ told this to the people following him, they turned and followed no more. Then Christ asked Peter would he also depart. I hope that we can witness with Peter when he said, “To whom shall we go for Thou hast words of eternal life.”

Therefore, God has prepared a people to be called the Sons of God. They are as sheep and are scattered throughout the earth. God has not forsaken this people, but will raise them up the last day and clothe them in a Robe of Right-

eousness. Then the fullness of God's Kingdom can be viewed and his praises sung without ceasing.

May God continue to bless us with his rich mercies and our hope of eternal life. "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth Mercy."

(Elder) Curtis Rains
Kenly, N. C. 27542

ELDER KEENE'S ARTICLE CONCLUDED

The night is far spent, and the angel and Jacob continue their wrestling. But the Lord will not contend forever, he will bring his dealings with his people to a gracious conclusion.

Our heavenly Father ever has our welfare in view, no matter how severe the discipline. Though he casts us down, and we are laid in the deeps, he will bring us up again from the depths of the seas, and exalt us in due time at his own right hand in heavenly places.

Thus, when the angel of the Lord saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. Thus as the ascension of the morning was approaching, by a mysterious, divine touch Jacob's thigh is put out of joint. This was a master stroke. Jacob can no longer stand upon his feet, he sinks, he falls in his anguish to the ground.

Did Jacob loosen his hold of the man as he sank prostrate to the earth? No; the man that wrestled with him all night is down with him too, held fast in his embrace.

When we in our troubles could hold up no longer, did we yield to despair? Did our hearts rather cry out, "Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee."

When Jacob was lowest, then he was uppermost; when he was weakest, then he was strongest. Out of weakness he was made strong. This is a divine paradox so often verified in the experience

of the saints. There can be no mistake in affirming that a divine power was imparted to Jacob, a poor, sinful creature to wrestle with the man. But surely Jacob is done for, vanquished, he will slacken his hold, for he can rise no more. Will he not now cry out, "Enough, I yield, thou hast gained the mastery?" Not so.

Shall I say that amidst his agonies the poor, prostrate cripple tightened his grip? What a scene is this just before the break of day; wrestling still, though no longer able to stand upon his feet. What tossings to and fro have also been going on in the heart of Jacob.

Before the man began to wrestle with him he was greatly agitated, and his conflicts then taxed all his energies. So Jacob now is engaged in a two-fold conflict. This enquiry also exercises his soul, "Who is this that wrestles with me? The darkness of the night is upon me, and I can not see his face." So the child of God often inquires, "These sharp temptations, adversities and trials that I wrestle with, are they friends or foes?"

The day breaketh. Draw nearer with me, fellow witnesses of this scene. See, one of the wrestlers weepeth. There course the tears down his cheeks. Listen, he maketh supplications. Which one is it that weepeth and is the suppliant? The weeping wrestler is the one, the hollow of whose thigh is out of joint. (Hosea 12:4)

Jacob wept and made supplication. The day breaketh. It was then Jacob obtained his first glimpses of the face of the mighty wrestler, and such glimpses did he have of the one bending over him, that his heart was wholly persuaded it was not a foe, but one whose look was tender mercy toward the fallen one.

When the Lord has brought you low, has it been revealed to thee, as the day breaketh, that he who has afflicted thee, whose providences have prostrated you, is thy gracious Friend, full of tender pity? Jacob wept and made supplica-

tion unto him.

All the dear family of God have their times of weeping. Indeed, to some much of life's pilgrimage is in the vale of tears. A tearless religion is not the religion of Christ, for the Spirit of God so teaches. The elect that in a heart feeling way are made to feel their estrangement from the Holy One of Israel, and they mourn every one for his iniquity. (Ezek. 7:16)

The causes of the tears of the saints are manifold. They weep when in captivity to the enemy. (Psalm 137) And when they tread the homeward pathway they come with weeping and supplications. (Jer. 31:9) Contrite souls even in our own day water their couch with their tears. (Psalm 6:6) Peter wept bitterly. Hezekiah wept sore. There are seasons when the daughter of Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. (Lam. 1:2) "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Then she sings, and her face is radiant with smiles, for the Lord has forgiven all her sins, he hath scattered her foes, he has lifted up the light of his countenance upon her.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Jacob might say, Shall I let thee go, and wilt thou leave me a poor, disabled cripple, in the dust?

"Lord, I can not let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case.
No, I must maintain my hold,
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus' sake."

"Except thou bless me." Thy blessing shall dry my tears, heal my woes and strengthen me. With thy blessing I will fear no evil, I can face Esau and his four hundred men, "Let them curse, but bless thou." (Psalm 109:28) Leave me not neither forsake me, give me first thy benediction. Thou camest as an adversary, and hast brought me in

anguish into the dust of the earth, now, only as a Friend can I let thee go. Thou camest with a frown, now leave thy smile with me. Thou wast angry with me, let thine anger be turned away, and comfort me with thy blessing.

O, dear reader, whatever thou hast, if thou lackest the blessing of the Lord, how destitute thou art!

"And he said unto him, What is thy name?" and he said, "Jacob." This inquiry and Jacob's answer is full of meaning. There was signified in it Jacob's unbrotherly conduct.

Esau in his exceeding bitter cry exclaimed, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing." (Gen. 27:36)

The Lord is constantly drawing forth from his people the confession of their low estate, and it is not with a trifling tongue they answer the Lord's searching inquiry, but in lowliness of heart they bow at his feet, confessing their name to be Jacob: A worm, (Isaiah 41:4); the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. 1:15); ready to perish, (Deut. 26:5); dust and ashes, (Gen. 18:27).

When Jacob had acknowledged his name, did the angel say, Thou art too unworthy, thou hast been too contemptably mean to have my blessing? O no! In such exceeding riches of grace the Lord deals with the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, for on them he will make known the riches of his glory, and Jacob was one of such vessels of mercy. "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, I hated Esau." Here we have displayed the holy and glorious sovereignty of Jehovah's love.

"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." O, this in truth is raising up the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among

princes, and to make him inherit the throne of glory. (1 Sam. 2:28) As he spake these words methinks I see the man and Israel arising from the dust. Yes, when the man arose Israel was with him. The everlasting arms lifted up the lame man, and in tender compassion put his thigh in joint again. (Although he ever after had a remembrance of this in the sinew that shrank.)

The Lord bringeth low and lifteth up. How often are believers brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow; our pride and self-sufficiency have to be so often brought to naught. He brings down our heart with labor; we fall down, and there is none to help. "I was brought low and he helped me." This is ever the experience of the household of God.

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." The Lord gives his people another name, a new name. (Isaiah 62:2) The first name is significant of what we are in our fallen estate, base and sinful, earthy, a name declaring our dishonor, a name upon which reproach and condemnation rest, a name in which we are ashamed and weep before God.

"But thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." (Isaiah 62:4) "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. 4:7)

The Lord pronounced Jacob a prince. This honor have all the saints, for our mighty Savior who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. "As a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." This was God given power. Glorious illustrations of

this are given in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

The people of God according to their day, the circumstances they are in, the work to be performed, are endued with power from on high. Even the wonderful privilege of having power with God flows from the gracious power of God. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and this spirit of supplication the Lord pours down upon his suppliants. (Zech. 12:10)

Our power with God in prayer at his footstool ever proceeds from the glorious and precious fact that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Through him, through the sacrifice and blood, his obedience and eternal excellency we have access, acceptance, favor and power with God, and in triumphant faith we sometimes sing, "We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, "Wherefore is it that thou doest ask after my name? And he blessed him there."

"Thy name." In what relationship do we stand to each other? How shalt I think of thee when thou art absent, removed from my sight? From the very dawn of the Lord's dealings with his own they begin to ask after his name. How hallowed is his name! and as the name of the Lord is unfolded to them by the Holy Spirit, they reverently affectionately and prayerfully think upon his name; and his wondrous works in creation, his providences, and the gospel of Christ declare to them how near is his name. (Psalm 75:1)

"Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Ay, Lord, thou thyself knowest. So poor, weak and sinful am

I. Is thy name Jesus, art thou my Saviour? Is it Redeemer, and hast thou ransomed me from hell? Is thy name Shepherd, Husband, Friend, the Lord our Righteousness, Emmanuel, Incarnate Love? Art thou all this to a poor sinner like me?

And he blessed him there on the field of conflict. He anointed him with it. The dark bitter night is over, and the morning finds Jacob no longer "greatly afraid and distressed," but there he stands in princely majesty, for his name is Israel.

Now he can meet Esau. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

"And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew which shrank."

Frederick W. Keene

(This article was published in the March, 1926, issue of *The Lone Pilgrim*, and submitted for republication by Elder W. W. Hudson.)

HAS MET ALL OF THE EDITORS

1704 Camp Street
Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401

Dear Editors:

It gives me great pleasure to be able to say that I have met all of the dear editors of the *Signs of the Times*, and heard each of them preach; and, if I know anything about the truth, they preach the same doctrine which I hope to believe.

Am enclosing check for two year's subscription. It is all I get in the way of preaching down here, as I live here with my widowed daughter and I am nearly eighty years old. It is two hun-

dred fifty miles to the Buttahatchie Association, the nearest one to me; and still farther to the Five Mile Creek Association. My membership is at Mt. Zion Church, Birmingham, Ala.

I get in a low mood sometimes; then am made to thank God for all his goodness and mercy to me. I am often ashamed of myself for I don't mean to complain.

My love to each of you and your dear companions. I have met each of them, and spent a night at Elder and Sister Wood's; also at Elder and Sister Lambert's and Elder and Sister Griffin's many times. May the Lord bless you all.

In hope,
Myrtie Foster

PRECIOUS READING

106 Moore Street
Clinton, Ky. 42031

Dear Kindred in the Lord:

It is time to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*, which is the most precious reading I find because it has so many different experiences of the brethren, and the teaching of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Back yonder in the beginning God chose a people in Christ according to His own good pleasure, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began. O this doctrine which comes down as drops of rain! Solomon said, "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time for the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Isn't it sweet when our old winter is past and we see the beauty of Spring;

then we know that Summer is nigh.

Our church clerk, Brother J. E. Jones, died two years ago, which made us sad for he was much loved by everyone who knew him. He was a faithful soldier of the cross. Please make the change indicated when you publish the next church notices.

I enclose a check for \$10.00 for two year's subscription, use the other for yourself.

An unworthy creature,
Elmer Prince

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes, the Lord willing with the church at Lower Town Creek, Edgecombe County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1971, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located just off Highway 43 between Pinetops, N. C. and Rocky Mount, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

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

TAKING ORDERS FOR BIBLES

Sister Pearl Dudley, a member of Sandy Level Church and a cripple, is taking orders for King James Bibles. One is white, \$6.00 each, and a larger one is black, \$10.00 each. Both have leatherette backs.

She expects to be at the Pigg River Association to be held in the Franklin County High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia, the last two days in July, and first Sunday in August, and will have samples. She will be glad to talk with anyone interested. Her address is: Mrs. Pearl Dudley, Rt. 1, Box 382, Hardy, Va. 24101. Phone number 721-2541.

ORIGINAL WHITE OAK UNION

The next session of the *Original White Oak Union* is appointed to be held with Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, N. C., fifth Saturday and Sunday in August, 1971. The church is located about one mile East of Holly Ridge, North Carolina.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

L. H. Southerland, Clerk

MEETINGS TO CONTINUE
ON THE SECOND SUNDAYS

The Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church of Naches, Washington, voted at their last business meeting to continue holding their meetings on the second Sundays in each month, instead of the fourth Sundays as announced last month.

We desire this to be published in the *Signs of the Times* when convenient,

Daisy Baker

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with North East Church, Onslow County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1971.

The church is just off Highway 24 between Jacksonville and Swansboro, N. C. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To June 1, 1971)

Myrtle Black, Neb.....	\$50.00
Blanche Cox, N. C.....	2.00
Allie Neal, Ill.....	3.00
C. R. Bird, N. C.....	3.00
Less L. Craven, N. C.....	5.00
Elder C. N. Bunn, Va.....	3.00
Mrs. W. D. Roberts, N. C.....	3.00
Lavrenia Biggs, Tenn.....	3.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	2.00
Mrs. R. F. Walker, N. C.....	1.00
A. M. Rice, N. C.....	1.00
Mrs. J. E. Jones, Colo.....	1.00
Mrs. Charles Philpott, Va.....	3.00
Elder W. D. Griffin, Ala.....	1.00
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Mary L. Hellings, N. J.....	1.60
A. T. McCollum, Can.....	3.00

Mrs. S. B. Beasley, N. C.....	5.00
Mrs. Ernest Gibson, Ga.....	3.00
J. E. Lawrence, Va.....	3.00
Ralph Lucas, Va.....	2.00
Mrs. Rena Lawrence, Va.....	3.00
Marietta Neeman, S. Dak.....	6.00

PLEASE NOTE: We find it necessary to charge fifty cents each, postage paid, for extra copies of the *Signs*. This does not include copies lost in the mails, which are supplied free. All copies of the *Signs* are mailed at the same time. If your copy is two or three weeks after the first of the month in arriving, it is not the fault of the publishers. They are mailed before the first of each month.

We always welcome letters and articles from the brethren for publication. Some of the Elders are faithful in remembering that we need their support by their writings and in handling subscriptions; and we wish that more would do the same.

EDITORS

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1971.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203
Stokes, N. C. 27884

EASTERN UNION

The next session of the *Eastern Union* will convene, if the Lord wills, with the church at Concord on Saturday and fifth Sunday in August, 1971.

All lovers of salvation by the grace of God are invited to come and be with us. A special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east will take No. 64 highway to Creswell, N. C., make a right turn and go two blocks, turn right on the Cherry Road about two miles to first church on the right.

N. L. Ambrose, Union Clerk

Danville, Virginia August, 1971

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORIAL

“And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to 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.” (Genesis 45:4, 5)

“And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” (Genesis 50:19, 20)

Before I write any further there is a matter that must be settled once and

forever. That is this: I do not believe for a moment that what I believe is the standard for orthodoxy, nor do I believe that what any other man, or body, believes is a standard for the same. The only standard that I recognize as being the standard is the written word of God. However, that standard does not give me any authority (nor do I recognize any other man as having that authority) to declare non-fellowship for everybody that differs with me. I have yet to conduct a funeral and say over that corpse, and to the sorrowing relatives, that the dead person before me had gone to hell. Moreover, I have not said, nor do I have the least thought that anybody has the right to say, that everybody that differs with me are of the devil and that they are going to hell. I say these things because I have been accused of believing them because I am in nominal fellowship with these very things.

Several years ago I stopped with an elderly couple who were Methodists by affiliation. I believe that they loved things that were lovely (Col. 4:8), and I enjoyed my visit talking about that righteousness which is by the faith of God. As I got ready to leave the elderly lady laid her arm on mine and said, "You cannot leave until you pray." Instantly there was given me an earnest desire to pray. I fell on my knees at their feet (they were not able to kneel) and if God ever gave me peace of mind in prayer it was at that time. I felt then, and I feel still, that I knelt among saints. In the last forty-five years my little offerings have gone among people of many opinions; my preaching and my speaking in prayer has been heard by thousands upon thousands. I would not be faithful if I told you that my writing and my preaching and my speaking in prayer had been received by all. But I look back now in what I am sure is the evening of my ministry, and I remember in much satisfaction and joy the many precious faces and letters of those that have received it as a savor unto life. Many of them

have gone on; many others are lingering on the border of that fair land; even now I feel the drawing near of His glorious feet as He walks in the midst of His vineyard, and that it will not be long until I, too, shall join that train of followers to that city whose Maker and Builder is God. The writer and the speaker, with those spoken and written to, have been poor wayfaring sinners all of the way. We have not been agreed about many things but we have been shown the preciousness of Christ.

The best argument in the world to show that a man is wrong is for him to be intolerant of any views that oppose his own. He may be ever so right and correct in his views; he may go to great lengths in a letter preaching and writing the truth, and yet there not be an iota of gospel in it. That does not mean that he has got to compromise, but it does mean that none of us have a monopoly on being right or wrong.

Now to come to the text. It is a part of the inspired scriptures. No man has a right to explain it. Explaining things means that God did not clarify what was being said. I desire above everything else to expound a text, but I abhor explaining a text. If the Bible, if one text of the Bible, needs my wisdom or the wisdom of any dull mortal to explain what God meant to say, my readers are welcome to all of it. If, I say, God inspired men to write a book that needs me or you to unlock it, it means absolutely nothing to me, for all the books of men need that, and if God's book is like their book, just let me, being of the earth, have earthly books to deal with. In this, I am writing to you. I am not writing to you to call you a fool, nor any other bad name. I am not writing to you to antagonize you, and yet I well know that there is not a shred of compatibility between the natural mind and spiritual things. I am writing to you that know the joyful sound. If you do not know it please do not waste my time and yours in writing sarcasm and wit to me. Let

us say once and for all that the text is concise and to the point and means no more nor no less than what it says. I have heard the text *explained* so that it means that God did not have anything to do with sending Joseph down into Egypt. If putting construction on what God said is permissible, then by all means all men are right in what they believe.

Through God's tender mercy it has been my pleasure to hear the most of the predestinarian ministers. I have never heard any one of them advocate predestination any stronger than God presented it to these brethren of Joseph. Since I have much reason to believe that the humble followers of Jesus Christ are his brethren, I feel an urgent desire to follow in the footsteps of my Joseph and declare that while we, when we do wrong, mean it for evil, God means it for good.

I am not seeking debates. I will not reply to criticism. But I do not have any hesitancy in calling upon one and all to tell me this: In your heaping abuse upon those that believe in the unlimited predestination of God; in your venomous attacks upon those that believe that Paul meant the same thing in Romans 8:28 as Joseph did in the text at the head of this article; in your murder of good language to sustain the time worn theory that God has never purposed evil, I say, you that have employed this kind of reasoning, tell me, in a brotherly manner, just what Joseph had in mind. I am not seeking your apology for God; I am not seeking honor for myself for my sun is fast sinking; I am not asking for your opinion about anything; I do not want your saying that, If what Joseph said is the truth then so on and so on becomes the truth. I do not want any of that. I want you to say that what Joseph said is the truth and then for you to quit belittling those that agree with him.

Agreeable with what I have said, to wit, that "God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain," and that

his interpretation goes before him to the end that He says what He means to say and means just what he says, no more, nor no less, I would say that everything that inspiration tells us transpired in Joseph going down into Egypt was according to God's purpose. Much of this route was done in evil. It was evil in the brethren, it was evil in Potiphar's wife. Not one of those involved in this evil meant to be serving God; not one of them meant to be doing God's will. They were involved in gain for themselves; they were serving divers lusts and only that. They did not have, as an object, the glory of God; they did not realize that they were evil; they did not have any knowledge of the judgments of God. (See Psa. 36:1; Rom. 3:18; 11:33.)

We speak about chains. Chains are to hold together. Will any of my readers forge a chain and purposefully make a weak link in it when we know that it will be for the downfall of our purpose? Dear reader, would you forge a chain with a weak link, knowing that that weakness would thwart the end that you had in view? Now the question is: Would you do that? If you would not do that, why pour out vituperation upon not only your poor and afflicted brethren but upon Joseph as well as our spiritual Joseph (see Matt. 18:7). Our text embraces God doing something.

In correspondence with a lovely elder (one that I have read after all of my reading life, and one that I dearly esteem as a brother in Christ) he said, "After the storm is over and I have looked back over it all, I now think that what the Absolute brethren intended was to advocate the sovereignty of God." He further said, "I grant that God has a right to do with His children, as well as other creatures (especially man), as it pleases Him; that He does not necessarily withhold grace from us because we have sinned but that He might teach us how frail we are; that He might prepare us for trying temptations; that He might pre-

pare us for some greater service in His kingdom." These thoughts I would not find fault with.

However, there is more to God's sovereignty than I have seen in much of the writing about it. If He is sovereign then He IS. He can not be sovereign and at the same time desire something different. How sad it is (to nature) that my remembrancer is failing. I find myself confronted with problems that I can not solve nor fathom. If I had known and had the power I would not have been in a predicament like unto that. I cannot see the future, and I can not remember the past. If God is sovereign, he is not like that. If He knew before hand that *any* of His creatures would turn out different than what He made them for, and yet that He went on and made them that way, He is in worse shape than I am, for my failing is because that I did not know any better, but His failure is that He knew better but did not do better. That is a cheap brand of sovereignty.

I have never believed that God is the efficient cause of my sin. However, I do not wish to read nor to hear (not having desire nor time for such things) that God was under any compulsion in the creation of the world; that there was *anything* before that creation much less any thing of His creation that made *anything*; that He made *anything* that has failed to serve His purpose. I do not have the least idea that *anything* of the vast creation around me would have been had He not made it. I believe with all my heart that God made man upright for Solomon says that He did, and I do not believe that He was talking legalism when he said so.

The weakest argument that has ever been hurled at our precious people is this: If God did do what you say He did, then God is the cause or author of all the sin that is in the world. The man that advances such an argument is not even a fair debater, because the rules of parliament will not allow a man to charge what he thinks are the

consequences of a doctrine unless they are specifically advocated. To my certain knowledge there has been but few among us that have ever hinted that God was the efficient cause of their sin, and to all those that have said it, I say as clearly as I know how to use language, that the Bible and Christian experience does not teach such a monstrosity.

But there is something else as clearly taught as this is, and that is that God does take wicked men and make them serve Him. They are His sword (and that does not need any explanation), and I am sure that He uses His own sword. If I had any hint that He turned His sword over to anybody else for one moment, my hope of immortality would cease with proof of that. God takes the things which he hates (Esau and all of his) and makes those things work for good to His chosen people. I know that God does this, because He said that He did. I know that the intention of men is to destroy Christ. This intention is not any stronger than it was in the brethren of our Joseph, nor was the evil in them any different than it was in his brethren. If there is any proof otherwise it would be more consistent with Christian principles to point this out than it would to criticize my ignorance. The work which was evil in the brethren was used of God for good to Israel. The work of those that crucified our Master was evil but His going to the cross was the greatest blessing that ever came to a poor sinner. Since God sent Joseph down into this Egyptian land using the intended wickedness to get him there, I am sure that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. The "it" was wicked but God meant it for good.

But the question comes up in my mind: Why write again on this subject? My only reason for doing so is found in what I hope and believe is my Christian experience. The evening shadows are getting longer and longer.

Soon they shall end in that final summons which is death. As I approach this solitude of death I desire once again to know if what I have travelled over this United States and Canada proclaiming will do to rely on as I lie down in death. As I have been writing I have been contemplating the subject and I have been eating His broken body and drinking His shed blood.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 12:32

Elder G. Beebe's Son — Dear Sir: — As I am a steady reader of the *Signs*, and find great comfort in perusing its pages, I desire your views at your leisure, on the portion of Scripture found in John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." If you, or any associate editor, have in the past written upon the above quoted text, I will buy a copy, and not trespass upon your time.

From an earnest reader and well wisher,

W. W. Harris

REPLY

We do not recall whether the above Scripture has ever been written upon in the *Signs* editorially, and so we will try to comply with the request of our correspondent. Many requests claim our attention, some of which we cannot respond to, either for lack of time, or, as is oftener the case, for lack of understanding of the subject proposed.

We would say first, that we understand that the Savior presented the same truth when he said to Nicodemus, John 3:14, 15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Also the Savior refers to the same thing in John 8:28. In the verses following the text, it is written, "This he said, signifying what death he should die." Then "The

people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" These are all the Scriptures in which the expression "lifted up" is used, as applied to the crucifixion of the Son of God, and it is worthy of remark, that John is the only one of the disciples who uses this expression, as falling from the Savior's lips. The expression is a forcible one, and it is used as another way of saying that the Son of man must be put to the cruel death of crucifixion. Jesus *must* be put to this manner of death. No other way would satisfy the type of the brazen serpent, as alluded to in John 3:14, 15. The Savior said, "As the brazen serpent was lifted up, so must the Son of man be lifted up." Had Jesus been stoned to death, as was Stephen, or had he been beheaded, as was Paul, or had he suffered any other form of death, it would not have satisfied the type.

The truth is plain that our God had decreed that his Son should die in the form that he did, and had so signified ages before in the type which Moses, his servant, was commanded to prepare for the disobedient Israelites, who had been bitten by the fiery flying serpents, on account of their transgressions, and who needed healing. There is a striking likeness between the type, and the great antitype, in another aspect. The Israelites were bitten by serpents, and a serpent must be raised up for their healing. So Jesus was made sin for us, who were sinners. We could not be healed otherwise. As the Israelites were bitten because of their sins, and so were convinced of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, so are the people of God convicted of their sins, and of the just judgment of God against sin, and then they are made to see that a Redeemer must be found, and then Jesus is revealed as the only name given under heaven, and among men, whereby they must be saved. Serpents had bitten the Israelites, and so a brazen serpent was the emblem of the divine power and

mercy to them, in healing them. Sin has bitten unto death all the people of God, and they are convinced of this, and then Jesus is presented as the one who has been made sin for them. But there is a difference between the type and the antitype.

The brazen serpent was but a piece of brass, *Nehushta*, as it was called in the Hebrew tongue, while our Savior was the real power of God to save, and not a mere emblem. It has seemed to us that there was another reason why the Son of man must die the death of crucifixion as he did. It was a lingering death, and a painful one, and so by it was the wrath of God against sin emphasized, as it could have been in no other way. Thus not only the fact of his death for sin, but also the manner of his death, were both fixed in the eternal mind, before the world began. And so all things before it, were pointing on toward it, and all that it was meant to accomplish, was declared by the mouth of all the holy prophets, and in all the types. There is never any change in the eternal mind; there is but a continued manifestation of it to us in all the ages of time. It is declared again and again, that these things were so, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. How often it is said in the New Testament, "Thus it is written;" and Jesus declared that the Son of man goeth as it was appointed for him.

In the text under consideration, the word "if," which the Savior used, by no means implies any doubt that he shall be lifted up, or crucified. On the contrary, he expressly declared that he ought to have suffered these things, and thus to enter into his glory. And again he declared that it was thus written, and that it behooved him to suffer these things. These things *must* be, else the purpose and word of God shall *not* be fulfilled. Unwittingly the hands of wicked men carried out the will of God. They meant it not so, yet they in their very hatred of Jesus and his word, only fulfilled his eternal purposes of love and mercy toward his people.

How wonderful it is, that wicked men only succeed in bringing the purpose of God to pass. The potsherds of the earth may strive with the potsherds of the earth, and nations may rise and fall, but it is only the fulfillment of the word, that he will overturn and overturn, until his will is accomplished.

In the crucifixion of the Savior, the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of godliness, are set one over against the other, and the mystery of iniquity was made to work out the everlasting decree of God, in the salvation of his people. Thus the purpose of God, the fallen condition of the objects of the love of God, the overruling providence which controls all worlds, and beings, and events, all worked together to fulfill the decree that Jesus should die for the sins of his people. They who crucified the Savior, did not know that they were fulfilling his all-wise design in what they did, but nevertheless they were doing the will of God. Thus the inspired Peter testifies in Acts 4:27, 28, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Notice they were all gathered together against the Lord, and yet it was (though all unknown to them) to do the very thing that his purpose had before determined. How wonderful that men should fight against God, and yet do but that which he has decreed. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

But perhaps the chief question in the mind of our friend is, What is meant by the expression, "Will draw all men unto me?" We do not suppose that it is here necessary to argue that this text does not teach the doctrine of universal salvation. Were it so, we should find its teaching in direct contradiction of the general tenor of the Scriptures; for the everlasting destruction of the wicked is declared in the word many

times. Still less does this text give any warrant for believing in conditional salvation. Whatever term "all men" embraces, the Savior declares without any reservation, that they shall be drawn to him. There is no condition in the text. It is not said that I will endeavor to draw all men unto me, nor is it said, I will draw them if they will come, but the language is, "I will draw all men unto me." If the words "all men," do mean all the inhabitants of the world, then it is sure that they will all be saved in him, "For whosoever cometh unto him shall in no wise be cast out." But if the words mean this, then the merest glance at the facts would show that they were false, for all men are not now, nor have all men ever been drawn unto him. Only a few were drawn to him in the years immediately following his death and resurrection. The vast majority of mankind then hated and persecuted the doctrine of Christ and his followers; and to-day what do we see? Three-fifths of all the present inhabitants of the world do not even believe nominally in the name of Christ, nor in the God of heaven, who sent him into the world. The followers of all pagan systems of religion embrace fully three-fifths of the race of man. Then if we come to consider those who claim to be christians, we find the Romish church, the Greek church, the Arminian church neither of whom either believe in, or practice vital godliness. They are state churches, and possess a religion of forms, and make no pretensions to demanding an experience of vital godliness as a condition of membership. Here and there one among them shows some acquaintance with true religion, and some personal knowledge of Christ as his Savior; but this is not because it is the teaching of their church, but rather because the light of the gospel has pierced the darkness of blindness and ignorance, and has brought salvation to one here and there.

Then if we consider the Protestant denominations of the day, we find in most of them a passing by, and a com-

plete ignoring of the new birth, and a teaching that all there is of vital religion, is a belief of certain dogmas, and a moral life. This is especially true of the church of England, of the Lutheran church, of the German Reformed church, and of the Campbellites; and in all the rest, one might attend upon their ministry for years, and never hear the new birth alluded to, and if one should come to them with a genuine christian experience, it would be looked upon and tolerated only as a figment of the imagination. Indeed, if we look over the so-called christian world, how few show that their hearts are with Christ, who may in the forms of worship, call upon him. The professions, the lives and the conversation of the majority of religionists, show clearly that they have not been drawn unto Christ. Let any man take the village, or the community in which he may dwell, and think how many he can call up, who show by their lives that Christ is to them all in all. How many, even of those names are upon some church book, show that the god of this world is after all their god. It is an astounding fact, that those who claim that the salvation of Jesus was meant to embrace the whole world, must face the truth that not five per cent of mankind, even in this late day, when the name of Christ has been preached for nearly nineteen centuries, show by their life that they have been really drawn to him.

What shall we make of these facts, if indeed it was the purpose of God to draw all the race of Adam unto him? But the people of God who believe his word concerning election, and that a remnant shall be saved, have no such difficulty to face. As to why our God should have chosen a remnant, we know that he gives no account of his matters to any one. We can only say as the blessed Master did when he rejoiced in spirit, and said, "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 know no more than this, and we have no right to say any more than this. These things show, if anything can be shown clearly, that the salvation of God never has, and does not now, embrace all mankind. If we believe that our Savior knew whereof he spoke, and that he could utter nothing but truth, then we are driven to believe that these words do not at all teach that all individuals of the human race shall be drawn unto him. We have no question that the meaning of this language is just what is taught in the Scriptures elsewhere in many places. It is that now the middle wall of partition should be broken down by his crucifixion, between Jew and Gentile, and that not only should the Jew partake of the blessings of his salvation, but also the elect of God among the Gentiles, should come to him. "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." We need not multiply quotations. No doubt many will occur to our readers.

Now we will turn for a brief consideration of the drawing itself. What is it to be drawn to Christ, and how does it come to pass? It was a startling statement that the Master made, if considered from any human standpoint. It was a contradiction of all that men could think possible. To what and to whom are men generally drawn? Would we expect to see men coming to the side of a malefactor who had expiated his crimes upon the tree of the shameful cross? Yet Jesus declares just this, and we hear Paul saying afterward, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Christ draws his people by that which is a shame in the eyes of the world, and Paul glories in that which the world counts shameful. He does not then say, If I be exalted to a kingly crown; if I be received and believed on, by the noble and the powerful; if I manifest my

power, and at once overthrow my foes; if I can but cause my doctrine to be heard and heeded by the wise, then shall I draw all men unto me. No, he says in substance, If I am put to the shameful death of the Roman cross, if I be lifted up as the derision and scorn of men, if I die and go down into death and the grave, then will I draw all men unto me. Not by pleasing the world, but by offending the world will he draw men unto him. Not by doing what men expected he would do, but by doing what no one could expect of him, should this come to pass. The religion of Christ does not stand in the world, nor is it advantaged by any means that human reason or human desires could suggest. The key of all that makes the kingdom of God precious in the hearts of any of the sons of men, is found in these words, "If I be lifted up." It is by his death that we live. In no other way could men be truly drawn to him. If we are drawn to him at all, it must be as he is, and as our needs require. We need a Savior, and he is a Savior only as he died upon the tree of the cross. Therefore he must die, if we are to have our needs met and answered.

This drawing is purely experimental. The soul comes to feel his need of atonement, and in Jesus he finds his atonement. Thus the cross comes to be the sweetest theme in the poor sinner's heart, that it is possible for him to hear. And like Paul, he also says at last, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ. He must say this, because here alone is his salvation and his rest. Paul declares to the Galatian churches, that he had set forth Christ evidently crucified among them. This he calls elsewhere holding forth the word of life. Who can express what this means to a guilty and condemned sinner, who sees that as he has sinned so he must die? Such a soul must be drawn to Christ. It needs no exhortation to bring him there. The thirsty need no exhortation to come to the fountain of waters to drink. The fountain of cooling waters itself draws

them. Just so Jesus draws his people. Their need, and his fullness, are the two things needful to draw them; and so out of every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, his chosen come as doves to their windows. The word of their hearts is fulfilled when they say, "Draw me, and I will run after thee."

(Editorial by Elder Chick, November 1, 1897.)

OBITUARIES

BROTHER LESTER HARDY MANLEY

"Man that is born of woman is of a few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

(Job 14:1, 2)

Brother Lester Manley was born in Rockingham County, N. C., where the Lord blessed him to devote his 65 years to his family, brethren, and friends until the death angel called on April 3, 1971, to bear his spirit home on the snowy wings of God's love.

He leaves to mourn, Sister Edna Somers Manley, a precious companion for more than 42 years. A daughter, Mrs. Edmund Seay of Route 5, Reidsville; son, Fred W. (Billy) Manley of Raleigh, N. C.; sisters, Mrs. Jim Kimbro of Route 5, Reidsville; Mrs. Porter Garrison, Sr. of Reidsville; Miss Sue Manley of the home; brothers, Lloyd W. Manley of Route 2, Reidsville, and Lawrence F. Manley of Route 5, Reidsville.

Our brother leaves a host of brethren and friends who feel his heartaches, sorrows and sufferings are over, and now that precious peace abounds in the sleep of death.

The writer worked with him before I knew he was concerned with this blessed truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. My heart rejoiced when he offered to the church at Bush Arbor in June, 1960, for I had found him to be a quiet and humble man.

Brother Manley suffered long and hard, yet through a God given faith and hope of Heaven and Immortal Glory his sufferings were made a little easier to bear: feeling that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

His funeral was conducted at a Reidsville Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest, that peaceful rest, to await that glorious resurrection in Reidlawn Cemetery, only a short distance from his home on Route 5, Reidsville, N. C.

May the Gracious Lord continue his blessings upon this bereaved family, brethren and friends who feel our loss is his blessed eternal

gain. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by Clifton Robertson as requested by Bush Arbor Church. Read and approved in their conference meeting June 12, 1971.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

DEACON ZACK MCKINNEY

Deacon Zack McKinney, of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church, Rockingham County, N. C., was born April 16, 1886. He was married to Miss Nancy Lee Hall in October, 1906, and to this union were born eleven children. He was the son of Elder B. B. McKinney.

Brother McKinney was received into the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1916, and later moved his membership to the Reidsville Church. He was ordained a deacon of the Reidsville Church in 1952, and filled his office well, manifesting a stability in the truth, a great love for his brethren, and the desire for the welfare of the church of God.

Brother McKinney was a lovable person, well versed in the Scriptures and manifested at all times a desire to talk on the Word of God. He finished his days in a nursing home, and when visited by his pastor, brethren and friends, his face would glow with love that spoke louder than any word he could have said.

In the absence of his pastor, his funeral was conducted by Elder Donald Smith at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church.

Written by his pastor,

D. V. Spangler

BROTHER AND SISTER GEORGE RUDD

We at Gilliams Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, as it pleased him to remove from our midst Brother and Sister George Rudd.

Sister Minerva Rudd was born August 19, 1889, and departed this life August 16, 1970. Brother George Rudd was born June 8, 1882, departed this life August 17, 1970. They were united in marriage November, 1905, and were blessed to rear a large family of children. They are as follows: sons, Lee J., Leonard, George D., Walter F., Lacy T., and daughters, Mrs. J. M. Rimmer, Mrs. Nellie Moss and Mrs. Bessie Simons.

Brother Rudd professed a hope in Christ and united with Gilliams Church and was baptized by her pastor, Elder J. W. Gilliam, April 26, 1915. The brethren at Gilliams recognized the gift of Brother Rudd and he was ordained as deacon July, 1922. He was blessed to fill this office well. Sister Rudd was a believer for many years before she united with the church and when it pleased the Lord she asked for a home and was baptized the fourth Sunday in June, 1955.

I was told by friends that it was an inspiration to see Brother and Sister Rudd and children in their earlier years walking to their meeting approximately three miles; being an example of faithfulness and loyalty to their church. He was a firm believer of electing grace, being blessed to walk softly and humbly before his brethren and fellowmen, and trusting in an all wise and merciful God. Indeed it was inspirational and strengthening to me as I visited in their home to hear each of them tell of their travels in life and experiences and faith in God.

There are many things I shall remember them by, but one thing that stands out with me; a few days before Brother Rudd's passing on a Sunday morning, I was on my way to fill an appointment out of state. My wife was in the hospital and I was walking in the valley feeling so cast down, and was impressed to stop and see him. His wife was also in the hospital at that time. He called me to his bedside for prayer and as I was leaving he began to quote from Paul's writing, 2nd Timothy, 4th Chapter, Verse 2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine," and I went on my way rejoicing.

The were blessed to live as husband and wife for almost 65 years and maintained their own home and did not have to be separated or placed in a convalescent home. As death came to Sister Rudd and a few hours later Brother Rudd passed, we rejoiced to see once again the mighty hand of God. Their funeral was conducted by Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elders W. C. King, E. F. Oakley, and Donald E. Smith. They were laid to rest side by side in Bush Arbor Church Cemetery to await the coming of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy be placed on the church record, a copy sent to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by request of Gilliams Primitive Baptist Church and approved in their conference meeting May 22, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Freman Somers, Clerk

A FAITHFUL PASTOR

There are so many kinds of sorrow, but we at McCray Church have such sweet sorrow. God has been so good to us, and how sweet the years have been. Because we have been so wonderfully blessed in having the opportunity of a faithful pastor for forty-six years, Elder W. Curry King. We have so many gracious memories and beautiful thoughts to come in our minds when thinking of him, that death does not part.

We feel we have been greatly enriched by

his long and useful life among whom he so unselfishly labored. We shall miss his wise counsel and guidance. Yet it is with thanksgiving and praise for his kindness toward us and words of comfort we received from his presence. His willingness to sacrifice himself for his churches won for him much love and respect from it's members and friends, and he was known as a faithful pastor in every church he served. Always reluctant in leaving to visit other churches, however he did occasionally, but prompt in securing someone to fill in for him.

During his many years of pastoral care there were only seven occasions that he was absent from the pulpit other than in his later years, being away one Sunday a year while on a vacation that he and his dear companion so much deserved. Elder and Sister King were gifted to hospitality and their home was always opened with the warmest of welcome to their many friends far and near.

Planning in and around his home was a place many happy hours were spent. He liked seeing things grow and gardening was an enjoyable hobby. He and Sister King found so much joy in sharing their blessings with others that those visiting in their home always left with something in a bag from their garden or some fruit from his much prized orchard. The last task he performed was bringing into the kitchen some vegetables from his garden only a few minutes before his passing. As he often said, "I would like to go with my boots on," and his wishes were granted.

Elder King was an humble man and tender-hearted, grievous when those around him were grieved and rejoiced when they rejoiced. It is those that inspire us that we like being around, and he was endowed with wisdom and forbearance that many would seek his counsel, even in the late hours of night. It was always a labor of love, making you feel glad that you came. So it is the many times we have been given renewed courage by having such a close walk with him, as our pastor. May each of us be given to consider the great example of love, humility and forbearance that he has left behind.

Somewhere during his discourses, he would often speak on the resurrection with a strong belief in the hope that he would one day be raised like his savior, be like him and be satisfied.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints feeling he is among the children of the Heavenly King. Traveling home to God, in the way the fathers trod, this was among his favorite hymns that was of great inspiration to him. The members and friends of our church loved him dearly and feel we have lost a wonderful servant of God;

but, ever trusting in a power than can raise up others to preach the gospel as he did. He will continue to live in the minds and hearts of our members. As he often said to comfort others, he has fought a good fight and is now reaping the rich reward that was laid up for him. And may we say together, our God is too good to be unkind and whose mercy never faileth. May we also join others who loved him, find comfort in the things he loved and cherished: salvation by grace and the sovereignty of an all wise and gracious God.

So should we feel sad that he is missing the struggles and sorrows of this life or are we comforted in the thought that he is peacefully sleeping awaiting the greater joys of the eternal beyond.

We humbly and gratefully submit this final tribute in sacred memory of our beloved pastor from the faithful few of McCray Church.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Ruth Jeffreys, Clerk

SISTER PEARL CRAIG COLLIER

Sister Pearl Collier was called from this life on April 3, 1971. She was born in Obion County, Tennessee December 14, 1879. She was preceded in death by her husband, J. B. Collier, ten years ago, and by her son, Sylvester Hassell Collier, three years ago. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Ruth Chappel; a son, Woodrow Collier, five grandchildren and fifteen grandchildren. Sister Collier died suddenly at the home of her son, Woodrow Collier, near Martin, Tennessee.

Sister Collier and her husband, J. B. (Bud) Collier, joined Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church in the year of 1910 and were baptized by Elder Hue Oliver. She was such a humble person. Her talk was always seasoned with Grace in the Love of God. She was a star in her community and loved by everyone who knew her. She manifested a great love for her church, and loved the preaching of the Gospel of God our Saviour.

Brother and Sister Collier's home was always open to their brethren, their friends and neighbors, and certainly a wonderful home to visit. This writer has known their home most of his life. When I was a little boy, I enjoyed going there and hearing Brother and Sister Collier talk of God and Godly things. We have lost a dear Mother in Israel, but it is Heaven's gain. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Sister Collier's funeral was held at Murphy Funeral Home in Martin, Tennessee, by Elder Wayman Chappell, her grandson, and her Pastor, Elder Herbert R. Prince and she was laid to rest in the Collier Cemetery.

Elder H. R. Prince

MRS. LULA L. JOHNSON

Again, our Father in Heaven called a dear sister from our midst. He gives us life and takes it away according to His will. Sister Lula was loved by all who knew her. Her seat is vacant here. No one can ever take her place with us. She was blessed to live a good life span of 87 years in love, faith and prayer; examples so many of us need to follow daily.

She was the daughter of Robert Langley and Lou Norville Langley. In 1907 she became the bride of Ellis Johnson. They were blessed to have a family of two sons and two daughters: Jennis Johnson, Ruth Johnson Morgan, Helen Johnson Forbes, and Ellis Johnson, Jr.

We shared the loss of her husband, her youngest son Ellis, Jr., her oldest son Jennis, and her daughter Helen. All through her sadness she was so brave and humble saying, "It's hard, but God never puts more on us than we can bear."

Survivors are her daughter Ruth J. Morgan, son-in-law Joseph Morgan from Jacksonville, N. C.; daughter-in-law Marie W. Johnson, who loved her deeply; five grandchildren, Mrs. Ann Anderson, Billy Jo Morgan, Mrs. Rose Marie Bell, Mrs. Janice Barbour, Mrs. Brenda Joyce Owens; nine great grandchildren, Lindsey Ann Anderson, Brent Clark Anderson, Alan Bell, Beverly Bell, Melanie Bell, Angela and Rejema Owens, Wright Barbour, Albert Cannon Morgan; two sisters, Mrs. Addie L. Wooten from Fountain, N. C., Mrs. Blanche L. Wooten from Greenville, N. C. and several nieces and nephews who loved her dearly and rendered all that loving hands could do for her. She spoke so highly of her in-laws. In a special way, she always kept an open mind, giving praises for all who so kindly remembered her. It was always a delight to have her in our home and Sister Pearl's, in later years. We miss her more than words can express. We have wonderful memories to behold.

Sister Johnson united with Autrey Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in May 1925. She was baptized by her Pastor Elder A. M. Crisp. She loved her church and its doctrine of salvation by the grace of faith. We feel her spirit returned on February 17, 1971 to the one who gave it.

Funeral services were held at the church by Elder A. P. Mewborn whom she loved dearly. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Dilda Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. May God console all who loved her, is our sincere prayer.

Written by request of Autrey Creek Primitive Baptist Church, April 3, 1971. J. B. Coker, Clerk.

Leona W. Manning
Addie L. Wooten

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1971

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
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IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A NOTE FROM ELDER RHODES

P. O. Box 82
Spearsville, La. 71277

Editors and Readers of the
Signs of the Times:

Please find enclosed check for \$4.00 to renew my subscription. I have been taking it for a long time, and enjoy it very much, so I want to read it as long as I can.

I would like very much to see you brethren Editors of the very much appreciated and widely distributed paper the **Signs of the Times**, and send my very best regards. Would be glad if you could visit our section of the country any time you can.

May the Lord richly bless the editors and readers, and all lovers of the glorious truth which cannot be downed by the opposers of it. Pray for me a poor sinner.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

(We are informed that it was Sister Robbie Holloway who sent the writings of Elder Rhodes which we published a short time ago. We mistook his granddaughter's name for a grandson. — J. D. W.)

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Sa-

tan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..." (2 Cor. 12:7-9)

If you will read verses one to six you will note that Paul was lifted into the third heaven (verse 2) or paradise (verse 4) and heard unspeakable words which were not lawful (or possible) to utter. This was a wonderful revelation indeed! He was lifted up so high or was so elevated that he did not know if he were dead or alive. (see verse 2)

Now, Paul was given as a pattern to them that should hereafter believe. (see I Tim. 1:16) We believe that all of God's people are given revelations. It is a revelation for one to know within his heart that he is a wretched, ruined sinner, and that he stands in need of mercy. One must be given a revelation before he can believe in the doctrines of Grace. (**within his heart**) Paul did not learn this doctrine from his parents, nor from the institutions of men, nor thru any research of his own. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11-12) In short, one must have the truth revealed. Jesus said, "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." (Matthew 11:25) Christ is revealed unto his people by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

Let us quote another Scripture upon the subject of revelation. "But as it

is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:9-10) This shows that God has revealed things unto his people that he does not reveal unto the world. This also shows that man by all his efforts, research, learning, etc. cannot find out the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is foolishness to the world.

In the 7th verse of this text, we notice that Paul is telling us why it was necessary that he be given the thorn in the flesh. (Of course, he did not understand this point when he asked the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh.) We note that the revelations were wonderful, and glorious. Notice the wording of the text, "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, . . ." Now, would we be twisting the Scripture around and cause it to mean something else if we said that if Paul had not been given the thorn in the flesh, he would have been exalted above measure, or puffed up? It would probably go to his head, wouldn't it? If it wasn't for the thorn in the flesh, he might think that he was smarter and wiser than his brethren. But God knows what is good for his people. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) The thorn in the flesh (doubts and fears, soul afflictions, etc.) was given to bring Paul down. Now, if we are "cut to the pattern," we must be given the thorn in the flesh. Sometimes we think of it this way: The greater the revelation, the more severe trials and afflictions. Also, it is our experience that we receive the sweetest peace and meditations during the darkest hours.

"For this one thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." Besought means "entreating with urgency, making supplications, asking earnestly for, begging, craving," etc.

Notice the setting: Paul was lifted up, and then brought down by the thorn in the flesh. He was in distress, so he asked the Lord to remove the thorn. The meaning is that Paul pleaded with the Lord for this thorn to depart from him. We believe this means that Paul earnestly prayed unto the Lord for this thorn to be removed. We have heard it said that Paul did not pray for this thorn to be removed, but rather that he besought the Lord. We ask the reader to carefully examine the meaning of the word besought, and you will see that it means the same as praying unto the Lord.

Paul pleaded with the Lord three times for this thorn to be removed or to depart from him. God's answer was: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Why did God wait until after the third request to answer Paul? This was a trial of Paul's endurance. Paul did not give up pleading with God after he failed to receive an answer after the first request, nor after the second request. Jesus said: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1) Dear reader, may God bless you to not give up when trials come your way. May God bless you to keep pleading for strength to bear whatever trial or affliction comes your way. Jacob did not give up: when Jacob wrestled with the angel he said: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Genesis 32:26)

Keep in mind that **God did answer Paul's prayer, although it was not in the manner that Paul wanted or desired.** God did not remove the thorn, but he did give Paul the grace and strength to bear it. Do you see the meaning? The grace of God is sufficient for us. It does not make any difference how dark the path may lie ahead, because God will give you the grace to bear the trials that lie ahead.

"Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face"

Paul told why it was necessary for him to have the thorn in the flesh, so let us apply the same to ourselves. Although these heavy trials are hurtful

to the flesh, they are good for our souls, and they teach us to be humble and to be patient with one another. "...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience," (Rom. 5:3) When tribulations first come our way we certainly do not glory in them, but we plead for them to be removed, do we not? But we learned the fruits of the tribulations because they taught us patience. If we did not have tribulation, then we would not have patience, would we?

God is faithful, and will give His people grace to sustain them in time of need. Even though you may not feel the presence of God, you may rest assured that He is there with you. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8) As one makes his bed in hell, we think of this as a state of deep darkness when one feels in a measure the wrath of God. "In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer." (Isaiah 54:8)

Let us bear in mind that God gave Paul the grace to bear the thorn in the flesh. Now, the thorn in the flesh that Paul endured was not a natural thorn that grows on bushes and trees. This thorn in the flesh is anything that Satan uses to harass the children of God. It may be doubts and fears, trials, tribulations, etc. To sum it up, it is something that brings one down to the footstool of the Mercy of God. If one were lifted up all the time, what need would there be for him to plead for mercy? In this case, he would not because he would not feel the need of mercy.

Let us keep in mind that God knows the needs of His people. He has promised to supply all their needs, and not their wants. (see Romans 8:28 quoted earlier.)

As we read Isaiah 43:2, we note that God promised that you would not be alone during the dark and trying days. He is there with you! "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and though the rivers roll,

they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." In connection with this, let us remember that the road to heaven is not an easy path. Although there are many troubles ahead, God is there with you. "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." (2 Cor. 4:8-9)

Again, God knows the needs of His people. It takes a heavy trial to teach them patience. God will see that a trial will come your way to teach you patience. "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:23)

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

REPORT OF MEETING

1738 31st Street West
Birmingham, Ala. 35208

Dear Brother Spangler:

Hope you and yours are well and enjoying the joys only those chosen of God know anything about.

We have just attended a three-day meeting, the Buttahatchie Union Meeting. The Lord was gracious and visited us through the persons of his ministers; and we hope that we are thankful for His goodness and mercy to usward. Elder C. M. Haygood and Elder Jerry Evers of the Pleasant Valley Association of Texas; Elder George W. Jones of the South Ouachita Association; Elder H. C. Moon and Elder C. C. Hand of the Five Mile Creek Association; Elder W. D. Griffin, whom you well know; (I am glad he is back in Alabama — sorry that his health does not permit him to exercise as he would desire to;) Elder E. E. McCool, of Buttahatchie Union and Brother Clovis Townley, a licentiate of the South Arkansas Association, all came laden with good news

from a far country, and all were blessed with good delivery, and we, I hope, were blessed with a ear to hear and a heart to understand.

I am enclosing a check for the new subscriber as shown. May the Lord be with you and keep you is our prayer for Christ's sake.

Mrs. R. A. Hocutt

REPORT OF GOOD MEETINGS
IN CANADA

Apt. 315, 80 Scott Street
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Am enclosing obituary of our dear departed Sister, Mrs. Flossie Hodgins. Am also enclosing copy of a letter written by her to Elder and Sister Edna Turner. Am wondering if you would care to publish this letter, and also re-publish her experience from the **Signs** of February, 1957.

We felt honored and blessed to have Elder Spangler, his wife and friends with us at our May meeting. And last week end was our June Meeting; and again we were blessed with good preaching from Elder Rhue and Elder Turner from the U. S., as well as from our Canadian speakers. How wonderfully we feel they spoke the same truth. As one has said before, "The sweetness lingers on."

We do appreciate the writings in the **Signs**. May God see fit to continue its publication.

A little sister in a precious hope.

Verna Carscadden

(We will re-publish Sister Hodgins experience in the October issue. — J. D. W.)

LETTER BY THE LATE
SISTER FLOSSIE HODGINS

The following letter was written by Mrs. Ellis (Flossie) Hodgins, formerly of 1197 Richmond Street, London, Ontario, to Elder and Mrs. Elmon Turner. Mrs. Hodgins passed

away on April 15, 1971. (See obituary this issue)

December 15, 1969

Dear Elder and Sister Turner:

Olive read your most comforting and good letter to me. I did enjoy it. We also read the 71st Psalm and I hope the Lord will bless and keep me in my old age.

I want to tell you of the sweetest experience I had in the hospital. When I found out I had to go to the hospital and had to have an operation, I felt the Lord was putting me there. He sends us our sickness and our trials and He also sends us our blessings, and I felt reconciled that if it was His will, that was what I wanted. Before going to the hospital, I was thinking of my trouble and the Lord showed me where He had taken me out of trials before and He showed me so plainly where he was able to take me through this. What a wonderful God. I felt I would be brought home again and while in the hospital I hadn't dread or fear of the operation. I just seemed to be resting in peace. The night before the operation, I told the girls I was just resting in peace and I felt it was the Peace that passeth understanding. I felt it was.

So the dear Lord has put me there and has taken me home and I am gaining slowly. What a wonderful God we have to trust in! I hope He will make me fit for that Heavenly Home.

I hope you are both real well and may the Lord bless you both.

Much love.

Flossie Hodgins

44 Durett Grove
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Peter 4:17, 18)

The Scriptures teach that God shall judge his people, but not that He will mark iniquities against them in his divine justice, for this He did to Christ when He laid upon him the iniquities of us all. He suffered the justice of God for the unjust sinners that He might bring us to God. He met and satisfied divine justice so that He might be just and remain just in justifying the ungodly. Jesus Christ is both the judge and the justifier of his people, for He came not into the world to condemn them but to save them from their sins. When they are judged in his experimental dealings with them they are chastened of him that they may not be condemned neither with or by the world. He came to call sinners to repentance and to give to those He called to it the forgiveness of sins. Both are gifts and He never offered them anything. Neither can they have it till He pleases to give it, regardless of how eager they are to receive it. We may at times quote with much complacency, ". . . no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. . ." But when God is severely chastising His children they will most certainly try to get out of his almighty hand and have their own way about the matter; but still to no avail, for Jesus said, "I am the WAY," (not a way), but "the Way, the truth and the life." The Lord is described as having ways, but his ways are not our ways. Experimentally speaking He deals with his people in many ways, but Jesus is the way and only way of life and salvation. There also is only one spiritual or eternal life and one salvation for his people, and Jesus is both and all of each to them.

In speaking of the judgment Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This has reference to the experimental dealing of the Lord with his people in this life upon the earth, and by no means has reference to a judgment of them after they are resurrected in Christ's

likeness, for in his likeness they most positively will be. Neither does it have reference to any thing outside of Christ's lovingkindness and the multitude of his tender mercy in dealing with them. The same is mentioned in the whole chapter from which the text is quoted: I Peter 4th chapter. Whether it be rebuke, correction, or instruction, it is all beneficial and is accomplished by the spirit of his grace, love and mercy, leading, teaching and guiding them in the paths of righteousness for his name sake. It is through and by the Spirit of Christ that the old man is crucified, the flesh is mortified, and the child of grace is delivered from evil. It is the children of grace possessing two natures after their new births, that are chastened of the Lord; and his chastisement is to teach and correct them, as well as to keep them by his power. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby."

It is the Lord's dealing with them in his own judgment for their good and for his glory. Therefore the Scriptures teach for our comfort and consolation, to ". . . think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. as though some strange thing happen unto you. . ." These fiery trials are more or less common in the experience of all his children; He hath said, "And I will bring the third part through the fire," (not over, or under, or around, but "through the fire"), "and I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." All these dealings of the Lord with his people are to separate them from self and the world, and to humble and keep them meek and lowly, wholly dependent upon him for all things pertaining to life and salvation.

Where the scriptures speak of the righteous scarcely being saved has no reference whatsoever to their salvation

being scarce in Christ, for He is their salvation, all of it from start to finish. The scarce part is in their experience. Experimentally they think it is scarce amidst great trials afflictions and the many snares in their experience. Nevertheless, truly they are as secure as Christ himself is, who said, "because I live, ye shall live also," and ". . . where I am, there ye may be also." Therefore they are as secure as Christ himself is. The Lord separates the sheep from the goats in this life, for He is the good Shepherd of the sheep that never leaves nor forsakes them. He is today upon the throne of his glory with all power in heaven and earth, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the father gave him in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. He is upon the throne of David and his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with justice hence forth and forever; the zeal or spirit of the Lord will perform this.

When the Lord says by his life giving spirit in the heart and mind of one and all of his elect of grace. "Come out from among them," (the world) "and be ye separate saith the Lord, and I will receive you, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord almighty," they most certainly obey him, for he calls them with a holy and effectual calling. So He separates them from the world, to which they can never return, for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last day, forever glorified in Jesus likeness. ". . . as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 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." He by the one offering forever put away sins, made an end of sins by a perfect atonement, satisfied divine justice, abolished death, rose triumphant over death and hell and ascended at the right hand of the majesty on high to appear in His sweet and glorious presence for every one that He

died for; and before God they are in him as perfect and blameless as Jesus, who is their all in all.

Any who deny the perfect, complete and wholesome atonement of Christ in making perfect satisfaction to divine justice for all the sins of all his people, by which they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ, deny both the work of God the Father, and God the son, and God the Holy Ghost. We could not atone or make satisfaction to divine justice for **one sin** should we suffer eternally in an eternal hell. Without the shedding of pure, perfect, and precious blood there is no remission of sins, and we of our selves don't have one drop of pure blood, but are corrupt from head to foot, with no soundness in us, and we can no more change our nature or ways than an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard his spots. The old tree is corrupt and cannot bring forth good fruit; all good fruit is of Christ, and I by nature am the chief of sinners whom Christ came to save, and did and doeth, and will save to the utmost all the Father hath given him. They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's own Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. When they awake from death or asleep in Christ they will in that moment see Christ as He is, now glorified, and be like him and ever be with him in glory, In the resurrection of the saints, they will be raised in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body, in immortality, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. This will be when Christ appears the second time without sin unto salvation and makes manifest in completion the glorification of all He died for, and rose again for their justification.

Thanks be unto God who gave us the victory over sin, death and hell through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all praise, all honor, all glory for ever and ever.

(Elder) John L. Sanders

CANNOT NOW MEET REGULARLY
WITH BRETHREN

Newton, Ala. 36352

Dear Elder Spangler:

My subscription is about to expire so please continue it for the check attached. For some fifty years I have received the *Signs* and desire to read it as long as I remain here.

I hope that you and the other editors continue in good health, and especially that Elder Griffin regains his. We have been associated for half a century; and his writings are inspiring.

Elder E. R. Sorrells of Hartford, Ala. recently died after a long illness. He had been pastor of several churches in our association, and lived a wonderful life among our people. Sister Alice preceded him in death several years. They were devoted to each other and had a wonderful family.

Another great loss to us was the passing of Sister Nettie Smith of New Hope Church. It was my privilege to baptize Brother Warren Smith late in life, and he and Sister Nettie were a wonderful example for others in the cause of Christ.

We miss very much Sister Mattie Sorrells who recently passed on. She and I were baptized by Elder H. A. Smith the same day nearly fifty-eight years ago. She meant so much to the church with her husband, Deacon A. E. Sorrells, who died several years ago.

The writer is now seventy-nine years of age and unable to attend church regularly because his dear companion, Ada, is an invalid. She has been so faithful to him during the time he has served ten different churches, and attended associations far and wide, and been in the ministry fifty-three years. Surely we miss the fond association with the Baptists far and wide.

We remember so well our first trip to Virginia thirty-one years ago when we attended the Staunton River Association at Springfield Church, and met so many Elders and others whom we loved . . . We noticed in the June issue

of the *Signs* that a son of Sister Ella Richardson had gone to be with the Lord. How well we remember the Richardson family, and also that of her brother with whom we spent the night of the second Sunday in July, 1940; and how royally we were entertained. The Williams family mean much to the Primitive Baptists today. We have been treated far better than we deserve wherever we have gone among the Baptists. As we reach the closing days here below, may all of us be blessed to live closer to the Lord, for in Him we live, move, and have our entire being. Without Him we are nothing.

In closing, pardon me for mentioning an incident in closing a sermon in Martinsville, Va.: A young lady came and said to me, "Brother Collins, I had never seen you before you came to the rostrum to speak, but during your sermon I was made to know that you preached that sermon to me a month before that Sunday morning." Great and marvelous are thy works, and past finding out are thy ways. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." John joins Jeremiah in affirming, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God."

O may I join each of you in that city where pains are unknown and death never comes. Remember me in your prayers.

(Elder) J. J. Collins

Rt. 1, Box 272E
Jonesboro, La.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I am sending a letter from a dear sister, Sister Kate Mathews, one who has been with us in the church only a short time.

I have enjoyed the *Signs of the Times* for about thirty years. To me it is the best. May God be with you all.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
E. A. Tyler

THE LETTER

Dear Eldridge and Lois:

It is very hard for me to express my feelings in spiritual matters though I have talked a lot and worried my brothers and sisters in the flesh. I still don't feel like I have said what I wanted to say to any of you. If the Lord will grant, I will try to tell you a little of what goes with me.

Most of the time I seem to be in the wilderness. I feel wretched and guilty about everything. I feel like I have broken the commandments, and do not feel fit to even sit among God's people. I feel that if you knew how wretched I am, you would not want me near you. I have shed more tears over what I am over the past years, and spent many nights trying to reach what you all seem to have. Many times I can only cry, "Abba, Father." So many times I have wanted someone to talk to, and when they were near me, I could never say what I wanted to say.

After I had joined that Baptist Church and saw what a mistake I had made, because I couldn't go along with their man-made worship, I had to ask out, because I hope I believe in an all-powerful God that has made all things for his own purpose; and nothing is that God did not make.

I am vile, I am weak, and there is no good thing in my flesh. I have no confidence in my flesh for I know I am full of sin and always will be as long as I am on this earth. But the few things I glimpse, and my afflictions and trials and temptations, are the reasons for my hope . . .

I wanted for a long time to ask for a home there but never felt fit. When I finally did see that I was going to, I just asked the Lord to lead me. After I finally was aware of myself, I felt that they would not have me; and I wouldn't blame any of you because I hate myself, and can never do or say the things I want to.

A few times I have seemed to sit in

heavenly places, and to have my soul fed with manna from above and to be filled, and to drink from that blessed fountain that can quench my thirst. I am poor and weak in spirit and am needy, and so much of the time hunger and thirst after righteousness. I can only hope; and sometime my hope is very slim, as it is today. But I know that if only I was written in the Book of Life will I be God's. But I believe I also know that God is my judge, and I trust in him for he is my refuge in all things. For a long time I just had my Bible to comfort me, for I do not care for things of this world anymore. My mind is continually on spiritual things, so much so that I cannot carry on a conversation. I am a worm of the dust and depend only on the mercy of God. I do not know, and am made many times to fear that I am not one of His; but with such things as I have told you hangs my hope.

During my long years without a home, I would write things that came into my mind about my feelings, which probably do not mean anything to anyone but me; but I poured my heart out on paper and cried much. I have had some precious things come to me which I hope came from God. I believe they did, because I have kept them in my heart all these years, and they have given me much comfort and joy. They have stayed with me and cannot be shaken no matter what anyone may say.

I realize that I haven't shown much fruit of the spirit to you all, and I feel so unfit and unqualified for I seem to see something in all of you that I seem to have missed. Brother Hilton can express my feelings so very well when he speaks of his undone condition; for that is the way I feel. I wish I were more able to express myself but I just can't seem to put it into the right words . . .

This is written from the bottom of my heart, and I hope I haven't worried you. I have already been too much bother to many people.

May God be with you and yours always.

Love always,
Kate (Mathews)

A FEW OF THE SPIRITUAL
TRAVELS OF J. J. RHUE
(Written in the Year of 1957)

I was born September 5, 1908, the fifth of nine children born to our parents, Thomas Davis and Moma Prescott Rhue, at Stella, Carteret County, North Carolina. Our parents were honorable and devoted, but poor, hard working people. They did their best to set a good example for their children to follow, always admonished us to keep good company and abstain from the use of strong drink. They did not approve of their children attending dances. We felt then that our parents were much too strict, but we now realize what noble parents we had and that they were only doing their duty toward us children. The longer we live the more we desire to follow in their footsteps.

Our mother and father always took their children with them to church. Waiting for the last preacher to finish his sermon would become very tiresome. When I became old enough, it became my duty and privilege to drive the family car and take them to churches far and near. The comfort and joy they received while visiting in the homes of Old Baptists and attending the churches I could not understand. They were blessed to travel much among the Lord's people.

I seldom ever attended churches of any denomination after I grew up and left home. I had great respect for my parents and did not like to hear anyone criticise the doctrine preached and believed by Old Baptists. However, I did not have any further interest in them, and had a feeling that they would, as many have predicted, soon die out when the older ones had passed away. During these years, I had many serious thoughts concerning my eternal salvation and final destination should death overtake me. I endeavored to live in

such a way as not to bring reproach on my parents and family. The determination to be a leader and make something of myself was very strong and a desire to be looked upon as a good fellow was with me.

I became acquainted, in my early manhood, with a young lady who would later become my devoted companion. After marriage, at the age of twenty-three, we pursued a normal and very happy life and were blessed to make a good living by working very hard. We made our home in Hopewell, Virginia, but soon moved back to the farm where I was born and reared. Three years later I became ill with typhoid fever, and for several days it seemed that death hovered over me, and this illness was so severe that I remained unable to work for months. The good Lord certainly must have had a purpose in my staying here, or He would not have raised me from such a low condition. In due time, after having lost almost all my strength, I began to recover. After the extremely high temperature had subsided, my left leg began to give me much trouble and perhaps will as long as I live.

I have wondered why He kept me here. During my illness, I had a deep feeling that it would take a higher power than man to raise me from my helpless condition, and I made many promises, only to be broken later, that I would do better if the Lord would restore me to my former state of health. Serious thoughts entered my mind. I considered heeding the advice of the Arminians and join one of the churches preaching their doctrine; later to withdraw if I became dissatisfied. According to their doctrine, I would thus be safe. Somehow I just could not reach the point where I had enough confidence in them or in myself to do this or make such a step. I felt I would be a hypocrite if I did this and would be lost if I died in this condition. A time had come in my life when I felt to be a complete failure, and I realized that I was in a helpless condition. I was aware, for the first time, that I was in dire need of

help from a heavenly source. We moved to New Bern, N. C. before my complete recovery was experienced. My condition was such that I was forced to leave the farm and seek other work. Then later, in the year of 1936, I secured a position in Winston-Salem. This seemed an opportunity to get ahead and accumulate something and at the same time get away from my depressed condition, that I might in a new environment and under different conditions, meet new acquaintances and somehow start all over again with a new life. Little did I realize that I could not run away from the all-powerful God.

For several months, or possibly a year, I did a pretty good job thinking that I had overcome my past difficulties. We began making big plans for the future, and we proceeded, with the help of a very devoted brother, to build us a home. About this time I was feeling somewhat prosperous and self confident; but lo and behold, little did I realize what troubles and sorrow the future held for this unworthy sinner.

We were now in our new home. The good Lord had blessed us with a fine, healthy son and a good position, seemingly nothing to hinder our future from peace and happiness. Soon I awoke from this blissful state of contentment to find myself a very miserable creature. Even though my work was what some would consider wholesome and pleasant, in contact with many fine people and friends, meeting many new faces daily. In the midst of many people of all classes, but just about the average you meet in a large city, I became the loneliest and the most downcast human being upon the face of the earth. Finding myself under a great burden, we began, my wife and I, attending Old Baptist meetings at churches my brother, Elder Z. L. Rhue, served as pastor, and other churches in that part of North Carolina and over in nearby Virginia. I was seeking and searching for relief that I desired so much but had not found.

As time passed, we visited much among Old Baptists. On many occasions when in the home of these people, whom

I had been made to love, I would sit and listen as they told of their trials, and shared their sorrows together, and, to my dismay, I had discovered a people that were traveling and experiencing the same trials and tribulations that I had been traveling through. My feelings I tried to hide and conceal. I did not want anyone to know how little I felt to be, but most of the time I could hardly control myself and would choke up and could not talk. In this condition, I would leave their company in order to be alone and try to shake off my troubles. I tried to stay away from these people, realizing at the same time that I was never satisfied except in their presence. It seemed they were magnetized in some mysterious way and I could not stay away from them. About the only time that I received any relief was hearing the glorious gospel being preached. I still had to learn that I could not run away from this impelling power or force that was leading me in paths that I had not known before. As time passed I became so restless that I felt that I must do something; so in 1939 I told my dear wife that I thought that we could better our condition if we moved back to the farm, a small tract of land my parents had given us soon after our marriage. I told her that I had always wanted to farm and I believed my leg had improved to the extent that I could do the work on the farm without too much handicap. My wife being a very agreeable companion agreed to make the change. We listed our home for sale, resigned my job and moved back to Carteret County, N. C. and the farm.

Little did I realize at the time that I had made a move that would take me back to a place that I had tried to stay away from, Hadnott Creek Primitive Baptist Church where my mother and father were members and I had attended years before as a child. I had a deep abiding feeling for this church, but had tried to keep such feeling from entering my mind. Soon I found in moving I had not left my troubles behind. We attended church regularly and this awful bur-

den became even heavier. I loved these people, but felt too unworthy to ask for a home with them. When trouble came and I was overwhelmed with sorrow, then I would promise the Lord that I would offer to the Church at the next meeting, but when the time arrived and the opportunity came, I found myself in a different frame of mind, and again I had found that my promises were not worth anything in the sight of a sin avenging God. The time had come that I hated my own life. Every way that I turned there was condemnation. I felt that I was not fit to live nor die. I could not stay away from their meetings or the company of Old Baptists, but felt too sinful, weak and unworthy to be in their company.

In January, 1940, our daughter, Agnes, was born. Never in my life had I experienced such shock as when the doctor told me that our baby had no upper lip or roof in her mouth and had a cleft palate. What a horrible sight it was to behold our innocent baby born in this condition! I felt that this thing could not have happened if I had not been such a great sinner. It seemed that the wrath of almighty God had been let loose on me, a hell deserving sinner. I had not only sinned away the day of grace, but I had by my sins brought down His wrath on my beloved child. I was such a condemned sinner before a just and holy God. My cry was, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." These were trying hours for her mother and me. It seemed that all hope had faded and that I was sinking deeper by the hour into despair. My inward cry was, "Mercy, mercy, mercy." I became a beggar indeed. I begged the Lord to look down on me in pity and compassion and forgive me of my many sins, and, if it could be His will, to provide a way and make it possible for our little Agnes to be spared the horror of having to go through life in her condition. We were informed by our doctor that she probably would never be able to speak an audible word; but the Lord heard my cries. My prayers were answered. Through the providence of one who

works all things after the council of His own will, directing the hands of the surgeons, she received surgery when she was five weeks old and again when she was ten years of age, and at last when she was sixteen years of age. The operations were successful. Her speech is now excellent and her mouth and other features are almost normal. A miracle was performed. Agnes is a senior in high school this year, and is president of her class. I want to thank the Lord, if I could for His mercy and grace. He reached down and picked me up when all other help had failed. I had gone to the end of all my human strength. It was, "Lord, save, I perish." During this experience there was a voice that came with power saying, "Fear not, but stand firm for the cause for which I have sent thee."

When the Lord's time came and I was made willing in the day of His power, I was asking the Church for a home with them and was received along with my dear companion, and was baptized on the first Sunday in September, 1946, by Elders Zennie L. Rhue and A. B. Barham in the old mill pond on Hadnott Creek. This is where my father and mother, and my mother's father and mother were laid beneath the liquid grave. There I received much relief and left a burden. This burden to be baptized has never returned, but the most of my time I am in a destitute condition and am still a beggar and pensioner upon His grace. I have many doubts and fears and am made to wonder if I have ever known the Lord in the pardoning of my many sins. If I am not a deceived mortal, I love the brethren and the Church, and, according to Holy Writ, this is one evidence that we have passed from death unto life. This has been a rough road, but He did not promise His children that they would go through this world, "On flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas." "I will also leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." If we knew our sufferings were for His name's

sake, it would be much consolation, but we have to go faltering and begging from day to day. Some times our hope is almost gone, then again it is strong enough to live by, and may we be possessed with strength when we come to press a dying pillow, and may the Lord keep and bless His people is my hope. This has not been written for the benefit it might be to others, but for the relief I am still seeking.

Part One comes to a close on this the first day of October, 1957.

Jabez J. Rhue

(Concluded next month)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

1971

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler)

To the Upper Country Line Association in session with Reidsville Church, July 17, 18, and 19, 1971.

Greetings in the Lord:

It has fallen my lot by appointment to write this Circular Letter to the churches composing this association; and also our corresponding associations.

I will refer you to the scripture found in Jeremiah sixth chapter and sixteenth verse. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

It seems proper to the writer that we be reminded from time to time what associations are for; and what they are not for. The word association carries with it the thought of spiritually visiting with each other in the kingdom of our Lord — to meet to worship God, see many lovely ministers, brethren and friends who we do not see often, and re-affirm our hope in His love and mercy.

It seems the poet describes this in the hymn in Loyd's Hymn Book:

"Not to control the church of God,
Or rule, or bind her sons,
But to associate below
With Zion's little ones."

In most associations, those sent from the churches to represent them in the association, are designated as messengers instead of delegates. This is proper, as the churches have not delegated any authority to them to act for them in the internal affairs of the church. Our forefathers saw the danger of intrusion by associations in the internal affairs of churches, and inserted in our Articles of Faith that each church was independent in matters of discipline; as set forth in Article twelve of our Minutes.

In the prophecies and in the gospel there are two sounds that go forth from the servants of the Lord: a note of praise, and a note of warning. The nation of Israel depended on the sound of the trumpet, blown by the priest, to warn them of the approach of an enemy, and to summon them for the day of jubilee or the worship of God. How careful it becomes us to be in these things for if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for battle. That which was applicable to the people in the days of Jeremiah, is also good for us today.

The question will be asked, What are the old paths: and the good way? This is a very important question. We cannot call the paths the old paths just because they have been followed probably an hundred or a thousand years.

It appears to me that the old paths have reference to the doctrine, order and ordinances of the Lord's house. Old paths cannot be considered the ones mentioned in our text, except they are in accord with the infallible word of God. It becomes all of us, both ministry, deacons and brethren to continually inquire as to our practice, whether it conforms to the word of God.

Brethren, may we ever keep in mind what a great blessing it is to meet each other as pilgrims here below, and to bow low before a gracious God, realizing what a great blessing it is to have this privilege.

All the paths we have mentioned lead to what the prophet calls, "The good way." This good way is Jesus, who is

called the way, the truth, and the life. This is the good way referred to in the scriptures where it says, "And thine ears shall hear a sound behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left."

May we all be on guard not to accept tradition or traditionary practices as a substitute for the word of God; or be lulled into accepting or believing any doctrine or practice because it is called the old path, unless it has a thus saith the Lord.

"O may we ever walk in Him,
And nothing know besides,
Nothing desire, or aught esteem,
But Jesus crucified."

I think the poet had the good way in view in the hymn on page 51 of the Hymn and Tune Book.

"The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone, they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

The apostles all proclaimed him thus,
Jesus the Lord, or God with us,
Who did by death our ransom pay,
The truth, the life, the good old way.

'Tis true, there's one exceeding broad,
Cast up by men, a dangerous road,
Where thousands to destruction stray,
Who never found the good old way.

Cheer up, believer, courage take;
Why should thy heart with sorrow break
Eternal joys shall soon repay,
The sorrows of the good old way."

It becomes us today to stand in the ways, and inquire for the old paths, (paths supported by the word of God,) and walk therein; and we are told we will find rest for our souls. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12)

DESIRES PRAYERS OF THE BRETHREN

828 Belmont Ave.
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Editors:

Inclosed is a copy of a memorial to

my beloved husband, James B. Barron, who passed away October 9, 1970. Would you please publish in the **Signs of the Times**.

My husband loved to read the **Signs** very much, and looked forward to it each month. Needless to say how alone I feel since God took him home to rest from pain and sorrows in this world. I believe with all my heart he was one of God's children: his life was one. To know him was to love him. I prayed that I might live to care for him, and the Lord blessed me to stay by his side lacking two weeks and three days before he passed way.

The Lord has been good to me all the days of my life. I feel so unworthy of anything — just a poor weak sinner wandering in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and hoping when I pass from this life for a blessed place of rest, where there will be no pain or sorrow, no tears or trials.

I am enclosing a check for my sister's subscription and mine, as shown.

I hope you good brethren will have a mind to pray for me when at a throne of grace: I feel the need so much. It is such a lonely life without my husband. O is there anyone like I feel to be. There are times I feel lifted up, but so much of the time low in spirit.

Your sister in a blessed hope of a brighter day.

Patricia P. Barron

(See obituary this issue.)

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 1

Providence, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

If blessed to, I feel I must write concerning my experience. I know I can't write as I would like.

I felt the presence of the Lord with me when a small child; and this caused me to fear. When I was sixteen a voice spoke and said, Read the Bible. I started reading it. While I was in college and walking along the sidewalk, a voice

spoke plainly and said, Dancing isn't worth what you are paying for it. I did not desire to dance any more and stopped.

When I was nineteen I was real sick one night and thought I was going to die; and I promised the Lord if he would spare me, I would take the Bible around and read it to people. I took it everywhere I went for about three years, and would ask the people to let me read to them.

The Lord gave me a good husband. I was married to David Henry Sartin in 1931. I feel the Lord was with me for I started going to the Primitive Baptist Church; and after a while I was received and baptized by Elder Dodd. My husband was good about taking me to the meetings. I felt so alone when I went down into the water, and thought of when Christ went to the cross alone.

After I reached home from the baptizing and standing in the front yard, I was given a love for the church and brethren I had never felt before. I hope I still love them, and always will.

May the dear Lord have mercy on us. It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has been good to me all my life. I know He does all the saving and I do all the sinning. My health is very bad now.

In Christian love,
Mrs. D. H. Sartin

THE EXAMPLE OF FOOT WASHING

(John 13:15)

The example of foot washing,
Giv'n by the Saviour dear,
Is followed by many of the saints
In churches once a year.

'Twas an act of humility,
And of condescension
On the part of the Son of God,
"The high and lofty One

He told his disciples they ought
T' wash one another's feet,
And many of the sons of grace
Do find this service sweet.

It is engaged in with pure joy
By followers of th' Lamb,
Who desire to walk uprightly
Before the great I AM.

But now it is not to be made
Of fellowship a test
Among Old Baptists here below,
Who are a people blest.

Differences there will be here
Until the final day,
But in the mansions of glory
They'll all be done away.

On that great and glorious day,
Saints will their Saviour meet,
They will see the Lord and Master,
Who washed his apostles' feet.

A happy meeting it will be
For all the blood-bought throng,
And they'll ever be with the Lord,
To whom they all belong.

C W. Vass
409 New York Ave.
Eliz. City, N. C.

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The two hundred sixth annual session of the **Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, at the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church located in the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following, October 2, 3, and 4, 1971.

The meeting house is located on highway No. 43. Those arriving by way of 301 north or south would leave highway 301 by-pass at junction 43 east. In case of inclement weather the association will meet at Benvenue School also located on highway 43.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order to visit with us.

Johnny Ray Gardner, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association** will be held, the Lord willing, with Reedy Prong Church; which is located about fifteen miles east of Dunn, N. C. — one mile off of highway 55.

Those traveling from the east will turn right at an association pointer about four miles from Newton Grove, N. C. Those traveling from the west will turn left at the same pointer.

The ministering brethren and brethren, together with all who love the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, are invited.

C. D. Turner

ALL-DAY MEETING AT NASSAWANGO

The Lord willing there will be an all-day meeting at Nassawango Church near Salisbury, Maryland, the fifth Sunday in August, 1971. Services to begin at 10:30 A. M.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1971 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Scotts Church, Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in October.

The Meeting House is located about six miles south-west of Wilson, N. C. on hard top rural road. Those coming from west, north or east take Highway 301 south of Wilson, cross Contentnea Creek bridge just below motel section, turn right on hard top road and follow on to the meeting. Those coming from the south on 301 highway turn left at stop lights in Lucama, go about one mile to the intersection, turn left and go about two hundred yards, turn right and follow on to the meeting.

The Saturday and Sunday services will be held in the Lucama School building located on the north-east edge of the town of Lucama.

All lovers of the truth, our correspondents, ministers of our faith and order, and especially ministers of our sister associations are invited.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The 1971 session of *The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salisbury Church, corner of Route 50 and Baptist Street, Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 20 and 21, next.

Anyone coming from the north on Tuesday should contact Brother William Adkins, Mardela, Maryland, Tel. 742-2198, Area Code 301; those coming from the south, please contact Brother Bill Davis, New Church, Virginia, Tel. 824-4421, Area Code 703; or Brother Harry Ward, Snow Hill, Maryland, Tel. 632-1816, Area Code 301. Those coming on Wednesday, proceed directly to the church house.

We cordially invite ministers, brethren and friends who love and seek the truth.

Mildred V. Dykes, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Smith River Primitive Baptist Association* will be held, the Lord willing, with Mountain View Church, Floyd County, Virginia, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday. (September 3, 4, and 5, 1971)

Those traveling Highway 221 should turn west on Road 610 at Raye Janney's Esso Service Station, and follow same approximately seven miles to No. 659, which leads to the meeting house.

Our correspondents and other brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk
Ferrum, Va.

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the *Seven Mile Association* will be held with the church at Reedy Prong Meeting House, Johnston County, N. C., beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday.

The meeting house is located on County Road 1124 between Highway 50 and 55. Follow Highway 50 east of Benson approximately 8 miles, turn right on County Road 1124 at association sign, and continue to meeting house.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator
James Young, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held at Halcottville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1971.

Those coming Tuesday take Denver Road at Kelly Corners to the home of John B. Hewett — Crystal Spring Farm. Those coming Wednesday go directly to the Meeting House at Halcottville.

Brethren and friends are invited.

Elder A. J. Slauson

Danville, Virginia September, 1971

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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We always welcome letters and articles from the brethren for publication. Some of the Elders are faithful in remembering that we need their support by their writings and in handling subscriptions; and we wish that more would do the same.

EDITORS

EDITORIAL

FAITHFULNESS

It has been requested that we write upon the above subject, and in doing so, we confess ourselves as too much of the earth, earthy, to be able of ourselves to rise to that height from which we could instruct our brethren in faithfulness. To our sorrow, we find that though we are at times able to rejoice in the love and mercy of a faithful God, yet our recollections often reproach us with many instances of our unfaithfulness, from which recollections we ought to learn, yes, and we do learn, that in us, that is in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. How good it is that "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Faithfulness is not of man, and never can it proceed from man, it is the direct fruit of God's Holy Spirit, and there is only one way that this faith can be ours. The Scripture saith, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." True faith is only received by divine revelation, it is not the darkened mind of the creature depending upon the veracity of the word of its creator, but it is an illuminated mind confidently depending upon the ability, and walking in the strength of Him who has promised.

Thus faith is not just a blind assent-

ing to the truth, but it is an implicit trust in him who has imparted strength by the word he has spoken to us. Thus David went forth in the strength of the Lord. Not only does faith believe the word spoken, but while it is inlively exercise the recipient feels and knows that all Scripture is given by inspiration, that not one word of our eternal God shall fall to the ground, that his faithfulness is unto all generations, and as he hath established the earth, so it abideth. It is by and in this God-given faith that the soul diligently seeks God, believes his words and walks in his ways, and the more faith is in exercise the more that soul will have confidence in God, and lose confidence in the flesh. For one to walk after the flesh, is to walk after that that pleases not God, for in the flesh we cannot please God. Thus those who are in the flesh, and follow its motions, are without faith, and Paul tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Now while God in creation pronounced his work good, yet the work of man, that is, the work of the flesh never was good and never pleased the Lord, and daily we find the flesh profiteth nothing, it is under the curse of sin. Of the word of God Isaiah saith, "It shall accomplish that which I please," and Jesus, the Word made flesh, said, "I do always those things that please him." It is here, we would say, that true faithfulness is found: in Jesus. Paul tells us that "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

How necessary to examine ourselves, and that often, whether we be in the faith. It is easy to deceive ourselves, and we may deceive others, but we cannot deceive God. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And if Christ be in you, the body is

dead because of sin. How clear and cutting such truth is; and how necessary, we say again, for both hearer and speaker to examine themselves and prove themselves. Faithfulness is the keynote of Jesus as a Son, faithfulness should be the keynote of those who profess to be his.

"Let us ask the important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure.)

What it is to be a christian,
How we may our hearts assure.

Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

As we are concerned principally with those who profess Christ, we would direct our remarks first to those who are brethren, partakers of a holy calling. "Consider him that 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." There is not one spark of faith in the soul but what Jesus is the author and finisher of it, and so, while we are in this life Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Now to live in Christ and Christ to live in us, is not like one sitting in a bus and that bus taking us to our destination, while we may read a newspaper, chat or sleep, but is a daily self-examination in the sight of truth, and struggling hard against sin and unbelief. A taking joyfully the spoiling of our goods and counting it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, is not according to the flesh. When the Lord gives a grain of faith, he will also see that that faith shall be tried. There will be a wicked heart to contend with, a darkened mind, a stubborn will, a hardened conscience, and all this in the one who has vowed to walk softly before the Lord.

We are naturally proud, and the Lord knows how to humble, and he often takes a way we least expect to bring us low. "He that is low need fear no

fall." Yet the lower we are brought faith sees the Lord exalted higher, views him as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. When faith is dormant in the soul we become high-minded, and, as far as spiritual things are concerned, we are asleep. To such Paul says, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some of you have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." At such times our faithlessness will be seen. There will be a winking at sin, an indifference to prayer, to the word of God, to the afflictions of Christ, as manifested in his saints. It is at such times that wars and fightings come, and oh how cruel sometimes brethren can be to brethren. Again this world will not be the enemy it once was to such, and riches will have lost their deceitfulness. However, the Lord will not leave them there if they are his, there is a furnace in Zion, and faith will again enable them, under affliction to confess his hand and know no will but his. It is then that the fullness of faith excludes unbelief, softens, makes a tender conscience, denies ungodliness and enables one to live a godly, righteous and sober life in the present evil world. Faithfulness demands that all who own a Savior's blood shall lay their tongues in the dust, yea, shall be dumb rather than speak evil against those for whom Christ died.

Now, as is often the case with those who speak in God's name, as with the people to whom they minister, we would write upon the necessity of faithfulness in those who are upon the walls of Zion. The word saith, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," that is, he must be faithful to his God and the word of his grace. He must be faithful in declaring what he has handled, tasted and felt of the word of life, he must not handle the word of God deceitfully. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, doing it as he that shall give account unto God. Paul charged Timothy before God and

the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

This charge was also given to us, and therefore how necessary to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. There are many who need reproof and rebuke these days, and do we reprove or rebuke them? And is it with all long-suffering and doctrine? All need exhorting that they shall walk worthy of their high calling, not with eye service as men-pleasers, that they shall not copy their conversation after this vain world. A ministry with no rebuke or reproof in it will be very pleasing and satisfying to the flesh, but dishonoring to God. A ministry without exhortation will breed an indifference to the precepts of the gospel. Godly exhortation will not fail to stir up the pure mind of the hearers unless they be reprobate. Where there is a faithful ministry there is generally a faithful people, for it is often "Like priest, like people," and where there is a faithful people, such will pray that their minister shall prove faithful to them. A ministry that denies the doctrine of God in any part is not a faithful ministry. The church of God should always be careful in their judgment of a gift, for the words of an unfaithful elder will eat as doth a canker. A faithful ministry will not overthrow the faith of God's children like Hymenaeus and Philetus who were unfaithful in their teaching concerning the resurrection. An unfaithful ministry is to be blamed for much of the confusion and divisions that have ever crept into the church. Paul tells us, If I seek to please men I should not

be the servant of Christ; and Elihu said, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away."

To follow the high calling of an ambassador of God calls for the speaker to be as God's mouth. His testimony must not be with high sounding words of man's wisdom, and only as he divides the precious from the vile, is he God's mouth. There are many, perhaps, today as the Lord declared to Ezekiel: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." The Lord said he would lay the land most desolate because of their abominations. Surely there is a woe upon those who deal treacherously with God's people. Isaiah tells us, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If one speak, let him speak as the oracle of God, and if he minister, let him minister with the ability that God giveth. But we lack wisdom! James saith, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." There is nothing that brings a man to his knees in prayer if he be a servant of God more than a realizing sense of his insufficiency for these things, and the one who wrestles and communes with his God most in private, though he may often mourn an absent God, will find that God will give him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. It is only when one goes forth in the strength of the Lord that he can put to flight the armies of the aliens. Surely we need to cry daily, Lord, make and keep me faithful, faithful to thee and thy word, then I shall be faithful to

those that are thine.

G. R.

(The above was by Elder Ruston in September, 1931.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN 5:4

"For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had."

We are requested by a sister living in Texas to give some expression upon the above text, and we feel willing to do the best we can.

By reading the preceding chapter it will be seen that Jesus was performing miracles in Galilee, after which there was a feast of the Jews, and he went up to Jerusalem. He, being a law-abiding Jew, attended the feast days as well as the fast days, though not always, as it seems from careful reading. In fact, he came not to keep the law from a literal standpoint, but in the spirit of it. However, while at the feast at Jerusalem he was found in the temple, and no doubt took part in the feast. We are told that at Jerusalem by the sheep market there was a pool, called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches, and that in them lay a great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt and withered, waiting for the moving of the water. This to our view sets forth the entire law, through which was the hope of the Jews. Of all the multitude waiting at the pool we have no reason to suppose that one was other than a Jew. Jerusalem was the pride and admiration of that nation, and outside of it little seemed worth while. Their worship was there, the law was read there, the fast days and the feast were there and the pool through which, together with the work of an angel, healing was done. It was there also that the Jews bought

and sold and got gain. Notwithstanding the fact that they made the temple "a den of thieves," to them Jerusalem was "the holy city." All things pertaining to the temple worship were according to the commandments of the law, and from that standpoint cannot be criticised, but all those things were mere shadows and soon to pass away.

The term "five porches" seems rather odd, and particularly so if the pool was foursquare, but if round or octagon it could have had more if there be no significance in the number five. The number is full, as are the numbers three and seven so often used in the Scriptures, and may signify the five books of Moses embracing the whole law by which the Israelites were governed and through which they hoped and expected justification before God, and at last eternal life. But no law was given that could give life, if so righteousness would have been by the law. Therefore their hope was not "a good hope through grace," nor could they be justified by the law of Moses. It being all, however, they had, they had nothing else to hope in nor depend upon, hence the multitude of blind, lame, halt and withered were in the five porches of the pool waiting for healing, and some were literally healed of whatsoever disease they had.

This brings us to consider the ceremonial cleansing of the Jews through the blood of goats and calves offered by the high priest. Such cleansing was only outward, and for one year only, then there was again a remembrance of sins and another offering necessary. This shows that the law in its entirety, represented by the five porches, could never make the comers thereunto perfect; every ordinance showed in itself imperfection.

The angel that went down at a certain season and troubled the water, making healing possible, was not, in our understanding, such as is seen in pictures, with wings, sometimes called without authority, "angelic spirits." According to the Bible definition of the word "angel," it means "a ministering

spirit," or one sent to minister. Let us not forget that was an age of miracles, and some men who followed not Jesus had power to cast out devils and do many other wonderful works. We therefore conclude that the angel that troubled the water was a man, a ministering spirit, with peculiar power, no doubt of God, to give the water healing properties or powers, as it were. The term "an angel went down" simply means that he visited the pool at certain seasons, and has not a shadow of significance that he descended from heaven.

It is plain to be seen that all who were in the porches depended upon "instrumentalities" — the water, the angel and their own ability to get into the water when troubled; but there was one man there, a certain man, yet his hope was in the law, or, in other words, expected to assist in his healing by some day getting into the pool when the water was troubled. It matters not how undone one may be, he or she keeps on trying, hoping that some day they will be able to perform that which seems necessary in their salvation, but, as to that man, Jesus must come revealing his power and salvation. To the poor helpless man Jesus appeared and asked him if he would be made whole. The man replied, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." This demonstrates the utter ignorance of that whole nation of the power of the Godhead, gospel blessings and eternal salvation. Not a thought above the law, no hope except in works, no justification except through the deeds of the law. The man did not know Jesus, nor had he the slightest conception of what was about to take place, but Jesus knew him, and was there at the right moment to do the will of God in showing forth his power and his doctrine of election. He did not need the assistance of the angel, the water nor any man to put the object of his love into the pool, but simply "spake and it was done," saying to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." And immediately the man

was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. Marvelous power, infinite mercy and abounding grace. It was indeed sabbath to him, a rest from all his efforts to be healed, a day of strength in the Lord, able to do the commandments of Jesus, which are not grievous. How wonderful that the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and that the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and how glad poor sinners are that they are not offended in Jesus, but rather rejoice in his power and eternal God-head.

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”

After the man was healed and took up his bed the Jews found fault with him, saying, “This is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.” but he said, “He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk.” Self-righteous men always find fault with those healed by the Lord for not doing as they do in keeping the sabbath, praying three times a day, giving of all they possess, so they say, fasting and feasting, but they are, after being healed, under another law to God written in the heart and in the mind; no longer have they hope in the pool, nor are they found in the five porches, but rather in the temple of the living God worshiping him in the beauty of holiness, ascribing greatness to his name for their healing and eternal salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Well do they realize that an Angel indeed, God’s only Son, his ministering Spirit, came down from heaven to minister and to give his life a ransom for them. The pool at Jerusalem is no more, but a fountain has been opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of spiritual Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, and in this fountain the lame, the halt, the blind and the dead in sin are washed, healed and made clean every whit.

K.

(The above was by Elder H. C. Ker May 15, 1921.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. FLOSSIE HODGINS

By request, I attempt to write the obituary of our precious sister in the Lord, Mrs. Flossie Hodgins.

She was the widow of Ellis Hodgins, who died in August, 1942. She passed away in her 95th year, April 5, 1971, and her funeral was held by her pastor, Elder George Ruston, in London, Ontario. She joined the Covenanted Baptist Church in 1955 at Poplar Hill, Ontario.

All who knew her loved her dearly and will miss her but those who will miss her most are those near and dear to her by the ties of nature, her three devoted daughters: Olive Hodgins, London, Ontario; Elsie (Mrs. C. K.) Abbott of London; Helen (Mrs. R. J.) Dallard of Windsor, Ontario. She had four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints.” (Psalm 116:15). She was a wonderful mother and friend. After her operation, she would say, “I must not complain, I have felt the Lord’s presence.”

She lived in London with her daughter, Olive, and she and Olive were always ready to entertain the ministers, their families, and friends. Her walk and conversation proved how much she loved her church and looked forward always to church meetings.

Few were so wonderfully bright and blessed to quote scripture at her age. Her experience before and after being baptized was published in the February *Signs*, 1957.

Written by one who loved her,
(Mrs.) Verna Carscadden
Brampton, Ontario

SISTER EMMA STANFIELD CHANDLER

We must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in the calling of our beloved sister in Christ, Sister Emma Stanfield Chandler. Sister Chandler was born March 9, 1896 of her parents, the late Stephen Stanfield and Nettie Baynes Stanfield, and departed this life June 1, 1971.

She was the wife of Brother D. Otis Chandler, Sr.; and unto this union were born five children; Ruby Stephens, Dorothy Harris, Brother D. Otis Chandler, Jr., Wilbur and Joseph (Joe) Chandler.

Sister Chandler possessed a hope in Christ many years, but it was late in life when she united with the church and was baptized into the fellowship. She united with Bush Arbor

Church in 1958. In her community she was known as a kind devoted mother and neighbor.

As we visited her home in her last days, it was indeed inspiring to see the love and care which she received from her family. Everything was done that earthly hands could do. She spoke so sweetly of the years that had passed and how she looked forward for her late pastor to spend nights in her home. We could see the faith of God in action as she was reconciled to her trials and suffering in this life, and even made willing to accept death. Her funeral was conducted by her present pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Bush Arbor Church cemetery to await the resurrection morning.

May her family, church, and all that mourn her passing be reconciled with the word of John the Revelator 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labour; their works do follow them."

Written by request of Bush Arbor Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one kept for church records.

Read and approved in our church conference July 10, 1971.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

SISTER KATE DAMERON MITCHELL

It is with a feeling of inadequacy that I attempt to write a suitable memorial of one of such Spiritual stature of our beloved Sister, Mrs. Kate Dameron Mitchell. I am very conscious of my limitations — my inability to adequately tell of all her virtues, and indeed, her true worth to our church.

"Miss Kate," as she was widely known because of having taught school, was born at Whitmell, Virginia, on July 4, 1880, and died May 21, 1971, at the home of her daughter. Thus her pilgrimage here was almost ninety-one years.

Sister Mitchell's family moved to North Carolina when she was very young, so she spent most of her life in Rockingham County.

She was united in marriage in 1910 to Mr. Robert P. Mitchell, and to this union one daughter and two sons were born. Her husband preceded her in death in 1948, and one son, Joseph Drury Mitchell, died in 1956. She is survived by the daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Mitchell Meador, who so tenderly cared for her the last few years. One son, Robert P. Mitchell, Jr., also survives.

Sister Mitchell was the daughter of the late Elder James S. Dameron, and Sister Kate Roberts Dameron. In addition to being an eminent minister of the gospel, Elder Dameron and his wife were among the pioneers in the field of education in Rockingham and Caswell Counties. They having established the Ruffin Select School in Caswell County in 1867. This school was known to some as The Rock Academy. All members of the family, including "Miss Kate," were teachers.

Sister Mitchell united with Reidsville church in August, 1926, and was baptized by the late Elder O. J. Denny. It is believed that she became church clerk soon after she united with the church. She served very efficiently and faithfully until infirmities of age forced her to become inactive. She, however, remained our clerk emeritus until her death.

Among her greatest gifts was her Spiritual insight. She manifested that she was taught of God, and indeed, was a scholar in the school of Grace. Of the many Spiritual graces with which she was endowed, the virtues of deep compassion and humility were most readily recognized. Her unerring judgment in church matters was duly recognized, and her wisdom in advising could not be questioned. Also, her faithfulness in attending her meetings was commensurate with her great love for her church.

A precious Jewel has been taken from us, and we are deeply conscious of our great loss; but we are comforted in the assurance that her dear Spirit has taken flight to "That Land of Pure Delight" — where the veil has been removed, and she is beholding the glories of her blessed Redeemer.

An impressive and befitting funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He used the beautiful Twenty-Third Psalm, which she had requested. Her body was placed beside that of her husband in Reidlawn Cemetery in Reidsville.

Our church wishes to extend to Sister Mitchell's family our sincere condolence.

Written by one who loved her deeply for Christ's sake, and whose memory we shall always cherish.

Mamie P. Aldridge

DEACON JAMES BOLDEN BARRON

In loving memory of my beloved husband, Brother, and Deacon, James Bolden Barron, who fell asleep in Jesus October 9, 1970, after a lingering illness in Wilson Memorial Hospital.

He was 85 years, one month, and thirteen days old. He was the son of the late Joseph Thomas and Farby Elizabeth Stancil Barron being the fifth child of twelve children born to this union. Surviving him are three sisters,

Mrs. Irene Barron Ellis, Mrs. Nannie Josephine Barron Hughes, and Mrs. Mary Thomas Barron Elmore.

Brother Barron was twice married, first to Sudie Elnora Joyner on December 3, 1905. Three children were born to this union, two sons, Joseph Thomas and James Albert, who preceded him in death and a daughter, Nellie Mae Barron Whitley.

His first wife died on October 10, 1931 and he was married the second time to Patricia Althena Pelt on November 11, 1933, who survives him together with his daughter and three grandchildren.

Brother Barron united with the Toisnot Primitive Baptist Church, now Wilson Primitive Baptist Church, in August, 1905, and was baptized by Elder Pleasant Daniel Gold, his pastor. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in August, 1927, and served faithfully for 43 years. He was an active member of his church for 65 years.

In his declining health and last illness all was done that mortal man could do, but his days were fulfilled according to the will of God.

I was confined to the hospital in the intensive care unit during my husband's last illness and was still in the hospital when he passed away. I had prayed day and night to Almighty God that I might live and be given strength to care for him until the end, but it wasn't in God's providence, and that I do not question, for God does all things according to his will. Our daughter was by his side constantly during the last days of her father's illness and death. She was most dutiful to both her father and me and has been a great comfort to me since her father's death, for which I truly thank God for giving us such a loving and considerate daughter.

My husband was a devoted husband, father and friend to his church family and community, and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Elder W. J. Berry. Their words of comfort to his family and large congregation of Brethren and friends were most impressive. Three of his favorite hymns, "Amazing Grace," "Jerusalem My Happy Home," and "Father I Will Rest in Thy Love," were sung and he was laid to rest by the side of his first wife in Maplewood Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the call on the last day, when our Lord returns for his redeemed children and says well done thy good and faithful servant. I feel assured in my heart that he was one of God's little ones.

The Lord was good to me in giving me such a wonderful husband to share 37 years, lacking only one month and two days, of my

life. Tho, as much as I loved him and miss him, I would not call him back to this low ground of sin and sorrow and the pain he had to suffer in the flesh. I thank God that his suffering is over and know that surely he is resting in peace with his Lord.

I only hope that when I go it will be well with my soul, and that grace, peace and love will be with me until the end of my days on earth.

Done by order of Conference at Wilson Church Saturday before the second Sunday in November 1970. The Church will send one copy to the *Old Faith Contender*, one to the *Signs of the Times*, one to the family, and one for the church records.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Preston Gay, Clerk

RALPH L. QUINN

We, the church at Sand Hill, N. C., desire to write a few lines in memory of our dearly beloved brother, Ralph L. Quinn. He was born March 30, 1895, and died February 26, 1971.

Brother Quinn united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church September 13, 1947, and was a true and faithful member. He greatly enjoyed the fellowship of his brethren, and rejoiced in the visits of the church members in his home. His love and good wishes shall ever be a memoir to those near and dear to him.

His immediate kindren to survive him are, his wife, Sister Mae Quinn; five girls, three boys, and several grandchildren, who stood by him so faithfully until the Lord saw fit to call him home. We believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes at Sand Hill Church, and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

As he bore evidence of being one of God's elect, we believe Brother Quinn's soul is in the paradise of God to await the glorious resurrection day. Written by his niece,

Lois H. Kennedy

BROTHER ALBERT BOLLING

Brother Albert Bolling was born August 17, 1886, and died May 29, 1971. He was a son of J. J. Bolling and Martha George Bolling.

He joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 28, 1970. He was afflicted with a bad stroke, causing him to be unable to attend church. We held some services in his home, but we could not understand very much

he said, though we knew by his expressions that he enjoyed the meetings a lot, and seemed to be in praise to our Lord.

Surviving are his wife, Sister Minerva Doss Bolling, of Chatham, Va.; two foster sons, Junior Bolling, of Gretna, Va., and Percy Fox, of Altavista, Va.; three foster daughters, Mrs. Doris Earls, of Chatham; Mrs. Dorothy Fraser, Brookneal, Va.; and Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, Norfolk, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Rosa Motley, Dry Fork, Va., and Mrs. Sallie Brumfield, Gretna, Va.

His funeral was held at the Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and his body was laid away in Gretna Burial Park to await the second coming of our Lord.

L. R. Willis

ANNIE E. TRUITT

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our God who was pleased to take from our midst our dear and beloved Sister, Annie E. Truitt, who was born on May 21, 1888, and departed this life on March 27, 1971.

She was the daughter of the late Isaac and Rachel Elizabeth Whaley. Sister Truitt was married twice, her first marriage taking place on February 8, 1915, to Levin White who passed away in the year of 1937; and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Maggie Jones, who survives and now living in Laurel, Del. She is also survived by seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

Sister Truitt was married the second time to Glen Truitt on Jan. 6, 1940, and his departure from this life was in 1945.

Sister Truitt was baptized in May of 1953 by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett, and remained a faithful member of the Little Creek Church until her departure from this life. She attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. Sister Truitt was a strong believer in salvation by grace and even though she spent quite some time in nursing homes, she always enjoyed so much hearing someone mention about the goodness and mercy of the Lord; and by his mercies she said many times her hope was for a better land. The writer visited her many times and always found her praising God for his goodness and kindness toward her.

May it please the Lord to bless all that mourn the loss of this dear one, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Funeral service was held by the writer in the Little Creek Church meeting house and her body was laid to rest in the Little Creek cemetery.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SALLIE SHORT COX

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister, Sallie Short Cox, on May 8, 1971, at the age of 83 in Lynchburg General Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sister Cox was born February 13, 1888, to the late James and Martha C. Short. She was the wife of the late George T. Cox.

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church October 28, 1934, and was faithful to attend as long as a way was provided.

She leaves to mourn her loss one son, Otha Cox, and two daughters, Mrs. Virginia Frazier and Mrs. Edna Love. She also leaves four brothers, Victor, Lundy, John, and Tom Short; four sisters, Sister Annie Hedrick, Sister Jennie Murphy, Sister Ora Adams, and Mrs. Lizzie Adams; sixteen grandchildren and twenty great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. James Worley. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in the family cemetery.

Written by,
Marvin Brumfield

MARGARET FLORENCE HASTINGS

We feel that we have lost a very dear friend when it pleased the Lord to take from our midst Miss Margaret Florence Hastings, who was born April 24, 1886; and departed this life March 31, 1971.

She was the daughter of the late Samuel B. and Julia Anna Hastings. She had a B. A. degree — Penn State University and taught school 52 years, 49 of which were in Delmar, Delaware. Miss Hastings lived for many years with her sister, Mrs. Marion Francis, who survives. She, as far as the writer knows, attended the Old School Baptist meetings all of her life. She was not a visible member but we feel she was a believer in salvation by grace; and the writer of this has felt many times, from her walk and the expression on her face at the meetings, that it would have been well to have said Sister Hastings.

May all of us who knew her so well be blessed to feel that she had spent her allotted time here and that the Lord was pleased to take her to a better land where all the sorrows and cares of this world are taken away.

The funeral service was conducted by the writer in the Marvel Funeral Home in Delmar, Del. and her body was laid to rest in the Little Creek Cemetery.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1971

NO. 10

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Pittman Grove Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1971.

The church is located on Highway 222 about three miles east of Kenly, N. C. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 203,
Stokes, N. C. 27884

HELP ME DEAR LORD

Show me the way through darkness to light
Give me a heart to know wrong from right
Stay by my side and never let me stray
Help me Dear Lord, for my enemies to pray.

I walk alone in this world of woe
Except to my Saviour I have no place to go
When everything seems useless,
And nothing goes right
I feel myself sinking out of sight
I cry, my God, have mercy on me,
Please hear this sinners humble plea.

Dear Almighty God and Saviour of thine
Wash me and cleanse me and make me divine
Keep me humble through each trying day
That I may not stumble along the way.

I beg in thy name, Hold me in your Hands,
And give me a home in your promised land,
Where joy and peace will reign forever,
And the lust of this world I shall not endeavor.

Evelyn Winstead
Rt. 3, Box 323A
Jacksonville, N. C.

ENJOYS ELDER BEEBE'S WRITINGS

2238 McCurdy Road
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

Last week I read about 150 pages and scanned the rest of the **Signs Editorials**, Vol. I, which you gave me. I have rejoiced in every page I have read. What a wonderful book! It is a book I will

treasure all of my life and will be, I am sure of inestimable value to me. You were so right when you said in your letter that Elder Beebe was an able defender of the truth in the midst of much opposition. What a learned man he was! How scholarly he presents the views of the Old School Baptists substantiating each point with scriptural texts. How ignorant I feel as I read the words of a man who had such a command of the English language and such an insight into the unsearchable riches of the Bible.

In establishing the **Signs** in 1832 he stated in the preface that the publication would be devoted to the Old School cause and would maintain inviolably the ten scriptural sentiments outlined there. This, I feel, he did in his writings to the edification and comfort of its readers. Yet, he did so with humility, dignity and reverence, and we see in his works not a trace of harshness or bitterness. He certainly fought a good fight in the face of such violent opposition.

John Milton, the English poet, said: ". . . a good book is the precious lifeblood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." Elder Beebe was truly a master spirit whose inspired writings live on today to comfort the afflicted in Zion.

I am sure, as you mentioned, that you do often think of the Black Rock brethren of long ago as you go to the church each 3rd Sunday. How I would love to visit that church, steeped in the history of our staunch forefathers, who, with God's unfailing support, preserved the truths of the Old School Baptists.

I feel the **Signs** still subscribes to these views as stated in the 1832 pro-

spectus when it was established. We have today able writers who firmly adhere to these sentiments and who are dedicated to carrying on the work begun nearly 140 years ago.

We know, of course, the preeminent and supreme writing is contained in God's holy word — the Bible, which must be exalted above all other writing,

Yet, we are blessed to have writers, both past and present, to uphold steadfastly the doctrine of our faith and bring good news to the lonely and burdened sojourners scattered about our country. May we know, through their inspired writings, that we are not forsaken. "And I will dwell among the children of Israel and I will not forsake my people Israel." (I Kings 6:13) "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." (Isaiah 31:17)

May God continue to feed the needy through our sweet publication, **The Signs**, and may it always abide by the principles upon which it was founded in 1832. And may His everlasting love shine forth through its pages.

Brother and Sister Wood, thank you again for my books. Please thank your dear friend who gave you **Fragments** to send to me. I have been reading it tonight and have found in Elder Durand's writings beautiful expressions of my own experiences.

My love to you both.

Humbly,
Katie Kilby

ENJOYS THE SIGNS EACH MONTH

Rt. 1,
Rison, Ark.

Dear Editors and Readers of the **Signs**:

I do so much enjoy the good reading each month. I am sending a check for \$4.00 for another year. I will be seventy-seven in November and live alone with no one to share the sweet fellowship I have in the Spirit of Jesus. There is great joy in witnessing his great love to others. I miss this so much for

I don't live close to those that have the true religion of Jesus Christ: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

I know nothing only as the Spirit lets me know; and no man can take it from me. Jesus keeps me in his grace, and nothing can be hard for us as we abide in his grace. He makes our enemies to be at peace with us, and we experience this many times in our walk of life. I feel so unworthy of his mercy and goodness to me.

I enjoy every letter in the **Signs**, especially the ones on experience. They remind me of my own, and no one can take them from us.

May the Lord bless your work continually until He comes.

One of the least,
Edna Whitehead

MY EXPERIENCE BEFORE AND AFTER BEING BAPTIZED

London, Ontario, Canada
November 5, 1956

To My Dear Children and Grandchildren:

About two months before my baptism, in my sleep. I seemed to be standing, and I looked down and saw the words "JESUS IS MY SAVIOUR," in large block letters, very plain, and I thought how wonderful those words were. They would come into my mind so much — "Jesus is my Saviour!" It seemed so wonderful! The thought came that I should tell Elder Ruston the wonderful words I saw — that it was my duty to join the Church and be baptized. This was much on my mind, but I didn't know when. I didn't know then what God's plan was. The words "Why tarry?" would come to me. Wednesday was Mr. Rogers' funeral, and Beckie said she would call for me. On the way she said she received a letter from Minerva McLean, so she stopped the car and read her lovely letter in which she said she intended asking for a Home in the Church, and if received, baptized on

the 1st Sunday (which was the next Sunday — November, 1955) at Poplar Hill.

Oh, I thought, what about me? I didn't know what to do! We went to the funeral and Elder Ruston preached from the 39th Psalm, and his text included the 7th verse — "And, now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee." They just seemed for me, I felt. I went home. I truly had distress of mind. My prayer almost continuously was that the Lord would keep me; make me willing, if it was his will that I should go. On Thursday I knew Elder Ruston was going to Poplar Hill to arrange for the baptism and I looked for them to call. I hoped the Lord would put it in his heart to call, for I thought if he did my prayer was answered, but he didn't call, so I was full of doubts and fears.

On Friday, dear Beckie came up and I told her how I would love to see Elder Ruston, so she phoned him and they said they would be up about 6 P. M. In the meantime, we went out to Elsie's. I wanted to tell her what was on my mind. Elder and Mrs. Ruston came and were with us for supper. I told him I was thinking of coming to the Church and be baptized on Sunday, too, but that I had such doubts and fears. I was so encouraged when he told me he had me on his mind about coming and he wasn't surprised.

That night I spent a sleepless night, begging the Lord to be with me. The cold weather didn't bother me at all. All I asked was that the Lord would be with me, guide and direct me, and give me a calm and peaceful heart. Saturday I was still terribly distressed, sometimes feeling I couldn't go, yet all the time getting my clothes in readiness. I would try to read the Bible, but got no comfort, and I would say so often — What kind of a creature am I? — getting ready to be baptized and in this condition — "Like one, alone, I seemed to be; Oh, was there anyone like me?"

Sunday morning when I awoke it was bright and my troubles and fears were gone. When dressing, those lovely words,

"The clouds ye so much dread are filled with mercy and shall break with blessings on your head," were sweet and comforting. I seemed surprised I hadn't a fear or a doubt. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." I was glad that my dear children and grandchildren were able to be there, too. I felt a blessing in that. It was truly a time to be remembered as long as I live. I truly feel the Lord was in it all the way through, and I hope I can praise His Holy Name as long as life shall last. Dear Beckie was a great comfort, too.

All the following week I was glad and happy; my mind filled with the wonderful Way — and the baptism, but by the end of the week I began to have fearful doubts that I shouldn't yet have gone and been baptized — that I was all wrong! I didn't know what to do! I knew I had done the wrong thing — thought I was ready, but was not. On Monday night I was alone and started to iron, and in my great distress, I just said, "Jesus said He was my Saviour;" and then it came to my mind that it was the evil spirit telling me I was wrong — and my trouble was gone!

I told Beckie that experience, and she wasn't surprised. She said, "If you are a Child of God you are promised those fears and trials." Again, I was filled with rejoicing, but not for long, for it came to my mind that the day I was baptized, as I stood in the water, I seemed to want to get a firm hold of Elder Ruston's hand, and the more I thought of it, the more distressed I became, that I was just depending on my own strength; and Oh, how that has troubled me! I felt I wasn't ready to be baptized! My awful unfitness!

At the May Meetings I took Communion, and I felt I wasn't fit; also at the June Meetings I took Communion, but, Oh, my unfitness! I would pray that the Lord would show me if I was right, and those lovely words, "Jesus is my Saviour," would come up before me and I would think what more do I want, but I felt I hadn't that right love, and I prayed that I might be given that love that He, alone, can give, and the words,

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee," came to me; and Oh, what comforting words they were.

On Friday night before our own Lobo Meetings (September 1956) I couldn't sleep, praying that the Lord would give me joy in taking Communion, and to give me some token that I should have been baptized. Then, the sweet, comforting words came into my mind that Jesus was left, alone, when he hung on the cross. I can never tell you the comfort I have had since then. What a wonderful Comforter we have!

And how I enjoyed the Lobo Meeting! I just felt I could run and not be weary and walk and not faint. Of all my experiences, I feel this to be the most wonderful! It just seemed to CONFIRM and SETTLE all previous promises. Jesus felt forsaken, and in my great distress, he brought this to my remembrance. The following verse came to me with much sweetness — "In every pang that rends the heart, the Man of Sorrows had a part. He sympathizes with our grief and to the sufferer sends relief." (58th Paraphrase)

MOTHER

(Mrs. Flossie Hodgins)

(See obituary last month)

MATTHEW XIII. 33.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

According to Matthew, thirteenth chapter, this parable, and many others, spake Jesus to a great multitude at the seaside, and his disciples asked him why he spoke to them in parables. He answered, and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. I will say at the very beginning that if I have in any measure been instructed into the kingdom of heaven it seems a very small quantity, so little that I just hope I have a part

in his kingdom. Now Jesus did not tell his disciples that it was given unto them to explain the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to know it, and I believe that God's children, from their earliest recollection, experience things they will never in this life be able to explain to their own satisfaction. For instance, when they come to the church and ask for a home, they cannot tell what they have seen, heard and felt, as they desire, though it is sufficient to the church, being accompanied by the Spirit, for the church is composed of the likeness, as the one offered, and as Elder S. J. Norris said in his lifetime, he hated his own ways, but he loved those who had ways just like his. The apostle said we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away, though now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face. So it is, I think, with God's children who are given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. It is in part, or a foretaste, while they live in this tabernacle, but in the world to come they will see Jesus and be like him, which will be the fulness of that which they have here received an earnest of, and the earnest is just like the fulness will be, only it is in a small part here, wherein we hope that we are his and heaven is our home, when we leave this world. I said we, for Paul said there is a crown laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all those who love his appearing.

The parable Jesus spake that "the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." I think the leaven figures the grace of God, or kingdom, and the woman that hid it in three measures of meal is wisdom. The three measures of meal are a man, composed of three component parts, body, soul and spirit, as Jesus said, Behold, the kingdom of God is within you, and, again, as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk

in them, I will be their God and they shall be my people. The effects of the grace of God in the heart, or inward parts, of his people, crucify the old man with his deeds, daily, and usually keep God's children repenting with godly sorrow, weeping and mourning and in grief because of their sins, which dwell in the mortal flesh. They cannot attain the measure they desire to; though the will be present the ability, or power, is absent. The nature of divine grace is to, and does, humble God's children, and to bring us down and show us what we are by nature and what we must be by grace. It teaches us that in the flesh dwells no good thing, neither can it produce any good thing, nor can it glory in the Lord. Paul said, I delight in the law of God after the inner man, and have no confidence in the flesh. The same as to say, I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. The law he delighted in after the inner man was the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that made him free from the law of sin and death. For sin reigned by the law of commandments, which Paul found to be unto death, but much more does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ.

God's children are not under the law of the old covenant, but the new covenant, the law of grace and love, and it constrains them as a compelling power, though many times they kick against the power with a haughty spirit, in their nature, as the children of Israel did in the days of old, and when they do they will certainly smart under the chastisement of the rod of God's everlasting love, that they may say it is all of grace from first to last, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation (it does not try to bring it.) hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we 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 Savior 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. Then can we do one thing without grace? No, a thousand times no. The grace of God teaches us that we cannot, and it also teaches us that we are poor, weak, sinful mortal beings, that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing, that without Christ we are nothing. But by the grace of God we can say with Paul, I am what I am, and that is a sufficient and wonderful supply in all needs, times and places.

We will now consider the hidden leaven. First, Jesus said, My Kingdom is not of this world (natural, visible). Again. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Then his kingdom is invisible, and cannot be seen nor heard with the natural eye or ear of man, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It is the work of Sovereignty, by the invisible Spirit of God Almighty; the manifestation thereof is only by divine revelation, and he gives it to whom he will. As Jesus said when he rejoiced in the Spirit, I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. Again, the apostle said, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit of God searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Let me ask the question right here, Who knows the things of the covenant of God's grace, the finished work of salvation by grace, finished, perfect and complete, of God in Christ Jesus our Lord? Let such ones rest, with perfect complacency that they have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Fear not, little flock, it is

your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. A candle is not lit to be put under a bushel, but to put in a candle-stick to give light to all who are in the house, and Jesus is that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the spiritual world, or kingdom. The true Light reveals the corruption and weakness that is in this earthly house or tabernacle of clay. It reveals to the believer that God only can redeem, purchase, call, sanctify, justify and glorify by the blood of Jesus Christ, a perfect sacrifice acceptable and holy, without spot or blemish, whom God has set forth, to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins, that hath passed through the forbearance of God, that he might be just and the justifier of them that believe that he hath imputed their sins to Christ Jesus, and Christ's righteousness to them. The true light gives light to all who are of the household of faith, and it is not hid from them, but from the wise and prudent, or the wisdom of this world, for it is as a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed to all the earthly wisdom of this world; they are totally blind to the life and godliness that is in Christ.

Jesus said this leaven was hid in the three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. If this leaven be the grace of God begun in the heart by the eternal Spirit it is a good work. Paul said, Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Wherein this leavening process will gather our sleeping dust, or quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us, by which our body, soul and spirit will reunite and be changed from natural to spiritual, and the whole will be leavened. It is a work begun, that will crown God's children in heaven and immortal glory, free from pain and sorrow, ransomed from the grave, its power and sting, to the inheritance reserved for them, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth

not away. No, it fadeth not away. Whereunto they are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, and are preserved in Christ and called and are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of the redemption of our vile bodies, when corruptible will put on incorruption, and mortality will put on immortality, and we shall be changed, all being the perfect work of the sovereign, eternal, irresistible, unalterable, unchangeable, all-powerful, all-wise God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, who liveth and was dead, and is now alive for evermore. Surely he is our faith and hope, our salvation, and salvation means everything pertaining thereto. As David said, The Lord is all my salvation. He is our peace, our faith, our wisdom, our hope, our righteousness, our justification, our sanctification and redemption, and I believe he gives to his people in this life the measure that seemeth him good and as he wills to, and that is the measure that was given them in Christ before the world was. As before stated in this letter, it is in part, but it is sufficient for them in this life, for God is able to keep them from falling. Yes, to give them far above all they can ask or think, and present them before his throne with exceeding glory.

If any poor mortal ever desired to know the truth in Christ, whom to know is life eternal, I am that one if not deceived. But alas, if I know anything about it it comes in a different way than I would have chosen. First it comes in a way to abase me in my pride, with all my pets that I may nurse and not know it, but am bound to suffer in the same before the Lord delivers, then I can say with David, I will praise the Lord, for he is great in mercy, for he delivered my soul from the lowest pits of hell. O Lord, thou knowest what I need, make me not too poor lest I steal, nor too rich lest I forget thee. Surely Jesus is meek and lowly, and rest to those who labor and are heavy laden. (The ones who are weary are

the ones who appreciate rest.) It is by grace, from first to last, the greatest unmerited favor ever bestowed upon poor unworthy sinners.

The Jews under the old covenant were commanded to eat unleavened bread, which must be a figure of the sacrificed body of Christ, and no doubt but that God's children eat of this sacrifice when they are partaking of the suffering of Christ. Although unleavened bread is not good while eating it, but no doubt it strengthens them and causes them to be bold in the warfare (or in the grace of God at least). If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Jesus commanded his disciples to beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, speaking of the doctrine and commandments of men. The doctrine that is not all of grace is of men. The doctrine that is of grace is of God. So is the kingdom of heaven that is likened unto leaven. It is not something to puff up nature, but it subdues it. For Paul said the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and though our outward man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day. The apostle said, "Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." God's children only know of the mysteries in the measure that Christ is made unto them. When I awake in his likeness I shall be satisfied.

J. L. Sanders

(Republished by request from March, 1938)

FINISHED THE WORK HIS FATHER GAVE HIM

Bassett, Va.

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:

I have a mind to write some of my thoughts concerning the cross of Christ.

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the

cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." (Phil. 3:18, 19)

I believe Christ was bearing the cross from his birth all the way to his death. Christ came into the world to do his Father's will; and he did just that to perfection. He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto 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." (John 6:37, 38) "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 3:39)

"Jesus said unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:12-14) "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Hebrews 9:24)

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

If a man preaches a doctrine that Jesus left anything for us to do to make his blood effectual, then he preaches a lie; and the death of Christ would be in vain, and the cross of none effect, Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, and he will come again to present us to the Father without blemish.

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” (Phil. 3:20, 21.) “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain.” (1 Cor. 15:37)

“Thou sowest not that body that shall be.” This means to me that this vile body will return back to the dust, but God will take this dust and make it into an heavenly body. “But if the spirit of him that raised 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.” (Romans 8:11) “For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not 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. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.” (1 Cor. 15:16-20)

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thes. 4:15-18)

Dear Elder Wood, I have selected the above mostly from the scriptures: and you may do as you see fit with this. I have had different ones to ask me to write for the **Signs**.

James R. Hollandsworth

AFTER A LAPSE OF MORE THAN TWO YEARS I AM IMPRESSED TO WRITE MORE

(Part Two of Elder Jabez J. Rhue's experience)

January 26, 1959. I find myself pondering the same question over and over again that has been with me since before I united with the Old Baptist Church September 5, 1946. For several months after my baptism, I felt relief and rejoiced in the fact that they, so great a people, had seen fit to let me live with them. However, very soon this burden that had been with me long before I was baptized returned, and it was heavier than ever. This burden came with a feeling that the time would come when I, this poor sinner, would have to stand before His people and preach the gospel. Knowing my weakness and sinful condition, it would make me tremble when these feelings would come over me. I would beg the Lord to deliver me from this burden, but it seemed the more that I begged the greater the burden. I tried to reason with God that I was not qualified in the least to perform that which had been laid upon me. It seemed that I would die if relief did not come. If I could be blessed to unite with the Church, I felt it might give me relief and peace of mind. It seemed that the burden to be baptized and to speak to His humble poor, in a sense, were the same, or that I could not separate them. When this burden to be baptized would come the burden to preach would come even stronger. In this condition I vowed that I would never unite with the Church; for, if I did, I would certainly have to make the feeble effort to present myself to the Church and certainly have to relate to them my troubles and tell them what great things the Lord, our Saviour, had done for poor sinners, of whom I felt to be the greatest. During all the dark hours through which I traveled I was continually begging the God of all grace to remove this burden and heavy weight that pressed me down. When I would get so low that it seemed

that I could not live or die, I would promise the Lord that at the next opportunity I would tell the Church my feelings. When the time came and I asked for a home, I could not speak many words, but for some reason and to my relief they received me into their fellowship.

As stated before, the relief from my baptism did not last long even though the burden to be baptized has never returned, and when I think of that day it is a Bethel spot in my life. After my baptism, these impressions to speak came with greater power and more often. With these impressions so strong, I began to beg the Lord to give me evidence that I would know this calling was indeed from Him. I would go to bed at night praying to Him to show me just a sweet glimpse of His loving face, that He might visit me in a dream and make known to me that He would open the way and make it possible. Within myself, I knew that I could do nothing. I could not even tell my good wife who has been so patient and understanding while I have been in trouble. Many times I had tried to open my heart and pour out the truth to her, feeling that if I could only be blessed to tell some one my troubles, it might bring relief. Many times I felt if I could talk with the brethren I would have so much to tell them, but while in their presence I would be shut up and could not tell them my feelings, even if failure to do so meant death. At times when hearing the gospel preached it seemed that I was cast to the very depths of hell as Jonah was when cast into the sea. In this condition, I could witness with the speaker, but there is no relief for me, feeling that the mountains are closing in and will crush me into everlasting destruction where there is no hand to deliver. My cry is, "Lord, will you ever deliver me from this agony?" If I could only exchange my life for that of a dumb beast, or anything else for a moment of rest and peace. I believe I know that God is able to deliver, but will He ever deliver this poor worm of the dust?

Today I am made willing to be God's anything, but what tomorrow will bring He only knows. If I could be blessed with power to pray to this God who has all power for grace sufficient to remove everything that is to hinder and bring me low enough and remove all carnality and this poor sinner be enabled to praise His name and give Him all the praise and glory, that I might be given a tongue of utterance that I might tell the Lord's people that their King is yet alive, and alive forevermore.

Oh Lord, would thou bless me just one time to pour out my feelings, and with liberty; and the inspiration to set forth the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Oh Lord, would thou remember thy children everywhere and bring them together in peace and love, remove all malice and strife, visit the poor and afflicted, remember our fathers and mothers in Israel, have mercy on our families and loved ones, cause our children to be God fearing men and women, and if it can be thy will open the windows of heaven, come to our rescue and make us to feel thy presence and direct our steps and keep us as an apple of thine own eye; and make us to lie down in green pastures. Lord, thou hast promised us that thou would not put more on us than we can bear and that thou would be a present help in time of need, make us able to bear all our trials and afflictions. Bring us low enough to feel the need of a Saviour and to call upon thy name. We realize, dear Lord, that the carnal mind is not able to approach Thee unless blessed by Thy divine spirit. Our works are as filthy rags in thy sight. Oh Lord, we feel our weakness and dependence on a higher power. We cannot declare that Salvation is of the Lord until we are brought to the bottom of the valley. Then it is that we are made to cry out and beg for thy mercy. Guide and direct our steps, keep us at the feet of our brethren. And, Oh Lord, when we have finished our course in this life, may we be blessed in that hour of death to depart in peace with Thee and on the

morning of the resurrection be crowned in thy Likeness in that world that shall never end, Amen.

In a dream about a month ago, I received some comfort while in the presence of my father, who was a great defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace and was blessed to testify in His great name to His people. My father passed from this world several years ago, but in my dream there were several of the Lord's people gathered in his presence, and he was conversing with them. He looked directly at me and told them that I would have to preach, and as he spoke a sweet smile appeared on his face which was an assurance that my deliverance would come from heaven. When I awoke, I had been made to feel that the Lord had been with me, and for a few days made satisfied that my calling was of the Lord and in His good time that I would be delivered.

I know that I am too sinful, unworthy and lacking in every respect and am not able to do anything that would be pleasing in His sight unless upheld by His divine power. Somehow, I have an abiding hope that my trust is in one that does all things well, and He is a just and merciful God to do with this poor worm of the dust as He sees fit, and we are not to question His authority. One day my sorrows, afflictions and troubles, I hope will be over and I will be carried to that city and land of rest, whose builder and maker is God, to be with Him and the family of God to sing His praises in a world that has no end. There we will be like Him, and be satisfied. This is my hope.

Soon after the above was written, I was called on to speak and express my feelings and received much relief from my first attempt. In October, 1960, the Church liberated me to preach among our correspondence. In February, 1962, my Church called for a presbytery to meet in March, 1962, to examine me, and if found qualified, to ordain me to the full work of the gospel ministry. Pursuant to the above action the ordination took place as requested by the Church. Since my first attempt, I have

been blessed to visit among the brethren in many of the churches in our correspondence and felt sometimes that the dear Lord gave me sweet liberty and at other times felt that I had manifested exactly what I am when not blessed in the spirit, a failure. When I was cold, hungry, poor and without a home, these good people took me in, and they are still my judge, and I hope nothing will ever separate us. If not deceived, the happiest moments of my life is when being blessed to preach the riches of His grace to His believing children and that love flows from one to the other.

I desire the prayers of my brethren.

Jabez J. Rhue
Swansboro, N. C.

DOES NOT WANT TO DO WITHOUT THE SIGNS

14778 Springdale Ave., RFD 3
Middle Field, Ohio 44062

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see my subscription runs out in October, so please renew it again as I do not want to do without it. It is indeed a blessing that God gives us such spiritual minded men to write to His people of the wonderful works of His grace to His chosen, poor and afflicted people. Paul said that by grace are you saved, not of works lest any man should boast; and that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. When? It was decreed in the Covenant of Grace before the world was. So we poor worms of the dust were not there to help in any way as far as eternal salvation is concerned. We have not even one iota to do with saving the dead sinner.

The preaching of the gospel is to them that perish foolishness, but to us that are saved, it is the power of God. May we be blessed to give God the glory for the witness within our poor souls, which He has given us by His quickening spirit, and the applying of the

blood of His Son and our Elder Brother and Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord. I can hardly wait until I can go to the house of the Lord and hear of His goodness to His children; and to read about it in the *Signs*.

May God continue to bless you Editors and writers in your wonderful labors in the vinyard of the Lord.

Here is a check for \$10.00 to renew our subscription for one year; use the balance as you see fit, — maybe to send the *Signs* to some hungry souls who cannot afford the price . . . May the Lord richly bless his people everywhere in these wicked times, is our prayer.

Claude and Mary Thomas

ELDER W. W. TAYLOR COMES TO WASHINGTON

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Mossy Rock, Washington, whose doors remain closed so much of the time lately because of the illness of its Pastor, Elder Ernest Attebery, Hermiston, Oregon, who is the only ordained Elder in these Northwestern States, opened wide its doors on August 13, 14, 15 for the annual three-day meeting.

The hand of Providence surely was in this matter for we were able to get Elder W. W. Taylor to come from Tinsman, Arkansas to preach for us, even tho he was hard pressed for time to make the trip West after preaching for a week shortly before in Virginia and being in the East, and just days before coming here, he was in Texas.

Then the weather was extremely hot for some time before the meeting dates and on Thursday, the 12th, it cooled down and remained so during the three days, seemingly it being of the Lord that we were spared from meeting in the extreme heat.

Brothers and Sisters of The Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Naches, Washington came to worship with us and others from Oregon. We were glad to have Sisters Myrtle Black and Lois Cloud, Mother and Daughter,

from Meadow Grove, Nebraska with us. They were visiting in the West at the time. With the visiting brethren and with all our own active membership of seven being able to turn out the last day, over thirty were present, including Elder and Sister Attebery. He was not able to stand and preach. We were glad he was with us all three days.

The little church surely redounded with the many songs we sung and from the forceful preaching of the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified, as Elder Taylor came forth with it. Surely we dwelt in the Tabernacle of the Lord those three days.

On Sunday when the church doors were opened, Brother Philip Coleman asked for a home with us and was accepted. He was baptized that afternoon by Elder Taylor. Thus our membership now stands at eight. We know not what the Lord has in store for us from here forward, but we will strive to keep our little church active and hope that our number will increase, as well as to hope we can meet occasionally in our little building when Brother Ben Preston can come from The Dalles, Oregon, to fill the pulpit, and that we may find some visiting Elder from elsewhere, available to us at times.

Written by Brother William Hall — sent in by

Sister Opal Huntting, Church Clerk

LOVE TO EACH WHO WRITE THEIR FEELINGS

4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Editors:

One thing that has made the *Signs* so special to me is a feeling of brotherly love to each who write expressing their feelings and belief. Many I have never seen, but in their writings a sweetness fills all the space between the lines, and a perfect blessedness grace the pages. Here I meet the faithful ones who have searched the Word for

the Saviour's testimonies of the truth, which strengthen me against the trials of life so I may take courage in a re-nowness of the spirit.

I am blessed to hear our pastor, Elder Arthur R. Warren, once a month, but there seems a long time until that next meeting, so the *Signs* fill in with added food to feed a hungry soul. And, perhaps, most of all the *Signs* give re-assuring comfort to me while prophesy is being fulfilled in these troubled times. Times in which the bowels of the earth are being moved, and the multitudes disturbed, revealing evidence of the prophesy that is in the testimonies of Jesus.

Not so long ago you reprinted Elder Leffert's editorial "The Restitution of all things" which has impressed me so much with rereading, revealing in these times such prophesy as is not learned from books, neither is it taught by man, but is the gift of God to whomsoever He leadeth beside the still waters to partake of the Word of life.

May God bless all who continue to write for the *Signs*, bless them with days that may pass in peace, and find them at eventide victorious over all temptation, and giving praise to God who dost govern all things, world without end.

Sister Mary L. Hellings

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
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(To August 1, 1971)

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APPOINTMENTS FOR
ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH

Elder John Lee Smith of Spearsville, La., will, the Lord willing, fill the following appointments. He is well known among us, and I hope many will make an effort to hear him.

Monday night, October 25th at Danville P. B. Church.

Tuesday night, October 26th, at Malmaison.

Wednesday night, October 27th, at Weatherford.

Thursday night, October 28th, at Old Bethel.

Friday night, October 29th, at Rocky Mount, Va.

Saturday night, October 30th, at Staunton River Union.

Saturday night, October 30th at River View — 7:30.

Sunday, October 31st, at Upper Country Line Union at Peasantville Church.

Monday night, November 1st, at Dan River.

Tuesday night, November 2nd, at Pleasant Grove.

Wednesday night, November 3rd, at Bush Arbor.

Thursday night, November 4th, at Greensboro Church.

Elder and Sister Smith will depend on someone for conveyance from place to place.

D. V. Spangler

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Smithwick Creek Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1971. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder M. E. Garner, alternate.

The church is located in Martin County, N. C., about 9 miles south of Williamston off of Highway 17 south.

We cordially invite all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

Danville, Virginia October, 1971

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” (Daniel 2:44)

EDITORIAL

WRITING IS COMMANDED

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” (Rev. 14:13)

I suppose the command, write, has

been violated to a greater degree than any other command given to me by the Spirit. My neglect to obey this command has resulted in more misery, condemnation, and cries for forgiveness than any other of my sins. Every time the command is given, my mind is flooded with a multitude of heavenly and gracious thoughts. All are un-expressed because of my desire that the whole theme be given me before I write a word.

Sometimes it is true that I think I have stored in my memory the entire theme. I prepare to write but all that has been stored is gone!! A new subject comes like a bolt of lightning! I begin to write. I read critically what I have written. I fear that the readers will not understand what I have in mind. I try to re-write, re-examine, and finally throw it in the wastebasket. I meditate again for hours — someone comes in — I quit in disgust — wait for another day — undertake it again, but the same kind of experience over and over, and over and over again. Results? Nothing written worthy of space after wasting hours and days of precious time in idleness!! I grieve. I lament. I pray. I read. I am called away and try to get my mind off of the subject of writing but I feel guilty of having not written every hour I am conscious; — except those precious hours used in talking and preaching of spiritual things.

I have examined this which I have now written. To the waste basket this goes — for I have just poured out to you my woes. A voice says, “Not yet. You must write as you preach. You preach extemporaneously. You must write the words given you without forethought or preparation. The writers of the Bible had changes of thought but kept writing for they had no time to erase and re-compose. The Proverbs were written in this manner: “These six things doth the lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination to him.” The writer was aware of only six as he began to write yet there was another shown him while he wrote. This proves that as the Spirit operates the writer, the writer is increased in wisdom and

knowledge. My habit would cause me to re-write with this expression: These seven things doth the Lord hate which are an abomination to Him. "Three things, . . . yea, four" is a common expression in the Proverbs 30:18-33. The Spirit now shows me the value of these expressions: **I must write as I am moved.** I must not wait for a complete revelation of the subject matter with the expectation of briefing it. I cannot command the Spirit at my own convenience. Neither can I write from memory the precious thoughts given me by the Spirit in bygone days.

John had a change of thought while writing the last verse concluding his booke on The Gospel. The first part of the verse was prompted with the thought of the multitude of things which Jesus did. The last part takes into consideration not only what He did, but also, what He is doing now, and the precious promises of what He will do. "And there are also, many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." (John 21:25) Even John must have felt guilty of failing to write more books on the subject: The Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was John who quoted Jesus as saying, ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58) By faith of the living redeemer in eternity making His appearance in time inspired an abiding hope in God's chosen for thousands of years before that notable day in Bethlehem. Yes, He was with the Hebrew — the three that were cast into the fire. Even Job was made to know that His redeemer **liveth** hundreds of years before He came as a person born of a woman, brought under the law. Let us quote from the book of Job:

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter

day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

(Job 19:23-27)

Why did Job so much desire that his own words be written at that moment? Because he was experiencing **Living Words** that could only come from a **Living Redeemer**, being actuated in Job **that very moment.** And because he wanted these glorious Words, which were eternal, written "**NOW**" to record something miraculous which he had never before experienced: — to be a reminder to him should he fall again in the slough of despondency and misery. Surely, the Lord Jesus Christ is that Living Redeemer, — Who inspired Job with precious and eternal words which **ARE** true and faithful! Why did Job want these words printed in a book? Surely because these like precious words would be just as precious, powerful, faithful and true, — to all of like experience. He was anxious that this his testimony, might be published in order that others might know that his trust was in **The Redeemer** — not in himself! Oh that we could tell others of God's wondrous works to the children of men! Why did Job want these words graven in the rock forever? Because these living words state an eternal truth. It never has changed. The same message endures forever. Job was so elated of being the possessor of these eternal truths that he desired the people of all times to come, to read, feel; yea, taste, handle, eat, and enjoy every one of them.

Moses' command to the children of Israel was: "Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gate." (Deut. 6:9) This was relative to the, "Commandments, statutes, and judgment, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you." (Deut. 6:1) If the

Old Covenant demands such publication, surely, the New Covenant should be written; yea even in your own words. When God writes His laws in the hearts of His people; yea, when He energizes them with the **Law of Grace and Truth**: He makes them anxious to confess it with their mouth, write it with their fingers; yea, publish the good tidings of great joy by letter, tract, periodical, radio, and television. We are not willing for the ungodly men to edit and control the publications of such precious writings: therefore, we are decidedly opposed to **Tract Societies**. We are not willing for a mixed multitude composed of many unbelievers to control church missions; therefore, we are decidedly opposed to **Missionary Societies**. We are not opposed to teaching the Bible; but, we are opposed to put our children under the tutorship of those who are neither God-called nor God-qualified to teach the Scriptures. Therefore, we cannot endorse **Sunday School Unions**. Childrens minds are easily impressed: therefore, believers should bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We believe in the distribution of the Bible, but object to unbelievers having supervision over translating, printing, publishing, and distribution of it. The Bible belongs to God's children. The Church is the home for God's children. Do you think it proper for churches to have nothing to do with the printing, editing, publication, and distribution of its own Book?

As I now sit in my library, I pause awhile to gaze at the many books that surround me. I see several commentaries on the Bible, some church histories, many books of sermons, many books on various religious subjects, a few concordances, a collection of hymn books, periodicals, recordings, and Bibles. I pick up one Bible that was given to me by an Old Baptist minister, another that was presented by a minister's widow, — What do I find? They were both published by The American Bible Society; another, the National Bible Press; another, The International Bible Press; Bibles with chain references,

added notes and helps by various authors. I look at the hymn books and find that all the hymns we use in our church worship are over one hundred years of age. Most books I have were written before this century began. Only a very few books have been written and published by Old School or Primitive Baptists. Are there no **new tunes** worthy of singing? Has the Lord quit inspiring His people with **fresh living words** coming in rhythm worthy of singing? Are you impressed to write in your own words these fresh invigorating experiences which mean so much to you **now**, Maybe, later when you become so despondent and faithless, these former words will stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.

When Jesus makes His appearance to you, He is all you need. When He disappears, Oh how you search for something to remove the great doubts! What could be more comfortable and encouraging to you than to read your own words which were written while in companionship with the Eternal Redeemer? Gracious, truthful, and faithful words given to you by the Lord become **your** words for they are given unto you. This redemption is eternal, certain, and sure; but are you always aware of it? Let us read what John says in one of his epistles: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (I John 5:13) While you know that you believe on the name of the Son of God, John's first epistle will prove that you have eternal life **now**. If you know you have it now, his epistle will prove that it is eternal: nay, it will never end! It proves the security of the believer. John is writing to believers in the name of the Son of God. Are true believers in the Son of God always aware of their firm belief? **NO!** Sometimes clouds of doubts and fears so flood your soul that you often ask, Do I believe? There comes a faint awareness of belief, — Is this real belief? yea, you pray, "Lord, I believe;

help thou mine unbelief." You again read the epistle that you may believe on the Son of God; yea, praying the Lord will help your unbelief.

If once you have most firmly believed in the name of the Son of God means that you shall each and every moment of your entire life as strongly believe it: then, John's last expression is useless and confusing. Let's read the last expression: ". . . and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." John must have written this while in a glorious state of mind. He knew well the truthfulness of his writing. John boldly said many times: "I know," "We know"; and, "That ye may know." Do we know? Yes, while our conversation is in heaven we know. When we fall, we do not know. Show us again, Lord Revive us again. Teach us again for we are so prone to forget. Have we ever been taught of the Lord, John must have been slipping from this state of Supreme spiritual knowledge as he concluded his epistle. Surely he had entertained the thought of how easily it would be for true believers to be tempted and drawn away after idols; else, he would not have written: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (I John 5:21) While our conversation is in heaven, we have no thought of idolatry. When Jesus turns His face from us, the devil is ready to tempt and draw away. We need this admonition of John when tempted by the devil. Oh that these words were printed in bold letters where we could see them as the cunning craftiness of Satan begins to take hold of us!

When God made an end of communing with Moses upon Mount Sinai, He gave him, "Two tables of testimony, Tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Ex. 31:18) I somehow feel that Moses thought while communing with God: I will never forget a word of this: yet, God knew Moses would not keep them in memory. Even though Moses in His anger had thrown down the tables of stone upon which the two tables of testimony had been written, God called him up again: "And the Lord

said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest." (Exodus 34:1) Even though Moses broke the tables of stone which contained the writing of God's finger, yet he could not damage the finger of God. Even though God's children forgot that God delivered them, to the extent that they made a golden calf to worship, it did not cause God to change one word of His law and testimony. Even though God's chosen people by their bad conduct had such an effect upon Moses that he broke the two tables, it did not in any manner change the wondrous characteristics of God. "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Exodus 34:6-7) How anxious ought we to be to encourage, exhort, admonish, warn, and rebuke in the spirit of meekness with sound words. We should speak them, write them, print them and publish. It is no wonder that so much writing is found in tombs, on rocks; Yea, engraved to be read for generations to come. The Psalmist wrote while in great trouble: So should we that our children and our children's children should know that we experienced the same. David was praying as he wrote: so should we. When David realized his prayers were being answered: he kept writing. When he realized deliverance, he said, "**This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.**" (Psalms 102:18) Read this Psalm. While you experience deliverance, praise Him in your writing. Reading the writing of others is profitable to you when it applies and harmonizes with your state of mind at the time

of reading.

Editing spiritual writing is the most difficult task one ever undertook. Why? Spiritual experiences change so radically and often that unless our souls are in the same spiritual health — both writer and editor — we cannot properly edit. While I am faint-hearted and my soul in distress, I question the boldness of expressions like: “And we **know** that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we **know** that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may **know** Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” Read 1st John 5:20. My own writings and preaching have contained such bold and authoritative statements of Jesus being: **My Saviour! My redeemer! My Shepherd!** — and **My Leader!!** While my soul is in distress, I would delete such expressions as being too certain. While feasting upon the manna from Heaven, being in communion with Christ, I would delete expressions of groanings, misery, trouble, doubts, and fears. When my soul is so sick, it requires reading my own words, and hearing my own voice by recording in order for me to believe that my soul had ever experienced such wonderful spiritual health.

I have **Butler’s Bible WORK, Select WORKS of Mr. John Bunyan, Hunting-ton’s WORKS**, and many other **WORKS** by spiritual writers. The phase of the quotation in the heading of this article that interests us **now** is the spiritual writings, or **works**, left behind by those who have entered into that Eternal Resting Realm. I now pick up a book entitled, **Newton’s Works**, and I find within its pages, **The Olney Hymns**. Many of these hymns are sung often. These glorious thoughts expressed in prose and poetry still inspires God’s people today. The works of these spiritual writers **live** in time, yea, hundred’s of years after their passing from time. Newton was born July 24, 1725.

Brethren, there are so many thousands of books of religious writings try-

ing to dis-prove Bible truths in circulation now, — that our children are being drawn away, questioning the inspiration of the Bible. Graduates from theological seminaries devote their time in writing books against the predestination of God, the total depravity of man, the new birth, the power of Jesus to save each and every one whom the Father chose in Christ, the effectual call, irresistible grace, preservation and perseverance of God’s elect unto a life of eternal bliss beyond this time world. Why do they so write? Because they believe not the truth. The truth is beyond the reasoning, intellect, grasp, wisdom, knowledge and understanding of mortal people who have not been born of the incorruptible Spirit, or seed. Most writers sincerely exalt the power of man, limit the power of God, spread the theory that each and every person has natural ability given him to choose his destiny; yea, even to live righteous lives here without any super-natural help. Brethren, write and publish your testimonies of what the Lord has done for your soul. Write your own bitter and sweet experiences while undergoing the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit. Write of the power and evidence of Jesus Christ’s power to save. Write your auto-biography. Write a brief history of the church of your membership. Write the Church Covenant that you endorsed when becoming a member of your local church. Write and publish for the generations to come that your works of writing may be read by your children: that they may know your own belief, trust, hope, and varied experiences.

I have before me brief histories of Dan River Church and Malmaison Church which have just recently been printed. Elder D. V. Spangler, member and Pastor of Dan River and Elder O. K. Tench, Pastor of Malmaison, as well as those whose labor of love assisted in this venture, are to be commended for this work which will be read with interest by those who follow after.

This **editorial, MY WORDS**, on the necessity of writing, is being published

in *The Signs of the Times*, Incorporated, as belonging to the Primitive or Old School Baptists. As the Lord wills, I shall continue to write for it, as long as it is under the supervision of God-called and qualified ministers. Do not put your writings in the wastebasket. Send them in for consideration to be published!! Amen.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

"HOW SHOULD A MAN BE JUST
WITH GOD?"

Job ix. 2

New Vernon, N. Y.,
February 4, 1935

Of all the considerations in which fallen man is interested, there are none of greater magnitude than that presented in the above text. Man, as a fallen sinner, cursed by the holy law, and doomed to a perpetual and eternal death by the inflexible justice of the immutable Jehovah, is deeply concerned in the investigation of this momentous subject. With rapid strides the sons of men are hurrying through this mortal state of existence, at the termination of which we are to launch into the everlasting reality of our final destiny. With earnest solicitude for the knowledge of the truth, and with ardent prayer for light from the Sun of Righteousness, whose refulgent beams alone are sufficient to illuminate our depraved, bewildered and perverted understandings, let us seriously enquire into the scriptural ground of a sinner's justification before God.

It would be a reflection on the character of the thrice holy God, to suppose that he would save a sinner in his sins, or without a complete justification, based upon his righteousness commensurate with the utmost demand of law and justice; and as we are by nature destitute of saving faith, and "he that believeth not is condemned already, and

the wrath of God abideth on him," the question returns, How should man be just with God? That there is indeed a way the scriptures abundantly demonstrate, and the fact is perhaps universally admitted; but the **how** presents a mystery unto which the angels desire to look, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that men should entertain various opinions on this sublime subject. Had we access to all the knowledge on this subject of the learned and wise men of this world, it could by no means lead us into the mystery; for the sovereign God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of our race, because so it has seemed good in his sight. But blessed forever be his name, he has revealed it to babes. Therefore, while human wisdom and knowledge utterly fail, divine revelation unlocks the cabinet of the eternal world. The Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails to look upon the book, to open the seals thereof, and by his Holy Spirit to disclose the sacred contents, in which a full development of the way of a sinner's justification before God is made. Leaving all human speculations on the subject, then, to the book of revelation let us apply, and look alone to the holy oracle to settle the point which ever has, and still does, involve the professing world in conflict and disputation, viz: How should man be just with God? Here from the mouth of God may we be informed whether justification or salvation be of God or of men; whether of grace or of works; or jointly of men and of God, or by grace connected with works.

Whether this mongrel system can be sustained by the Bible or not, nothing can be more certain than that it is a very popular doctrine in this our day. That God is the grand or efficient cause of justification, that works are the grand or efficient means, that men are the efficient agents who employ the necessary works or means, and that grace has no more to do in the justification of a sinner than to **help** man perform his part. Under the impression that this is the plan of life and salvation, we see

men setting themselves about the work in great earnest, inventing and trying many projects to move upon God to save sinners, and to induce sinners to consent to be saved, to induce God to lay aside his own, and adopt their plan; we see a number of men engage by agreement to occupy different rooms, but simultaneously to pray for some unregenerated individual on whom they have engaged to bestow their united efforts. Monthly concerts of prayer for specific objects are horns of the same beast; contrivances to prevail on God to do the will of man. Let us not be understood to speak against prayer, or even social prayer meetings, whether monthly, weekly or otherwise; the abomination we wish to detect and expose is that of previously agreeing upon — may we say, an assault upon the throne of God — by covenanting that they will not give the matter up, until the Lord complies with their requests. Now christians are aware from revelation that they know not how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which they cannot utter. Hence as they know not, they cannot agree beforehand how they will pray, or for whom in particular they will supplicate the throne of grace. When God is graciously pleased to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, then they open their mouths wide in prayer, and the Spirit indites their petitions, for the Spirit knoweth what is the mind of God, and maketh supplication for such things as God designs to bestow; even as our Lord has informed that they who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

To move upon the unconverted or dead sinner, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and a great variety of other machinery have been brought into requisition, but with as little success as their attempts to induce the Holy One to vary from his fixed purpose of grace and salvation. The entire brood that pass among men for benevolent institutions are birds of the same feath-

er, and all respond to the popular creed before mentioned, viz: God is the cause, works are the means, men are the agents, and grace a name for nothing.

But we digress. We proposed to leave the speculations of men, and come directly to the fountain of truth, the Bible, and there ask, How should man be just with God?

And first, we enquire, is justification of God or of men? Let the Bible answer. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." — Rom. viii.-33. "That he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." — Rom. iii. 26. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified." — Rom. viii. 30. Here then our first question is settled forever; it is God that justifieth. "Neither is there salvation in any other." — Acts iv. 12.

We next enquire, Does God justify the sinner by his grace freely, or for and in consideration of their works? To the bible again. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." — Rom. iii. 24. See also Titus iii. 7. Can it be possible for any one to be justified freely by the grace of God, and yet in some sense by works after all? What saith the scripture? "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not** by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." — Gal. ii. 16. "For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Now to him that worketh (read this, ye workmongers) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." — Rom. iv. 2, 5. "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." — 2 Tim. i. 9. And again, if we could possibly make it appear consistent with scripture that a sinner could be justified by works, his salvation must in that case depend on his evil, not on his good works; for the apostle expressly declares, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." — Titus iii. 5.

But once more we enquire, May not a sinner's justification depend jointly on works and on grace? Let the Bible answer. "And if by grace, then it is no more of 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." Romans xi. 6.

Seeing, then, that justification is of God and not of men, that it is of grace and not of works, the conclusion is inevitable that all the modern schemes, plan, efforts, labors, &c., of pious or impious men, are abortive and vain, and that the only ground on which we are at liberty to hope for justification with God, is that which wholly excludes works, and is from the foundation to the top-stone exclusively of grace, which is through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the stupendous plan of grace which provides for the justification of God's elect, Christ and his people are identified in an indissoluble union. He, as their head, representative and surety, has voluntarily pledged himself in the covenant of life and peace, to present them holy and without blame before his throne at the last day. Hence all their responsibility to law and justice devolved on him; all their sins were charged to his account, and all being summed up, were laid on him. Isa. liii. 6. "And he bare them in his own body on the tree. He was delivered up (to law and justice) for their offences, and raised again for their justification." — Rom. iv. 25. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," (or set apart to him.) — Heb. x.

14. Thus, as the representative of his people, and their surety to the law, he was numbered with the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.) that is, law and justice viewed him in this relation as the debtor, delinquent or transgressor; for on no other ground could justice smite the Shepherd. Zech. xiii. 7. But standing here in the law room and place of his people, his soul was poured out unto death. Isa. liii. And so having fulfilled the divine law in his life, he bore its tremendous penalty in his death, and having paid the utmost farthing, and completely and eternally canceled all that stood against him, on his people's account, he burst the confines of the tomb, in glorious conquest over sin, death and hell, arose to live forever, and hold the keys of hell and death, and in his resurrection brought life and immortality to light, and by his knowledge justified many, having borne their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11.

Thus in his resurrection from the dead, our Lord revealed himself as the way, (John xiv. 6) and the only way in which it was and is possible for man to be just with God, for he himself is "God with us." — Matt. i. 23. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit. 1 Tim. iii. 16. And inasmuch as he who had become sin for us, or who bore our sin, had cancelled the demands of justice, had risen, and was justified in the spirit, by virtue of his obedience, by his blood and righteousness as his people's representative, his people were justified with him, and in him, and by him, and through him. The relation which he bore to his people rendered it impossible that he should be justified alone; his people were justified with him. Hence, as he is God with them, they are just with him; they were crucified with him; (Gal. ii. 20.) dead with him. (Rom. vi. 8.) And as he promised the church, by the mouth of the prophet, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. xxvi. 19,) they are risen with him, and in every nation they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him. Acts x. 35. And it is

his will that all that the Father hath given him shall be with him where he is, (John xvii. 24, and he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. Isa. liii. 11.

The great question is then answered, and the **only** way that man can be just with God is brought to light in the gospel; for vain is the help of man.

"No blood of birds, nor blood of beasts,
Nor hysop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash our dismal stain away.

Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow —
No legal works could cleanse me so."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe February 4, 1835)

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., a presbytery met April 17, 1971 at 7:00 p. m. for the examination of Brother Henry Sartin, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with hymn 196 Benjamin Lloyd song book and prayer by Elder Haywood W. Wray. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Kenneth R. Key, Leonard Key, E. F. Oakley, Raymond S. Payne, H. W. Wray, Rufus Brown, Leonard Brammer, Wallis A. Smith and Donald E. Smith.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Kenneth R. Key as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith Clerk. Elder Raymond S. Payne was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Brother B. H. Dixon having been duly appointed by Moon's Creek Church in conference April 17, 1971, spokesman for the church delivered Brother Henry Sartin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Raymond Payne using scripture reference 1st. Tim. 3rd chapter. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Rufus Brown. Elder Leonard J. Brammer delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference the Bible as his guide.

The Moderator asked Brother B. H. Dixon if the church approved the work of the pres-

bytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Henry Sartin and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained deacon was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Moon's Creek.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Wallis A. Smith.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

OBITUARIES

W. TOM SMITH

The dear Lord saw fit on May 29, 1971, to call from our midst our precious brother, Tom Smith. He was born September 23, 1891, to the late Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Smith in Tarrant County, Texas. He married Ruth Bourland February 5, 1911, in Oklaunion, Texas; and to this union four children were born — three sons and one daughter

Brother Tom united with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma, in 1943. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in May, 1944; and to this office he remained very faithful as long as his health permitted. Brother and Sister Smith's home has been a welcome place for the Old School Baptists all down through their married life. Many of the Old Baptist people and ministers have spent very pleasant hours, days and weeks with these precious saints.

Dear Brother Tom fought a good fight and is now enjoying the paradise of God, waiting the redemption of his body on the resurrection morning. Here he received the tilte to heaven — there the full possession.

His dear wife, children, grandchildren, our little church and his friends will greatly miss him, yet we feel our loss is his eternal gain. May we be given to say, "Thy will be done."

Services were conducted by Elders W. W. Taylor and C. M. Haygood. Submitted at the request of his precious wife.

Elder C. M. Haygood

ELDER C. L. COKER

We at Hancock's church are writing a letter of love and respect of Elder C. L. Coker who passed away in February, 1971. Elder Coker was loved much by the members of our church. It is with a sad heart that we try to write this letter, but we would want to bow to the will of our Heavenly Father who worketh all things after the council of

his own will. Elder Coker was loved by many people far and near. We read in the scripture that a minister of God must have a good report within the church and also out of the church. He was blessed by the grace of God to have this. We looked forward each 3rd Saturday night for him to come and be with us and preach the Doctrine of Salvation by the grace of God. He always seemed like a part of our church. He was blessed to comfort the church and this poor sinner in many ways.

We would not want to bring him back to this low ground of sorrow, for we do believe he is gone to a far better place than this world of heartaches, trials and tribulations for God's people. Our hope is that the Lord will take us one day in that city that he has made for his people. His funeral was conducted by Elder A. P. Mewborn with many there who loved him and came to pay their last love and respects in this life. We can only say Lord thy will be done and comfort his wife and children and those who loved him.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this letter be sent to the family, a copy to the Signs of the Times, and a copy placed on our church records.

Approved by the church in conference February 20, 1971.

Elder Curtis Rains, Moderator
Nina McLawhorn, Clerk

HAYWOOD TAYLOR

Brother Haywood Taylor was born August 20, 1899 at Farmerville, La., and died November 28, 1970. He was married to Vinnie Scarborough, and both are members of Liberty Hill Church. The funeral services were held at the church on November 29, 1970 at 2:00 P. M. with Elder W. W. Taylor officiating. His body was laid to rest in the Liberty Hill cemetery.

He is survived by his widow Sister Haywood Taylor, Farmerville, La., one son, Lynwood Taylor, Baton Rouge, La., one brother, Cloyce Taylor, Farmerville, La., one sister, Mrs. Myrtle Dumas, Mooringsport, La.; and four grandchildren.

It was my pleasure to have known Brother Taylor for several years. In my talks with him I always found him to be humble, meek and lowly. I do feel like that any time our Great Creator God shows one of the heirs of Grace what he is by nature and at the same time what he hopes to be by that same grace, it is enough to make him humble before God and his friends. I do believe humbleness is one of the most precious fruits of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus certainly did walk in a most humble, meek and lonely walk while he was here on this earth. I am also persuaded to believe that Brother Taylor believed in a God

that was, is and shall ever be able to perform all things he promised his heirs of Grace that he would do for them. Our Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. What this means to me is that our great God is able to give eternal life to every one that he died for. "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish. I am come that they may have life and have it more abundantly." I most surely do believe that a child of God when he breathes out his last breath, then his suffering is over once and for all. I do hope Sister Taylor that you will find some comfort in these few words. I hope God has blessed me to write in regard to your request. May the great creator God keep and bless all of his little ones and keep them humble, meek, and lowly while passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

David E. Turner

A MEMORIAL FOR BROTHER STEPHEN ISAAC FOUNTAIN

Our loving heavenly Father was pleased to remove from the stage of action our dear brother "Steve" Fountain, as he was known far and near. He was 81 years, 2 months, 16 days old. The third child of Hosea Nixon and Laura Ann Brown Fountain, he was born February 8, 1890 in Duplin County. His departure from this life came at 6:00 A. M. April 24, 1971 in Duplin General Hospital after a long illness. God blessed him with six sisters and three brothers. Both parents and all his brothers and sisters preceded him in death except four. Those surviving are: Mrs. Sudie Bryan, Mrs. Louzetta Murphy, Mrs. Temple Powell and Louis Fountain.

Brother "Steve" was married to Myrtle Bryan in December, 1915. This union was blessed with one child which died in infancy. His dear afflicted companion passed away April 23, 1966 after a lengthy illness.

His afflictions kept him from living alone at home after her death. He made his home with Mrs. Sudie and John Bryan's family. They all loved him dearly and were always ready to lend a helping hand toward making life happy and comfortable as long as he lived. There were other nieces and nephews who helped during his hospital sickness.

He and his wife loved the doctrine, Salvation By Grace, and manifested a strong faith. They attended church meetings regularly for years, contributing to the church welfare, and were always ready to help those in need. He offered his body before the people at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on March 12,

1961. Deacons put it before the church, and he was gladly received by all members present. By request, his name was recorded with the church at Muddy Creek. He was baptized that afternoon by Elder L. L. Yopp at Floyd Pond. Many of the brethren, sisters, and friends were present for the baptism service. He manifested the love and faith of a good brother in his home church and all others as long as health permitted his attending. All during his sickness when his mind was rational his love and interest in doctrine, church, and members continued the theme of his conversation. He enjoyed so much people visiting and talking with him.

His funeral was held at Muddy Creek Church Sunday, April 25, at 3:30 P. M. Elder Harmon Brown conducted it. The large congregation of people present was a manifestation of the love people felt for him.

"We Shall Sleep, But Not Forever," "Robed and Ready" — songs he loved — were sung by those dear to him. His body was laid to rest beside his wife in the Nickie Fountain Family Cemetery. Many beautiful flowers much more than covered his grave.

We miss him so much at church. We know his family misses him most of all. Yet, none of us could wish him back in his condition. We would say, "Sleep on dear Brother Steve, sleep on." May we all be together in that Heavenly Home some day is our humble hope.

I love and cherish his memory and the association I had with him in and outside the church. Written by the request of his sister, Mrs. Sudie Bryan, and John Bryan family.

Arlene Horne Brown
Rt. 1, Box 309
Richlands, N. C. 28574

JAMES LISCOMB BLAIR

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, J. Liscomb Blair, who was born July 28, 1894. He passed away March 10, 1971. He was the son of Robert Young Blair and Louise Oakes Blair. He was first married to Lucy Murphy December 27, 1914; and she departed this life November 6, 1942. To this union were born four daughters and one son: Mrs. Alease B. Carter, Mrs. Nellie B. Colman, Mrs. Ernestine B. Mize, Miss Pattie Blair, and Norman Blair, who died June 4, 1968. There were three granddaughters and one great granddaughter, and three great grandsons.

On November 17, 1945 he married Ocie Brumfield, who survives, along with one sister Irma B. Walker, and six brothers: Wade, Luke, Dewey, Ernest, Robert and Joe Blair.

Brother Liscomb joined Canaan Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1964, and was baptized by his pastor Elder R. A. May. He

was ordained deacon July 5, 1965; which office he served well. He always filled his seat at the meetings, and was loved by all. He will be greatly missed.

His funeral was conducted at Swicegood's Funeral Home by his pastor, Elder R. A. May, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va. beneath a mound of lovely flowers, to await his Lord's second coming.

May it please God to shower his love on his dear wife and family, and remove all feelings of sorrow and enable them to say Thy will be done, not mine. We feel surely our loss is his eternal gain. Written by a brother in hope.

C. D. Brumfield

SISTER ORA ADAMS

Sister Ora Adams was born April 16, 1884, and departed this life June 27, 1971. She was united in marriage to Brother Edd Adams in December, 1900; who preceded her in death, having passed on October 31, 1958.

To this union were born twelve children — a daughter and three sons have passed on. Four sons and four daughters survive: Hill, Fred, Tom and Rayburn Adams; Mrs. Bertie Lawson, Mrs. Berl Darnell, Mrs. Carl Hoke and Mrs. Marty Block. Surviving also are several grandchildren and great grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Lillie Bazzel and Mrs. Lona Smith; three half-sisters: Mrs. Annie Cook, Mrs. Bessie Cook, and Mrs. Vada Waldrop; one half-brother, Willie Hill, and a host of friends.

She was a member of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. She and her husband, Brother Edd Adams, were baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins the first Sunday in June 1954.

She was bedfast for several months from a broken hip. She bore her afflictions and trouble without a murmur. She loved her friends the brethren and sisters, and often asked about them, and expressed a desire to go and be with them. She enjoyed having them in her home as long as she was able. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

We feel she is much better off since she is through with suffering and afflictions which are common to this low ground of sin and sorrow. So, dear children and friends, let us not mourn as those who have no hope. The Lord is coming again soon to gather his jewels unto himself. What a sweet hope we have that we shall be with him forever more.

Elder Paul Poyner conducted her funeral and she was laid to rest in Bazzel Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. The large congregation and beautiful floral offerings denoted the love and respect in which Sister Ora Adams was held.

May the Lord keep and sustain all the

bereaved ones who were devoted to her, and did all they could for her comfort. The writer has known and loved her for over forty-five years.

Written by request.

Trudie Adams

WE MOURN IN THE WILDERNESS

When I read of the voice of one crying in the wilderness, I think of my former Pastor and his journey through this wilderness land.

I believe he was blessed to preach the gospel declaring the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

I feel I shall long remember that beautiful October morning, 1970. The trees had just begun to shed their leaves.

For some reason I felt to be dwelling at ease; when suddenly I was overshadowed, and my heart was deeply grieved.

The beauty of the morning faded, and the Lord of Heaven only knows how many tears were shed,

When we poor mortals received the information our precious Pastor Elder Curry King was dead.

We knew his health was failing, though it was hard to accept that his life's evening sun was going down.

In his last days it was plain to see that faith, hope, and charity did abundantly abound.

Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. His life on earth was oftentimes troubled like the waters from his youthful days.

We believe he died in that peace the Lord gives and he so dearly loved and found momentarily between the rolling waves.

In all things he was given to remember his divine creator and was blessed to preach His sovereignty over all His creation.

Through faith that is counted for righteousness, he was given a sincere obedience in life and conversation.

Brother King was a modest man. His humble character and personality won as much admiration and respect as any man I ever knew.

As minister, farmer and businessman, husband, and father in Israel, the light of the Lord by faith shined through.

The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life. The memory of the just is blessed, and we cherish the memories of him that lingers in our mind.

He was cautious not to offend; his words were fitly spoken, and he treated us with brotherly love and fellowship from a heart so kind.

Just a few days before the death angel called, he spoke so sweetly at our communion table at Bush Arbor, saying for some precious

ones this service would be the last.

We believe he felt in his heart that before our next meeting, from this wilderness of sin and sorrow, he would pass.

In the beginning the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone; He so graciously brought a precious one into our brother's life.

Sister Brona K. King, his helpmeet for more than 49 years, a lovely sister; a true, humble, and devoted wife.

We rejoiced when he retired from business; and they moved back home to their Green Valley farm.

Where he and his precious companion lived as one and so dearly loved the peace and calm.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; their works do follow them. Preacher King, as he was known by so many, leaves a legend.

The youth of this day will be told many things the Lord blessed Preacher King to say and do throughout this region.

I haven't forgotten the darkest hours of my tribulations when I felt my world had come to an end;

The flowers of love he so freely gave that made me feel that even I had a friend.

At his funeral the precious ones he felt to be his sons in the ministry, spoke so sweetly of his life, ascribing all honor and praise to the great I am.

Our brother believed in the sovereign grace of the King of Saints who blessed him to sing the songs of Moses and the Lamb.

That sad day as I left the cemetery, my heart sank within me as I looked upon the huge mound of beautiful flowers.

They covered the grave of my beloved pastor only a few steps from the pulpit where he spent so many precious hours.

I said within me, you have finished your course; now take your peaceful rest, for our heartaches and sorrows remain.

It was hard to give you up. Yet, we feel our grievous loss is your blessed eternal gain.

We esteemed our brother and pastor most highly in love, and now we are very sad,

As we bow in humble submission and thank the Heavenly Father for the blessings we have had.

In this wilderness land, I fly low and mourn as the dove.

The tears fill my eyes as I try to write this, I hope, in the bonds of Christian love.

Whether we walked in the valley of despair or from the mountain top we wanted to sing;

We would find a heart-felt love and warm welcome from Elder Curry King.

Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1971

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/71
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY FATHER WORKS

There are those times I cannot see
That all is working good for me,
But then I see a shining light
And know that everything is right.

My Father works to do his will,
His every purpose to fulfill.
No man can stay his holy hand
But all must bow at his command.

I cannot see the path ahead,
But by His Spirit I am led:
I've naught to dread or naught to fear:
His Spirit makes his work so clear.

And so I travel on and on
The way my precious Lord has gone,
And when I reach that happy shore,
I'll sing his praise forevermore.

(Jesus is the light of my soul, given by my
holy and merciful Father God.)

Ethel Gilland
232 McKenzie Ave., Apt. 4
Panama City, Fla.

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER LONNIE THOMAS

HOW THE LORD HAS LED ME

Dear Bro. Pittman: — At my father's request I will write a part of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. When I was about grown I went to preaching at Charity. As they were singing the closing hymn I could not keep from shedding tears and thought they were the happiest people

I ever saw, and if I just only was as good as they looked to me I would be so glad. I was afraid some one would see me crying. I wondered what they would think of me. So I tried to keep from crying, and have thought many times since why I felt like I did. Yet I went on enjoying the worldly things as we all do until God makes us feel His great power.

The year 1915 I became so troubled I could hardly bear it. I just felt all the time like something dreadful was going to happen. I would lie down at night wondering what it would be. Our little boy Cleo was taken sick Feb. 1916 with pneumonia and was seriously ill for twelve days when it developed into that dreadful disease, meningitis. The doctors said there was no chance for him to get well. One night my friends told me to lie down and get some rest. As I went I thought I would try to pray for my child to get well. And the first thing that came to my mind was, "Lord what have I ever done good to make me fit to call on Thee for anything." I could only ask the Lord if it was His will for him to get well I would be glad and if not I hoped He would give me strength to bear it. So in the night they woke me, as they told me they would do, if they thought he was any worse. I got up and went to his bedside. I looked at him, trusting in the Lord that I might be willing for His will to be done. In a few days the child began to improve, I became very much troubled about his condition as the doctors said he would be afflicted in some way. One day I was trying to get him to talk, as he could talk some before he got sick. I thought his affliction might be that he could not talk. And oh how awful

I thought that would be. My mind was brought back where I first was. I must be submissive to the Lord's will and if it is His will he would talk. And if he was afflicted I was no better than those that did have afflicted children. It wasn't longer than thirty minutes before he could talk some. I felt surely it must be the Lord showing me his great power. The child got well and wasn't afflicted in any way.

I would study over these things and felt that I couldn't praise God enough for His wonderful blessings. I would go to church and I enjoyed hearing the gospel preached better than I ever had before. I would wonder whether I was a child of God, and I would think if I were, surely I would be given more evidence. Time passed on and I tried to lay all this aside. The year 1917, my trouble came again. It came with such force at times I could hardly bear it. I knew nothing to do but to look to the Lord for ease. I felt willing to kneel and pray as I had heard and read of others doing. In my heart my prayer was, "If it is God's will to relieve my burden I would be glad, though if I just could be given evidence that I was a child of God I would be willing to bear all my suffering."

It wasn't long before our baby most two years old was taken sick. She was sick four weeks when it developed into meningitis which caused her death one week later. Oh, how it hurt me to give her up. I would think what a glorious exchange it was to leave this troublesome world and rest in that happy home where pain and sorrow never comes. I was blessed with the pleasure of a feeling sense of my many sins being forgiven the morning of her death. I was so burdened I could hardly bear it. When all at once I was perfectly at ease. I was so happy I could not help but smile, and was afraid some one would see me and not know what to think of me smiling and my child having just died. It wasn't long before that easy, calm, feeling left me. My burden was relieved so much I thought it sure-

ly must be the dealings of the Lord. After then I felt I must talk to the church, but I was afraid I was mistaken in the whole matter so I put off joining till first Sunday in July, 1919. I went before the church and told of my hope in Jesus and a part of what I've written, and was relieved of another burden that I don't believe I ever would have been, if I had not taken up the cross. I was baptized in August, 1919, and have rejoiced in trying to serve in this way. Please pray for me and mine. Your unworthy sister in hope.

Ferrum, Va.

Lonnie M. (Rakes) Thomas

(Re-published by request from *Zion's Advocate* of May, 1922. See obituary this issue.)

THE CHOSEN

"Blessed is the man whom thou choos-est, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." (Psalm 65:4)

If there were no other scriptures in the Holy Bible declaring that salvation is truly of God and not of man, I would be satisfied with this one truth. However the Bible declares this truth from cover to cover; but few can see or understand it.

There are thousands of buildings referred to as "churches", which are only buildings and nothing more.

There is but one church, and that is the church of the living God. This church is not made by the hands of men, but by the eternal God himself. And, Oh, how precious is this church in the sight of our God and his people! This church was purchased by the precious Lamb of God, and is eternal, never to be destroyed.

Only the chosen people of God can enter the door of this church, and Oh, how safe and secure are the little lambs of God when they are brought to the realization that they are part of this church! It is truly joy unspeakable and

full of glory for those who are chosen of Him to share in this glorious truth.

So many today are running to and fro seeking, searching, and ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. The few who do know and believe the truth are looked upon as the scum of the earth, and treated as though they were mentally retarded, and are considered to be beyond help by the world.

But let us remember that our precious Lord Jesus was treated in a very shameful manner and was scorned by those who considered themselves to be good. Can we expect the world to favor us when we put forth an effort to exalt our precious Lord? Indeed not! How can we who know the truth be in fellowship with those who deny that the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus forever sealed the redemption of his people? What fellowship does light have with darkness? The two simply do not mix.

I have said many times, and say again, that it is better to stand alone than to follow that which I know to be wrong. That which is wrong has no part with that which is right, and I surely have found that to be true, for I have been left to walk alone as far as this world is concerned, simply because I refuse to bow down to false doctrine.

May my Father God ever give the grace to stand alone, if that is what it takes to walk in His light.

Ethel Gilland,
232 McKenzie Ave., Apt. 4
Panama City, Fla.

ENJOYS READING THE SIGNS

Rt. 4, Box 320
Lenior City, Tenn. 37771

Dear Elder Wood:

It is with pleasure that I will try to write you a few lines this beautiful day. I have enjoyed reading the *Signs* for the past year, and am thankful to be one of your readers. So many

good letters from God's loving people and ministers, it fills my soul to sit down and read them. May God bless each one that has a part in it.

You are acquainted with Roy Thomas in Wilmington, Delaware, my dear brother: he has mentioned you so much I feel like I know you also.

I am sending \$7.00 for the renewal of the *Signs* for two years.

A sister in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Ben Fields

CARRYING OUT THE PURPOSES
OF GOD

"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 counsel determined (decreed) before to be done." (Acts 4:27, 28)

Surely we only move and act to carry out the purpose that God has determined to be done; as these people did. We know that Christ was carried before rulers and kings, and treated scornfully — crucified, bled and died. And this scripture tells us they were doing what God had determined that they should do. If people want to call this unjust, and say, If God is this kind of a God they want no part of him, that is between them and their God; and they have said this very thing.

But I know that God does his will and none can hinder. He is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things that be in heaven and earth: and he holds all power in his hands. What he created the people of the earth for, and why he created them, is known only to him — He made them. If he wanted to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor (Romans 9:25) we cannot question him as to why he did it: for he does all things after the counsel of his own will. What is considered evil by man, God brings good out of: and all things work together for good

to them that love God, — like Joseph, when his brethren sold him into Egypt. They hated Joseph and were going to get rid of him; but God had foreordained or predestinated this from the foundation of the world; and it was at the appointed time. They, the brothers, meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. (Exodus 50:20)

In Joseph going down into Egypt he found favor with the king, and was placed just under the king in the affairs of the kingdom. And when the great famine came into the land of Canaan where Joseph's father and brothers lived, the brothers were sent into Egypt to buy food; and they had to go before Joseph to buy the food. Joseph knew his brothers, but they did not know him. One can see how God works these things. God had caused Joseph to have dreams, and these infuriated the brothers. But all this had to come to pass to get the children of Israel down into Egypt, which was long ago prophesied they would go there, and toil under the Egyptians four hundred years; and then they would be brought out. Just look how God works all things — Joseph's father and brothers moved into Egypt to be with Joseph and have food.

Another example is when Pharaoh would not let the children of Israel go out of Egypt. The Lord told Moses, I will harden his heart that he will not let them go. Could Pharaoh have done anything about this? The Bible plainly says that the Lord hardened it. I had a letter from a lady a week or so ago, and she wrote that Adam and Eve ate the fruit in the garden of their own free will — they did not have to do it. She said the Lord knew they would do it, but he didn't make them do it. Well supposed they had decided not to do it — I suppose they would still be in the garden, and that all of God's plans would have fallen through. But I say they did exactly what the Lord had determined: just as the scripture at the head of this article says, "They were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel deter-

mined before to be done," that all his purposes from the foundation of the earth to the end of the world should be accomplished.

If He had not wanted them to eat the fruit, and sin enter into the world, why didn't he place the flaming sword around it to start with? This surely would have kept them away from the tree, since he made everything that is or ever will be; and knew man's weakness — that he would do this very thing. I say that his plans were all laid out, and that not one thing would fail, that the saying of God might stand, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isaiah 14:24)

When God made man He knew the weakness of man — He made him just as He wanted him. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:11) He had the power to make a strong man who would not partake of the forbidden fruit, and the garden of Eden could have been just that — the Garden of Eden or heavenly place. God's creature man did not teach him something he didn't know by partaking of the forbidden fruit; if so God would not be an allwise God.

Let's just say, God's plans were all laid out from the foundation of the world, and man started fulfilling them. A child of God will praise Him for all his wonderful works that He has done under the sun. The Devil is at God's command; and he can only go as far as God allows him to go. All this talk about man being a free moral agent and is turned loose to do as he pleases, I cannot understand. According to most religious teaching, the Lord is kept busy begging people to let him come into their hearts and save them; and then writing and erasing their names in and out of the Lamb's Book of Life: Today their names may be there, but tomorrow they may have back-slid. If death overtakes them in this back-slid condition, they are bound for the place

where all the children of wrath go; so they were not saved in the first place. For if anything is saved, it is forever: if it is lost, it never was saved. Saved carries the meaning: to deliver, to persevere, safeguard, to make safe, to save from danger or destruction. Wherein is God praised in a doctrine that says they are saved today and lost tomorrow? I cannot find any comfort in this.

I believe if I am saved, it will be for eternity; and I can praise God for this. God knew what he was doing when he made man, and his purpose and will was all laid out before the foundation of the world. We have a lot of people who say, This or that would be charging God with sin. What is man to be saying this or that would be charging God with sin? I don't believe it would concern God one bit, if his creature man charged him with sin a million years, since His ways and thoughts are so high above man's ways and thoughts. The mind of man cannot comprehend the ways and thoughts of God: — "As I have thought so shall it come to pass," says God. To me this seals the thing from the beginning to the end. No matter what man charges God with, I see God as the Almighty, Omnipresent, Holy, Righteous, All powerful, All wise God, who reigns over the heavens and earth, and does his will, and none can hinder him. No matter how much man may try to change His will, whatever He does is right and just.

In the case of Jacob and Esau: many people say if he loved one and hated the other, He would be unjust. But this is just what the Bible says. Romans 9:11 tells us, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God. God forbid." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Romans 9:18) Where is

the person that will charge God with anything?

So we are all carrying out our part in this great universe, just as those people were at the heading of this article; and surely we are all doing whatsoever the Lord determined before to be done. I am fully aware that this doctrine is scorned and trampled and looked down on by the world; but this makes little difference to me.

Eunice Dean
11475 S. W. 41 Street
Miami, Fla. 33165

THEY SHALL COME TO HIM

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

Those that were given to Jesus are spoken of as the elect, Children of God, Church of the Living God, Wife of Christ, Body of Christ, etc. The sheep were given to Jesus to be his bride. Notice the ownership. You cannot redeem anything that is not yours. An article, animal, etc. must be yours by ownership before you can redeem it. In other words, you cannot redeem anything that does not belong to you.

When did the father give the people to Jesus? It goes further than just those living during that age. They come to Jesus by faith. As Paul said, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9) Paul did not mean that we see Jesus in the flesh, as we see one another face to face today as we visit one another, go to meeting, go to our jobs, etc. Paul meant that we see Jesus by the eye of faith.

The Father gave his people to Jesus even before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1:4) The Father saw all of them even before they were in existence. "thy book all my members were written,

which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalm 139:16) As we think of the members of a natural body, this makes us think of the Church of God. The members of a natural body were fashioned even before it was in existence. "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30) Not a bone of Jesus was broken. The beauty of this is that not one of God's people shall be broken off, or utterly cast off. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way, though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalm 37:24) This means that even though a Child of God may fall for awhile, or fall temporarily, God will uphold him and he will not be finally lost forever from the presence of God. A child of God may fall for a while, but in due time God will bless him with repentance, and the child of God will repent over his sins, and he will mourn over them, and he will pray unto God for guidance.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." In short, this means they shall believe in Jesus. In due time all of the elect shall come to Jesus or believe in him and not one of them shall fail to come to him. We believe that this text is applicable to God's people in all ages. We see the work of the Holy Ghost, and this is an effectual work. God gives to all natural life, and he gives spiritual life to his elect in due time. The text did not say that all men should come to Jesus, or that they might come if they only trust him, or accept him as their saviour, etc. Some might say, how can they come to Jesus since they do not have the opportunity in that country to hear the gospel or do not have the opportunity to read the Bible, etc. I am glad that God is stronger than weak man. God is able to save his people to the uttermost. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." (Isaiah 59:16) The

Lord's hand is not shortened that he cannot save. (Isaiah 5:1)

God's people do not come to Jesus or believe in him by their own strength. In fact, they cannot come to him, unless they are drawn by the Lord. "No man can come to me, except my father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44) The children of God are not drawn against their will, but they are made willing by the Lord. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power..." (Psalms 110:3) How is one made willing by the Lord? When one sees his lost and ruined condition, and he has come to the end of his own strength, and finds that he is not able to help his own condition, and finds that man cannot help, then his eyes turn away from the perishable things of this earth, and he turns to God and pleads for deliverance, and pleads for mercy. He is made willing to look to the Lord for his needs. He is made willing to go to Jesus. How welcome are the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) The poor sinner finds that the yoke of the law is too heavy for him.

The law demands perfection, and gives nothing. There is no mercy in the law. But there is mercy in the Lord. "His mercy endureth forever." (Psalm 107:1) There is rest in Jesus and this is a peaceful rest. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Heb. 4:10) One is in a condition to enter into that rest when his strength of performing the deeds of the law has failed him. It is natural for one to work as long as he is able, but when his strength fails him and he finds that there is nothing he can do to merit the favor of God, then in due time he is blessed to wait upon the Lord for mercy. He waits upon the Lord for guidance, mercy, etc. Then he has entered into that rest because he has ceased from his own works. As long as one feels

that he is able to perform certain conditions in order to merit his own salvation, he has not ceased from his own works, and he has certainly not entered into that rest which is Jesus Christ.

God's people shall come to him in due time. It is not up to us to question God, and wonder if just one would fail to come to him. Jesus said that all shall come to him. Meaning, all must believe in Jesus at that appointed time. Let us not get uneasy about the matter. God will teach all of his people, whether it is directly as in the case of Paul's experience, or whether it is in other ways. The point is that this is God's business, and there is nothing that can hinder him from teaching his people the truth, and it does not take God a certain length of time to teach his people. All of them shall be taught of God.

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Several years ago when I did not believe in this doctrine, this thought came to me: "How cruel it would be if someone wanted repentance, if he felt the need of salvation, and would be cast off because he was not in that blessed number." The sweetness of the matter is that if one feels the need of salvation, it is some sweet evidence that he is in that blessed number. Why? Because the Scriptures point out that the wicked have pleasure in unrighteousness, in following after the pleasures of this world, etc. The children of God are the only ones who have the desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and who realized their lost and ruined condition, and pray for deliverance. You pray from your heart, do you not?

When you come to Jesus for mercy, (pray or plead for mercy) Satan may tempt you and tell you your sins are too great, he may tell you that you are a hypocrite, etc., but take courage, because the blood of Jesus washes away all the sins of his elect. May the Lord bless you to look to Jesus for salvation,

and rejoice that none that come to Jesus shall be cast off.

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

CIRCULAR LETTER
LEXINGTON-ROXBURY
ASSOCIATION
1971

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church of Shokan, Ulster County, New York, being held in the Old School Baptist Meeting House at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, September 15 and 16, 1971, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Each year we thank God that it has been his good pleasure to sustain us in the faith once delivered to the Saints and shield us from the evil that is in the world, so that we might meet again.

We wish to call your attention to the 57th chapter of Isaiah. The 1st verse reads: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

Before the beginning of time God foreknew what was going to come about. God elected himself a people, and knew they would transgress and sin. God predestinated the way of salvation, and all they would need in their journey through time.

At the start God created Adam; then from Adam God brought forth Eve as an helpmeet for Adam. They transgressed and were driven from the garden of Eden. Although God told Adam he must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and toil, it was God that made it all possible. Evil and jealousy were present when Cain slew Abel; and continued to increase until the time of Noah — when only Noah and his wife,

his sons and their wives were saved of all the inhabitants of the earth. God provided a hiding place in the Ark. This Ark was a hiding place for God's chosen few during the deluge, which was a calamity to the rest of the inhabitants of the earth at that time. A remnant was saved from the destruction to keep the earth populated. It was God's pleasure to do it this way. All things are possible with God and He determined to preserve Noah in this manner. God laid out the master blueprint, and all things come about and take place at the appointed time.

A famine was due to come upon the land of Canaan. Therefore God sent Joseph into the land of Egypt to prepare a hiding place for the children of Israel. Joseph and Israel did not realize it was for their good at the beginning, as there were many trials and tribulations involved. God saw to it that they were placed in the land of Goshen a well watered and sheltered place for flocks. God set a boundary between the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and not one of the plagues ever touched the Hebrew children.

The Israelites sojourned in Egypt for 400 years. The time had come according to God's predetermined will that they should move to the promised land of Canaan. The Israelites would, probably, have been content to stay in the land of Egypt, but God placed a king over Egypt that knew not Joseph. (Exodus 1:8) This king put hardships on the people of Israel to awaken them to their low estate. Exodus 1:12 reads, "But the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew; and they were grieved because of the children of Israel." God had a purpose in all this to make manifest His power and glory.

God raised up Moses for this purpose. God caused the enemy of His people to raise and educate Moses; and Moses grew up in the house of Pharaoh's daughter; but God kept Moses from taking up with the Egyptian religions. God called Moses apart for His glory. God spoke to the prophets

through dreams and visions, but to Moses God spoke face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend. (Exodus 33:11) It was through Moses and the prophets that God made himself manifest until the time appointed for Jesus to come into the world.

The Israelites were unable to keep the law of themselves, and went astray many times. Each time God laid the rod of affliction upon them. Each time the Lord raised up a prophet to lead them out of captivity. The initiative of calling a prophet rests with God. He calls his prophets at the appointed time in his blue print of the way of salvation. Many of the prophets were led to despair at the sins of the Israelites. The prophet's lives were in jeopardy at the hands of Israel, but the Lord always provided a way of escape.

In the 19th chapter of 1st Kings we read of Elijah: "He arose and went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough. Now, O Lord take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." Elijah was in the depth of despair and waited for the salvation of the Lord. God sent his angel to awaken Elijah, telling him to arise and eat. God furnished the medicine to strengthen Elijah through the cake, representing Jesus, and the water, representing the Word.

Dear brethren, are there not many times when our hope runs low and our faith is sorely tried? It is then the thunders and lightning, the winds of evil and false doctrine arise against us. The poor tempest tossed child of God runs here and there seeking after shelter from the storm. It is then the Lord sends his Comforter, saying, Peace be still, it is I. God has set Satan's bounds and he cannot afflict the children of God beyond the endurance given them by God. God planted his seed in the elect people, and the hand that did the planting will also do the cultivating. The elect plants of God shall not be rooted up.

Precious brethren, the elect of God

have a wonderful hiding place: the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek; a priest that had no beginning or ending of days. This priest, Jesus, came into the world, gave his life for his people, and has gone back to the right hand of God to intercede for his people.

In the Old Testament days the high priest had the names of the tribes of Israel written on the breast plate of his garment. He also had bells and pomegranates on his garment when he was in the holy place.

When Jesus left and went back to the right hand of God, He sent the Comforter to care for the elect People of God. Jesus had the nail prints in his hands and feet, and the spear pierced side to show the price he paid for the sins of his people.

God has provided a hiding place that shall not fail. Isaiah 32:1-3 reads, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall harken."

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free
The saints from everlasting were
And shall forever be.

In covenant from of old
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold
Was blessed in Jesus there."

Hymn 188 Beebe Collection

(Written by Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger.)

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The *Upper Country Line Union Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in October with the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church in Rockingham County, N. C.

The meeting house is located on 704 between Reidsville and Madison, N. C. We welcome the brethren and friends.

Rachel Wray, Asst. Church Clerk

EASTERN UNION

The next session of the *Eastern Union* is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Bethlehem, in Tyrell County, N. C., on Saturday and fifth Sunday in October, 1971. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited; a special invitation is extended to our ministering brethren.

Those traveling east take Highway 64 to Columbia, N. C. to stop light, turn right on 94 about two and one-half miles to first cross-road, turn right at the sign Bethlehem Church, about 200 yards from the highway.

Elder N. J. Ambrose, Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To September 1, 1971)

Margaret Phillips, Va.....	\$ 3.00
N. Hunt, Va.....	3.00
Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.....	18.00
J. H. Merrill, Tex.....	3.00
J. B. Waters, Ala.....	3.00
Effie Davis, N. C.....	1.00
Elva S. Gentry, Va.....	8.00
Helen J. Jones, Calif. in memory of Sister Etta Donlary — Cousin.....	10.00
Fannie Mae Harper, N. C.....	1.00
Mrs. Jane Fagan, N. C.....	3.00
Gladys Robinson, N. C.....	1.00
L. W. Parker, Ala.....	1.00
Mrs. J. V. Pickeral, Va.....	3.00
Mrs. Lester W. Mellott, Pa.....	3.00
Audrey E. Dyer, Va.....	3.00

CLERKS WILL PLEASE NOTE

We find it necessary to insist that those who send in notices of meetings for publication in the SIGNS, must mail them to us at Manassas in time to reach us thirty-five days before the publication date in which the notices are to appear. For example, a notice for the December issue should be in our hands on or before October 25th, which would be thirty-five days before the December issue date; and is the date copy is mailed to our printers each month.

Most meetings are appointed some months in advance, so send your notices in early and we will hold them until the proper time for publication. — J. D. W.

Danville, Virginia November, 1971

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances should be mailed to Danville, Virginia, as shown below. All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia 22110. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

tices which had been urged and promoted upon the Baptists, contrary to the scriptural doctrines and practices which were time honored from the days of Christ and his Apostles.

There was much controversy between the Old and the New School Baptists in those days; but we are not interested in reviving the issues, for we are interested only in the fact that the Old School Baptists in that day, and since, required a "Thus saith the Lord," and consequently a "Hearing of what the Spirit saith unto the churches," for their faith. And further, we are interested in showing that the **Signs of the Times** through the years, has not wandered from the original Prospectus of 1832.

We have been delighted to re-publish the writings of former contributors to our columns through the years, under the heading of **Voices of the Past**, for the express purpose of showing the consistency of the faith adhered to by the editors of the **Signs** throughout the years. We are zealous for these fundamentals, while allowing the brethren to express individual thoughts or interpretations not contrary to them.

There will be extra copies of the December issue available from the **Signs'** office for anyone who may desire them.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

SPECIAL NOTICE

We purpose to publish in the December issue some of the early articles by Elder Gilbert Beebe in which he enlarged upon several points of doctrine embraced in his **PROSPECTUS** when he began publishing the **Signs of the Times** in 1832. These are taken from the **First Volume of Editorials** of Elder Beebe, and will fill almost all of the December edition.

We believe these will be most interesting to all of our readers, and will enable them to read in one issue of the paper, those scriptural reasons why Elder Beebe, being blessed of the Lord, opposed contrary teachings and prac-

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46:3, 13

"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they wor-

ship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Harken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I will bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

When moved by the Spirit of God my petition to you is the same that Paul had towards the church at Thessalonica (I Thes. 5:25), for I am sure that my need is as great as was his. In my writing and preaching, I do not entertain any idea that it is different from that of my brethren. All that are called to service in the kingdom of heaven are first impressed to walk in wisdom's ways, whether it is in serving churches in the various activities, visiting the sick, writing articles. I do not mean by this that all I hear and do, and all that I see, is the result of an impression of the Lord. Far from it, but I do mean that in the service of our Lord, and to His brethren, that we are led of His Spirit to that end.

If we as ministers and writers, as hearers and readers, have any idea in mind other than the glory of God, we ought to be ashamed. Yet, being poor frail sinners, knowing only in part, we, (or I am) frequently running when not sent, writing when not inspired of the Spirit, speaking when not called. This

not being able to do as I would; this constant reminder that I do not know the things of the Spirit, causes me to be fearful when I come to the pulpit or to the typewriter. Many times I have left home, and all that was near and dear to me by the ties of nature, and be asked as I drove away: "Who has required this at thy hands." Many times I have had impressions to write on a certain subject or text and write a page and look it over only to throw it in the waste basket.

I would be foolish if I told you that I do not live to preach and that I preach to live; I would be foolish if I told you that I do not enjoy preaching and writing. It is my meat and drink. I have not resented people telling where and what and when and how to preach, nor have I resented it when I have had attempted controls put on me so as to "block" me in. Many times I am sure that brethren had my welfare in mind; at other times, it may have been Shimei cursing me, but if so, I have felt that the Lord sent him. At the same time, I have had to examine my motives and impressions as to whether they were according to knowledge, and have seldom, if ever, come up with a satisfactory answer, yet have had to venture, often in misgivings.

I do not think that I am called an extremist, or, perhaps, a hobby rider, and yet there are certain things that we necessarily say again and again. Even the greatest objectors to repetition are, themselves as guilty as any of using certain phraseology in making up their expressions.

We do not have among us as a religious order of people two ministers with the same gift. However, if there are diversified gifts among us, possessors of these gifts should be (and are) the last to find fault with the other minister's gift. This does not mean that we cannot differ and remain brethren. One of the humblest elders that I ever knew was not what is called an Absolute predestinarian; one of the ablest and most highly respected elders did not believe in the future resurrection of

the body. These two elders are gone these many years (they were each a thousand miles from here), but their living in harmony with their brethren was brotherly. Now with that much said, I leave my preliminaries or foundation and take hold of the text with what I hope the Lord has given me. Since I am writing in my own field and not that of another; since I have, if not mistaken, withdrawn my foot out from my neighbor's (minister) room; since words mean one thing to one and something else to somebody else, I will, as blessed of God, use such terminology and phraseology as befits my understanding of the things found in the text. I would beg you to correct where wrong, but not to murder the King's English, but if you do, please do not waste my time with murderous criticism. I will, perhaps, spend three articles in dispensing with my understanding of the text.

"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Sometimes God hails his children (Luke 1:28; Mat. 28:9); sometimes he calls their attention by saying, "Ho, every one that thirsteth" (Isa. 55:1); sometimes he speaks in a hearkening command to them. It is of paramount importance that we notice the manner of address as well as those that are addressed. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Here we have the same thing said twice — that God has a people; that these people are his portion; that they are the lot of his (God's) inheritance, and that they are known by the name of Jacob. I would appreciate it if you would turn to this chapter of Deuteronomy (32) and read this statement, to wit, *The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* If men have bewitched you; if the gods of this world have blinded you; if the

cunning devices of false teachers have guided you wrong, then, by all means, remember this declaration of the Lord. *Then let us pursue it.* As far as salvation pertains to Jacob, it is sure. The God of salvation has redeemed Jacob (Isa. 44:23; 48:20; Jer. 31:11). And since Jacob and the Lord's people are used interchangeably with one another, I quote for all unbelievers and skeptics to read the message of the angel to Joseph, to wit, He (Christ Jesus) shall save his people from their sins (Mat. 1:21), and the messages of Paul that he (Christ) has saved his people. (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5) These are the ones that the text is addressed to, not one less, not one more.

This address is to all of the house of Jacob, but it is not to all the house of Israel. Let us proceed carefully, as the Lord leads us forth. It is to all of one, and to a portion or remnant of the other. I did not say that. *God did say it.* The evening approaches for me; the lengthening shadows tell me in unmistakable language that the time is short, therefore I am not inclined to spend any time in bickering and quibbling over such sacred and superb matters. However, if there is one among my readers that fits into the description above (to wit, one that has been confused by clattering tongues) I am willing to spend and to be spent in sweet communion together in searching for the truth.

These people so searchingly addressed and called to gospel attention, are in God's hands from all eternity. Providence extends to all times, events, seasons, peoples and things. If that does not go far enough, then let me paraphrase the statement and say that there is not anything in all the world that the providence of God does not cover in the salvation of his chosen people. The reason for making this statement is because all things are working for the good of God's people. *I did not say that grace caused all things,* nor did I say that grace works simultaneously and in conjunction with providence. I feel

bound to spare no words to make it clearly known that the Bible teaches me that all sin proceeds from the creature and that all salvation proceeds and comes from God. Yet, if I denied the providence of God in salvation, I would deny that there was any good wrought out of the selling of Joseph into Egypt; I would deny that there was any good wrought in the crucifixion of the Saviour; I would deny that tribulations work patience; I would deny that it is good to be afflicted; I would deny that the tribulations of the apostle (with the Corinthians) was for their consolation and salvation (which, by the way, is time salvation); I would deny that our light affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I am not able to say that the grace of God preserved Paul from his mother's womb, but I am able to say that the providence of God separated him from her womb, and that God's grace called him to the ministry, and I am able to say, yea, delighted to say, that everything pertaining to his life, both natural and spiritual, was in the Lord's hand; even saying that God raised him up to play havoc with the church, for that, even though evil as far as his intentions went, was not any more so than was the work of the brethren of Joseph or the work of Pharaoh. If God could (and he did) raise up Pharaoh to show his power in doing so; if God could (and he did) send Joseph by the wicked route of his brethren and Potiphar's wife into Egypt; if God could (and he did) bruise his own Son and use wicked men in doing it, and none of these things make God the author of sin (and they do not) where would a poor puny man begin to make him so?

The manifestation of this care over this house and remnant of house begins with the womb. Have you got any place (I want the scriptures) of the need for earlier care than that? To be sure, I find within the lids of the Bible that God does not do anything in time but what he determined to do in eternity.

He *was* in one mind, and he *is* still in one mind. As there were not any to change his one mindedness before the world began, also, in the same manner, to the same degree, no more, no less, there are not any now or in the future that will change it. These people were the objects of God's care from all eternity, but it is of the manifest care with which we are dealing. *It was from the womb.* It reaches plenty far back. It reaches all the way back (Job 31:15; Isa. 44:2) I am not uneasy that anybody will be able to destroy what I am saying. The care of God begins with the womb. Put a stake there as you preach and write. It shall never be destroyed nor removed. It reaches as far in the future as one of these people are going. It embraces old age, even hoar hairs; It embraces the work of God's power or providence in the work in the womb, and it runs in a continuous line throughout life. It embraces the first work in bringing into being, into bringing *to* the womb and *from* the womb. These thus addressed are subjects of two kingdoms, of two families, of two nations, of two worlds. The work pertaining to their first birth was completely under the power of God in providence; the work pertaining to their second birth has been, and still is (see John 3:8), as well as the living of that life now (Gal. 2:20), all in the hands of Him that works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:21)

"To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?" This applies primarily to the ones addressed. But this address reaches down to now. In order that we know our status before God, let us hope that it is addressed to us. If so, then to whom will you liken Him? Have you anything or anybody in mind? Whom have you in mind to liken him to in creation? Did he alone create? If not, who? If so, what? He is before all things. Have you got one like that? Is it the devil? *Who or what is it?* If you do not have any one like him, then

why be everlastingly bringing him down on a level with his creatures? Men devise and can never bring to completion; men in begetting, and women in conception, can bring to birth, but who can deliver a living child? (Isa. 66:9); men can drive to the brink of destruction (as at the Red sea), but tell me, O thou that readest, whom can you liken the deliverance to? Whom have you on your list that can enable an assembly to walk on dry ground that minutes previously had been a sea? Who is able to raise a storm and make it a calm (Psa. 107)? Have you any one, any one at all, that can bless fire to the providential needs of humanity, and yet keep it from scorching three poor sinners?; that gave us water which will drown people, and yet, under the care of God will save eight people?; that will give a good law, that is broken unto death for the transgressors, and yet that he who gave it will sentence His Son unto death for transgressors?

Who can be made his equal? Have you (the ones addressed in the outset) any one that is his equal? O I know that we both, writer and reader, have *tried* to palm ourselves and other arms of flesh off as being (not just his equal, but) his superior, but have we or can we? That there are many lords and many gods, is freely admitted; that there are many running that have not been sent, is freely granted; that there are a variety of doctrines, is not denied, but that anyone of them is equal to the God of Israel is denied; that any of those *not sent* is equal to the least one that *is sent*, is denied; that any doctrine is like or equal to the doctrine of God our Saviour is denied.

Everything shows that there is not anything worthy of comparison to the God of our salvation. Who can make a rose? Who can plant a humble lilly in the dark morass of the wilderness and cause it to throw its blossom heavenward? Who can be alike in the darkness and in the light? Yea, who can make darkness light before his offspring? Who can save Israel to the uttermost,

both inside Egypt, and bringing them out? Who can make that which one hated into the most delightful company in the world? Who can make one that courted the earth, to turn his back on that earth and walk in the assembly of this God? Who can hate sin, and its consequences, and yet use it for the good of those that he loves? Who has made all things, whether visible or invisible, that is before all that is made, and makes consistency out of the whole? Who is it (to the ones addressed) that saves a poor hell deserving sinner in the merits of his Son, and *with Him* gives that sinner all things?

Have you or you (of those addressed) got anything, or have you got a string on anything, that can do these things? If not, then, if He does not have mercy upon you, and you die in that condition, hell is your doom.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Rushville, Ill., Dec. 21, 1864

Eld. G. Beebe — Dear Sir: — If you have light on the subject, and time to write, and space for publication, please give your views on Gen. iii. 22, especially on the latter part. "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: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken." Yours faithfully,

Ephraim J. Pemberton

Reply, — Without claiming any extraordinary light on the true figurative import of the words of this text, we will venture to give such views as we have on the subject; hoping they may serve to enlighten those who are anxiously enquiring after the truth; and if nothing more, lead them to a close examination of the scriptures.

We do not understand the account given of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the fall of man, and the

early propagation of his seed &c., to have been written as a mere history of events to gratify the prying curiosity of men in the subsequent ages of the world. The book of Genesis is not a record of facts noted as they transpired and so transmitted to posterity, like all profane history; but written by Moses, more than two thousand years after the creation of the world. As Moses wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we infer not only the sacred truth of what is written, as the testimony of God himself, but also that the sacred import of the record is, like all other parts of divine revelation, the opening of the mouth of God in parables, and the uttering of dark sayings; and all designed to be made plain in due time to the expanding understanding of the children of God by the same spirit which inspired Moses to write.

Instead then of reading it as a mere literal history of events, we regard every line and every word as the inspiration of God himself, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things" which are to be fulfilled in the fullness of the dispensation of times. A clear understanding of these early records will show to the divinely instructed pupil in the school of Christ, a perfect and beautiful cluster of types pointing to Christ, and his salvation of his church and people, in which the two parallel mysteries, godliness and iniquity, are strikingly developed.

Had we the ability, the time and space, we would review the whole record from Gen. 1:1, to the text on which we are now requested to bestow our attention; but we must let it suffice, for the time, to express some thoughts on the expulsion of man from the garden of Eden, and some things therewith connected, and First, God in his triune relation, as Father, Word and Spirit, not as three Gods, but the only true and living God, revealed in creation, providence and grace, created the world by the Word; for, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God." (Heb. 11:3.) "God, who at sundry times and

in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1:2.) Which accounts for the plural form of the pronoun. "Let us make man in our image." And in our text. "Behold the man has become as one of us.." Christ is declared to be the image of the invisible God; and the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory. (See Col. 1:15. Heb. 1:3.) And Adam, is the figure of him that was to come. (Rom. 5:14.) Man, was not as we understand directly the image of the invisible God; but was made after that image a fac simile, a figure, a type of Christ. "And after our likeness." Not like God in infinity, immortality or deity, but as a figure of the dominion of Christ over all created things, having dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea, and every creeping thing &c. Nor do we understand that his created elements or perfections were like the uncreated attributes of his Creator, for then he could not have fallen; but the likeness and image was confined to his being the figure of him that was to come; that is of Christ. Not only as lord over the animal creation; but also, as the head of a posterity which God had created in him; also in his identity with his bride, and finally in all that is recorded of him in the scriptures. He the first Adam, Christ the second Adam. But let us not mistake; for that Adam which was first, was not spiritual, but natural; but afterward that which is spiritual, as seen in the second Adam which is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was of the earth, earthly, his anti-type, is heavenly; the first was natural, the last spiritual; the first was made a living soul, the second is a quickening Spirit.

Second. The first estate of man, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the

sight, and good for food; for the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." &c. Here in an earthly Paradise, which is also figurative of the church or Garden of the Lord, man in his primeval rectitude was placed by his creator, surrounded with every comfort for the eye and for the taste, all planted by the Lord God himself, and growing luxurantly without the labor of man; and all perfectly adapted to the condition of man in his original purity; yet man was natural, and the garden natural, and all their surroundings were natural. In this consisted the adaptation; for if the garden, and its trees, its plants and fruits had been spiritual they could neither have been pleasant to his sight nor good for food. As a natural man he could not see, or discern spiritual things; nor could his natural and earthly nature have subsisted on spiritual food. Yet Adam being natural could and did prefigure him that is spiritual; and so also did the garden and trees, plants, rivers &c., being natural prefigure the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this garden was found every tree, and every thing that was pleasant to the sight or good for food, or that could contribute to the support and comfort of man in his then present condition: but of these we propose to notice two trees which are particularly mentioned; and to show what they particularly represented.

1. The tree of life is mentioned, which was in the midst of the garden. This tree was among those of which man had permission to eat freely, and so long as he continued to eat of it, and obeyed the command of God, to touch not, taste not and handle not the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was to him the tree of life, for without transgression he could not die. The figurative allusion points to the tree of life, of which Christ is the Root and the offspring, Rev. 22:2, 14, 16; the type being natural, and the anti-type spiritual.

2. The Tree of knowledge of good

and evil, being the only tree or thing in the garden that man was forbidden to touch or taste; is appropriately called the tree of knowledge of good and evil: for man without touching or tasting it could not have known evil; any more than we could have known sin except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." But in partaking of the fruit of it man became a sinner, and with his transgression death entered, and passed on all the unborn posterity, which being in him, were involved in the transgression, and consequently to the knowledge of evil. This tree, we understand was designed to represent the law of God, the transgression of which brings guilt, condemnation and death to the offenders. In support of this position, we assume, and shall endeavor to show, that the Law of God, answers to this figure beyond all doubt or controversy.

1. It is a tree of knowledge of sin: of evil. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of Sin is the law." (I Cor. 15:56) "And where there is no law there can be no transgression; for sin is the transgression of the law." Hence it is written, "By the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified in the sight of God." In perfect agreement, as we conceive, with this application of the figure, were the circumstances connected with the giving of the law at Sinai. Three days before the descent of the Lord to proclaim his law, he commanded Moses to sanctify the people of Israel, and to admonish them to come not up to touch the mountain on pain of death. "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through: whether it be beast or man, it shall not live." (Exodus 19:12, 13.) And after Moses had faithfully given this charge, and the time appointed had come; the Lord called Moses to him, and again sent him down to repeat the solemn warning. "And the Lord said unto Mos-

es, Go down and charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord, to gaze, and many of them perish. And Moses said unto the Lord, The People cannot come up to mount Sinai; for thou chargest us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them." (Exodus 19:21-24; compared with Heb. 12:18-21.) How remarkable the coincidence, when we compare the charge given to Adam, Gen. 2:17, and the charge as copied above concerning Mt. Sinai. The law of God, as given to Adam, in this figure and as reiterated in its covenant and preceptive form by Moses, clearly shows that no man can approach unto God by the law, for it could not give life, or righteousness should have been by it; but it is the ministration of death. An apostle tells us that the law is not made for a righteous man; and again that the law entered that the offence might abound, and that sin might appear exceeding sinful. So we see that man while in innocence could have no knowledge of evil, and consequently could not be comparing, know good and evil, or good from evil.

Third. We now propose to show that Adam in partaking of the tree of knowledge, as in every other incident recorded of him, was the figure of him that was to come. Eve, who was created in Adam, and a part of himself, bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh, and called **woman** because she was taken out of the man, living in his vitality, and existing in his flesh and bones; bore the same natural relationship to him that the church of God does of spiritual relation and identity to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. For we are his, (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And as Eve was the bride, the wife, of Adam, in this figure, so the church of

God which was created in the second Adam, was and is the bride the Lamb's wife, his body, his flesh and his bones. In this presentation of the figure, let us trace the analogy in a few particulars. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve, And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (I Tim. 2:14, 15.) Was it not even so, in the application of these words to Christ and the church? Might not our apostle here add, as in Eph. 5:32. "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church?" Certainly Christ in identifying himself with the transgression of the church, was not deceived. Well did he count the cost. Well did he know that in bearing the sins of his people, he must die; and for that very purpose came he into the world, and was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Well did he know that to redeem his church unto God he must be made sin for her; that he must bear her sins in his own body, on the tree.

Now hear what Adam said when arraigned in judgment; and imagine his words as uttered prophetically as from the lips of Christ, the second Adam. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Some have fancied themselves wise enough to tell us what were the thoughts and design of Adam in using these nineteen words, instead of frankly acknowledging the truth in a single word. Some have concluded that his object was to charge the blame on Eve, or on the Creator himself, for having given him such a wife; but we confess that our line is too short to reach the thoughts and intents of Adam's mind; but whatever they were, we read in them a prophecy of the Husband of the church of God. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." For what purpose were they given him? "This is the will of the Father, that of all that he has given me I should loose nothing." And, "Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold

my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24.)

Let us consider the circumstances of Adam's complicity with his wife in the transgression. How stood the case? Did not Adam tell the truth, in saying that God gave him the woman to be with him, as a companion and help meet for him? God had said, "It was not good for man to be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The design of God that **she should be with him**, as a help meet for him, and that through them to people this world is too apparent to admit of contradiction. And the type with equal clearness, applies to the spiritual Adam, and Jerusalem which is above, and is free and the mother of all the promised seed, designed to people the new heaven and new earth wherein dwells righteousness, Shall we now indulge in vain speculation, and suppose Adam, being not deceived, had refused to follow Eve into the transgression? What then? Eve is involved in sin, she must be driven out of the garden alone, and forbidden to eat of the tree of life; a separation final and everlasting must have followed. Adam in innocence could not go with her, Eve in transgression could not return to Adam.

Suppose again, when the bride elect of Christ, beguiled by the old Serpent had fallen under the curse of the righteous law of God, the heavenly Bridegroom had resolved to let her go? An indissoluble union must then have been broken, a purpose of the immutable God must have failed, and the Bridegroom and the bride, irrecoverably put asunder. Did Adam love his guilty bride? Did Jesus love his fallen and law condemned people? Though Eve

could not return to Adam, Adam could go to her; and such was the strength of his love; stronger than death; it was the only alternative. Rather than part, he plunges with her into death, that the union may be perpetuated. And, Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth. "God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Thus far then, the figure bears in its application to Christ, and his church. Truly, "He hates putting away."

Once more, — How was Adam involved in the transgression of Eve? Simply by receiving at the hand of his erring wife the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil which we have taken to represent the law, and eating thereof; and by doing this came legally under the penalty of that law, and irrevocably doomed to die on that self same day. And do we not see the application of the figure to our divine Redeemer. He lived and reigned above the law that his people had transgressed; but to carry out the eternal purpose, that, "Where he is, there his church shall be also; he bowed his heavens and came down. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." At the hands of his church he receives the fruits of the tree, or law, He who knew no sin, is made sin for us: that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise also takes part of the same. His people are transgressors; He is voluntarily numbered with the transgressors; and the iniquities of all his people are laid on him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Partaking of the fruit of the law, he dies: but being in this, so far superior to his type, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. Adam, the first could go no farther than to involve himself in the condem-

nation under which his beguiled and deceived wife had fallen. He could share with her fate, but had no power to redeem or deliver her.

Fourth. We come now to that part of the subject on which our correspondent desired us to write: as stated in Gen. 3:22, which we propose to consider in connection with the two succeeding verses of the same chapter, and

1. We will offer a few thoughts on the import of the declaration of the Lord God in relation to the changed condition of man, in consequence of having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." The figure was now complete. Adam, who according to the expressed purpose of his creation, was to be a type, likeness, figure, or image of his maker, — of Christ, of him that was to come, — of "One of us," had now attained to the perfection of that imagery, not only as the first Adam, the head and embodiment of his natural posterity, a perfect figure of the second Adam, who is the head and embodiment of the spiritual seed, in whom also was the life and substance of his bride; but now, in eating of the tree which prefigured the law, Adam, who knew no sin, or evil before, is made sin for her. While in a state of innocence what evil could Adam know, but now in receiving at the hand of his wife the fruit of the tree, — the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, or of evil; the law being the ministration of death, he came to a knowledge of evil; and thus more perfectly the figure of him that was to come. The figure of him who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners: — of him who knew no sin, yet for the sake of his church, became sin, by being made under the law, and by the assumption of all his people; who thus by following his bride in the transgression secured the purpose, for which she was given to him, namely, to be with him. Thus the man, "became as one of us," in that particular; that is, by his knowledge of good and evil; the type of him who should bear his

peoples' sins in his own body on the tree.

We cannot perceive that Adam's knowledge of good and evil, made him like his Maker, in any other sense than that of being the figure of him that was to come; in actually coming under the curse and penalty of the law; for even of good and evil his knowledge could not approach the infinite knowledge of the supreme God. The "One of us," we understand was and is the man who is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Zech. 13:7.

2. Man's expulsion from the garden was a consequence resulting from his connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever:" — The evil which Adam knew, in consequence of eating of the tree of knowledge, was a pollution of his nature and the sentence of mortality, — death, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This sentence placed Adam and his posterity beyond the reach of the tree of life; as Christ's coming under the law, and bearing the sins of his people involved the necessity of his death, in the same day, or dispensation, in which he was made of a woman, made under the law; and in fulfilment of this figure, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate," that is without the gate of Jerusalem; which figuratively signifies the same as did the garden of Eden; and here, perhaps the figure ends; for Adam could not redeem himself or bride. He had no power to rise from the dead, or deliver himself, his bride, or his posterity from the sentence of the law which consigned him to death.

The tree of life in the midst of Eden, which was accessible to man as long as he remained in the garden, to agree with this whole cluster of figures, was natural life; for as long as he remained in innocence, and abstained from the forbidden fruit of the law, the tree of life secured to him that life which he had, and all the comforts adapted to

his condition as an innocent man; so that he required no other, and indeed was not capacitated for the appreciation of spiritual life; that capacity he could not have without being born again; for the scripture declares that that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural. And again, "The natural man receiveth not of the things of the spirit." &c. And "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now the sentence of death being upon Adam and all his race in him, demanded his expulsion from the garden in which was the tree of life. The reader will observe that though the tree of life in the garden represented the natural life which man then possessed, yet it was figurative of the tree of spiritual, immortal, or eternal life which is found only in the midst of the Paradise of God.

3. Prohibited now from the tree of life, and condemned to die, we see man totally divested of all power to put forth his hand to take of the tree of life, to shield himself from the execution of the sentence which had passed on him, and on all mankind in him, and from the hour in which he was driven out of the garden neither he nor any of his race have had power to perpetuate their natural lives one moment beyond the bounds which God has set. The days of man are as the days of an hireling, so that he cannot pass the bounds.

4. But viewing the tree of life, as figurative of that tree of spiritual life of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the root and offspring, we have one of the most clear and positive presentations of the total inability of man to raise himself from a state of condemnation, and death, either by the law or by the gospel.

Not by the law, for he is condemned already by the law, and the wrath of God abides upon him; nor by the gospel, for he is driven out from the garden in which that tree is planted, and the way to it is kept by the cherubim and a flaming sword, which turneth every way; meeting him at every possi-

ble point. How utterly hopeless are all the efforts of men to put forth their hand. The cherubim, or spirit of the holy law watches every movement with untiring vigilance, and the flaming sword meets them at every turn. Nothing that the hand of man can perform; no offering that in their hand the sons of men can bring, can gain for them access to the tree of life. Nothing short of the way of holiness; the new and living way which God has consecrated for his people through the flesh of our Redeemer, can open to any man the gates of Salvation. Christ is the "Only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, or can see; whom no man can approach unto." He is the Way, and the Truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. Nor is there any possible evasion of this truth. "He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life." The way of the tree of life was securely kept. No fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye has not seen it, nor hath the lion's whelp trodden it.

Fourth. In connection with the foregoing, it may be well to consider the destination of fallen man, as long as he shall remain on the earth. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man:" &c. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 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." How changed is the condition of man! Expelled from the garden which God had planted and blessed, where every comfort grew spontaneously that he

could possibly need or desire while in a state of innocence; but now having become a sinner, and fallen under the curse of the law which he had violated, the productions of this garden were no longer suited to his condition; and even the outer world, or earth into which he was cast, was unsuited to his condition, until God, for his sake had pronounced a curse upon it. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Now doomed to encounter the thorns and thistles, and in sweat and labor, in toil and sorrow was he doomed to seek his subsistence from the earth out of which he was taken, until his wearisome days of labor and sorrow should be accomplished, and then his earthly body should sink back into the bosom of the earth still groaning under the curse which for his sake was laid upon it.

How strikingly in all this, is the present condition of his fallen progeny portrayed! Fallen men doomed, as a righteous judgment of God, to seek, and labor and sweat and toil to procure support and happiness from the earth; and forbidden, and prohibited from putting forth his hands to take of the tree of life. Is it then surprising that the propensities of man are all drawn to the earth. Not only toiling for the support of his earthly body, but also for the comfort of his earthly mind. All his conceptions of a religious nature are also worldly, earthly, sensual and devilish; and as such they are always work-mongrel, and in his alienation from the tree of life, he can conceive of no higher order of religion than that which he can attain to by his works; and works too which must perish, and finally be consumed, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burned up.

Lastly. As Eve, and all the kindreds of the earth are embraced in the earthly Adam, and all die in him, so all the church and seed of Christ are quickened in the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. In Romans 5:14, we read that after the similitude of Adam's transgression, he (Adam) is the figure of him that was to come, that he is in the similitude, the figure of Christ, who

has now come. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift, for if through the offence" (not offences, but a single offence) "of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which was by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence" (or as in the margin, **by one offence**,) "death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one, (or by one offence) "judgment came upon all men to condemnation," (that is upon all the posterity of the one man.) "Even so by the righteousness of one," (or as rendered in the margin, **by one righteousness**,) "the free gift came upon all men," (that is all whom he represented,) "unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

Thus in the transgression of the first Adam, whereby he involved all his natural posterity in sin, guilt, condemnation and death, the inspired apostle could see a similitude of redemption and justification to life of all the seed of Christ by his righteousness.

We have extended our reply to our correspondent to a great length; but venture to hope that we have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We have felt unwilling to give such views as we have on the single verse proposed, believing that we could make ourself better understood by taking the general range of the whole subject. If our prolixity shall render what we have written dull and uninteresting to some, we hope that some at least may read it with profit and edification.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe December 21, 1864. This is rather lengthy but well worth careful reading — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MOLLIE T. PILCHARD

Sister Mollie T. Pilchard was born March 12, 1888, and departed this time world December 28, 1971. She married Alonzo W. Pilchard in 1905, and five children survive her.

She joined Pitts Creek Old School or Primitive Baptist Church with her husband in 1919, and was baptized by their pastor, Elder B. F. Coulter. Brother Pilchard became ill and the meeting house was closed for the lack of repair. They took their letters to Snow Hill Church in 1929. Brother Pilchard departed this world in December, 1932, and his funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder H. C. Ker.

Sister Pilchard's funeral was preached by Elder W. D. Griffin and she was laid to rest beside her husband in Goodwill Cemetery near Pocomoke, Md., there to await the glorious resurrection.

Sister Pilchard was well known and loved by all. She was with my mother when I was born; and we have traveled many miles over the years to the various churches in the vicinity. She knew the God she loved, and loved the God she knew. Her first thought was for her church and brethren.

Submitted in loving memory.

Frank A. Holland
Pocomoke, Md.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER LUCY CAPPS

It has been the good Lord's will to call from this world our dear sister, Lucy Capps. She was born to Stephen and Susie Grimes March 28, 1889. She was married to William Capps in 1906; and died March 24, 1971. She lived a full, useful life devoted to her family and her church.

She was a member of Spring Green Church for many years, and served as Clerk as long as she was able. In this she followed her daddy's steps, for he was our Clerk for many years as long as he was able. She had a strong faith and hope in her Lord, and she lived her faith all through life, trusting in the Lord and accepting trouble and sorrow as they came. As the will of God was, she had faith to carry on. She was a loving person, and to know her was to love her. We feel that our loss is her gain.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by one who loved her, Annie Edmondson.

Done by order of Conference at Spring

Green Saturday before the fourth Sunday in April, 1971.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Johnny Ray Gardner, Clerk
Sister Annie Edmondson
Committee

MYRTLE BLALOCK DAVIS

It is with a heavy heart that I attempt to write of the passing of my dear devoted wife.

Myrtle was a native of Caswell County, N. C., born January 19, 1907, the sixth of eight children born to Green Malcolm and Ann Frances McKinney Blalock. She leaves as survivors two brothers, J. S. Blalock, Elon College, N. C.; H. J. Blalock, Gibsonville, N. C.; thirteen nieces and nephews, and her husband, the writer of this article of Roxboro, N. C.

At the age of sixteen her family moved to Gibsonville, where she grew into womanhood. She married Walter Chester Petty March 1, 1929, who died May 30, 1937, as the result of an automobile accident.

We were married November 13, 1943. She joined Gilliam Primitive Baptist Church in the late 1930's and was baptized with her mother. Later, after we were married and she came to Person County to make her home, she moved her membership to McCray Church, where she was a loyal and devoted member until death. She was involved in a fatal automobile accident January 14, 1971, which put her in the hospital where she underwent two operations and laid in a serious condition for eighty-four days before passing away April 8; making her stay on earth 64 years, two months and twenty-five days.

Everything that skilled doctors, loving relatives and friends could do, was done for her, but they could not keep her here, for it was the time that her Lord had planned for her to come home. She bore her suffering without complaint. She told me several times that no one knew what she was suffering except her and her Lord, but that it was nothing to compare with what her Saviour suffered.

After one of the most beautiful funerals I ever saw, conducted by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, assisted by Elder Kenneth Key, she was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery amidst a profusion of beautiful flowers.

She was blessed with a big heart and a warm and lively personality. To know her was to love her. She was a wonderful cook and housekeeper. Some of the proudest moments of my life with her, was when we had a group of our Old Baptist Friends to share a meal with us. She could set such a beautiful table of well prepared food, and

preside over it with such charm and grace. She dearly loved to entertain the brethren and visit among them, which we were blessed to do from the Blue Ridge of Virginia to the coast of North Carolina — thereby gaining many dear friends.

When we have so much and lose it, our loss is equally as great. I humbly beg the Lord to reconcile us to His will.

A bereaved husband,
N. D. Davis

LEE OTHA GOSS

Brother Lee Otha Goss was born March 1, 1886, and passed away June 20, 1971. He was the son of Elijah and Eliza Jones Goss. He was married to Ethel Hicks Goss, who passed away July 29, 1967. He leaves one sister, Mrs. Maggie Roberts; and nieces and nephews.

Brother Goss joined Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 8, 1937, and he and his wife were baptized Sunday morning, September 13, 1937, by Elder D. V. Spangler. He was ordained to the office of Deacon May 14, 1939; and he served the church well and faithfully.

A firm believer in salvation by the grace of God, he was always ready to proclaim the truth of Holy Writ, and that every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Light, with whom there is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning. He looked toward that eternal home prepared for the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was conducted at Gooch Memorial Church June 22nd by his pastor Elder Donald Smith and his former pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful blanket of flowers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church have lost a much loved brother and Deacon. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, Second that a copy of this obituary be placed on our church record, a copy sent to Mrs. Roberts, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order in our Conference Meeting Saturday, June 10, 1971.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother O. Y. Clayton, Clerk
Annie C. Gregory, Assistant

SISTER LONNIE M. RAKES THOMAS

In loving memory of Sister Lonnie M. Rakes Thomas. She was the wife of Mr. Joel

Thomas, Ferrum, Va., and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Rakes.

She is survived by her husband; three daughters: Mrs. Alfred Rountree, Norfolk, Va.; Mrs. Beverly Ingram, Henry, Va.; Mrs. Rhett Walker, Mobile, Ala.; one son, H. C. Thomas, Radford, Va.; seven grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. Surviving also are two brothers and two sisters.

Sister Thomas was born April 13, 1890, in Franklin County, Va. and was married February 1, 1909. On July 6, 1919 she asked for a home with the Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church, being joyfully received with her sister, Ollie Ingram. They were baptized August 3, 1919, by Elder T. F. West.

She was a gracious and much loved member, who I believe was a mother in Israel. She was not ashamed of the Lord our Saviour nor his precious doctrine; neither are those who believe salvation is completely of the Lord. Manytimes have I rejoiced while in her presence, and many times have I found comfort at her complete trust and wise counsel. She will be missed by all who loved her, especially by her beloved husband and family, and none will miss her faithful attendance at our meetings more than I. Yet I would say to all that mourn, to weep not for her as for those who have no hope. Her hope is alive and has promised never to leave nor forsake.

She fell asleep January 3, 1971, at home with her faithful companion of more than sixty-one years, after a short but severe illness. Her funeral was at Arrington-Bussey Funeral Home, Rocky, Mt., Va., by Elders Leonard Brammer, William Holland, and the writer. She is now resting in the Rakes Family Cemetery, where she awaits the calling of her blessed Saviour.

Written by one who loved her dearly.

Amos I. Hash

LETITIA "PINKIE" COX

Sister Letitia "Pinkie" Cox's time for departure of this earthly travel came June 5, 1971. She was born October 26, 1873; making her nearly ninety-eight years old. She united with Malmaison Church in December, 1911.

Her husband, Mr. Eddie Cox, died November 25, 1952. She and her husband came to church many years together, and, as many do, had their seat at the same place each time — this being right in front of us children. How well I remember her pretty alto voice ringing out in the singing, and she would whisper to us to help also. Mr. Eddie would so often have his arm behind her on the back of the seat. They showed much affection for

each other, and came together when they could.

Sister Cox wasn't able to come to meetings for many years after going to the nursing home, but liked, when her mind was clear, to talk of her church. She forgot many things past and sometimes did not know friends, but by God's grace never forgot the song "Amazing Grace" or some of the things God wrote in her heart and put in her mind. We can see again His grace being sufficient to the end for his people.

May we, friends, family, and her church members, be made to rejoice rather than mourn in saying, she fought a good fight and kept the faith, and there's a crown of righteousness laid up for her, not only her but all those that love His appearing. We hope to be made reconciled to God's will, as He gives and takes away at his appointed time.

Elder Julian Williams

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It is with a heart of sadness that I attempt to write the respects of our dear Brother and Deacon, Brother Julius W. Stallings.

Brother Stallings was born February 4, 1919, and died July 24, 1971, making his stay on earth 53 years. He joined Tarboro Church November 1, 1964, and was ordained deacon on February 4, 1967. He was blessed to be a faithful member and he meant a lot to our church as a Deacon trying to serve and trusting that God might be his guidance. He was faithful in attending our church, and always ready to give a helping hand at all times. He loved to talk about the great things God had done for him, and how he was blessed as he sojourneyed this life. If you once knew him you could feel for him. He is going to be missed in our church, but we feel that God's will has been done.

Now the church at Tarboro feels that our loss is his eternal gain, and he is resting with our Saviour to await that glorious resurrection.

We resolve that three copies of this respect be made: (1) for the church records, (1) to be sent to his family, and (1) to be sent to the *Signs of the Times*.

Sleep on our dear Brother, we'll miss you day by day. We know there is no other who can ever fill your place.

This done in order of conference at our August meeting, 1971.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER DELLA PUSEY

Sister Della Pusey was born July 10, 1876,

and died October 8, 1969, in the Deerhead State Hospital.

Her nearest survivors are two granddaughters: Mrs. Nancy Reinhart, Portland, Oregon; and Mrs. Emily Cottingham, Snow Hill Road, Salisbury, Md. She was the daughter of George and Mary E. Briddell, and the wife of Alison T. Pusey.

She was baptized June 25, 1905, by the late Elder T. M. Poulson and united with the Nassaongo Church. She was a loveable sister of firm belief in the word of God, and was always faithful to attend the meetings as long as her health permitted.

Funeral services were held at the Holloway Funeral Home by Elder W. D. Griffin, and she was laid to rest in the Parsons Cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord.

Written by
Mollie E. Fooks

SISTER ROSA HARRIS ROBINSON

It is the desire of our church to write the following in memory of Sister Rosa Harris Robinson who was born May 20, 1905, and passed from her earthly existence April 11, 1969. She had been in failing health for many months.

We esteemed Sister Robinson and loved her dearly for she was gracious, gentle and kind, with a warm personality that endeared her to those who knew her. She was an asset to her church, to her family, and to her community.

Sister Rosa loved the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, and she united with the church at Hancock's Meeting House in February, 1922, and was a faithful attendant all her life. She loved to meet and mingle with her brethren; and she always met them with a loving smile and a warm handshake; and the brethren were happy to have her in their midst, for her presence added to their pleasure.

Her death has caused us a great loss but we feel that our loss was her eternal gain; and we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who doeth all things after the counsel of His own will. We pray that He will bless and comfort the bereaved family in their loss of a loving and devoted wife and mother.

Sister Rosa's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, in the presence of a host of friends and relatives, and she was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hancock's Church beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

Done by order of Conference while in session June 20, 1971.

Elder Joseph Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 139

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1971

NO. 12

RE-PUBLISHING ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S EARLY WRITINGS

We are re-publishing in this issue some of the early writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe in which he maintained the scriptural sentiments which were embraced in his *Prospectus* when he began publishing the *Signs of the Times* in 1832. We feel that these will be most interesting to all who are lovers of the truth.

These same principles have been consistently adhered to through the years; and the present editors are fully in accord with them, and have endeavored to maintain them inviolably. We think it well to publish several of these articles in one issue of the *Signs*, that all may compare Elder Beebe's writings with the Scriptures, and with the present standard of the paper, to see that the same doctrine is yet advocated as being the faith once delivered unto the saints.

The following articles are taken from the *First Volume of the Editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe*, in which he gave the scriptural reasons for maintaining the principles he had announced as being the teaching of the Scriptures. These articles are selected from those published during the years between 1833 and 1837.

The Scriptures alone are infallible, yet it is good to read the writings of those who are blessed with understanding and the ability to write concerning the things revealed therein.

EDITORS

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." — I John v. 8.

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, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

DOCTRINE TO WHICH WE ARE
PLEDGED IN OUR PROSPECTUS

New York, N. Y., January 2, 1833.

In our prospectus we are pledged to maintain inviolably the several scriptural sentiments embraced in the respective items which are named. We intend to notice them severally in the order in which they were presented.

The first that comes under consideration is "the Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal

Perfection of the Great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost." "These three are one." — 1 John v. 8.

That God exists, we need no further demonstration than what is presented to our view in creation and in providence. In the former "the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth forth his handywork." In the latter, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The well established laws of summer and winter, of seedtime and harvest, the waxing and waning of the moon, the revolutions of the earth and the planets, all proclaim the existence of the Great First Cause of all causes — a supernatural power; and we are taught by divine revelation that that first cause, that supernatural power, is God. But as the existence of God is seldom denied, we will pass on, and with the most profound reverence consider some of his perfections. And first, *God is a Sovereign.*

By the term sovereign, as it applies to God, we are not to understand an arbitrary or tyrannical being, but quite the reverse; an all-wise disposer of all events, an independent, self-existent, and omniscient God; one who holds the eternal destiny of his creatures in his own almighty grasp, working all things after the counsel of his own will, even as he has ordained all things for his own glory; and being independent of and superior to all beings in heaven or on earth, has an incontestable right to do his pleasure in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; having a right to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor; to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will to harden; to reveal his gospel unto "babes and sucklings," and to hide the same from the "wise and prudent;" to love Jacob and to hate Esau, to save his people with an everlasting salvation, and to turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

In view of the sublime doctrine of the divine sovereignty, the inspired

writer inquires, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed unto him the way of understanding?" — Isaiah xl. 13, 14. The full display of this attribute of the Deity would require a development of all his perfections, but particularly that of his independence and omnipotence, of which we shall have something to say hereafter. But first we will consider his right to dispose of all events according to the pleasure of his own will. And who is prepared to dispute this right? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" "Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, he hath no hands? Wo unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" — Isa. xlv. 9, 10. If then we admit that it was God's sovereign right to create a world, we must acknowledge that it was his right to determine what kind of a world to create, and for what end it should be created, or else we must conclude that he was not absolutely independent; and to form such a conclusion would certainly be a great derogation from his divine perfections. If while we gaze with admiration and delight upon the beauties of creation, we should believe that God was bound by some law or power independent of and superior to himself, to create all things in the exact order in which they are and were created, we could no longer enjoy the delightful reflection that our God is the Most High. We must therefore conclude that it is his sovereign and eternal right to do his pleasure in heaven and on earth, or we must say with the fool, "There is no God." But the more resplendent is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, when we contemplate him in connection with

his independence. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Thus, for instance, in imagination, strike from the scale of existence every created object, and what would remain? Nothing but God alone, and inasmuch as he existed before all things, he must have existed independently of all things, and we must deny his immutability, or admit that he continues to be the same independent God now that he was before the highest parts of the habitable world were made. He is self-existent and self-sufficient. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

The extent of God's sovereignty is commensurate with his infinity. It is displayed in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In creation serpents as well as doves were made — some men and some angels — all were not made alike, nor for the same end. In providence, we see the beggar raised from the dung-hill to the throne, and the proud monarch hurled from his royal seat down to the most abject state of wretchedness and misery. To some men God has given riches and to others poverty, to one sickness, and to another health. "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah," in the time of severe famine, &c. "But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was widow."

To make known to the King of Babylon this divine sovereignty, the Lord drove him from his palace and from the society of men, to range with the beasts of the field till seven times were passed over, until in providence he should learn that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and as a sovereign giveth the kingdoms of this world unto whomsoever he pleaseth. The display of divine sovereignty in the kingdom of grace is most striking. The election of his people in Christ Jesus before the world began, unmoved by any regard to their virtues or good works. "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." — 2 Tim. i. 9. And in further testimony of God's sovereignty we hear an inspired apostle say, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." — 1 Peter ii. 7, 8. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? 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? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

God is immutable.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." — Mal. iii. 6. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?, and what his soul desireth that he doeth." — Job xxiii. 13. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." — Heb. xiii. 8. "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." — James i. 17. Farther testimony to establish the doctrine of God's immutability seems to be quite unnecessary; were we for a moment to suppose God to be a mutable being, like unto ourselves, we might then say with the fool, "There is no God." In giving up the immutability of God we would give up all; for if it could be proved that God ever changed it would prove the forfeiture of his truth. He says, "I change not;" and could his truth fail, his holiness could not remain unimpaired, his wisdom would stand impeached, and his glory forever be eclipsed. Again, if God has changed, or ever should change, that change must be either for the better or for the worse;

if for the better, he was once imperfect, and if for the worse, he is now imperfect. The awful absurdity and blasphemy of the doctrine is enough to make one tremble.

God is Omnipotent.

By the Omnipotence of Jehovah we understand that universal and almighty power which is essential to his being as God, and that his power is an attribute peculiar to himself. This divine perfection of the Godhead was manifested in the creation of the world. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And also in providence, as exemplified in the entire history of the children of Israel, in their elevation above all other nations under heaven, in their redemption from Egyptian captivity, in their passage through the Red Sea, in the miraculous manner in which they were fed with manna, and supplied with water, and in the signal victories given them over their enemies. Nor is the manifestation of omnipotent power confined to any particular event, or train of events. It shone in dreadful majesty from Sinai's flaming top, nor with less grandeur from Mount Calvary, when the meridian sun was dressed in sack-cloth, the rocks were rent, the dead were raised, the veil of the temple was rent asunder, and the most holy place exposed to view, while frightened nature, as with a voice of mighty thunder, proclaimed the doctrine of God's omnipotence. If a further illustration or demonstration of the almighty power of God were necessary, we might advert to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, when "God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

In the economy of salvation, too, God has made ample display of his omnipotence. The fulfillment of the holy law, the perfect satisfaction rendered to divine justice, the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, and the emancipation of the prisoners, the conquest of our beloved Lord over death, hell and sin, the destruction of death, and him that had the power of death,

which is the devil, the regeneration and quickening of his elect, together with their preservation in grace unto eternal glory, the resurrection of their bodies in the likeness of his own glorious body, and the consummation of their everlasting happiness in the world to come. The man must surely be a stranger in Israel who cannot trace the power and Godhead throughout the whole work of salvation, from the foundation to the top stone.

The perfections of God are eternal.

It cannot reasonably be expected of finite beings that they should be able to comprehend the eternity or infinity of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" We are therefore able only to contemplate the divine perfections of Jehovah, as far as they are revealed to us by his word and Spirit, and if through the abundant revelation made we could vie with the brightest prophets and inspired men of God in our conceptions of the Holy One, or with the tongues of men or angels, could set forth our views of God, we would be with them constrained to say, "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?" That God is a being of infinite and eternal perfection, but few in our age are bold enough, in so many words, to deny. But yet while many will admit this truth in general terms, they will deny it in all its particular bearings on the redemption and salvation of sinners. Many very zealous professors of religion will form in their own imagination a standard of right and wrong, and then say, if God should vary from their standard he would be unequal, unjust or imperfect. But we know of no higher standard of perfection than God himself, hence all that is done or decreed by him is perfect, because it is done or decreed in accordance with his own mind and will, and must there-

fore be compatible with his nature. It cannot be the prerogative of creatures of yesterday, whose breath is in their nostrils, to set up a standard of human wisdom by which to scan the perfections of their Maker. If it be admitted then that God is perfect, it needs no more than the admission of his immutability to establish the doctrine of the eternity of his perfections. As far as God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself unto us, we have been constrained to pray that he would conform us to his will, and by his sovereign grace, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus our Lord, conform us to the image of him who is the "brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." The above brief statement of our views of the "existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah," &c., are sentiments which we hold dear to our heart, and such as we stand solemnly pledged to inviolably maintain in this paper. The doctrine is neither strange nor new to the Baptists of the school of Christ.

In the revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." — 1 John i. 5, 8. On this important point of doctrine our views are happily expressed in the above scripture, quoted from the apostle John, while all human language utterly fails in setting forth the mode of God's existence. We rejoice that the record which he has been pleased to give of himself in the Bible contains all necessary information on the subject; at present we shall for want of room omit giving our views at large on this point; we will only say that we shall cautiously avoid all such doctrines as do either deny or refuse to acknowledge the eternal power and Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

THE ATONEMENT

New Vernon, N. Y., August 28, 1833.

Perhaps among all the rich displays of the adorable Godhead which shine forth with refulgent brightness in the works of creation, providence and grace, none can be found to outshine in splendor, or outweigh in importance, that which develops the purpose and grace of God in causing his sword to awake against the Man that is his Fellow, and which sets forth the atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people. No human talent can express, nor human wisdom comprehend, the fulness of this delightful doctrine; in the contemplation of which, the rich association of considerations flowing into the mind of the saints, are such as to absorb the mind in wonder and admiration. In our feeble efforts to declare what we have been taught by the Word and Spirit of God on this subject, we know not where to begin, how to pursue, or where to leave off. The atonement has God for its author, Jesus Christ for its victim, or sacrifice, the salvation of the elect of God for its object, eternal truth for its security, and almighty power for its execution. In the atonement all the attributes of Deity are displayed glowing with inexpressible beauty and grandeur.

In the eleventh number of this volume, we gave a summary view of the doctrine of the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man, in which we traced his history from his primeval rectitude and innocency, through his unhappy fall, and by an application of divine truth showed that he, in his fallen state, is "dead in trespasses and sins," justly condemned by the righteous and inflexible law of God, and under its tremendous curse; without an eye to pity, or an arm to administer relief. There we left him, promising that in the present article we would treat upon the only possible way of salvation, brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we promised to prove by the scriptures to be special and particular. (See page 280 this

issue.)

Notwithstanding the frequent occurrence of the word atonement in the Old Testament, we find it used but once in the New Testament, viz: Romans v., where it is brought forward by the apostle as the ground of the justification of the church of God, and of reconciliation to God. "But God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." In the light of this scripture we clearly discover that the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ was definite. Definite first, in reference to the purpose of God. The specific objects ascribed to God by the apostle are the commendation of his love toward those who are with himself included in the pronoun *us*, and in connection with this divine exhibition, their justification by his blood, and ultimate salvation through him. Second, the characters for whom the atonement was made are definitely pointed out, viz: they are those who do eventually rejoice in God, through Christ Jesus, and by him receive the atonement.

Third, the vicarious nature of the atonement is definitely expressed in the connection, "Who was delivered for our offences, (agreeing with the prophet Daniel, that Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself,) and raised again for our justification." For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love, &c., in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Here we discover that the people for whom Christ was made an offering were sinners, without strength, &c., and as

sinners they were condemned and under the sentence of death by the law. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The irrevokable decree has passed! Heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until it should be completely fulfilled. But while this was our deplorable situation, "in due time Christ died for us." But how for us? Most certainly in our room. For if he had not borne the curse for us, we certainly must have borne it, and sunk down forever under its weight. We cannot conceive how this substitution can destroy the relation which Christ as a spiritual Head bears to his church, but rather, in our view of the subject, it opens the way to make a fair display of that unity and oneness which has ever existed between them in a spiritual sense. "And he is the head of the body, the church, &c., and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." "And you, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." — Col. i. 18-21.

When in the contemplation of the atonement and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, the "man in Christ" is caught up to the third heaven, and is there made acquainted with those divine mysteries which cannot be expressed by human tongues; and amidst the glorious scenery of that bright world, his eye is fixed on one who was as "A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he is led to inquire, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat?" "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," — Isaiah liii.

The design of the atonement was that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." — Titus ii. 14.

The extent of the atonement is **to all the elect**. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth — who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c. — Rom. viii. 33, 34. "I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." — John x. 11. To all the seed of our Lord. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." — Isaiah liii. 10-12.

"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," &c. — Eph. v. 24-27.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness." — 1 Peter ii. 24. "This is my blood in the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." — Matt. xxvi. 28. "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." — Gal. ii. 20. By the above, together with many other portions of the word of God, it is evident that God had a specific object in view in the pouring out of the soul of his Son unto death, which special object was the redemption and ultimate salvation of his elect.

The efficacy of the atonement. "By one offering he has forever perfected

them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. — "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall (not may) return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." — Isaiah li. 11; xxxf. 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." And the voice of the Father is heard in Zion proclaiming, "As for thee, also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." — Zech. ix. 11. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." — Rom. v. 10. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquity." — Isa. liii. 11. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." — Heb. ix. 12. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." — Col. i. 14. "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." — Acts xx. 28. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." — Rev. v. 9.

We have not room here to meet and rebut the arguments generally adduced in favor of a general or universal atonement; we shall however resume the subject at our earliest leisure. We intend in our next number to present our views on the doctrine embraced in the sixth item of our prospectus, viz: the sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening the elect of God.

THE NEW BIRTH

New Vernon, N. Y., September 11, 1833.

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." — John

iii. 3. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." — (John vi. 63.)

Having in our preceding numbers briefly touched upon those subjects which are calculated to show the necessity of a radical change being wrought in those **totally** depraved beings who are, and were, "ordained to eternal life." in order to prepare them for the knowledge, love and enjoyment of spiritual things, we have now to treat upon the sovereign, irresistible, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in quickening the elect of God.

The absolute necessity of the new-birth is established by the declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have placed at the head of this article. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Marvel not (said the Master,) that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The very laws of our existence, as well as the analogy of the figure of a birth, employed to shew the nature of this radical change, forbids the idea of its being wrought by the subject on whom it is wrought. There is nothing in nature that possesses power of itself to produce any radical change in itself; hence, although man is a changeable being in many respects, yet he remains **man** still. The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually; therefore he is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; but even if this were not the case universally in nature, yet it must be admitted that if the elect were their own agents in this spiritual birth, then this work could not possibly bear the least analogy to the natural birth, from which this figure is taken, and in which the child which is born has not the least agency, but is altogether passive. But could the analogy of our Lord's figure (birth,) be preserved, and yet the sinner be an active agent in his own regeneration and quickening, this would be no radical change, nor would it give to him a place among the sons of God; it would constitute him his own son, and of course an heir to the inheritance

of his own corrupt, degenerate nature, and to all his estate of sin and misery. It would constitute him his own father, and give him a place in the generation next succeeding; but being begotten by himself he must of necessity be begotten in his own image and likeness, &c. But we find all these arminians absurdities concerning the agency of the creature in regeneration put to silence by the word and testimony of God. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." On this divine authority we ground our evidence that the regeneration and quickening of the elect of God is the work of the Holy Ghost. We will now consider that in the work of quickening the elect of God

The Holy Ghost is Sovereign.

The sovereignty of the Holy Ghost in the regeneration and spiritual birth of the elect is abundantly shown by our Lord in these words: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." By the figure here employed, the subject is reduced to the capacity of the weakest child of God. Where does the wind blow? where it listeth; and it is even so with the Spirit. If the Holy Ghost has (as many pretend to believe and say) listed or engaged in the quickening, conversion, or regeneration of all mankind, it follows by the immutable truth of God that there it will blow; **i. e.**, be effectual; then it follows that all mankind will assuredly be saved; the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ would then be nullified, inasmuch as sinners uninterested in that atonement can and will be quickened by the Holy Ghost, and the word falsified, which declares that the wicked shall be cast into hell with all the nations that forget God. How shocking would be the consequence; yea, what a terrible tornado would be the result, should the mighty rushing wind list and blow at the same time from every point of the compass; yet not so shocking as the chaotic situation into which the scriptures of truth would be thrown,

if it could be proved that the Holy Ghost was otherwise than sovereign in its operation on the heart, in the new birth, or by proving that he had undertaken the regeneration of all mankind. When the fierce north wind, blowing all before it, bends its course onward to the south, what human means can be employed to change the direction of its course, and cause it to blow from south to north? Surely no rational intelligence can be so stupid as to undertake the task. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," in spite of all the exertions of a **means-using** generation; it is sovereign in its course; none can change it, nor effectually resist it. Who will dare to say that the natural wind is more powerful or more sovereign than the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost has listed in the work of quickening all the elect of God. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," &c. Not all the powers that can be, can alter the course of the divine Spirit from the elect of God to the reprobate part of mankind. As it has listed, so it does, and so it will continue to quicken every one that is born of the Spirit, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Again, the Spirit in this work is sovereign, as it relates to the individual on whom it operates. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. Not as some would blasphemously represent the Spirit, in the attitude of a beggar, or a supplicant before the sinner's heart, wooing, beseeching, and striving to get the sinner's consent and in many, or any cases, getting discouraged and abandoning the the undertaking. Would this be blowing where it listed? Surely not. They can possess no adequate idea of the Spirit, or of its work, who suppose that the number of the quickened shall be in proportion to the amount of means employed by mankind, or that protracted meetings, anxious benches, submission chairs, benevolent religious societies, (so called,) or any other human inventions, can change the sovereign course of the Eternal Spirit from any of those on whom it has listed, or en-

gaged to apply the atoning blood of Jesus experimentally, or add one to the number of those originally "ordained to eternal life." "Predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." If, then, we admit the sovereignty of the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth, why talk about the use of means to produce it? If it depends on the use of means on our part, then the Holy Ghost ceases to be a sovereign in the work, and all must turn at last upon the pivot of works, and our bible must be forced to read, **It is of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, and not of God that sheweth mercy.** Could any thing be more absurd? Away with these yea and nay systems of the present day, which, like the **Baptist Repository**, will on one page tell us that regeneration is the sovereign work of the Omnipotent God, and anon, insert upon the other that souls may be rescued from a burning hell by the efforts of men and the use of money, but —

The Holy Ghost is Irresistible

Can any thing be more preposterous than to say that the Holy Ghost is God, Omnipotent, &c., and yet that he may be so resisted or opposed in his work, as to fail in the accomplishment of his designs? If so, the term omnipotent has lost its meaning.

By the Spirit's irresistible work, we would not be understood to mean that it works in unison with the feelings and disposition of the human heart; no, "the natural mind is enmity against God," says the apostle; hence all the powers of human nature are arrayed in opposition to the Spirit's work, in vain attempts to resist the Holy Ghost. The strong man armed, keeps the palace until a stronger comes; he then becomes subdued, and his goods are spoiled. Saul's last breath was slaughter against the saints, and persecution against Christ. Paul's first breath was prayer, and submission to the irresistible power by which at mid-day he was brought to the ground. But by the term, we mean that it shall accomplish all

that it has undertaken, and that there is no power in heaven, earth or hell, that can effectually resist the Holy Ghost. For example, while Arminians, Deists and devils, by all their united efforts stand in opposition to the method of God's saving grace, and the work of the adorable Spirit, he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, God will have them in derision. He will still move on his undisturbed purpose and grace; none shall let, none shall hinder; "the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." That the Spirit is irresistible in this work, we call to witness the experience of (not those **mushroom converts**, of human means,) but all such as have passed from death unto life, and know the Lord Jesus, and the power of his resurrection. The child of God will tell us, I was an enemy to God by wicked works; I was in love with sin, an enemy to holiness; there was no fear of God before my eyes. In short, I was dead in trespasses and sins; but about mid-day, O king, a light shone around me, and I heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Yes, says the poor soul, I was suddenly arrested, an awful trembling shook my frame, I felt myself undone, my sins in all their magnitude rushed in order before my afrighted eyes; loud peals of thunder from Mount Sinai caused me to tremble exceedingly, and quake, while vivid flashes of divine wrath taught me the dreadful reality, I am a sinner. There is a hell, a burning lake; I feel it this moment in my very soul. Whither, O whither shall I flee from the wrath of God? If up to heaven I direct my course, God is there. I dread to meet him. O ye rocks and mountains, shew pity and fall upon me; hide O hide me from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. In this condition, the poor wretch will not require knives or lancets, anxious benches nor arminian task-masters, to persuade him to "**agonize**." We risk nothing when we say that such a soul will testify that the Spirit's work upon the heart is irresistible. The Spirit hav-

ing thus quickened the man, the vital principle implanted is manifested by a struggle for deliverance, for light, for freedom; but all in vain he prays; the heavens are as brass, the earth is as the dust; his prayers are shut out. He flies to the law, but

"Justice cries with frowning face,
This mountain is no hiding place;
He reads; the promise meets his eye,
But cannot reach his case."

Thus burdened with guilt, and pressed down with wo, he sinks, despairs and dies. Here let us leave him one moment, (for we cannot help him; his case is desperate; no eye can pity, no arm can relieve him,) while we enquire. Dear reader, if the quickened sinner be thus helpless, thus destitute of power, if he that is made alive by the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, and slain by the law, can do nothing, what canst thou do? What can the poor soul do who has never been quickened, nor made to feel one spark of anything more than totally depraved human nature? Now let us look back, and enquire what has become of that poor soul we left in the valley of death. Behold he is raised from the dead! The same irresistible Spirit which brought Jesus again from the dead, has raised him up. He is a new creature; old things are done away. He is no longer an arminian, no longer a work-monger; he is stripped of his filthy rags; he is clothed, and in his right mind. Lo, he sits at Jesus' feet: his feet are placed upon a rock, his goings are established, and a new song is in his mouth. He no longer sings, Do, do, do, but he sings, It is done, it is finished. "The Lord has taken me out of an horrible pit," &c. But whence this glorious change? He that brought to the birth, gave strength to bring forth. Hence the soul was, and is delivered; the Spirit applied the cleansing blood of the Lamb; and he is washed and made clean; the Spirit gave him eyes, and he saw Jesus; the Spirit gave him faith, and he embraced him as his Savior, his Lord and his God.

*The work of the Spirit is,
in all cases, effectual.*

If this position be not correct, there must be some case or cases where the work of the Spirit has proved ineffectual. We call for such a case to be produced. Where has the Spirit ever wrought ineffectually in any case? Such an example, we bless God, cannot be found; and if there could, it would make all heaven shudder; for the very instant that the Holy Ghost fails to accomplish any thing which it has undertaken to do, that moment he ceases to be God, ceases to be omnipotent, immutable and perfect. If there is any thing which the Holy Ghost cannot effectually perform, we speak with reverence, he cannot be omnipotent. But he was omnipotent once, when he spake the world into existence; hence there must have been a change, and he is no longer immutable. That change must be for the better or for the worse; if for the better, he was once imperfect; for nothing can be perfect if it can admit of improvement; and if by an improvement he is proved once to have been imperfect, then his truth falls prostrate at once; for he has declared that he is the Lord that changeth not. But if the change be for the worse, (since for the better it cannot be,) then it amounts to the same thing. Hence we say that if one single instance can be produced in which it can be established that the Holy Ghost has worked ineffectually in attempting the quickening of a soul, *i. e.*, failed to effect its design, this would make all heaven shudder.

Again, let us admit what has been proved, and what we cannot deny, *viz.*, that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; and then if we prove that the Spirit's work has been ineffectual in any one case, the same arguments will also prove the Spirit's work ineffectual in every case; for human nature is in all cases precisely the same; all are on a level as to moral holiness, or unholiness; all are alike depraved and sold under sin; all are alike without strength in themselves. The unavoidable consequence

then is, if the Spirit's exertion fails in one case, it fails in all; for the same cause under the same circumstances must invariably produce the same effects. How dreadful then would be the reflection that one poor soul for whom Christ died, and in whose heart the Eternal Spirit had wrought a work of grace, had failed to realize those blessings which was by the Spirit intended, seeing by this awful catastrophe the whole plan of salvation must inevitably fall through, and not a soul be saved. But once more; if it can be established that the work of the Spirit has been effectual in the case of Paul, Peter, James or John, or any other individual, the point is forever established, and we fearlessly bid defiance to all earth and hell to controvert or gainsay our position.

But laying aside all our arguments, and reasoning on the subject, we will be able to establish this point by the positive declaration of the word of God. "For as the Father raised up the dead and quickened them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." — John v. 24. But we enquire, Whom will the Son quicken by his Spirit? He has left his will on record in these words, *viz.*: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," &c. — John xvii. 24. And in regard to the efficacy of this quickening power, the apostle was confident, and so are we, of this very thing, that he who began the good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And the blessed Master has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

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Anyone having either or both copies they would dispose of, please write us at P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110, giving price asked.

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BUSINESS OFFICE

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va. 24541

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84
Fayette, Ala. 35555

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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EDITORIAL

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

In regard to the doctrine of Absolute Predestination, Elder Gilbert Beebe did not coin the phrase, as some have thought, since it was in use many years before his time. He did affirm that this was a true expression of the Bible doctrine on the subject and used it because the controversy continued over whether predestination was limited and conditional, or whether God's government is absolute and all prevailing over all times, worlds and events.

Comparatively few even today admit God's absolute government over all things; but from the writings of the brethren termed Old School, and pub-

lished on the *Signs of the Times*, from its beginning, it is evident that they held this doctrine to be the expression which differentiated between limited and full predestination; and they would have all to understand where they stood on the question.

"The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability," wrote Elder Beebe in an article on the subject which we are re-publishing herein.

Were it not for the limitation of the meaning and application of the word predestination which many hold, no prefix would ever be necessary. A limited or conditional predestination is no predestination at all. When one uses the qualifying prefix in connection with the word, he is at once set apart from others who hold contrary views. It is a matter of conviction in the light of scriptural and experimental teaching with each one of us.

By the grace of God, the *Signs of the Times* will continue to advocate the doctrine of the Scriptures on which it was founded.

J. D. W.

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

New Vernon, N. Y., March 27, 1833.

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

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine

altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." — Prov. xxv. 25.

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

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

New Vernon, N. Y., March 19, 1834.

We are pleased with the communications of our esteemed brother Trott, on this all-important subject; and we do hope that our readers will faithfully examine all his numbers, comparing them with the infallible standard, the bible, with unbiased minds, open for the reception of truth. These numbers we are fully persuaded will bear examination; and certainly the importance of the subject should be a sufficient incentive to lead us to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary.

Among others, we doubt not, some well meaning brethren have started at the position assumed by brother T., that the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men and devils. But is there not a cause, why they are so fearful? Few, very few of our pulpits have rung with this doctrine for the last ten or fifteen years. Arminians and New School Baptists have and do hate it; while some, who are compelled to acknowledge the truth of it, have thought they were doing God service by suppressing the publication of it; and of that class, not a few who have seemed unconscious of the presumptuous stand which they occupy, while they are virtually attempting to dictate to the all-wise God what portion of his

truth will do to publish, and what should be kept back. It is sufficient for us to know that God has revealed this doctrine in the bible; it is our privilege to publish it, and leave the result with him.

This subject evidently involves the consideration of the extent of God's government. If we say that God cannot, without attaching impurity to his nature or motives, govern or overrule the wicked actions of men and devils, we say in substance, that he cannot maintain his holiness unless he resigns his universal government.

The example given by our brother, from the sacred volume, of the overruling providence of God in regard to some, and the express declaration of his foreknowledge and predestination of the wicked actions of others, are in point; nor can they be easily surmounted by those who protest against the universal government of God. The bible is full of testimony on this subject. God has declared the end from the beginning; and he says his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Prophets and apostles have corroborated this testimony. Balaam was forced to acknowledge that he could not go (though a wicked prophet,) beyond the word (or decree,) of the Lord; and Satan himself, if he could speak truth, would tell us that he could not drown a swine without the permission of God.

But leaving all other witness, we would be perfectly safe in resting the whole subject on three of the scripture references offered in brother Trott's numbers, viz: Acts ii. 23, iv. 27, and the history of Joseph. In the first two passages, in relation to the crucifixion of our Lord by wicked hands, we have an example of the extent of God's government, in perfect harmony with the responsibility of man for his conduct; and in this transaction we have placed before us the grand centre of all human events; this is the most important of all; all others, past, present and to come, stand connected with this. The model then which displays the government of God over the wicked hands

which acted in the murder of the Holy Child Jesus, is suited to every event that ever has or ever can come to pass.

In the case of Joseph, we are taught that notwithstanding the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God, which bounds the rage and wickedness of all beings that exist, **men and devils act voluntarily in sin, without the least regard to the purpose or decree of God;** of whose purpose or decree they are totally unconscious. Of this truth, what a striking example is given in the case of Joseph's brethren. Read the words of Joseph to them. Gen. 50:20. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Thus we see that while men and devils act from wicked motives, with wicked hands, God means it for good; overrules even their wicked acts and murderous designs for his glory, and the good of all such as are the called according to his purpose. Amidst all our trials and conflicts, opposition, be this our consolation:

"That death and hell can do no more
Than what our Father please."

"IT IS FINISHED."

Alexandria D. C., February 10, 1837.

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, — when his soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple, the ark, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Savior's lips

shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal God-head shouted, "**It is finished.**"

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had began; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. "He who runs may read." "He finished transgression, made an end of sin," &c. He himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: "The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever."

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin as far as relates to those he represented.

Third. He finished the law as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace, and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or title of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him; deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare to attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people,

and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died." He was wounded for their transgression; he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; and with his stripes they are healed. He sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be **using means**, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then the work is not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer — nothing to render his redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth forever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name — a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised,

opposed and slandered by all the work-mongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

New Vernon, N. Y., April 24, 1833.

We have proposed to give our readers a more enlarged view of our sentiments, which were briefly presented in our prospectus. The next item in order is, "the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man."

According to our engagement, we call the attention of our readers to the testimony which first from the word of God, and then from such collateral testimony as we can find existing among the human family, we intend on this occasion to present. The work before us is to prove that man in his fallen state, is totally depraved; and secondly, that he is justly condemned by law of God.

On this important subject mankind appears to be very generally in the dark; and from an ignorance of this subject many errors and extravagances have gained in the world as we shall notice in the conclusion of this article. We cannot expect that the proud heart of man will fall in love with the doctrine about to be presented, as it strikes a death blow at all personal righteousness or human excellence, as a ground for acceptance before the sovereign Judge of quick and dead. Painful as the awful truth may be, it should not be concealed that "Man in his best estate is altogether vanity." But as you are at this time called to contemplate man in his lost, depraved and condemned estate, you would have just cause to accuse us of "handling the word of God deceitfully," and of "giving flattering titles to men," should we

fail to present him as he is presented in the record which the God of all truth has given us.

Of the numerous passages of divine truth, which prove that mankind are depraved, we give the following: "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." — Eccl. vii 29. "Wherefore as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." — Rom. v. 12. "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may become guilty before God. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." — Rom. iii. 13-20 and 23. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores," &c. — Isa. i. 5, 6. "What is man, that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" — Job xv. 14. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." — Job xiv. 4. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." — Psalms li. 5. "Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." — Psalms liii. 1-3. What then? Are we any better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written "There

is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." — Rom. ii. 9, 11.

"The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent, they are like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." — Psalms lviii. 3-5. The above are a few of the many passages of holy writ, which prove the total depravity of all mankind in their fallen condition. Here in this volume, according to which God will judge the world, the whole mass of mankind are presented on one general level; *all have sinned*; death has passed upon all; hence there is no class of our race exempt from this state of wretchedness and depravity, *conceived in sin*, estranged from the womb, going astray, and speaking lies, as soon as they are born.

But as we conceive the doctrine of *total* depravity involves as a consequence, *total inability*, *i. e.* not as natural creatures, to perform natural things, but as depraved beings to perform anything which is good and acceptable in the sight of God. Of man in his alienation from God, it is written, "The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually." "He cannot see the kingdom of God." — John iii. 3. "He cannot discern the things of the Spirit." — 1 Cor. ii. 4. "He cannot receive the spirit of truth." — John xiv. 17. "He cannot do good." — Jeremiah viii. 23. "He cannot cease from sin." — 2 Peter ii. 14. "He cannot repent." — Acts v. 31. "Cannot believe (savingly) in Christ." — John vi. 29;—Acts xiii. 41.

Man is not only a depraved and helpless creature, as a fallen sinner, but he is also a condemned criminal, having sinned and come short of the glory of God, as we have shown. And the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness. He is not, as many suppose, (a probationer) in a state of trial, to see whether he will, or will

not deserve eventually to be condemned; for the law has already uttered its thundering sentence: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Nor again, as others have contended, that the sinner as a free moral agent, is endowed with natural ability to repent, believe the gospel and be saved; and, in the words of A. Fuller, "Commanded to believe, on pain of damnation." "For they are condemned already." — Matt. iii. 18. Hence, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." — Rom. ix. 16, 18. That the condemnation of fallen sinners is grounded on strict justice, but few will have the hardihood, in so many words, to deny. If it be admitted that the law of God is "Holy, just and good," and that a just and holy law has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" and that the sovereign Judge has declared that there is none that doeth good, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; the point is established forever.

It does not belong to the discussion of this subject to present a remedy, a way of salvation, or to pursue the popular course even of those of our day who contend for the scriptural doctrine of Total Depravity as strenuously as we do, and after establishing the point by the word and testimony of God, still conclude their subject by exhorting those whom they have proven to be dead in trespasses and in sin, to be up and working for life. No, this does not belong to our statement at all; we have not so been taught. We find the fallen sinner condemned already, and under the wrath of God. The sentence is passed, irrevocably passed; God who cannot lie has said that all have sinned, and that he will turn the wicked into hell with all the nations that forget him.

Thus the polluted sinner goes,
Laden with guilt and heavy woes,
Down to the regions of the dead,
With endless curses on his head.

Dead in sin, enmity against God, in

love with sin, drinking down iniquity, as the ox drinketh water, raging and blaspheming, condemned and under the curse of a righteous, just and inflexible law, we find the human race. Dreadful as their situation is, here we must leave them.

In a subsequent number we shall treat upon the only possible way of salvation for any of the miserable sons of men, which is brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is, as we shall prove by the scriptures, special and particular.

(See page 269 this issue.)

ETERNAL, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

New Vernon, N. Y., February 27, 1833.

In the third item of our prospectus, we are pledged to maintain inviolably the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election. Some of our opponents have been kind enough to interpret our prospectus in such a manner as to lay us under the necessity of giving our readers more fully to understand our views. The language in which this article is headed is neither vague nor ambiguous; nor does this subject require a volume to be written, in order to convince the wise what doctrinal ideas we wish to convey. Yet as we have only asserted the sentiment as a matter of faith from which we shall in no case depart, it remains for us to show that the doctrine is scriptural, and in proving it to be so we will give a sufficient reason why we cannot depart from it in conducting this paper. Having already given, in our former numbers, our views of the sovereignty, immutability, &c., of the great Jehovah, our present work will be to prove that he has absolutely, eternally and unconditionally chosen or elected a portion of mankind unto salvation, through Jesus Christ.

With that class of our readers who take the Bible as the man of their counsel and the standard of their faith,

nothing more will be required of us, at this time, than a fair presentment of the word of God. Neither human language nor human wisdom can set forth the doctrine in a more clear or positive light than that which is left by the Holy Ghost, in the sacred pages of the Old and New Testaments.

Let it be understood that our work is only to state the doctrine, and to prove it to be in accordance with, and founded upon the word and testimony of the God of truth; we do not undertake to make the unregenerate understand or love it; for such a work we freely confess ourself inadequate; nor do we consider it any disparagement for us to own that God alone is able to bestow the knowledge and love of truth upon those who possess it not. We shall attempt to show that —

First, God has chosen or elected a people unto eternal life; second, that this election took place in eternity, or before the foundation of the world; and third, that this doctrine is not founded on any conditions existing between the elector and the elected.

First, that God has an elect people, we call to witness the following portions of holy writ, viz:

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath *chosen*.” — Psalms xxxiii, 12. “And he brought forth his people with joy, and his *chosen* with gladness.” — cv. 5. “That I may see the good of thy *chosen*, that I may rejoice in the goodness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.” — cvi. 5. “The beasts of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to *my people, my chosen*.” — Isa. xliii. 20. “But for the *elect’s* sake whom he hath *chosen*,” &c. — Mark xiii. 20. “Go thy way, for he (Saul) is a *chosen* vessel unto me.” — Acts ix. 15. “Salute Rufus, *chosen* in the Lord,” &c. — Rom. xvi. 13. “But ye are a *chosen generation*, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the

praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." — 1 Peter ii. 9. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and *chosen*, and faithful." — Rev. xvii. 14. "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inso-much, that if it were possible they should deceive the very *elect*. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his *elect*, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." — Matt. xxiv. 22, 24, 31. "And shall not God avenge *his own elect*, which cry day and night unto him." — Luke, xviii. 7. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *God's elect*?" — Rom. viii. 33. "Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace*. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* hath obtained it and the rest were blinded. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the *election*, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." — Rom. xi. 5, 7, 28.

Second, the eternity of God's election is set forth in the strongest terms by the apostles, thus, "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 unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein *he hath made us*, accepted in the beloved. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." — Eph. i. 4, 5, 6, 11, also ii. 10. "Peter an apostle,

&c., to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithyna, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, &c. — 1 Peter i. 1, 2. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did *predestinate* them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Rom. viii. 29, 30. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." — 2 Thes. ii. 13. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. xiii. 8. These with many like scriptures, plainly demonstrate the eternity of the election of the people of God unto salvation, through Jesus Christ their Lord. Arminians may well tremble to meet the array of scriptures here employed to refute their cavils against eternal election. But we must show that God's election is unconditional, as far as it relates to those elected. The weight of this part of our argument may, for the present, rest upon the three following propositions, viz:

First, the fact that the election took place in eternity, precludes the possibility of its resting on conditions to be performed by the people elected. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," &c.

Second, there is not the mention of a condition (as resting upon the elect) in the Bible; and if this all important doctrine, which involves our eternal destiny in its weight had been suspended upon conditions to be performed by man, we may assuredly believe that God

would have made known a fact of such awful moment, in his word.

Third, the scripture expressly forbids the idea of conditions, either in regard to election, or salvation in any form whatever. To establish this point we hear the inspired apostle say, "By grace are ye saved through faith, that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

Again, if there be conditions in the election of grace, resting on the creature to perform, we would for the moment inquire what are the conditions? Is it works? No, for if it be of works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." Does the doctrine then require that the sinner shall be willing on his part to be saved? No, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. But did not the choice of God embrace the best kind of sinners, such as are not so vile, polluted and depraved as the rest of mankind? No, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." But did not God choose unto salvation such as would be born of pious parents — parents who would dedicate them by infant or adult sprinkling, and train them up to religion? No, "Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter."

"Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm." But were they elected on condition that they should use what is in the present day denominated "The means of grace," viz: — to give their property to charitable societies, and so fill up the "Lord's treasury?" No, for "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing." "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Now we inquire if election or salvation be conditional, on what condition does it rest? Let the Arminian answer if he can.

But to the everlasting exclusion of all such heart-sickening, God dishonoring, soul-revolting, devil-pleasing delusion, Thus saith the Lord God, whose word endureth forever, "Behold O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves," &c. Thus saith the Lord God, unto these bones, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter in you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up 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. And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea I will be their God, and they shall be my people." — Ezekiel xxxiii., see also Heb. viii, 10, 11, 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 iniquities will I remember no more." Here, from the uncorrupted fountain breaks forth a refulgent torrent of light and truth, sweeping away all refuges of lies, and reiterating Jehovah's declarations. "I will, and they shall," while each redeemed soul quickened and made alive by the Holy Ghost, and taught by the Father, joins in the heavenly melody to sing:

"Sons we are through God's election
Who in Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination,
Sovereign grace we here receive.
Lord, thy mercy
Does both grace and glory give.

Pause, my soul! adore and wonder!
Ask, O why such love to me?

Grace has put me in the number,
Of my Savior's family.
Hallelujah!
Thanks, eternal thank to thee.

Since that love had no beginning,
And shall never, never cease;
Keep, O keep me, Lord, from sinning!
Guide me in the way of peace!
Make me walk in
All the paths of holiness.

When that blessed habitation,
Which my God has foreordained;
When in glory's full possession,
I with saints and angels stand;
Free grace only
Shall resound from God's right hand."

PREDESTINATION

The absolute Predestination
of all things.

New Vernon, N. Y., February 6, 1833.

On this important part of the doctrine of Christ, we wish to be well understood, as we consider it a fundamental part of the faith of the Gospel. In the absence of this doctrine we can have no confidence in the predictions of the word of God. If the prophets spake and wrote of undetermined events, events concerning which the Holy One himself had not made up his mind, they must have spoken and written with the utmost uncertainty. If it were possible to banish the doctrine of Predestination from the Holy Scriptures, we should not only lose thereby our interest in the ancient predictions of the Old Testament, but we should find it impossible to believe the testimony of the new. What consolation would the exceedingly great and precious promises of the Gospel afford us, if we had reason to believe that God had not yet determined whether they should ever be verified? Again, what confidence could we have in the veracity of God, if it were certain that his promises were made without any determination on his part to perform them? Indeed there could be no certainty of a future state without the predestination of such a state. No heav-

en, no hell, no resurrection, nor final judgement. Thus we see to what an awful dilemma we should be driven without this doctrine. Predestination is the pre-determination of all events that can possibly come to pass, it involves the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, and exhibits the wisdom and the power of God; the one presents the plan, the other carries into execution the things decreed. Predestination is the result of the counsel of God's own will, originating with himself alone. "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed &c." In the doctrine of Predestination all the Attributes of Deity shine forth with dreadful majesty. The entire history of mankind is by Predestination established in the view of God, and the final destiny of all things are held in his almighty hand.

"There's not a sparrow nor a worm,
But's found in his decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

We may consider this doctrine first in the economy of salvation, and then in its more general bearings. First God has chosen, or predestined, his people unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and a belief of the truth. — 2 Thes. ii. 13. Agreeable to his own sovereign pleasure as expressed in the above text, he has predestined them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will. — Eph. i. 5. He has predestined them unto eternal life. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." — John xvii. 2. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." — Acts xiii. 48. He has predestinated their calling, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, their justification and glorification. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called,

and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Rom. viii. 29, 30. In short, every thing in relation to his people here and hereafter is so firmly established in the decree of God, that no power can prevail against them. "He rideth upon the heavens in their help and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." — Deut. xxxiii. 26, 7. "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought?" — Num. xxiii. 23. "Even the very hairs of your heads are all numbered." — Matt. x. 30, Luke xii. 7.

Predestination is not confined to the adorable purpose of Salvation by Grace, but it has a direct bearing on all things. Not a sparrow can be brought to the ground, nor can the troubled ocean dash her foaming waves one inch beyond the limits of God's decrees.

If any thing was left upon uncertainties, every thing must have been equally uncertain. If the smallest atom in creation were suffered to fly at random in the full sense of the word, God himself not knowing where, or when it would alight, it would prove what cannot be proved, viz: that God is deficient in knowledge. The Omniscience, and the predestination of God, must stand or fall together; they cannot be separated. We are confident that both exist in glorious harmony in the mind of him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. See Isaiah xlvi. 10. **The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability; this may be discovered by noticing the following examples. The crucifixion of Christ, the abduction of Joseph, together with many other circumstances recorded in holy writ. "For of a truth against thy holy**

child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain." — Acts ii. 23.

The brethren of Joseph had no knowledge of the purpose of God when they sold him to go down to Egypt, they meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. When the Jews persecuted the disciples of our Lord Jesus into strange cities they knew not that God had ordained this very method of sending his missionaries everywhere preaching the word. And amidst the abounding abominations of the present day, it is our consolation to know that God has ordained "The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of that wrath he will restrain." — Psalms lxxvi. 10. We need only to understand this precious doctrine, and we shall most assuredly love it. The christian exults in the thought that death and hell can do no more than what our Father please.

We might notice the objections commonly brought against this doctrine, but we shall wait until such objections are presented; and in the mean time earnestly request our brethren to examine the word of God on this important subject. And that the God of all grace may give us light and wisdom from above, that in his light we may see light, is our prayer in Jesus' name, to whom be glory, power and dominion, now and forever, Amen.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE OF ELDER BEEBE

New Vernon, N. Y., April 30, 1834.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." PAUL

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words:

He was, like all the race of which he is a member, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a **religionist** from his birth, yet an enemy to God, and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life; for he was alive before the commandment came. He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but he had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the Westminster Catechism, and in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees, he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counterbalancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship; but on all occasions when he had "paid his vows, he had peace offerings at home." Up to about this period of life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad, when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord, he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice, and give the reason, if any he had, why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas! his stronghold failed him in this very critical moment, he felt he was ruined. But like Edom he said, "I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places." Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper

he seemed to be involved in a horrible pit, and in miry clay. These exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awfully wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he should fly to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open.

At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frightened soul. Hell yawned before him; justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard, and brandished over his guilty head. The books were brought. The arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast: tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some Universalist that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had got hold of him? As well might be told, when writhing on a bed of embers, that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken. The Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form and void, yet God had said, Let there be light; and light broke in upon him; and in this light that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus, when in or about his seventh year, he went to a distant barn, under an im-

pression like that expressed by the poet:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul, and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, and he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what had passed while sleeping, he awoke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and sin were gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

"His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
and sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December, 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in Baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Connecticut, by Eld. John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep.

After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that champion of the truth, Eld. Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit. Let it suffice to say, that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisp-

ing the name of Jesus with such abilities as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school; and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. He finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is still as evil as ever it was. "To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not." He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

EDITORS' NOTE

We trust that our brethren have found these writings of Elder Beebe to testify of those things most surely believed among us. He wrote in 1876, "I stand today rooted and grounded in the faith and order on which the whole Baptist denomination in our country stood when I united with them sixty-five years ago. I have found no occasion to depart from either the faith or order of the church of God, as organized on the day of Pentecost."

Elder Beebe was ordained in 1823 to the care of the church of Ramapo, in New York, and three years later accepted the care of the church at New Vernon, New York, and served them fifty years. During that time he lived in Alexandria, Va. for three and one-half years, and served three nearby churches. He returned to New Vernon for their meetings. He published the *Signs of the Times* for forty-nine years, until he died in 1881, and is buried in the New Vernon Cemetery.

EDITORS

Extra copies of this issue are available from our Danville, Va. office.

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