

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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

Now, may the Lord reveal his face,
And teach our stammering tongues
To make his sovereign; reigning grace,
The subject of our songs.
No sweeter subject can invite
A sinner's heart to sing,
Or more display the glorious right
Of our exalted King.

This subject fills the starry plains
With wonder, joy, and love;
And furnishes the noblest strains
For all the harps above:
While the redeemed in praise combine
To grace upon the throne,
Angels in solemn chorus join,
And make the theme their own.

Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins;
To melt the hardest hearts;
And from the work it once begins;
It never more departs.
The world and satan strive in vain
Against the chosen few;
Secured by grace's conquering reign,
They all shall conquer, too.

'Twas grace that called our souls at first;
By grace thus far we're come;
And grace will help us through the worst,
And lead us safely home.
Lord, when this changing life is past,
If we may see thy face,
How should we praise and love at last,
And sing the reign of grace!

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

“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.” Jeremiah 6:16.



Elder J. B. Farmer

Before entering into any writing or speaking, desiring to rightly divide the word of truth, it must first be acknowledged that no man, of himself, knows or can know anything of the kingdom of God. These things are hidden and are not accessible to any in a carnal mind. They cannot be written, spoken, or read with understanding apart from the Holy Spirit.

This causes us to fear and tremble to write or to speak in His name, knowing we are unworthy, according to the flesh, of the least of all His mercies and of all His truth that He has shown unto His servants.

The commandment of God is given unto the children of God in every age and in every situation. And we are taught that with His commandment He gives the power and the wisdom to His little ones that is needful for them to obey. It is grace for grace. For we know that without Him we would go away backwards and shrink away from the truth. Because with the truth comes persecution. And no one in nature desires to suffer. But the way of truth is the way of suffering for His people. And He has promised that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And He also promised that all who suffer with Him shall reign with Him.

The Lord has commanded His people to **“stand in the ways.”** What does it mean to stand in the ways? It has appeared in my mind that His people are all brought to the separation of the ways. There is the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction on the left hand, and there is the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life on the right hand. We have been taught that many enter in at the wide gate and travel in the broad way that leads to death and destruction. And we have been given to understand that only a few shall be blessed to find the strait gate and enter there, and to walk in the narrow way that leads to everlasting life.

The Lord also commanded His people that upon standing in the ways, to **“see”**. What does it mean to see? It appears that the children of God are commanded to observe the two ways, and to consider their goings, and to seek a good understanding of the two ways. Can you think back in your experience to the many times you were made to halt between two opinions? Can you remember the many times that you seemed to be at a fork in the roads where you must either go to the left or to the right. And can you remember how the flesh prompted you to take the easy, pleasure filled way, and how you were condemned by your conscience upon entering the broad way? This broad way is that way of death from which the little children of God have been rescued.

Can you remember the many times when you were made to hate the deeds of the flesh and were given a desire to walk in a better way? Can you remember all your failures, and your broken promises to God to be a better person? I am made to believe that this is the experience of God’s children being under the severe law of God that condemns and kills, and shows us just who we are – sinners, worthy of death. The law is holy and just and good, but we found that we were unable to keep it because of the weakness of our flesh. But the law is also our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

Can you remember when you first heard with a hearing ear that Jesus came to seek and to save sinners? Can you remember when it dawned upon you that those He came to seek and save

were all in a helpless condition, guilty and condemned – just like you? Remember the woman taken in the very act of adultery, and the poor publican who could not even lift his eyes up to heaven, but smote his breast and said, **“God be merciful unto me a sinner.”** They were forgiven and were placed in the narrow way, which leads to life. She was commanded to, **“Go, and sin no more.”** And he **“went down to his house justified.”** When these things are manifest to us, hope springs up within us that our sins also have been forgiven us.

The Lord commanded His children to **“ask for the old paths, where is the good way”**. What does it mean to ask for the old paths, and what is the good way? The children of God have a desire placed in their hearts and minds to please God, and to seek His paths of righteousness for their lives. They begin to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness according to His powerful command. They begin to enquire about the lives of the old saints, and how they walked in the world. They begin to compare their own lives to the faithful in Christ Jesus to see whether they themselves are truly in the faith. They begin to see how the people of God suffered for the truth’s sake, and begin to learn a little, by experience, about the suffering of the saints in the narrow way. They are taught first hand what is the good way. It is the way of truth, and righteousness and love.

The children of God are commanded to **“walk therein,”** that is, in the good way. It is the narrow way, the way of suffering, the way of love, joy, peace,

gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, against which there is no law. The Lord's chosen vessels are taken from the broad way and placed in the narrow way, but they are not alone in it. He has promised that He will never leave you or forsake you, but that he will be with you even unto the end of the world. He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will make a way of escape that you will be able to bear it. All is well with His children as long as He is with them, and He has promised to be with them and in them.

There are a multitude of examples throughout the scriptures showing how God took His people out of the broad way, and placed and kept them in the narrow way, and how they were made to be a willing people in the day of His power. Even though they knew not the future, and many times it seemed like they would perish in the trial, they were blessed to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They were made to care not for their lives, and were given a desire to please God above all things. May we look at a few of them and see how they fared in the old paths.

Consider how the Lord dealt with Moses, the Israelite raised in Pharaoh's house with all its wealth and privileges. We are told in scripture, **"Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a sea-**

son; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect to the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them." Here is a child of God surrounded by every seemingly good thing that is in the world - those things pertaining to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. But the children of God are commanded to **"love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."** And they are told that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. So, Moses was separated from the world of luxury, and found himself on the backside of the desert tending sheep. After 40 years, the Lord appeared unto him in a burning bush, and he was commanded to go to Pharaoh and to tell him to let God's people go out from the bondage wherein they were held. Surely, this must have seemed like a death sentence to Moses, since he was a fugitive from justice in Egypt, and he was only one man against all the forces of the most powerful kingdom on earth. But Moses obeyed, by grace. The Lord was with him and kept him in the narrow way through all his trials and sufferings, and preserved him to the end of his journey in faith and love.

Consider Rahab the harlot. There was a woman, despised by the world, living on the edge of a large city of un-

believers. This city was about to be destroyed by the Israelites as they entered the promise land to possess it. This woman, a sinner, was a child of grace. The Lord knew His own and made provision for her and her family. Before destruction fell, spies were sent in to the city and they came to the house of Rahab. She feared God, and knew the city was about to fall. She recognized the spies as servants of God, hid them, and protected them from those of the city, who would have killed them. She made the spies promise to deliver her family and herself from the destruction to come. The spies told Rahab that she and her family must remain in the house during the destruction, and that she must display the scarlet thread or rope (which stood for the blood of Christ) in the window of her house upon the wall. When the walls fell, there was complete destruction of all the walls, except for the portion where Rahab and her family were housed. They obeyed God, by grace, and remained in the house, and were kept in the narrow way that leads to life. Rahab's name is found in the lineage of Christ.

Consider Esther, a beautiful young maiden who was taken into captivity with her people, the Jews, by the powerful king Ahasuerus. After the queen Vashti disobeyed the king and was deposed, Esther was chosen to be queen in her place. But the king knew not that she was a Jewess. Esther's older cousin Mordecai, who was as a father to her after her parents died, refused to bow down before wicked Haman, who was

the king's servant. Haman hated him and sought to destroy him and all his people, the Jews, and set a date for their destruction. Esther was in the lap of luxury, but was made to put her life on the line in order to save her people. In those days, no one could come into the presence of the king if not called by him. Anyone doing so, according to the law, could be put to death. Esther had not been called, but it was urgent that she speak to the king and plead for the lives of her people. By the grace of God, she said, **"If I perish, I perish."** She went unbidden to the king, and he held out the golden scepter unto her, which was an indication that she was received by him and would not be destroyed. When the integrity of Mordecai was revealed, and the wickedness of Haman was manifest to the king, Mordecai was exalted and Haman was put to death, and the Jews were spared. Esther and Mordecai were kept in the narrow way that leads unto life by grace through faith, not caring for their own lives, and were preserved.

Consider David, a lad who kept his father's sheep. The Philistines came against Israel to dominate and destroy them. They had a great champion, Goliath, who was a giant. He defied the armies of Israel and proposed that Israel send out a man to fight with him. If Goliath was victorious, the Israelites would serve the Philistines. If the Israelites could send one that would kill Goliath, then the Philistines would be the servants of the Israelites. David's father sent him down to see how his older

brothers fared in the battle. When David heard the giant's proposal, and heard the promise of the king (great riches, the king's daughter and his father's house would be made free in Israel) unto any that would go and slay the giant, David said he would go and fight against him. You know how they tried to put armor on David and how he refused saying he had not proved them. And we know that he took up five smooth stones out of the brook and took a sling and his staff against the giant. The broad way would have been the way of safety, cowering with the others in fear, or to go in the strength of the flesh. But David was placed in the narrow way and given courage and strength and wisdom to slay the giant. **"David said, Who is this uncircumsized Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God."** **"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David."** That day David gave Israel the victory against their enemy, just as the Lord has prevailed over Satan to give us the victory over death, hell and the grave.

Remember Daniel and how he was delivered from the den of lions, and how the three Hebrew children were bound and cast into the fiery furnace, and how they were delivered from it. When the king looked in he saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth

is like unto the Son of God. And the list goes on and on showing how the Lord has kept His children in every trial of life, and how He has gone with them and before them in all things.

Last of all let us consider Jesus, the night before he was nailed to the tree, and how he suffered. We are told that He sweated, as it were, great drops of blood in His agony in the garden. He prayed three times, **"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."** It appears that He stood in the ways, and saw the broad way that leads to destruction, and the narrow way that leads to life. He saw the good way and walked in it. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Jesus, the Lamb of God, gave His life, a ransom for many. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth and the life."** Those that are blessed to walk in Him, the Good Way, shall find rest unto their souls. Jesus said, **"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,"**

May the Lord bless us to stand, and to see the Good Way that leads to life. And may He bless us to walk therein.

And may we count it all joy when we are blessed to suffer with Him for the truth's sake, and may we find rest unto our souls in Him.

Elder J. B. Farmer

NOTICE TO OUR READERS



Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

With much sadness we must report the death of our esteemed Associate Editor and trustee of the Signs of the Times, Elder C.B. Davis. For the past number of months, he endured much affliction but the Lord blessed him with a peaceful passing. For "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Certainly we feel that he fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith.

Elder Davis served as associate editor since 1989 and trustee since 1991. He was blessed with a depth of understanding of the scriptures and a wonderful gift for expounding them both in his preaching and his writings. He was called to serve several churches as pastor including his home church of Shiloh which he served for forty years.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Sister Jeanette and all the family. May the Lord give them peace and comfort for the days and nights ahead.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Nov. 10, 2011

Elder Cleo Robertson,

I feel compelled to write and express my sincere appreciation to you and your staff for sending the "Signs of the Times" to me. It has served as a source of comfort and has afforded me many hours of reading pleasure while sitting here within these four walls at this assisted living facility.

The staff here at Serenity Care is kind to me and care for my natural needs but there is no spiritual communion that one seeks for. I have received a great satisfaction and comfort while reading the wonderful articles printed in the signs. I commend you for the superb choice of material that is printed. I can in retrospect walk with those voices of the past as well as those who still live. It was a blessed honor to have known several of the old soldiers of the cross whose articles have appeared in your publication.

The old picture of the Elders that attended the Lower Country Line association in 1947 that appeared in the June issue (page 143) struck a cord in my heart as I personally knew a few of them. Highly esteemed brother, Elder H.L. Rogers whose article appeared in the July issue, was a personal friend of mine. I met him in 1947 when I attended an association meeting held at the Lost Creek Church in Kentucky. He at that

time was the pastor where Elder J.B. Farmer now serves. I have enjoyed brother Farmer's writings, especially the one from the book of Ruth. (January issue) I have also enjoyed your writings, Elder Robertson, especially your views on Lucifer. (Page 170 of August issue).

An article written by J.W. McClanahan (April Page 88) Took me back to my teen years when he spoke at the Valley Church during the Tygarts Valley River Association in Randolph County, W.V. He had a commanding voice that kept this poor sinner boy spell bound during his delivery. I didn't understand much of what he was saying but I was convinced that he knew what he was saying. His preaching had a lasting effect upon me as I feel that while under the sound of his voice I was awakened to a degree to the truth that is in Christ Jesus. We knew him as Jim "Click" McClanahan.

I knew Elder W. I. Wade but do not remember his wife whose experience appeared on page 90 of the April issue.

I have feasted on the wonderful articles that have been printed in the Signs since you started sending it my way and again I want to thank you for your kindness. Also I have a desire to thank almighty God for you. May the smiles of our Lord and Master continue to be yours to enjoy all of the days appointed unto you in this life.

Jesus said "My Sheep Hear my Voice and they follow me." And as our highly esteemed servant of the Lord, Elder Kenneth R. Key, stated in his article in the May issue (page 100), "There will be no absentees," "All will be there

to hear him say, Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These things are surely believed among us.

They make our hearts glad! Elder Robertson, aren't we glad it is that way?

In a precious hope of Life Eternal,
V. Linn
R.R. 6, Box 750
Buckhannan, W.V. 26201

Dear Tony,

Another year has passed and my subscription is due. I would like to renew it for 2 years.

I have enjoyed the Signs very much and I hope the Lord will continue to bless you and the Editors in your efforts to keep sending out this worthy publication.

Thank You,
B.B. Summer, Sr.

November 4, 2011

Dear Editors,

Please renew my "Signs" for one more year. Use the rest as needed.

May the Lord bless all who help with "Signs."

In bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie Lou Grayson
229 S. Conecut St.
Greenville, AL 36037

James A. Lambert
2650 Kings Rd.
Meansville, GA 30256

Dear Bro.

I'm sending my dues and change of address.

We are renting a dairy farm here, there was no way to make a living in Newman.

We found this place and are milking 35 cows.

Sadly far from any Old Baptists except for Progressives.

We saw what looked like an old line meeting house and stopped and looked in the window and there sits a piano.

The papers are all in contention to Old Baptists.

James Lambert

ARTICLES

A PREPARED PLACE

“And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month”: Nehemiah 8:14.

The Feast of Tabernacles (booths) was the last of the three great annual feasts in which the males of Israel were to appear “before the Lord thy

God.” This feast, also known as the feast of harvest, was to be at the end of the harvest season when the harvest had been completed. The other two great feasts were the Feast of the Passover, also known as the feast of unleavened bread, and the Feast of Pentecost, or also called the Feast of Weeks. Each of these three great feasts was given under the law and was a prefigure of spiritual blessings for the future time, when Christ would come and, with his finished work, present great spiritual blessings to his bride, the church.

When Nehemiah returned to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, following the Babylonian overthrow and captivity, those that had escaped the captivity and returned to Judah had apparently never heard the reading of the law. Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation that was gathered and read the book of the law of Moses. They found, as stated above, that they should dwell in booths. They gathered branches from “goodly” trees and build booths in which to dwell for the seven days of the feast. The booths were not their regular houses or dwellings but built on the roofs of their house, in their courts, in the courts of the house of God, in the street of the water gate, etc.

“...And there was very great gladness.” Nehemiah 8:17. This indicates the importance they attributed to the keeping of the law, in general, and to the building and abiding in booths.

It should be noticed that the children of Israel themselves were to prepare a place, with their own hands, to abide during the festive season of Taber-

nacles, which was not their normal dwelling place. Although this was according to the Law of Moses it would, by nature, seem to be an unusual and awkward thing to do; To live in booths made of tree branches, which was apart from their natural homes. Yet they did it with very great gladness. This is what the law commanded. Yet the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did (the better hope is in Christ); by the which we draw nigh to God. See Hebrews 7:19. **"...if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Galatians 3:21.**

Looking ahead to the one that gives life, to the one that is prefigured in the feasts, as well as throughout the Old Testament, Christ is seen in John 14:2, that Christ tells his disciples "...I go to prepare a place for you." This is the one spoken of by Moses of a Prophet that God would raise up from the midst of the people, of their brethren him they were to hearken. See Deuteronomy 18:15.

This place spoken of, that Christ was to prepare, was not a booth or booths that would be made of tree branches in which the children of God would dwell for seven days. It was to be a spiritual place and would be that which would fulfill the type illustrated by the booths in the legal feast of Tabernacles. It would also be prepared by Christ alone and not by the work of mans hands.

The question then becomes where would Christ go to fulfill his promise and what preparation was to be made? The place where he was to go was the cross.

There the price of redemption was paid. This is in contrast to that which was not accomplished by the many animal sacrifices rendered during the days of the annual feast which made nothing perfect. But now, with the perfect sacrifice at the cross, sin was no longer seen by the Father in the hearts of the elect, but was covered by the redeeming blood of Christ. Not only is sin put away but there is more; **"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." Romans 5:10.** Thus sin was covered in His death, but spiritual life springs forth from his resurrection.

But what and where was the place that was to be prepared? It seems extremely unlikely that there was any preparation needed in the heaven of heavens where the children will abide in the presence of an eternal and unchangeable God. Perfection has eternally dwelt there. So it would seem that the preparation spoken of would not be in heaven. The scriptures seem to indicate that the place that was to be prepared is much closer at hand.

In Chapter 12 of Revelations a narrative picture, in figurative language, is written of the care given to the woman (the church) through the ages, including the life of Christ and the gospel age, following his ascension. In verse 6 it is recorded thus; **"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days"** Also in verse 14 it is reinforced; "And

the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Is not this the place prefigured by the "booths" in the legal Feast Of Tabernacles? And further, is not the present world a wilderness to the child of God, and is not the church militant in this wilderness?

Though the saints live physically in the world they are not of the world. This is the place, the church place, that has been prepared for his people here in time. It is not a place of bricks and mortar, nor a place with dimensions of width and depth. It is a spiritual place where love flows from breast to breast. A place prepared of God where rest is found and peace passes understanding. A place where prayers are expressed, the finished work of Christ is proclaimed and His name exalted. And there is very great gladness.

When is this prepared place to be occupied by the church? It is here in the spiritual hearts of his people now, in these latter days. Further, is this not the same time that the beast, or the antichrist, is given a mouth to speak great things and blasphemies; and power given to him to continue forty and two months? See Revelations 13:5. Notice that the period of time for the prepared place of the church and the time of the wrath of Satan are the same. They both equal a like period of 1260 days, which apparently is a figurative number given to the period of the last days. **"And the serpent cast out of his**

mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." Revelations 12:15,16.

The church, secure in the "prepared place", is not harmed by the flood of false doctrine spewed from the serpents mouth. The flood is swallowed up by the earth which has been deluded by the god of this world that has blinded the minds of them which believe not. See II Corinthians 4:4. And to the children of God, secure in the place prepared by Christ, the Spirit will reveal wonders yet untold of what He has done for sinners saved by grace.

Elder Wayman Chapell

ACTS 2: 1-4.

And 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 it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

VOICES OF THE PAST

**DEPRAVITY SEEN
PSALM 73:21-26
BY ELDER FREDERICK KEENE**

“Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.”

There are many deep and terrible experiences that the elect of God are made to know under the teachings of the Holy Ghost, and though humiliating, and our nothingness, vileness and helplessness are felt, yet how gracious are the fruits of all things unto the called of God. For the Lord our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, in his dealings with us ever has in view the glory of his own name, and the welfare of his dear children, The psalmist had many experiences which he portrays in this Psalm. His steps had well-nigh slipped, he had been envious of the ease and prosperity of the wicked. “For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.” But the Lord mercifully directed his

steps into the sanctuary of God, and opened his eyes to see some things he had not understood; and there he again tasted mercy from the God of his mercy. Reviewing, the many things he had passed through, and his present state, he retells the story, and speaks of his present blessedness, his portion as he is held in the hands of the Lord. He declares what is the ultimate height of glory, that is, his “earnest expectation” - Rom. 8:19.

“Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.” There are seasons with all the Israel of God “when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief”—2 Chron. 6:29. There is that heart-grief that is ours when the Holy Ghost shows us our iniquities, and we, by his gracious operations, are moved to mourn over them unto the Lord, and there are many other griefs arising out of God’s providential dealings, and then, as described in this Psalm, we are grieved in our cogitations over matters that we do not understand, for how frequently our conclusions are erroneous. Ah, some self-wise, shallow professors of Christ’s name may say, The psalmist ought to have known better than to be envious; I would not have troubled myself in such matters; I would have walked, and have done better in all these matters than the psalmist. Enough said of these self-sufficient religionists. No one has more self-condemnation than a child of God when the merciful, gracious Lord shows him the vanity of his ways. “Thus my heart was grieved,” whether there was a true foundation or not. “I was pricked in my reins.” These were not

momentary pin pricks, but the spear, the arrows of conviction of God. Yes, and Satan's fiery darts wounding his soul also! I well remember the time when I first took notice of what is written in this Psalm. It was about twenty-seven years ago. I was riding in my buggy to attend a funeral, and was in a cast down state of soul. I said within me, What text of the Scriptures shall I preach from at this funeral? and I thought of the words, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." I thought, That will do. Then I said within me, How, under what circumstances came the psalmist to come to this persuasion? So I mentally recalled the preceding verses, beginning at this twenty-second verse, Oh, I thought, is it such an one as this? I found tears coming into my eyes and flowing down my cheeks, for I felt I was just such a person myself. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." People sometimes may think, and rather boastfully say, to be heard of others, What a fool I was. But this of the psalmist is no such self-eulogizing prattle. When the Holy Ghost shows a child of God the folly of his thoughts, and speech, and ways, it is humbling, it is graciously so, for we are made to be of a meek and lowly mind before the Lord our God. We see how unwise we were, how far astray, how we had wandered away from the paths of judgment, how erroneous were our conclusions, how stupid we were. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted" - Psalm 107:17. Such we see we have been, and so marvel that we were prey

to all afflictions. We see now (that is, under divine enlightenment, after having received instruction in the sanctuary of our gracious God), that we belong to the foolish things, base things, things that are despised, things that are not, (I Cor. 1:27-28). "So foolish was I, and ignorant." So vile, so depraved, so astray from God and the truth, "I was as a beast before thee." Ah! to be thus before the Lord knowing that we are there revealed unto him exactly as we are, for in these sacred, dreadful moments we poor sinners know that our God is the discernor of the thoughts and intents of our heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (Heb. 4:12-13). **"The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" - Luke 18:13. "And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes" — Gen. 18:27.** Job exclaimed, "Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." "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."

"So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." Ah it is no trifling matter to see one's self so foolish, so ignorant, so degraded that we feel that we are sunken lower than the human family. "I was as a beast before thee." Oh our God is the high and lofty

One that inhabits eternity, and what am I? Sinful, vile, foolish, I have to loathe myself. "I was as a beast before thee," humbled, prostrate in the dust before the Lord, and yet his grace so exercising our sinful hearts that we are meekened, and contrite in heart, confessing our transgressions, our folly and shame, and imploring his compassion, pleading for his mercy in Christ Jesus. But can he, will he, bestow his loving-kindness on such a foolish, vile, ignorant mortal, one who feels, "I was as a beast before thee"? Yes, he will have mercy upon us. He is the God of all grace, and we are bowed before the throne of grace, the throne of God and the Lamb (Heb. 4:16). Our God is rich in mercy unto all who call upon him in truth. When the Lord said, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, was Jacob offended! Did Israel feel insulted to be named a worm?

Ah, no! We feel the Lord knows us exactly as we are, and each one says, I feel I am but a poor, creeping, sinful, helpless worm. The Holy One of Israel will be the help, the protector, the Redeemer of these worms. Did not Christ Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, in his humiliation exclaim, Behold I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people? Jesus, who in his own person was without spot, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, yet when he as the Surety, Redeemer of his own, bare their sins, when

all the shame, the ignominy of his people was laid upon him, when he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, when he was made a curse for us, how humiliated he was, how crushed and smitten. Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like his. He cried out unto Jehovah the Father, "Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns" - Psalm 22:21. So the thought, the hope, is put in our hearts that our precious Christ whom we have is not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

"I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." "Nevertheless." Notwithstanding I am all that is foolish and base, I am not spurned from thy presence, I am not cast out into outer darkness to languish and perish in my folly. Ah, I have many times had such a feeling sense of vileness of my Adamic nature, I have felt myself as a most loathsome reptile, too base to have being in the world, I have seen myself fit only for God's eternal reprobation, for the damnation of hell. "Nevertheless." Oh the exceeding riches of grace in God's kindness to us in Christ Jesus. We are miracles of God's grace. Again and again in the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel the Lord says, "But I wrought for my name's sake." He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my

right hand." It is because of his own everlasting and immutable love that Jehovah holdeth fast unto himself his own elect, and such of them as he hath called, and hath so shown them their depravity and utter baseness will by his gracious operations in their souls feel to be as dust and ashes, and tell the Lord, So foolish am I, and ignorant; I am as a beast before thee. If such a worthless wretch can be loved of God, then it would not do to turn this one loose; he is not fit to go abroad alone, so foolish, so ignorant, he will get into all manner of trouble, take the wrong path, stumble into the ditch, be the prey of every snare, allured by every deceiver, robbed by spiritual thieves and robbers. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand." Held so lovingly, mercifully unto himself, who shall pluck us out of his hand? Saith our dear Savior, **"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one"**- John 10:28-30. **"Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words"** - Deut. 33:3.

This is the important thing, not our hold on God, but that eternal God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost has hold of us. It is the great, almighty, gracious hand that has hold of "my right hand." It is the weak, tiny hand of the little child

held in the strong, kind hand of the Father. The little toddling child holds on to the father, but the father has the outside grip. There is a verse of a hymn that reads, "Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine," but I will alter it, and put it as the psalmist does,

"Lord I would clasp thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur or repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Can any power pluck us from the hand of our covenant God? Who shall ungrasp the gracious grasp of the Lord God omnipotent who reigneth? Oh it is blessedly wonderful to me a poor sinner. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee." Sometimes I have thought he has loosened his hold of me, turned me adrift, given me up, tired of me, I am such a fool, need so much mercy and grace. Ah, I have thought, and have said in my infirmity, I am a castaway, so worthless, so unprofitable that God no longer holds me unto himself. I am all astray, a wanderer in the waste howling wilderness; I am so vile, so fretful, rebellious, perverse, not fit to pray, and no heart even to pray, and if I do he regards me not; when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer. Dear reader, I could go on and on attempting to tell of my times, of my wretchedness, dullness, hardness, my inward vileness, but cannot fully tell the dreadful story. "He restoreth my soul." Oh the blessedness of this blessedness. Oh the preciousness of our precious Christ. The clouds, are swept away, he lifts up

the light of his countenance upon me. The noise of Satan the roaring lion is hushed, the day dawns, the night is past, the devouring, howling beasts of prey have gone into their dens. Christ is mine and I am his Jesus' precious blood and righteousness is my comfort and glory. Then I find I am with my God, held unto him, never separated from him, he still holdeth me by my right hand. "My people have forgotten me days without number"—Jer. 2:32. Oh the shameful ingratitude, yet how assuringly the Lord speaks in Isaiah 49: 15-16, and in Isaiah 44:21. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." If it were not that we are divinely kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, we would never be able to hold on our way. So the psalmist feels to confide in his God who has hold of him. In his faith he is so persuaded of the faithfulness, and the immutable graciousness of the Lord, that he says, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The believer in Christ needs a guide. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, shall guide us into all truth. Many think because they have a better knowledge of some items of doctrine, and can talk about the truth, that they are all right, acceptable to God. But all this may be, and yet a person may in his heart know nothing of the truth of the gospel, and have never walked one step therein. What does anyone know of the Savior who never felt he was a perishing sinner? What does a man know of grace who does not feel alto-

gether unworthy, helpless, a poor base thing, a nothing? (1 Cor. 1:28). How can any one know that Christ is the Lord our Righteousness unless he has been taught to see and feel that all his righteousness is as filthy rags? What know we of the precious, cleansing, sin-aton-ing blood of the Lamb of God? Oh we are made to cry, "Black, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior or I die." So with unnumbered sacred things of our God and Savior the Spirit of truth so teaches, so guides the elect and called of God, that they are made with all appreciation vitally and experimentally to enter into the truth. The difference between the mere professor appears at times to be slight; and the children of God may be deceived in these fleshly professors. Concerning hypocritical professors the Lord speaks of them to Ezekiel, "**Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. 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”– Ezekiel 33:30-32. What avails all this mimicry of hypocrites? There is much head and tongue religion in the world, but what does my soul know of Christ, his precious blood, of his high priesthood, of him as my Advocate with the Father? To that poor sinner who has been made to confess unto the Lord, “So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee,” how comforting is the persuasion in his soul that, “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.” In all my straits, in all doubtful matters, when blind guides would order my goings, when my own unwise heart would devise my paths, thou shalt guide me. Thy counsel, the blessed gospel of Christ, shall order my goings. The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The Lord is so unchanging in his love he will ever counsel us. He so blessedly declares, **“I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye”– Psalm 32:8.** He will ever have his eye upon us; never for one moment are his chosen out of his sight. He sees us when we see not him, and the darkness and the light are both alike to him. The children of God are not carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, but perplexities are their lot. Sometimes they are called to do business in great waters, and as the storm rages their souls are melted because of trouble, and they are at their wit’s end. But through the floods and the fires the Lord is with his people. His rod and his staff shall comfort us in the valley of the shadow of death. Thou

shalt “afterward receive me to glory.” God hath called unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, and the elect of God whom he did foreknow, he hath predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and, 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. 8:30). The pilgrimage is ended, we are come through all the tribulations in our journey and our almighty Friend has held on to us, and guided us safely to the end, bringing us to glory.

“How cheering the prospect of glory to come,
And the bliss of eternity see;
To be with the Lord and his chosen at home,
Oh this will be heaven to me.”

“Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” Oh, thou art more glorious and excellent than mountains of prey (Psalm 76:4).

Some people speak as though the pre-eminent attraction in heaven is to go to meet and to be forever with some precious much loved one of whom they have been bereaved. All this is mere human nature. Earthly kinships are not perpetuated in the realms of eternal glory. They belong to time, and to this world. When we depart this life, and are taken into heaven itself, it is true we shall then be forever at home with all the chosen in Christ Jesus, the household of God, but

it is to depart and to be with Christ, so shall we ever be with the Lord. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" My God, my Redeemer, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, our eternal All. There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Christ is The Desire. In all the characters he sustains unto his people, he is the One so needed by us poor sinners.

"His presence disperses my gloom
And makes all within me rejoice."

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, North Carolina
May 15, 1924

AN APOSTOLIC CHARGE TO THE ELDERS WHOM GOD HAS CALLED TO FEED HIS FLOCK

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." - (Acts 20:28)

This solemn charge was given in a most impressive manner by the apostle Paul to the Elders of the church at Ephesus, in the last interview he was ever to have with them personally in the flesh, for he knew that they would see his face no more. This was a most solemn and interesting time; when with the inspiration of a true prophet of our God, he foretold them of the sore trials they should be called to encounter after his departure, when grievous

wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock; and what was still more appalling, of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And after having faithfully warned and charged them, he closed his valedictory, commending them to God and to the word of his grace, and knelt down and prayed with them all. So affecting was the scene, the Elders all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.

We cannot for a moment believe that this charge is any less applicable to the Elders in the church of Christ today, whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, than it was to those of the church of Ephesus, or that we have any less occasion to heed the admonitions and accept the charge. None but those whom the Holy Ghost has called, qualified and made overseers, have any commission from God to feed his flock, or church. Men may be qualified in the schools of men to feed the swine, and may, like the prodigal, hire themselves out to citizens of the world for that purpose; but our God has entrusted the feeding of the sheep and lambs which he has purchased with his own blood to none but those who are qualified by the Holy Ghost. It may be well for those of us who hold the office of Elders in the church of the living God to examine this apostolic exhortation, and to examine ourselves and our ministry, and to prayerfully inquire whether we are abiding steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship; for as far as we depart

from their doctrine and admonitions, so far do we depart from their fellowship.

The first of all we are charged to take heed unto ourselves. This charge was also given to Timothy, 1 Epistle iv. 16: "Take heed unto thyself," and to the doctrine, and to continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. No man is to rush heedlessly and uncalled into the work of the ministry. **"And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."** – Heb. 5:4. Is it not to be feared that many even of God's children have heedlessly assumed the work unto whom God has given no ministerial or pastoral gift, and involved themselves and their brethren in much trouble and perplexity? But those have the most unquestionable evidence that they are called to the work, are to take heed that they obey the high and holy calling, and give themselves wholly to the work, and suffer nothing of worldly profit, pleasure or opposition to keep them from the faithful discharge of the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.

Again, they should take heed that their life and conversation before the world and before the church be such as becometh the gospel of the grace of God. "For a bishop (Elder or pastor) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to

convince the gainsayers." -Titus 1:7-9. "A bishop then MUST be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, APT TO TEACH." "Not a novice, (or one who has come newly into the faith, see margin,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, HE MUST HAVE a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." -1 Tim. 3:2-7. No minister of Christ has a right to be heedless or indifferent in regard to these indispensable qualifications, or careless as to whether his calling, gifts, and deportment are in conformity with these rules.

By a heedless disregard of this solemn charge, a minister may so far forget himself as to attempt to feed the swine, the children of this world, or to bestow his ministerial labors in chaplaincies for armies, navies, legislative assemblies, or to regulate the politics and secular affairs of the world. A due attention to the divine rule will lead the ministers of Christ to "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and in that kingdom they will find the flock of their special and exclusive charge. Not only are the Lord's bishops to take heed unto themselves, but they are commanded also to take heed to all the flock. If the Holy Ghost has made us overseers of the flock or church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, how great is the responsibility which rests on us? Can we, like Paul, take the people of our charge to record or witness that we are pure of the blood of all men, and that we have not shunned to

declare all the counsel of God? Paul did not hold himself responsible for the blood of any but those of the church of God, and in the application of the figure, which he borrowed from the ceremonial dispensation, in which the watchmen whom God commanded to give due warning to the Israelites when their enemies were approaching, or to faithfully warn them when God had said they should die, &c; if they neglected to warn them, and through their neglect an Israelite perished, their blood was required at the watchmen's hands, or they were held responsible to God for the consequence of their heedless neglect. Paul had faithfully warned the brethren, publicly and from house to house, and had kept back nothing that was profitable for them; therefore he was free from any responsibility arising from their failure to be profited by his labors. He was pure from the blood of all men.

Having therefore the apostolic example as well as precept, how important it is that the ministers of Christ should in like manner "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The manner in which the ministers of Christ should take heed, is shown by the manner in which Paul had acquitted himself in his work. From the first day he came into Asia, or among these Gentile saints, his manner of life at all seasons and on all occasions had been an open epistle of instruction for all the saints to feed and feast upon. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears. Not in heedless and vain jesting and trifling levity, as some of us in the present day are too much

addicted to; but under all his many temptations, and the lying in wait of the Jews, watching to find occasions to accuse and harrass him, he was neither allured by flattery nor intimidated by fear of persecution and his indefatigable labors were unremitting in looking up and feeding the church of God, teaching them publicly and from house to house. And as a pastor after God's own heart, he fed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. - Jer. 3:15. Testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Feeding all who were born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, on the sincere milk of the word.

In feeding the Lord's flock, constant care and unremitting heed should be taken that we feed them only such food as the great Shepherd and Bishop has provided. When they ask for bread we are not to give them a stone, or if they ask for an egg, to give them a scorpion. Timothy, as we have shown, was admonished not only to take heed unto himself, but also to the doctrine. It will not answer to heedlessly mix up our own vain speculations with the doctrine of Christ. Great care should be taken that we know nothing among the saints save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is on his flesh they shall feed, and his blood in the New Testament they must drink; and they must live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The old man, or carnal nature of christians, may be fed on doctrines of men, and even on doctrines of devils. Their depraved nature will receive it greedily, and it will inflate and puff them

up with pride and vain glory. Their carnal passions may be excited by what is called emotional or sensational preaching, but such food is unwholesome and poisonous to the flock of God, and woe to heedless pastors who teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Savior charged his apostles to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; no more, no less. His laws and ordinances are perfect and complete; they need no amendment, modification or improvement. Take heed unto the doctrine, and remember that Christ has said through the mouth of the apostle, **“But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”** - Gal 1:8-9.

The great object of the gospel ministry is to feed the church of God; for this purpose all the gifts requisite are supplied to those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ. “Wherefore he saith, When 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,” (and what were they given for?) “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the

measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” - Eph. 4:8, 11-13. This scripture defines the object and design of all the gifts which Christ received for and gave to the church when he ascended up on high and sat down upon his Mediatorial throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high. These gifts were none of them designed for nor given to the world, but exclusively to the church, which is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The Elders, in taking heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers should not heedlessly forget that their holy vocation is for the edifying of the body of Christ, to feed the church of God. The Holy Ghost has not made them overseers of the world, nor called them to feed the world. They are not qualified to give life to the dead, but to feed the living. The quickening power belongs to God, it has never been given to men; but when God by his Spirit has given life to the subjects of his saving power and grace, then let the ministers of Christ take heed that none of them be overlooked or neglected. “Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs,” is the command of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Israel.

The solemn charge to take heed, implies a constant watchfulness that no part of the flock suffer through our neglect to feed them with the wholesome food of the gospel, rightly dividing the word, and ministering to each his portion in due season. Great care should be observed lest we as Elders, evangelists, pastors or teachers should heedlessly feed the flock on any other food than the provisions which God has abun-

dantly blessed, and with which he will fill his poor.

The necessity of a vigilant watchfulness is suggested by the warning given to the Elders, of grievous wolves and sad apostacies that should distress the flock or church in the last days, when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The faithful watchman may not sleep at his post. As Paul said to Timothy, so he says also to each of the ministers of the word, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:6)

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1877)

ST. JOHN 1:9-13.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Durham Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday afternoon, November 19, 2011 at 2:00 pm at Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham North Carolina for the purpose of examination of this gift Brother Larry Bird. and if found qualified, be ordained to full work and service as Deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elders Raymond Goad, Haywood Wray, Mark Terry, Thomas Solomon, Cleo Robertson, Jimmy Gray. All deacons present were asked to sit together.

The meeting was opened with song and prayer by Elder Mark Terry. Elder Cleo Robertson was elected as moderator and Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as clerk. Deacon C. T. Hall acting as spokesman for the Church, delivered Brother Byrd to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon were read as set forth in scriptures 1st Timothy, 3rd chapter by Elder Jimmy Gray. All present Elders were invited to participate. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and the Ordination Prayer was offered by Elder Raymond Goad. The charge was delivered to Brother Byrd by Elder Haywood Wray. He then was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Byrd along with a Certification of Ordination.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by: Elder Thomas Solomon

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

Elders Present

Raymond Goad
Haywood Wray
Mark Terry
Cleo Robertson
Jim Gray
Thomas Solomon

Deacons Present

R. Allen Carroll
J. Carroll Williams
Wayne Edwards
Randolph N. Wells
Herbert Edwards
C. T. Hall, Jr.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Rd. in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in January 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk
Staunton River Primitive
Baptist Association

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 01/12

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, on the fifth Sunday in January 29, 2012. Coming into Greenville on US 264, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left onto Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

PSALM 95: 1-5.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host West Country Line Union meeting on Sunday January 29, 2012.

Singing will start at 10:00 and preaching service will start at 10:30.

The church is on highway 700 between Eden, N.C. and Danville, VA.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

R. Allen Carroll
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2011

Viola Davis, VA	5.00
Elder Alan Terry, VA.....	5.00
James Lambert, GA	5.00
Ardith Harris, FL.....	50.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA.....	5.00
Jennye Osborne, MD	10.00
Emmie Grayson, AL	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	15.00
Garland Ray Stanley, NC	25.00
Carlton Sumner, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
G.W. Weatherford, VA	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 180

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NO. 2

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THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

God is the Potter and we are the clay
And it's not up to us ever to say
Why did He ever make me this way
For we cannot change it, come what
may.

God will have mercy on whom He will
And who with His love, will He reveal
And whom with His rod will He deal
And who with His secrets will He seal

God has chosen His elected child
But not one thing can the child decide
Whom He gives ears and eyes of sight
Called out of darkness into the light

God will have mercy on whom He will
Whoever His seed are to Him will reveal
His spirit and love and cause them to
call
On His Name for mercy guidance and
all

God is the Potter, we are the clay
And none can ask Him why he made
me this way
For it all was His purpose and will to do
Whatever He pleases, for me and for
you.

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

For an editorial we thought it appropriate and hopefully edifying to publish the introduction or preface to the books of articles by Elder Gilbert Beebe. This introduction gives a concise history of events and actions taking place in the world at that time that lead to the establishing of the Signs of the Times, all according to the divine will and purpose of Almighty God. The Lord raised up a servant for such a time as that. This article will give you some insight into why the Signs was begun and the trials and persecutions encountered by the editor. As the Apostle Paul wrote, **"We know that all things**

work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The Lord will have all praise. :

Elder Cleo Robertson

From the early settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great opposition by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stocks, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. In those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of sentiment and uniformity of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the whole breadth of our country.

It is true that in those trying times,

the general principles of the doctrine of the gospel were not so clearly and fully preached and understood as at earlier and later periods in the history of Apostolic Baptists. As the bible doctrine and order of baptism held by them was the most objectionable to their adversaries, they were constantly called to defend the truth in relation to that ordinance against the assaults of their opponents. And when the violence of persecution began to abate, and by the interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots of the Revolution, the powers of the Puritans in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent farther corporal severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governments, the Puritans of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect their parish taxes from all within their parish limits. Afterwards dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of the parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritans was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously-united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcopalian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced, with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dunghill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation.

At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the "Signs of the Times," there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection with, or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries, on a very small scale, then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few of our illiterate young preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N.Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath-schools and Sabbath-school unions, in which various anti-christian denominations were recognized as hand and glove with Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the

church, as they were modestly called. Then followed Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperance Societies, Mite Societies, Magdaline Societies, Dorcas Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society, which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their *nurseries* and other institutions. Their machinery was now so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could be run through again, and re-converted and re-constructed as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the "Signs of the Times" was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated the institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as we were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz :

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, Im-

mutability, 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.”-1 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., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of

Institutions.

The violent opposition manifested by the New Order of Baptists, when our Prospectus appeared, was overruled to our advantage. Immediately on its appearing the batteries of our opponents were opened against us, through both the pulpit and the press. The papers of the New School sounded the alarm and warned the people to beware of the forthcoming paper; and in the Minutes of many Associations the churches were warned to withhold their support and countenance from us. In the ardor of their zeal, portions of our Prospectus were copied to show that we were hostile to their newly-invented institutions; and by this means, instead of retarding, as they designed, their efforts were of great service in letting those who were imprisoned among them know that such a paper was about to be published. The response to our Prospectus from all directions was liberal, so that we were able to proceed with our work. Thirty-five years have since elapsed, and thirty-five volumes of our paper have been published, and still the publication is sustained, and we are now enabled to greatly enlarge and improve it.

The publisher of the “Signs of the Times” has been, from time to time, charged with vacillation, changing his views, or departing from the principles formerly held. Let the readers compare the articles here re-published with the platform laid in the Prospectus, and judge for themselves, if there has been any departure from the principles *first* announced.

One important object in the compi-

lation of this book is to present, in as condensed a form as may be, the most important Editorial articles which have been published from the commencement, in 1832, whereby to show what has been sustained by the entire Old School or Primitive order of Baptists for so many years, and incidentally to embody such historical reminiscences as may be useful, not only to the present, but to succeeding generations. Many of the articles which we shall reproduce will necessarily allude to what the Old School Baptists have held, the manner in which they have asserted and defended their faith, and what they have encountered of reproach and persecution, and the divine support by which they have been sustained.

It is not claimed that all the supporters of the "Signs of the Times" are pledged to endorse all the articles which have been published, and are herein republished, for such is not the fact. Some of the articles may set forth the peculiar views of but a minority of the Baptists of our faith and order, and for whatever of error any of them contain, only the Editor is responsible. But inasmuch as the "Signs of the Times" was the first periodical paper devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, and the only one of some twenty periodicals which have subsequently been started that has been sustained by the Baptists of our order, it must be inferred that it has faithfully reflected the general sentiments of that people, to the support of whose cause it has been humbly devoted.

We do not propose a reproduction of all that has appeared under the Edi-

torial head of the "Signs of the Times," for there are many items of a local interest, bearing on what has long ceased to be of general interest. And some articles on the same subjects, which would appear tantologous and uncalled for. Still it is our intention, so far as possible, to condense, in such cases, the substance of the several articles on the same subject, so as to preserve all that is deemed of sufficient importance to be preserved.

Elder Gilbert Beebe.

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for two years – I am sending a check for \$50.00; use the rest as you see fit in memory of my companion for 53 plus years, Dora Ellen Vick.

Thank you and all staff, who gets the Signs published.

Love In Jesus,
Gordon G. Vick

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 02/12
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Nov. 30, 2011

Dec. 8, 2012

Please use this check to catch up back dues and to pay forward. This is for Thomas Nichols. He is in Richfield Assisted Living. (The Oaks) in Salem. A visit from his brothers and sisters in Christ would be a Blessing.

Thank you
Audrey Cahill, Cousin

Dear Editors,

Thanks for sending "The Signs" to me each month. I look forward to each issue. May the Lord continue to bless each of you to write those things which exalt Christ.

In Hope of eternal life,
Ralph Dale
Concord, N. C.

12-12-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

I am renewing my subscription for only one year this time.
For if I live I will be 98 Feb. 4th.
I enjoy reading the Signs over and over again. Use the rest as you see fit.

In bonds of love,
Sarah Barker

Elder Cleo Robertson
Signs of the Times
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, N.C. 27513

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is the obituary of Deacon Dean G. Connell of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas for publication in the Signs.

In brotherly love,
Deacon Frank Richards, Clerk
817-239-2961

Sirs,

I finally sit down to order a subscription. As a child I remember my mother reading the Signs of the Times. I hope and pray I get a small portion of understanding and comfort as she did while reading.

Enclosed is a check for \$20.00 for year 2012.

With a hope in Christ,
Jane Myrick

PSALM 45:1.

My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

Brother Tony Horton
 Circulation Manager and Treasurer
 Signs of the Times

11/19/2011

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time for me to renew my subscription for the Signs for another year. I am enclosing a check for \$30.00-\$15.00 for the subscription and \$15.00 for a contribution.

I have been receiving the Signs now for several years and always enjoy reading the entire contents. It is rewarding to be able to discuss what we have read with brothers, sisters, and friends, not only of the Old Baptist Faith, but of the many individuals of other faiths and denominations that read the Signs and tell us how much they also enjoyed it. May God continue to cause it to be published.

I believe that the Signs stands for the Truth and that The Truth will stand when all else fails.

A brother in hope,
 George W. Hyslip

PSALM 133: 1-2.

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 the skirts of his garments.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTIONS

When gazing on the cloud
 That gathers o'er my head,
 Dark thoughts within me crowd,
 And fill my soul with dread.
 My heart anticipates the worst,
 Some fearful storm about to burst.

But O! How good and kind,
 How faithful and how true
 Is he who leads the blind
 In paths they never knew;
 He goes before, and makes a way,
 Turns grief to joy and night to day.

When troubles and afflictions come upon us as stormy clouds, and we are enveloped in the darkness, there are times when our spirits are overwhelmed within us, and in the gloom of such dispensations we become fretful, rebellions (unless exceeding riches of grace are ministered to us by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter) and this but deepens our distress.

It is no easy matter when we are thus weighed down to see that all things work together for good; to think that in the faithfulness of our God that such afflictions are upon us. We are far from acquiescence, and it is not in our power to quell the disquietudes of our soul, and say, "**It is good for me that I have been afflicted**" (Psalm 119:71). But O! if the "**Sun of Righteousness**" (Mal. 4:2), will only break through, and

smile upon me. If our Savior will but shine upon the dark cloud of our distresses; then what fair colors, what inspiring gladness, discoveries of the attributes of Christ our Sun of Righteousness are seen in the clouds! The bow of the new and everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. O what mercies, what compassion, what love, what long-suffering, what faithfulness of our God we are made to trace in our afflictions.

Often the clouds of deepest woe,
So sweet a message bear,
Dark though they seem 'twere hard
to find
A frown of anger there.

“The bow shall be in the cloud” (Gen. 9:16). Our dear Savior has told us, **“In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”** (John 16:33).

And how blessed and assuring are the following: **“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee”** (Isaiah 43:1-2). Our afflictions are sanctified unto us in God's covenant love, and in them we are brought to seek His face for that sustaining grace to endure our trials and that we may glorify His name in the midst of the fires; and we cry also unto Him that He will bring us through our troubles that we may praise His name.

“In their affliction they will seek me early” (Hosea 5: 15). And, saith the Lord, **“I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord”** (Zeph. 3:12). And

“Should thou a moment's absence
mourn,
Should some short darkness inter-
vene,
He'll give the power, 'till light return,
To trust Him with the cloud be-
tween.”

Frederick W. Keene, Raleigh, NC
The Lone Pilgrim, pages 85-87.

**“ESTABLISHED IN THE TOP
OF THE MOUNTAINS”**
Denton, Kentucky

“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war anymore.” (Isaiah 2:1-4)

I venture into this subject with much fear and feeling of weakness, and except the Lord gives me strength and understanding, I cannot write anything that would be of interest to the household of faith: it would be only a mass of confusion and ignorance. We think the prophet here was, as he was inspired of God, speaking of the ending of the Mosaical law dispensation, and the coming of Christ and the setting up of the Gospel dispensation — the church here in the world.

The prophet says, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it.” The Mosaic law was given only to national Israel: no other people were under that law. National Israel was figurative of spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation. Israel under the law was continually at war with other nations of the world, and among themselves, with sword and spears: with carnal or material weapons. But Paul says, under the gospel dispensation, **“For though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.)” (2 Cor. 10:3-4)**

Let’s keep in mind what the prophet says: that it shall come to pass in the last days, “That the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto

it.” “The last days,” as I think, was the last days of the law dispensation, and this house shall be established in the top of the mountains: above the low valleys of the earth; above all institutions of men, and is the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. Out of her shall go forth the law, and the word of God from heaven. No authority on earth, nor institution of men, has any right to formulate any law or make rules for her. Her laws and regulations go forth out of her, and her preached word does not come from seminaries nor theological schools of training; nor by man’s wisdom. But, as Paul says, **“For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 1:12)**

“And all nations shall flow unto it.” This house which shall be exalted above the hills: the church, this spiritual house or spiritual Israel, is composed of every kindred, tongue and people of the earth. “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountains of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”; because Christ Jesus hath come in the last days of the law, and broken down the middle wall partition between the Jew and the Gentile, and made both one in a spiritual house. Paul says, **“Wherefore remember that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens**

from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:11-22)

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." A plowshare is the steel blade of the plow which breaks the soil

and prepares the seed bed; and also cultivates the young plants. It is used by the husbandman for preparing and cultivating the growing vegetation: as God breaks up the stony heart, and prepares it for receiving of the seed as it comes down from heaven by the word of God. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:10-11)

Again he says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. *He is the Rock*, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he." (Deuteronomy 32:2-4)

"And their spears into pruning hooks." A pruning hook is used in pruning out the dead and unfruitful branches. John says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:1-2) So God uses the pruning hook himself: he doesn't leave that to man. If it were left to fallible man, he might

prune out some of the fruitful branches.

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." So spiritual Israel has never warred with the sword and spear since the ending of the Mosaical law. All the law that they are under is the law which is written in their hearts and minds. Christ came in the end of the law — in the last days of it; in fact, his coming was the end of the law to his elect people. He came to establish a new covenant, a new and living way established on better promises; which covenant was spoken of by Jeremiah. He says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, (after those days of the law) I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts (in the old covenant that law was written outwardly on tables of stone, but in this new covenant, it is written in their very lives). And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, Saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sin no more. (Please notice the words here spoken

by God, and compare them with the teaching of the religion that is being taught over the whole world by men of carnal minds: they teach in their sunday schools (in their spiritual ignorance) children to know God, as though God was not able to make himself known to whomsoever He will, without any of man's work or help in any way. They seem to have much pity of what they call heathen nations: so afraid that they will not find out there is a God, and consequently will all go to hell, if they do not send preachers to tell them there is a God, and how to prepare themselves to meet him. They do not believe what God says about it, but say we must teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother to know God. **"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord."** (Jeremiah 31:31-37)

Maybe I have written too much, but have written as I have felt and thought to relieve my mind.

Elder H. L. Rogers

CHURCH ORDER

In setting forth some thoughts on this very important matter, we do so with no thought to dictate to our brethren, but with the thought in mind to present such things as we understand them to be the order of the Lord's house. I fully realize that anything we might say on the subject must be in accordance with his word, and the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ if it is to be of profit to anyone. This is a very important subject, and the writer feels very sensibly his own dependence upon an unerring guidance in the matter, hoping that God will bless what is said to his glory, and a better understanding among our people.

Each Church a Sovereign Body

The meaning of the word church as we understand it is, "An assembly called out." It has generally been recognized by our people that each church is independent in matters of discipline, and I will here quote the 12th. article in the Articles of Faith of both the Upper Country Line, and the Lower Country Line Associations, and in many others, in substance. "We believe that every church is independent in matters of discipline, and that associations, councils and conferences of ministers or churches, are not to impose on the church the keeping, holding or maintaining of any principle or practice contrary to the churches judgment."

In the commands given unto the churches by the Apostle Paul, these commands were to the churches. Sometime the instruction was to a certain church, at other times it was in a gen-

eral way, but always to the church. The instruction to one church as to their dealing with transgressions would apply in principle to all. **1 Cor. 4:17, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church."**

In the fifth and sixth chapters of First Corinthians, (Please read them) we notice that there were various offenses the Apostle referred to, and gave express command to the church as to how to deal with them. One of them was fornication, and the church was commanded to, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. To deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." We would apply this in the same way as, withdraw from everyone that walketh disorderly.

The Apostle further writes upon the matter in the 5th Ch. 11th V. "**But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.**"

It appears that the church is forbidden to eat, (Commune) with such an one until such time that the flesh is destroyed. They are to be delivered unto satan for the destruction of the flesh; until such time repentance has been manifested by turning from whatever sin he has been committing. This destruction of the flesh

is to our mind the evidence in the life of one dealt with that the offense that led to their separation from the communion has been subdued by God's abounding grace, to their good.

The minister, as an overseer of the flock, is to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering, and doctrine. He is to cry aloud when he sees something in the church that is dishonoring to the cause. If he fails to do so then he himself becomes a partaker of the sin. He is hiding that which should be exposed. Churches look to their undershepherds for advice, guidance etc. and if he tolerates the things that are expressly forbidden in the word, and fails to bring the matter before the brethren there is a loss of confidence to a certain extent in his guidance.

The question is often asked, What shall we do when a church divides over a matter, and cannot see eye to eye. In some church rules there is one that reads about like this. "If a minority be grieved at the action of the majority, they shall immediately make it known, and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, help shall be called in from sister churches." This is the substance of this rule, and is in many other church rules. This is a good rule, and if observed, we believe would help often in seeking a common understanding of problems. The majority should always be willing to seek counsel with their brethren when these conditions arise, and the minority be willing to also counsel with sister churches about such matters.

In divisions in a church or association it is often the case that both sides

are more or less to blame. Rushing in by outsiders, and taking sides often lead to more confusion, and division. These matters should be confined to their immediate locality, and especially where no point of doctrine is involved. **"He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."** Prov. 26:17.

In briefly reviewing the matter there are a few things I believe we would do well to keep in mind. 1st. we are to recognize the sovereignty of each church, and its independence in matters of discipline, and when a man does not hear the church, let him be as an heathen and a publican.

2nd. when a man's conduct is such that it is offensive to other churches, and the church fails to carry out the plain teachings of God's word in the matter, that church should be left to its own affairs and not communed with by other churches until such time that the plain command of God's word is complied with. Yet this church must be left to its own affairs, hoping God will show them the error of their way.

3rd. All confusion should be left where it starts, and not be meddled with by outsiders, nor sides taken quickly with either side in a division.

4th. Where division exists both sides will be willing to labor for reconciliation.

Now let us consider John's message to the seven churches in Asia, while he was in the Isle called Patmos. Though there was much fault found with them, yet the word of God to them was

to REPENT. Let us examine the salutation of John to them. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from him that is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before his throne.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

And hath made us Kings and priests unto God and his father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

I John who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the midst of the Isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."

The language speaks for itself. Though there was conditions in the several churches that they were commanded to repent of, or turn from, yet he desire that they receive grace and peace from Jesus Christ, and they are warned that unless they repent the candlestick will be removed out of it's place.

Instead of declaring non fellowship for these churches, John is admonishing them through the spirit to repent. They are STILL THE CHURCHES of Jesus,

and the spirit is speaking to them through the Apostle John.

Finally, brethren may we be given patience to wait upon the Lord: to be patient in tribulations; to be kind to one another, always remembering that as poor sinners in the flesh we need the tender watch care on each other for one another's good, and his glory.

Elder David V. Spangler

FALLING DOCTRINE

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. *He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. (Deut. 32: 1, 4)*

This doctrine belongs exclusively to our heavenly Father. Our precious saviour disclaimed it as being His and taught us so by His own statements. Far as Bible testimony goes, there is no source of saving doctrine save that which comes from God to poor sinful fallen men and women save this source. It is His; and He is the only source of it, and He initiated the only method of it being brought to us. I do not have any compromise to make about this doctrine getting to us. Furthermore, it not only is His doctrine, but he alone drops

it down to poor sinners. It is dropped on purpose to us. He alone can drop that which is His, and if I had the only doctrine, that is, the only saving doctrine that there is, I certainly think that I would turn it loose to fall on only those that I purposed to drop it on. You would do that wouldn't you?

There is not a source of rain save that which belongs to God. If anyone knows of another source of it I hereby yield to the one that has rain cached up somewhere, and that has a method of getting it to where it is needed by the owner. Unless I hear of such a source, I will know that I am on the right text. However, I am not expecting this fact. God is the only source of this doctrine, and He has the only absolute method of getting this doctrine to the desired point in the world, to silence the objectors to His sovereignty.

Just a few years ago the powers that be (I beg your pardon, they just thought that they were that powerful) thought that they could end droughts. They carried the rain making tools and ingredients unto the vast universe above us and found some dry clouds and they sprayed those clouds and made it rain. But complications arose. They were threatened with lawsuits from neighboring communities because that they had been deprived of rain that they should have gotten. Other complications arose, for tampering with God's sole prerogative of looking after the weather.

If you are a God fearing reader, I kindly ask you to consider that God's doctrine drops as the rain. This is also inclusive of the snow and sleet and

hail— all of it comes from the same source. It only comes as God drops it, and sometimes it is in sweeping power that all men working together cannot form a successful barrier against it. There is not a sane person on the globe that does not know this. Another thing that they do not know, and that is that it comes so small and so smooth and so easy that we are not aware of it. This dropping of this moisture is so beyond the power and wisdom of men that it comes as a vapour and is distilled as dew while men of great power are sleeping and unaware of the falling from above.

How helpless is this great land of ours about rain? We are as helpless as new born babes for this falling rain. Every single man and woman in the United States, yea, for that matter in the world, are dependent for the dropping down of rain. Now the comparison brings us, each of us, face to face with the absolute and unconditional fact that all of us are dependent upon God for the doctrine of God to fall on us. If for just one year this necessary rain did not drop, what would be your picture of this world in which we live? It has done quite a bit of dropping down rain in the last twelve months, and yet look at the starvation that is rampant over the world. Just suppose that it not rain in the next twelve months? What would any of us do in that twelve months?

Likewise suppose that the doctrine of God does not drop down again in the next twelve months? He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. What would be

the consequences if the doctrine of God our Saviour did not drop any more doctrine of God? This is not any laughing matter. God would be just if He withheld rain from every human being. You ask me, why? And I am telling you why! Simply because that we are all guilty before God. However, God loves His children and His doctrine of saving grace falls on those that belong to Him. He has made them an unconditional promise that He would come and that He would save them that belongs to Him. God never ceases to love His chosen people. In fact, God does not change His mind about coming and saving those that the Father gave Him. That promise was made by an unchanging God, therefore, that promise was made by the God that never changes. The doctrine of God is established upon the unchanging love of God. The doctrine of God's unchanging love is based on His continued faithfulness.

The salvation of God is as sure as the rain. Neither the rain nor the snow, in themselves considered, bring salvation, but God's way of handling them is figurative of salvation. As the rain comes down, even so does salvation come down from God. As there is not any salvation save in rain coming down, even so there is not any salvation unless it likewise comes from God. We certainly realize that there is salvation in what comes from God. Let us take a tour through the work shop of God. My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. Let us pause here. Thus we have found out one, if not the greatest things about

we frail creatures and our Creator. He does not think as we frail mortals think, and He does not do as we frail mortals do. He has His ways, and He does his ways. What would it be if we had our way? Let us ask ourselves once again that astounding question, What would it be if we had our way? In the sense in which it was created for, it is a good, yea, perfect world. Had we, as the human race, had our way, who knows the destiny of it now? Now let us continue, to wit, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us pause again. Not only are His ways and thoughts above ours, but they have been that way all of the time. His first and ultimate ways and thoughts have been above ours. As our creator, as the Architect of the universe, He is, and has been, the Potter and Creator, the builder and upholder and disposer of all things. This creature, man, has been a created destroyer (Isa. 54:16), but God's way has been higher and thus a Builder (Heb. 11:10).

This Builder is God. Man is a destroyer. Every blade of grass, every drop of rain that falls upon the earth, every smile of a little child together with its hand clasped in the hand of its mother, together with her love for it, every blooming flower, every sunbeam that has lighted up our pathway, every star that has shined out of the universe above us, together with every eye blinking, every breath you have had, combined with every beat of your heart has been a gift from God.

God's ways are not our ways. God's ways are higher than our ways. They have not recently got that way. All things were made that way and they have remained that way. The nations bluster and destroy and persecute the poor of the earth, but all of them reckoned together have a mighty poor standing with God (Isa. 40:15).

God is rated in His Book as being love. This love, like the source of it, did not have a beginning. Immediately a clamor arises among men and nations, both of them, like all things else, being creatures of God, He being above them, higher than all of them, did not have their origin in themselves; their being subject to His, the divine Creator of all, chose His subjects, His children in One like unto Himself, has fixed or arranged or appointed or predestinated their station here and hereafter, arranged all things and all subjects of this grace, together with those who are not subjects of that grace, should be ruled by Him.

Those subjects of His in nature have never gained the mind of Him. He appointed the laws of nature in such a sublime way that everything that His wisdom dictated as being necessary for the benefit, for the lifting of His people on high was provided in His declaring of the end from the beginning. Everything for the preservation of His people both in a natural as well as a spiritual way was set in motion. This setting in motion these many wonders of nature embraced the falling of the rain as He dropped it from His hand.

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and

returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where to I sent it.” (Isa. 55:10-11).

Now I have dealt extensively with the fact that the weather comes from God. In every sense in which earthly creatures know to summarize the weather, it is all out of men's hands. Let me say to one and all what Napoleon said to a group of his generals. While on one of his noted campaigns, a group of his generals were in an argument about the question as to the extent of God's creation. He listened for a while in silence. In impatience he walked out of his office into the midst of his subordinate commanders, and sweeping his hand to the heavens he challenged them with, Gentlemen, who made all of this? He stalked back into the seclusion of his private quarters.

Dear brethren and sisters, who made this world and the fulness of it? Secondly, who did He make it for?

I have in my declining days dealt with the rain, and the wonderful way in which it fits into our lives. There isn't a human being on the face of the globe that acknowledges the Bible as the MAN of his counsel that can disannul the fact that God sends the rain when and where He pleases. Furthermore, that same sacred volume teaches us that the doctrine of God's saving grace is sent

from God out of heaven when and where He pleases and that the result is just as efficaciously distributed, spread out as the doctrine of God is dropped, God in His effective way of doing everything He pleases.

In the meantime, study God's holy distribution of the rain that it always gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and beseech the Lord in my behalf that He will give me an exercise of mind to explore the beauties of that grand and glorious doctrine.

Elder W. D. Griffin
September, 1985

“ For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.”- Romans viii. 5.

None but those who are partakers of a heavenly birth feel heavenly realities to be their choice element, holy things their sweetest meditation, and the solemn worship of God their supreme delight. Look at this mark as a touchstone of divine life; for to be spiritually-minded a man must be spiritual, and to be spiritual he must have received the Spirit and been made a partaker of that kingdom of God which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 17).

Have you never found in reading the Scriptures a sweet peace distil over your soul, as the glorious promises came forth one after another as the stars

in the evening sky, each one brighter and clearer, and you felt a blessed persuasion of your interest in them? When at the throne of grace, favoured with liberty of spirit and access to your heavenly Friend, have you never felt the peace of God to drop into your heart, and like oil upon the waves, to allay every rising of rebellion within? Have you never found, in conversing with the saints of God, a sweet flowing of heart to heart and soul to soul, and felt that such conversation left behind a blessed fragrance upon your spirit? Have you never in the house of prayer had your heart and affections drawn up to the things of God; and as you sat and heard Christ, his Person and work, his grace and glory set forth, faith was drawn out to believe, hope to cast forth its anchor, and love and affection to flow, so that you experienced a spirituality of mind, a heavenly calm, and a holy peace that touched every spring of your soul, and watered it as the river that went out of Eden to water the garden?

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 96:1-3.

O Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2011

Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Thomas Nichols, VA	5.00
Lena Gray, VA	5.00
Marjorie Cook, TN	25.00
L.C. Hornsby, GA	5.00
Glenia Shelton, VA	5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA	5.00
Ralph Dale, NC	25.00
Jane Myrick, FL	5.00
Sarah Barker, VA	20.00
Raymond Joyce Jr., VA	50.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Michael Williams, NC	15.00
Gordon Vick, NC (In memory of Dora Ellen Vick)	25.00

OBITUARIES

**RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
DEACON DEAN G. CONNELL**

Brother Dean G. Connell, Deacon of Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, was born July 29, 1930. He was our Church Clerk and treasurer since November 2, 1957. His earthly sojourn ended on August 30, 2011, after a lingering illness. He was 81 years old.

Brother Connell united with Saints

Rest Church on July 3, 1954, and was baptized the following August 1. He was ordained to the office of deacon on July 19, 1964. His membership was uninterrupted for over 57 years. His lifelong character in the church and in the world was above reproach.

In the secular realm he worked for Gillette, which later became Western States Transportation, until that company ceased operations. He finished his professional career with Roadway Transportation, Inc., working in these companies as an accountant and collection agent.

The Lord God gave Brother Connell a keen, analytical mind and an intensity of purpose in his soul and spirit to use his talents in the service of the church. As Church Clerk and treasurer, he kept the church's records exactly, in a manner worthy of any major corporation.

From 1998, when The Remnant Publications first came under the aegis of Saints Rest Church, Brother Dean kept the records of all the income, expenses, book inventories, and incidentals for this publication until his passing.

In doctrine and practice Brother Connell was unshakable and fearless. Whether in matters involving a local issue in a church conference or in issues that affected churches and associations far and abroad, all could count on him standing firm on biblical principles. He was willing, if necessary, to stand alone on that which was right.

He is survived by his loving and de-

voted wife of 56 years, Sister Ettie Connell; one sister, Eldarie Shelton; and others related by marriage.

Brother Dean was a dear brother in the church, and much more; he was a faithful friend, a loyal confidant, and a trusted advisor and counselor. He was an integral part of *The Remnant Publications*, and he and his work will be sorely missed. Only time will demonstrate how valuable he was to Saints Rest Church, *The Remnant*, to the brethren at home and abroad, and certainly to Sister Connell. We miss him but would not bring him back to the sufferings of this life, which for him have ended in eternal rest in his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May we always be given to say in times of our sorrow such as his parting has brought to us all, "The will of the Lord be done."

Written by one who yet deeply mourns our loss.

Resolved by Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in conference on September 5, 2011, that three copies of this Resolution of Respect be prepared, to be distributed as follows: One copy for Sister Connell, one copy to be sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication therein, and one copy to be retained in our church records.

C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Frank Richards, Church Clerk

OBITUARY FOR BROTHER AND DEACON CLAUDE ALTON FORNES

On June 10, 2011, our Heavenly Father called our precious brother, Claude Fornes, home to be with him. I know we only have a hope that we will be with the Lord when we leave this world, but Brother Claude was one of the most faithful, humble, giving and loving men I have ever known. He is surely in heaven with his Lord and Savior.

Brother Claude was born and raised in Pitt County. He was born July 15, 1918. His parents were the late Ella Melissa Page Fornes and Henry Leon Fornes. He was a graduate of Chicod High School. He farmed and was also a carpenter for most of his life. He even worked as a carpenter during World War II at Cherry Point.

He married the love of his life, Eula Lee Mills, on December 20, 1940. On December 20, 1941, their first anniversary, their first born child, Sandra Lee, was born. They had a son, Donald Claude, born on June 12, 1949 and another daughter, Claudia Arlene, born August 21, 1955.

Brother Claude was baptized in July of 1978 along with Sister Eula by Elder Joseph Sawyer. He was a member of Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church until its closing. He and Sister Eula then joined Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church where he served as a deacon for many years.

Brother Claude is survived by his wife of seventy years, Eula Mills Fornes; daughters, Sandra Fornes Dixon and Leaky Dixon of Greenville and Claudia

Fornes Wainwright and husband, Dale, of Grimesland; son, Donald Fornes and wife, Jeanie, of Greenville; sisters, Louse Forrest of Greenville and Elizabeth Stanley of Farmville; grandchildren, Leaky Dixon, Jr. and wife, Rita, Kenny Dixon and wife, Barbara, Chad Fornes and wife, Lisa, Jason Fornes and wife, April, and Adam Wainwright; great-grandchildren, Gabriel, Cameron, Lee, Victoria, Jordan, Austin, Carrie and Chandler.

Brother Claude was a devout believer in salvation by the grace of God. He was so very thankful for everything the Lord had provided and never questioned the Lord's work.

He always believed the Lord had a purpose and a reason for everything and we were not supposed to question his works but accept it as "God's will". When I asked his son, Donald, what he would like people to remember about his dad he said, "How humble he was."

His youngest daughter, Claudia, wrote something about her dad during the time of his passing that she said I could share with his brothers and sisters in Christ and is as follows:

"My daddy, Claude Fornes, a simple man, a quiet man, a hard-working man, a loving man, a kind man, a giving man. I have watched my dad and learned what really matters in life — family, a good name, love of the Lord, being fair and honest. I have watched him with my mother as she has slowly lost touch with reality and at times not known who he was and learned what commitment means and what unconditional love really is in the way he has

loved her, held her hand, been patient with her and prayed daily for her. Some may look at his life and think he never had much, but daddy was rich in all that really counts and he never wanted for anything. He was satisfied with his life, not because he was lazy or couldn't do more, but he truly was content and every need was always met. There was only one thing that he ever wanted that didn't come to pass -no amount of work or money could change it -and that was for mama to be healed physically and mentally and be restored to him and brought home. His faith never wavered and he always believed that God could do anything but realized that God's will may not be to restore her. He didn't question why God allowed this to happen but believed it fit God's plan and purpose for their lives and trusted the Lord through it all.

I have always been thankful to be his daughter and anyone that ever knew him respected him and knew him to be a man of honor. Many years ago when I was first starting out on my own, I went to a local fuel distributor and asked for an account in order to get heating fuel. The person I spoke with handed me paperwork and told me it would take a while to check my credit history, etc., but the owner overheard me say 'my daddy has done business with you for many years' and asked who my daddy was. I told him Claude Fomes and he told the person at the desk to set up the account and deliver the heating fuel — no questions asked, all because of my dad's good name.

I learned some valuable things

growing up from him, like when you are angry he said "if you don't say anything you don't have anything to take back", and if someone mentioned that he didn't talk much he always said "you learn a lot more by listening than you do talking". He taught us to tell the truth no matter what and when you made a mistake he didn't rub it in or say "I told you so", he loved and stood by you as you worked it out.

He had a sense of humor and loved a good joke and to laugh. He always saw the glass as half full, not half empty. Instead of worrying about the "what ifs" he always said "cross that bridge if and when you get to it, and who knows you might not need a bridge!"

He farmed for many years and enjoyed being outside and being his own boss. He was also a terrific carpenter and worked in just about every house in the neighborhood at one time or another, and if daddy built it or fixed it, it was meant to last a lifetime. When he was urged to charge more for his carpentry work he just answered "live and let live — I don't want to overcharge anyone — they have to live just like I do". Sandra, Donald and I as well as some of the grandchildren all have touches of daddy in our homes. He helped build, remodel or repair all of our homes. He built beautiful wooden rocking horses and toys for grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In daddy's later years we saw him at 81 years of age endure daily baths and redressing when he was burned and he never complained. He thanked us for everything we did and was grateful it

wasn't worse than it was. When he had emergency surgery for a tumor in his bladder he didn't question "why me Lord." He was just thankful they removed it and life went back to normal. When he had to have surgery for an aneurysm he went through it with flying colors and was thankful it was fixed. In each situation his only concern was not what was happening to him, but how it was affecting his family, especially mama. He said many times he wasn't worried about himself, just her. In all my years of growing up I can honestly say I don't remember daddy complaining about his life. He was never bitter or resentful.

Daddy wasn't perfect and that is not the picture I am attempting to paint of him, but he was a good man, a good husband, father, grandfather, brother and son. He was an honorable man who loved the Lord and his family. I believe with all my heart that on that morning he left this world he heard the Lord say those words we all long to hear one day "***Well done my good and faithful servant'.***"

Brother Claude was laid to rest on June 13, 2011 in Pinewood Memorial Park. Elder Joseph Sawyer officiated the ceremony. Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book and one sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Written by his niece, Janelle G. Vanhorne, who loved him dearly.

ELDER C. B. DAVIS, JR.**April 23, 1925 -November 18, 2011**

In an attempt to comply with the request of Sister Jeanette, the widow of Elder Davis, I begin this obituary trusting in God for support.

Elder Davis died November 18, 2011 after several years of illness. He was born April 23, 1925, making his appointed life span on earth 86 years. He leaves a family of loved ones, Sister Jeanette, a daughter Barbara Phipps, three sons, Charles, Jimmy and Larry, and three daughters-in-law (the sons' wives), two sisters, ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Brother C. B. had a son, Bobby, predecease him.

Elder Davis was a close personal friend of our family and he was respected and loved by all who knew him. He was blessed to serve the Lord and His people any time and place after he was ordained to preach the gospel in a willing and lovely way. The churches that he pastored were Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in North Carolina, and in Virginia Cain Creek, Malmaison, Old Mountain, Danville and Bracy, and also Little Creek Church in Delaware.

He joined Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Roxboro, NC on August 15, 1954 and was their pastor for 40 years. He was ordained a deacon of Shiloh first Sunday in May 1959 and ordained a minister at Shiloh in November of 1971.

Brother C. B. and Sister Jeanette were married for 66 years. She stayed at his side throughout his illness, even at the hospitals where he was a patient. She sat with him night and day. Such

love and devotion is rarely witnessed by anyone. She said that she was given the strength by her God.

We that are still in this life will miss Elder Davis but I rejoice that his trials and pain of his mortal life are over. For years Elder Jimmy Gray and Sister Emma Jean Gray were so close and loving to him and his family. Elder Gray said that once Elder Davis had been in a coma, and during this time he was reaching in the air. When he was again awake, he was asked what he was reaching for. He said that he was reaching for that hand that was reaching for him. Can you imagine what unspeakable joy it will be to see our God (I hope mine) and His Son face to face?

In this life, there will be pain, sickness, and sorrow with few if any days of real peace, but we are promised in that eternal city that God himself will wipe all tears from our eyes. I feel that the chosen of God have had a few times to look through that dim glass into eternity to see their home in heaven and that it will be joy unspeakable. We have seen and felt enough to long for the end in this vain world and to be carried to that perfect, eternal, glorious home to be with Jesus and have perfect peace forever.

His funeral service was conducted at Brooks and White Funeral Home on November 20 by Elders Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield and Jimmy Gray. The service was concluded at the gravesite by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Written in the love of God's faithful servant, Elder C. B. Davis
By Burnell Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

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

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

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

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

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

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Genesis 1: 1-5.



Elder J.B. Farmer

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When the deep things of the Holy Spirit are revealed unto His children, they fear and quake as did the children of God when the Lord spoke unto Moses in the mount. Our God is a consuming fire. We dare not presume upon Him to speak in His name, lest we be consumed in a moment. I am made to believe that this is why the Lord’s ministers diligently seek assurance that they have been called and sent. This is why they do not lightly approach the stand. But stand they must. We are taught to **“preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.”** We are afraid to go, but more afraid not to go. And we are taught to **“study (be diligent) to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”** And God has commanded by His apostle, **“if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles (utterances) of God.”** The Lord also commanded us to speak the truth in love. This we desire to do, the Lord willing.

The children of God were not made His children yesterday, and are not being made His children today and shall not be made so tomorrow, as many suppose. We are taught that the first thing God did for His people was to save them. It is written that the Lord Jesus Christ stood a **“Lamb slain from the**

foundation of the world.” It is also written that He “hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” Some say that all are all alike until the Spirit comes upon one and makes him a child of God. But God has never worked that way. According to the scriptures, God had a people in the beginning of creation, and loved them with an everlasting love.

God did many things from or before the foundation of the world. And His ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth. He is not limited as we are. And He declared the end from the beginning. He knew and loved His children before the foundation of the world. The prophet Jeremiah said, “Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” And he said, “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” We read about the manifold works of God, “the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

The children of God were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Their names were written in the Lamb’s book of life from the foundation of the world. They were given grace in Christ Jesus before the world

began. God, that cannot lie, promised them eternal life before the world began. They were “born again (generated from above), not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” They are His seed. They are His children. They were generated by Him and created in Him before the world was. They have ever been in Him and shall ever be in Him. They are special because they are His.

When God said let there be light, I am made to believe, the children of God were created in Christ Jesus. The children of God were called light by the Lord. He said, “Ye are the light of the world.” And He commanded, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The inspired apostle said, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”

When God said, “Let there be light,” I believe the light He spoke of could not be the Lord Jesus, because He is the great I Am. He was not created, but is the everlasting God who inhabits eternity. The light spoken into being on the first day cannot be the sun or moon or the stars, because they were not created until the fourth day. It has appeared to me that the light that God made in the beginning, before He made anything else on the earth, was the whole spiritual family that He loved with an everlasting love. That light appears to me to be those that God foreknew. I cannot help believing that He knew them before He made any other thing that would in-

habit the world. The same ones He foreknew are those He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. They are the same ones He called, justified and glorified. God did all this before the world was. How can this be? It is written, **“I know that, whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth *it* that *men* should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.”**

You were chosen in Him from the foundation of the world. And it is written, **“The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.”** As Eve was created in Adam and was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh naturally, so were the children of God created in Christ Jesus and are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones spiritually. The beloved, inspired apostle said, **“For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”**

God also made the darkness, because it is written, **“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.”** It is also written, **“The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.”**

God has a purpose for all His creation, even the wicked. We are taught that the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, was blessed to preach the gospel and to show what wicked hands did on the evil day when the Lord of glory was crucified. He said, “Him, being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

“God divided the darkness from the light.” Many cannot have it, but God has made a difference between the light and the darkness. Those under a strong delusion falsely say that God loves everyone, and that God would save all if only they would accept His offer of salvation. But the truth is just opposite to what carnal minds have thought and said. He loved the light, and the darkness He hated from the beginning. He said, **“Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.”** Of one lump, speaking of humanity, God made vessels unto honor that would fit in glory, and made vessels unto dishonor that would fit into destruction. There is no agreement between darkness and light. When the light shines, darkness flees away.

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.” The children of God are called Day, and the wicked are called Night. Those generated of God are called out of darkness into His marvelous light. They are made to be a separate people, a peculiar people unto God. They love the light. They are drawn unto it even as a moth is drawn to the flame. I can remember saying within myself many years ago,

being in darkness and in much distress, "Lord, please show me the truth, even if it is against me." I am made to believe that the little children of God cannot resist the light. They are drawn unto the light, and by it their works are revealed to be wrought in God.

But the wicked hate the light because it exposes sin. They will not come to the light because it makes manifest that their deeds are evil. And they love darkness rather than light. Jesus said, **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God."**

This explains so many things. It defeats the false doctrine of universal salvation. It makes plain why some love God and some do not. Aren't you glad that God is so merciful to make His purposes known to His little ones? Is it not a wonderful thing to be blessed to see what is actually causing men to do the things they do, and not to be at the mercy of all the vain philosophies of the world? Aren't you glad that it has pleased God to reveal the mysteries of His kingdom unto babes, and to hide them from the wise and prudent of this world? May our God be praised world without end for His

goodness to His children.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

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Shreveport, La 71105

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett So.
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Bro. Horton,

Enclosed please find check for renewing my subscription to the Signs of the Times for one year and use the remainder as is needed. I enjoy reading "The Signs".

I was sorry to read about Elder Davis and know he will be missed.

Billie G. Speir

John Collie
1620 Hampton Rd.
Reidsville, NC 27320-8282
January 17, 2012

Dear Bro. Horton,

My subscription to the "Signs of the Times" expires 02-12. Please renew my subscription for two years. Use the "extra" as needed.

In bonds of love and may the Lord bless all who help with this publication.

John Collie

Mr. Tony R. Horton,

My dear brother I have been ill for some time and am ordering Signs a little earlier than usual. May the dear Lord bless His churches and brethren.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

1-8-12

Dear Mr. Horton,

The Signs of the Times is a wonderful publication and a blessing to many especially the ones that are not physically able to attend church services. My Mother, Maedell Norman, was one that received a great benefit from reading the publication especially after she became disabled. My Mother felt a lot of comfort and enjoyment from reading the Signs. Thanks to all the staff for their work which was a blessing to my Mother.

Both of my parents passed away in 2011. Please cancel the subscription to my Father, W. H. Norman at 3221 Pleasant Ridge Rd., Summerfield, N.C. 27358.

I would like to subscribe to the Signs for two years. I have enclosed a check for my subscription fee and a contribution of \$25.00 to the Signs in memory of Maedell Norman.

Please send the new two year sub-

scription to my home address listed at the bottom of the letter.

Thank you,
Don Norman
6154 Lake Brandt Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27455

January 25, 2012

Dear Elder Robertson,

We recently received a sweet letter from Sister Frances Cooper accompanied with her spiritual observation about the leaves of Fall. Her blessed insight was most meaningful to Sherry and me as it spoke of our experience of grace. I asked her if she would consent to letting me send it in to the "Signs" and she did. We hope you find it as precious as we did. We are including it with this note. Sherry joins me in sending our love to you and yours.

J. B. Farmer

I was vacuuming the carpet, and through the window I saw the pretty leaves falling. I stopped my work and looked at the beauty that God had given us. I stood in awe of His love for us. I then wrote down some of the thoughts that were presented to my mind and heart.

I watched the leaves as they were falling. Some had more brilliant colors than others. Some were from the large majestic oaks, many were from the lower trees. I did an intensive look and

watched as they twirled to the ground. All did not fall at the same time. They were left until their time comes. Their life was over, their shade isn't needed anymore, their time to let go is growing nearer. It was sad to see their beauty fade. Please let us thank God for the beauty that we see and enjoy in His creation. The beauty is our Brethren, the beauty in His firm doctrine and the love and mercy that He has given us. Like the leaves we too must fall, but oh what beauty we behold when we are blessed to behold, all that He has done for us. After all the splendor and beauty the leaves all fall low to the ground. They are all now together. It is gravity in action, God's work and love controls gravity. He is in complete control of everything. No matter how tall we stand, how we display our beauty, we all end up low to the ground. Our lives are so much like the falling leaves. Thank God for His love and mercy and hope to thank Him for everything.

Frances

January 24, 2012

Dear Brother Tony,

I want to renew the Signs, for a year. I enjoy reading them, as I don't get to go to church anymore. They give me much comfort. Give my love to sister Carla and all. Please send the Signs in my name.

Thank you and all,
Estelle Thompson

ARTICLES

Job 14:14 *If a man die, shall he live again? all the days or my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

It is an undeniable fact established by the Holy Scriptures and by thousands of years of human history; it is appointed unto man once to die. The sentence was placed on the first man Adam and consequently, on all of his posterity. **"...for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return."** We fear many things in this life. Many times our fears are unfounded and the things we fear never come to pass. However, so great is the certainty of death that the Apostle Paul says in his letter to the Hebrews Chapter 2 vs. 15 that we are "all of our lifetime in bondage through fear of death." He further declares both the certainty and the cause of death in Romans Chapter 5 vs. 12: **"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..."** When the first man Adam sinned, his nature was corrupted. Such is the corruption of man's nature that God looked upon the wickedness of man and saw that **"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."** In scripture, the heart represents the very essence of man's being. It is the seat of his emotions and the source of all his desires. Jeremiah testifies to the corruption of man's heart

in Chapter 17 vs. 9; **"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** Even if he had a desire to, and he does not, man is totally helpless to recover himself from his fallen condition.

Not only was Adam's nature corrupted, but also his seed. Job, recognizes this and illustrates the hopelessness of man's condition when he asks in verse 4 of this same chapter, **"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"** The sad truth follows, **"not one."** God established the order of his creation in the very beginning when He declared that every living thing would bring forth after its own kind. Every oak tree that ever has or ever will grow from a seed was in the very first oak tree. Every child, excepting Jesus Christ, that has ever come forth from the womb existed in seed substance in the first man Adam and can have no higher state in creation than the creature he came forth from. God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. They could do nothing more than multiply themselves in whatever state they were found to be in. Adam became a sinner possessed of a sinful nature. In multiplying, he could do no more than replicate himself. Christ bears witness to this:

Mathew 7:17 & 18: **"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."**

Mathew 12:33: **"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."

Luke 6:43: **"For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."**

After recognizing both the certainty of death and the inability of man to recover himself from it, Job then asks this most vital of all questions: **"if a man die, shall he live again?"** For Job, the question is rhetorical. Like all of God's children imbued with the hope of resurrection to eternal life, Job wrestles with doubts and fears. He seems to voice his doubts, **"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep"**, then pleads with his maker: **"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!"** Then declares his hope. **"all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."** This blessed hope of a resurrection covers a multitude of sorrows and suffering for God's children. Though weary of the trials and tribulations of this world, trusting in the promise of resurrection to everlasting life, they are made to press on **"toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."** Indeed, without the promise of the resurrection, Christianity would be meaningless.

1st. Corinthians 15:14 **"And if**

Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

1st Corinthians 15:19, "**If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."**

How then is this resurrection possible and what is the nature of it? Job points to the answer to both these questions, when he says, "**...till my change come.**" An incredible change must be wrought. But how? "**Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?**" With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

We would remember that in the garden of God, standing in the midst of it, was the Tree of Life. After Adam sinned, God, speaking of Adam said; "**...lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.**" God then drove Adam from the garden and placed east of the garden "**...Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.**" This Tree of Life, provided from the very beginning, is the remedy for man's fallen condition. To partake of it is to escape the sentence of death and live forever. He has however, been driven from its presence and cannot freely partake of it. Notice however, that the Cherubims and flaming sword were not placed to keep man from the Tree of Life, but rather to keep the way of the Tree of Life. Herein is the promise of One that was yet to come proclaiming; "I am the way..." "**For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**" The all that died in Adam were all that were in him,

the entire race of man. The all that shall be made alive in Christ cannot be the same all that were in Adam, for He did not take on the seed of Adam, but rather, "He took on him the seed of Abraham." All that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, both Jew and Gentile, are called the seed of Abraham in that they are the children of Abraham by reason of faith; "...that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also"

Mathew Chapter 1

Vs. 18 "**Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.**"

Vs. 22 & 23 "**Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.**"

Many professors of religion, schooled in the institutions of men, would have us believe the virgin birth of Jesus was a miracle performed by God in order to impress men and make them more inclined to believe He was indeed the Son of God. Still others, more modern, have pointed out that the Greek word translated "virgin", could also be translated as simply a "young maiden". This, I suppose, to be more agreeable to the cynics who want religious theory to conform to the science of human un-

derstanding. Neither could be further from the truth. The woman, who was saved in child bearing, was promised a seed. God's words to the serpent in Genesis Chapt. 3 vs. 15: **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."** In the illustration of bruising the serpent's head, the seed of the woman was to have the victory over the serpent and his seed. The promised seed however could not be the seed of Adam as he was corrupted and all of his posterity in him. This promised seed, which was Jesus Christ, was an Holy Seed of Divine origination which was brought forth in the virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost.

Luke 1:30 thru 35: **"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."**

This virgin birth was absolutely es-

sential to the divine nature of the Christ child. For He must *be*, as Peter said; **"as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** indicating that He was without sin, neither His own sin nor the imputed sin of Adam.

This same Christ came preaching to Nicodemus: **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** He further characterized this new birth as a Spiritual birth saying, **"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."** Peter characterized the Elect children of God as, **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** This **"Word of God"**, according to the Apostle John, was from the beginning and was none other than Jesus Christ:

John 1:1 **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."**

John 1:14 **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."**

Many in this world have been deceived by the claims of deluded and spiritually depraved men insisting that they by the power and eloquence of their spoken words can persuade the children of men to "surrender all" and become Christians (if only they can raise enough money to spread the "word").

Inventing the unscriptural notion of "the utility of the Gospel", they claim the power of the preached word as having the ability to produce the effect of the new birth. The scriptures however bear out the truth; it is the Spirit of Christ in you that brings forth a "new creature".

Romans 8:9 **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."**

Read again the words of the angel to Mary, **"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."** All of God's children are brought forth in the same manner. They are born again of that same incorruptible seed and by the same Spirit of God that brought forth Jesus Christ the **"first born among many brethren."**

This new creature born of incorruptible seed, is not the fleshly body that came forth from the seed of Adam any more than it is the old carnal nature that came forth from Adam. It does, however, dwell in that body along with the nature of the "old man" where there is a continual warfare between the two. Speaking of this warfare, Paul cried: **"O wretched man that I am I who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** He then answers the question: Romans 8:11 **"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that**

dwelleth in you.

Romans 8:20 thru 23 **"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body."**

The crowning glory of the work of salvation in Jesus Christ is the resurrection of the body. But it does not come forth in the corruption of Adam any more that the new creature has the corrupted nature of Adam.

1st Corinthians 15:42 & 43 **"...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."**

1st Corinthians 15:49 **"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."**

1st Corinthians 15:52 thru 57 **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must**

put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks [be] to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 11:33 "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Humbly submitted in hope
of the resurrection,
Elder Kenneth R. Adams

ISAIAH 51:6-7.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvations shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart *is* my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

VOICES OF THE PAST

AM I A GOD-CALLED MINISTER?

You will NOTE from my autobiography that I came under the hands of two presbyteries—being ordained twice by man in each of two organizations to the work of the ministry. One of these acts must have been a mistake, maybe, both of them. The great question: am I a God-called gospel minister? Let us try these two calls by analysis and contrast to determine whether or not either be of God.

I was in my "teens" when hands were laid on me by the first presbytery. I was of the opinion that the plan of salvation was offered to everybody. Each and every one of the family who came to the "age of accountability" possessed equal and sufficient ability to "accept the plan" by complying with certain conditions and thereby earn Heaven as their home by their own merits. I consented to that ordination or "call" upon the following basis of reasoning:

1. I had accepted the "Plan."
2. I had complied with the requirements.
3. I was prepared to teach others these conditions.
4. I was able to speak fluently and interest the hearers.
5. My walk and conversation was more becoming than others.
6. This demanded their high esteem and great respect for me.
7. It gave me opportunity to build a

greater reputation by influencing others.

As the reader will note in my other writings relative to my experience, the time came when this was all proved to be vanity. I had greatly deceived myself and others. The thought that I had so vehemently spoken untruths completely banished from my mind any thought of ever again speaking publicly in the name of the One whom I had so greatly blasphemed!

The day I was received into the fellowship of Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas was one of the greatest surprises of my life because I realized myself to be the chief of sinners. I was worse than any other because I had used God's name in vain while wearing the cloak of religion from the pulpit! I had pretended to be something when I was worse than nothing! I thought this would forever bar me from such a sacred place as the pulpit. The high privilege of sitting silently with the brethren was too sacred for so great a sinner as I felt myself to be.

Soon after I was received into the fellowship of the Church, I was attacked with such despondent and depressed condition of mind that I felt to have but few more hours to live at most. This continued without a moment of relaxation for days and weeks that seemed to be ages. I was so burdened with an unbearable weight that I felt my life was being crushed. Many nights I went to my room convinced that I would never see the sun rise again. Such loneliness and heartache is indescribable. All my dreams were as vexing as my daily thoughts.

Groanings and yearnings for God's mercy availed nothing. I was convinced one night that all this was upon me because I had deceived the people of God. I must have fallen asleep, for either in a vision or dream I was standing before a congregation of people preaching upon the text: "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I received such joy in my confessions that I awoke rejoicing in mind for the first time in weeks and months. I immediately reached for the Bible and searched for some text of Scripture that would harmonize with that expression. I was somewhat surprised when I found it verbatim in Job 42:6. This was the first time the thought occurred to me concerning preaching with the Old Baptists. The thought caused me to shudder and I began to argue my disqualifications. "I am ignorant and my brethren are wise. Their walk is godly and my walk ungodly. They are content and I am disturbed." These arguments became so numerous that the idea of preaching was dispelled from my mind and I was again possessed with the same melancholy state of mind.

I recall one night that I tossed in my bed for hours and tried to pray that the burden be removed. When I became exhausted I was suddenly impressed with the thought, "There is something you MUST do." I asked, "What is it, Lord?" There was no reply, thus no relief. I began to reason. "I am unfit to be a member of the church. I have deceived these good people. I MUST frankly confess to them and ask them to exclude me from their fellowship." "Lord, if this be what I must do give me relief." Yet no

relief came! I asked the same question concerning many acts that came to mind. Still no relief. Frustrated to the extent of insanity, I felt I MUST die. The reality of dying in this condition so horrified me that I cried in exasperation, "Lord, anything!" The command came like a thunderbolt, "Preach Christ the Way." I answered aloud, "I will preach." Suddenly my body ceased its trembling. My aching heart soothed. My surging and throbbing breast was calmed. The terrible weight was lifted and the burden removed. I went to sleep praising God for the relief of a troubled mind that had tortured me for many days. I had the first hours of peaceful sleep that I had enjoyed in weeks.

I awoke the next morning as convinced that I would preach as any one has ever been impressed of something they must do. The relief did not last long. My disqualifications came to mind again. Finally I thought of one possible qualification: "You have experience in public speaking." This one sunk into oblivion when I considered:

1. Heretofore you have been sure of yourself concerning the subject matter and preparation; now, you are uncertain and unprepared.

2. Before, you felt to have more knowledge on the subject than your hearers; now you are more ignorant than any one of them.

3. Before, you felt they would listen because they esteemed you as their superior; now, you feel to be less than the least.

4. Before, you were without fear and boldly appeared before any congre-

gation; now, you are even fearful of yourself.

By this time I was strolling down a country road and must have gone into unconsciousness, because when I became conscious, words were flowing with ease from my mouth and a peculiarly constructed pulpit was before me. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes. I looked out before me for the congregation and could see nothing but a winding road in front and trees on both sides. I reasoned: "This pulpit is an imagination of the mind caused from the tears that beclouded my eyes. I dried my eyes, blinked them, looked again and the pulpit was still there. I was yet walking, but this last sight so excited me that I stood still, closed my eyes for awhile, opened them again, but the pulpit was still in front of me. Something said, "I will put thoughts in your mind and words in your mouth when you are behind the pulpit." Then, the pulpit vanished and I was trembling from head to feet. I was so weak I could hardly stand and was about four miles from home. While walking home I feasted upon this new experience and conclusion that God speaks through His ministers. I thought I would tell this experience to my brethren but soon it seemed so unreasonable that doubts began to haunt me and I have kept it until this day with this exception, once, while speaking for the first time in a meeting-house, I looked down and saw this peculiarly constructed pulpit in reality and paused in the discourse to say, "I have seen this pulpit before" Even though I have not told this, it has been a great encouragement to me many times when

going behind the sacred stand, feeling so unprepared.

A few days later, (September 1930), I attended an adjoining association near Eldorado, Arkansas. It was the first time I had been outside my home vicinity while among this people. They were strangers in the flesh but yet I felt drawn toward them. While there I visited in the home of Elder T. J. Evers where some visiting elders were scheduled to preach. My feeling of unworthiness would not permit me to be in the room during preaching but I listened from the outside. When they had finished preaching, someone called my name, came after me, ushered me inside, and informed me that I was requested to preach. I was never so shocked in my life as I thought no one had any idea that I would ever attempt to preach, especially to make my first attempt away from home among strangers. I had not hinted to anyone of such impression. I do not know anything I said that night. However, I experienced some relief of mind in the exercise. When I finished, I walked from that room into an adjoining room to be alone. I was shocked with the sight of gray-headed elders sitting in that room with their heads bowed. I thought, "What a fool I must be to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord in the presence of these great men of God." I was so ashamed of myself.

The next meeting at my home church I was called upon to introduce services with hymn and prayer. Since that time I have attempted many times to speak, accompanied with great fear and much trembling. My deep-felt sense

of unworthiness and inability has been so uppermost in my mind that I have wondered much of the time, "Do I have the right to occupy such a sacred position and attempt to speak in the presence of God's people?"

I bored the listeners for months by using much of the time in trying to express my unworthiness and inability. My estimation of myself as being so sinful was so impressed on my mind that many expressions relative to this conviction were made each and every time I appeared before a congregation. It gave me relief but I was not aware of being so boresome to the hearers. God saw fit to use a sister to bring this to my attention. She told me of a conversation she overheard between a daughter and her father. The daughter announced, "Dad, I am going over to Oakland Schoolhouse today to church." Her father answered, "What? Do you want to hear that mean man tell of his meanness?" This caused much meditation. I have felt as unworthy, sinful, and unfit since then but have been cautious to brief my expressions concerning it. This conversation proved to be a great blessing to me and (I am persuaded) to those who have to sit under the hearing of my voice.

Many times in the exercises of speaking in the presence of this people I lamented much in the closing remarks upon how God had withheld His Spirit from me and that I had been given "no light" upon the subject under discussion. One day I heard an elder preach. His discourse melted my heart and I experienced exultant joy from the

beginning of his sermon throughout. His words were heavenly and the thoughts expressed were rapturous to me. He paused at the end of this glorious sermon and said, "I have had no unction of the Spirit while speaking. What I have said has been wholly formal and strictly mechanical." This was like pouring ice water on me. It made me shudder. Since that time I have not expressed these lamentations in closing—though I have felt it. It may be mechanical and formal as far as the speaker is concerned, but God is blessing the hearer with the unction of the Spirit. Since then I have been more content with the thought that God blesses me to the extent that it pleases Him and consecrates it to the hearers to the degree of His pleasure. Who am I to lament if He holds all joy from me and blesses the hearers with exceeding joy? Sometimes when feeling the coldest in delivery of a discourse, I have seen the Spirit manifested in the faces of the hearers. Could such a sermon be classed hypocritical, formal, and/or mechanical?

Praying in public was such a task for me. I felt it to be the greatest sin to utter words intended to be directed to God without feeling to be in the spirit of prayer. I refused to engage in public prayer many times when called upon because of this conviction. I recall once being in the predicament when I could not refuse even though I was convinced it would be formal and hypocritical! Words flowed fluently from my mouth but I was so cold that they seemed to mock me with the cry, "Hypocritical, hypocritical." When I arose from the form of

prayer I felt to be the greatest blaspheming hypocrite in the world! I was greatly surprised and astonished when something very unusual took place. One man immediately arose, came toward me with tears streaming down his face, took me by the hand, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful prayer. You worded the yearning of MY heart!" I was then convinced that God was pleased sometimes to put the yearnings in one's heart and the words to express the yearnings in another's mouth. May I ask the reader, "Could this prayer be classed as an hypocritical prayer?"

Since that time I have not refused to engage in public prayer when called upon.

My wife was the first one that I baptized. Officiating in the ordinances of the church seemed too high for me. I felt so unworthy to officiate that I felt so weak I could hardly stand and was trembling when I led her into the beautiful Caddo stream near Amity, Arkansas to baptize her. I felt that I could not go through this ordeal. I shall never forget the calmness and strength I suddenly experienced when I began the baptismal ceremony. Some of the most glorious experiences I have had was in the act of putting beneath the water candidates for church membership. God has always come to my rescue and converted the fear into sublime calmness in my attempt to engage in this sacred ordinance.

It seemed to be the impossible for me to be used to comfort those who were bereaved because of a death in the immediate family. I shuddered at the thought of ever being called upon. If not

deceived, the Lord has taken care of that also. I have been surprised and astonished at the words that have come from my mouth that were appropriate on such occasions.

I have had like experiences in visiting, praying for the sick, encouraging those who were so low in spirit, giving solutions to baffling problems, averting brethren from detrimental procedure, and striving for peace among troubled brethren. In every case that my efforts have been successfully used, it has been beyond any question with me concerning the source of strength. In every case all false ideas of authority being vested in me have been burned out through fiery trials and God has revealed Himself as the Author of all good acts which are godly. When it pleases God to work the will in you, there is no shifting from His will to yours. His will has been so convincing to me that there has been no halting between opinions when it is placed in my mind. I have learned by sad experience that it is best to do nothing regarding a matter until you are made certain concerning what ought to be done. God has so thoroughly worked the do in me in many cases that I was unaware of what I was doing until it was already done. Could I give myself a pat on the shoulder and congratulate myself for doing something that had been done through me and I was unaware of it while it was going on?

I felt many times in years past that I ought to lay aside my encumbrances and dis-engage myself from the vocations of

this world and devote what little strength and mind that God had blessed me with to the service of the churches who were looking to me as their pastor. Circumstances over which I had no control brought me into this position. I was forced to give up my worldly career. I receive no salary nor wage from anyone or ones. It has been so for years, but God has taken care to impress the hearts of friends and brethren to freely give of their means to us that we have not suffered in want of the necessary things of this natural life. Funds have come when needed without any solicitation to such an extent that I am fully persuaded that God controls the minds of the contributors even to the amount of contributions.

When I am given to review my life as a minister of God and pastor of churches, I feel that I have been very unprofitable. I have failed in many duties. I have fallen so far short of performing the duties incumbent upon a pastor that I am made to say, "I surely have been mistaken in it all." My brethren have been very tolerant toward me in bearing with my infirmities. Should they have been exacting I would have been severed from their fellowship long ago. I beg an interest in the prayers of each and everyone of you who reads this. After writing this imperfect treatise upon this question, it remains an unanswered question to me: "*Am I a God-called gospel minister?*"

Elder E. J. Lambert

JESUS THE AMEN

I was asked to write a sermon upon the word amen. Well, I may not be able to do that, but I will very readily pen some few thoughts upon it that has been comforting to me, and in which I have had some experience by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The first and most blessed thing is that Jesus Christ our Lord, our redeemer and everlasting friend, is "The Amen" Rev. 3:14. Indeed, there is no abiding blessedness apart from our beloved Savior. As He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, He is also the fountain of living waters. In Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; but all would be a failure, all our hope in things pertaining to God and to eternity would be a failure, if Jesus Christ were not the Amen.

This sacred name, like all the names he bears, is what He is unto His church. This name signifies that He is the constant one, the gracious, immutable Almighty friend, faithful and true. Rev. 3: 14. He is the one, who makes sure, and will bring to an all-glorious consummation all the eternal purpose which Jehovah the Father purposed in Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and He is the mediator and surety of the new covenant, and as our covenant head He is in delighted acquiescence with it. Even though in order to the removal of the sins of His people, to make atonement for their transgressions and reconcile them unto God, He should come and give Himself

a ransom, a sacrifice for their iniquities. He said, Amen to it. So let it be, it shall be." **Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40: 7-8; Heb. 10: 4-10. "All the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."** 2 Cor. 1:20.

Oh what exceeding great and precious promises there are in Him for time and eternity. The new covenant was established upon better promises than those given unto Israel under the law, the old covenant. The gospel promises are in Christ's gospel; they are made unto the elect in Christ. Thus, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, who speaks to us, and shows to us, and glorifies Jesus Christ in our hearts, we have sacred assurance, and are in earnest expectation **"in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,"** Titus 1:2. All the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and amen, sure to all the seed. As our covenant head He said, amen to them all.

In His faithfulness, love and mercy, and omnipotence He will see that none of these promises fail. What God hath promised, He is able also to perform. Their gracious and glorious fulfillment is not based upon the creatures performance. Ah no! God will show His people His covenant in the incarnate Son of God. Psalm 25:14. **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things,**

in which *it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*" Heb. 6:17-20. In all the characters that Christ sustains, and all the offices in the new covenant He fulfills, He is surely the amen.

The pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand; the government shall be upon His shoulder. Isaiah 9:6; 53:10. Well, beloved ones in the Lord, as we meditate upon the glorious work wrought by our Redeemer, and see how He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, how He finished all the work of eternal salvation, and will surely bring His people home to eternal glory, faultless, and holy, and without blame, and with exceeding joy before the majesty in the heaven, truly we are comforted and our hope is sure and stedfast, for Jesus Christ, the word made flesh is the Amen. And we, like the four beasts, (living creatures) in Rev. 5:14 say, "Amen" to all that Jesus Christ has done, and to all that He, as our great high priest, in heaven is doing for His people. There He appears in the presence of God for us, and forever our beloved Redeemer, intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And when we offer up our feeble sacrifices of praise, when our hearts send forth our sighs and prayers unto the throne, they all come through Him unto our God Father. He

says Amen to them, for they are all cleansed by His precious blood, perfumed by incense of His finished work upon calvary's cross, His sacrifice of Himself in our behalf, an offering, and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto God. Through Him, our Amen, we have access into the grace, we are favored to worship God in the beauty of holiness, with reverence and Godly fear. Yes, our hearts say amen, so let it be, to all that Christ has done, and all that He is unto His people. When we are in sweet accord and our hearts are saying amen to Christ's gospel, all sufficiency in self has been cast to the moles and to the bats, we are lowly in our own sight, we feel how naked and destitute we are in ourselves, we see we are poor sinners, and we have been taught under this bitter and humbling knowledge to look unto Jesus as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners. Yes, here must be God's own gracious teaching to humble such sinners, sinners who are enemies of God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts. It needs such operations of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart to bring him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," to bring him to see that all creature righteousness is filthy rags, and to submit to the righteousness of the God-man Christ Jesus, which is unto and upon all that believe. But every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me saith Christ, John 6:45. And in our precious Jesus our all-sufficiency salvation, righteousness, all grace and glory, and to everything in Him

we say amen. All is agreeable, all is needful, there is nothing lacking, all is finished, all is blessed, all is altogether lovely, all is to the glory of God, and to our everlasting consolation and happiness, in faith and love we say, Amen, so let it be. If the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost are so essential to bring our souls into accord with the gospel of Christ, and to say Amen to all the revelation of Jehovah's counsel therein: so also the same teachings of the comforter God and Holy Ghost, are needed to bring us to say, Amen, the will of the Lord be done in all His providences. We have surely learned, yes, we have had to learn it over, and over again; that without the continual ministrations of the grace of Christ how unreconciled we are to our lot, how cast down we are sometimes, how fretful, what inward murmurings, and how hardened we then become in rebellion. **"The rebellious dwell in a dry land."** Psalm 68:6. God's providences are high and deep— His thoughts, His purposes therein are not for us to fully understand.

"Deep in unfathomable mines,
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

Job at one time could say Amen to the adversities and bitter afflictions to which he was subjected, Job 1:20-21; 2:9-10; but in the continuation of his deep and sore troubles he is found fretting at a great rate, and speaking hard things against God. But we see the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful

and of tender mercy, James 5:11. **"The Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it."** Surely this severe reproof was nevertheless love's reproof! It entered Job's soul, subdued all opposition to the Most High, and brought him at the feet of the Lord. **"Then Job answered the Lord, and said, behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."** Job 40:1-5.

We have trials, afflictions, adversities, we have vexations, and things that are so contrary to flesh and blood. Our little plans are upset; our gourds are blasted, the flowers that delighted us wither, they are snatched away, cisterns are broken, and creatures all fail. Sickness, pains in ourselves and others we have to endure, we suffer bereavements; and we encounter the enmity of the wicked, of hypocrites. How shall we say Amen, unto the Lord under the pressure of any or all these woes? When the Lord giveth us tears in great measure to drink, Psalm 80:5; if the bread of adversity and water of affliction be our portion, Isa. 30:20, is it possible to acquiesce, and say Amen to God? When the thorn in the flesh is rankling, and the enemy is buffeting us until we are at our wits end, shall we not cry out for the extraction of the thorn? We pray that the enemy may be forced to take departure from us, but if it is the will of God that the thorn shall still pierce us, and the enemy still assault us, can we then say unto the Lord,

Amen? We can, but only when our Heavenly Father says, — thou art my dear son; thou art unto me a pleasant child. Jer. 31:20. Thou art beloved, lovely, all acceptable unto me in the beloved. Eph. 1:6. Drink the cup, my child! O then we can say, Amen, so sweetened is our cup with our heavenly Father's love in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, when He says, "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," then we can say, Amen, and join with the apostle Paul and , say, "**most gladly therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**" 2 Cor. 12:9. Pharisees, the selfsufficient, the hypocrite may talk very smoothly, and say, we ought to say, "Thy will be done" to God's providences. But the dear child of God, who while in this world is compassed with infirmities, poor and sinful and tempted, finds himself so in need of grace that it is only by the power of Christ resting upon him, only as his preciousness is communicated and the spirit of truth glorifies our dear Savior in the soul, and thus sustains us in afflictions, and sweetens the bitter waters that we can say, Amen to all our Heavenly Father's will.

There, I have penned some thoughts upon the word, and, oh may such grace from the Lord be ours that we be in accord with Him who is the Amen.

Elder Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N. C.

RANDOLPH, Maine, Nov. 12, 1930.

My DEAR SISTER EMMA: - We were glad to hear from you and yours. I will say I am much better of my bronchial trouble.

You ask for my views upon John xii. 24, 25. It seems to me that, as you have been thinking of the subject, you are the one to write upon it. However, I hope I am willing to do anything within the bounds of my limited ability for the comfort of the household of faith of our blessed Lord. If, by his grace, I have ever been enabled to say or write anything to that end, all praise is due to him who never leaves nor forsakes his people.

The above mentioned text reads as follows: "**Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone : but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.**"

While the corn of wheat remains in the bin wherein it is stored with thousands of like kernels it is lifeless, although there is a grain of life within, but when the wheat is taken from the storage bin and buried in the ground, then that grain of life is manifested. Little rootlets appear, and later the blade. But in the development of the plant the present kernel or grain has disappeared. And so Jesus has likened the natural life of a subject of God's grace unto the corn of wheat. "**But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**" As the husbandman has complete control over the wheat he puts into the storage bin, and later takes out

and plants in the ground, so the subjects of God's grace have no part in the new birth into Christ's kingdom. They are translated into a spiritual kingdom. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." They are in the world, but not of the world. As Christ and his kingdom increase in their view, so do they and worldly attractions decrease.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." The "heirs of promise" know by bitter experience that the old Adamic nature in them is not dead, but very much alive. Paul tells us, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law 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."-Rom. vii. 21-23. So we see that while we have no active part in our transmission from nature to grace, yet God holds us strictly accountable for our acts and deportment here on the shores of time. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."-Rom. viii. 13. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."-Rom. vi. 12, 13. Here, then, is the pathway marked out for the followers of

Jesus to walk in, and just in proportion as they by the grace of God are enabled to walk therein will the fruit of the Spirit of truth be manifest. It seems to me that verse twenty-five mentions the two classes of people living in the world, viz., believers and unbelievers. -The natural man loves the world and all that that implies. He has no love or desire for anything more than the world can offer. The natural life and the spiritual life will not mix any more than will oil and water. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Unworthily your brother,
J. E. HUBBARD.

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA UNION MEETING

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at New Hope Church near Spearsville, Louisiana on March 31 and April 1, 2012. All Lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2012

R. Smith, VA.....	5.00
M. Houston, NC	15.00
R. Rudd, NC	5.00
T. Middleton, NC.....	5.00
N. Dalton, VA.....	5.00
Elder W. T. Conner, VA.....	5.00
A.Lane, VA	5.00
D. Norman, NC.....	25.00
(In Memory of Maedell Norman)	
B. Abernathy, NC.....	10.00
B. Speir, LA.....	35.00
R. Newsome, FL	25.00
C. Franco, TX.....	5.00
J. Collie, NC	5.00
E. Thompson, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

**IN MEMORY OF
MARVIN AARON GILES**

Our Lord called home, Brother Marvin Aaron Giles on September 17, 2011. Brother Marvin was born April 1, 1934 in Nattaway County. He was a son of the late Thomas Hugh Giles and Brazie Taylor Giles.

Brother Marvin was predeceased by one daughter, Deena Melissa Giles;

one brother Cornelius Giles; four sisters, Gracie Scott, Elsie Scott, Essie Giles and Louise Mayhew.

Brother Marvin is survived by his wife of fifty-six years, Aleen Jeanette Moser Giles of the residence; one son Douglas Troy Giles of Gretna, Virginia; one brother Anderson and his wife Doris of Lynch Station, Virginia; one grandson Ricky Lee Giles of Gretna.

Brother Marvin was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. He was received by experience and Baptism, June 13, 2011. He was a faithful member and always enjoyed services and the fellowship of his Brethren.

Brother Marvin's funeral service was held by his Pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad September 20, 2011. He was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Brother Marvin will be sadly missed by his family and all that knew him. May all be reconciled to the Lord's will.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Lansaw
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

ST. LUKE 9:48.

And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

HELEN MCDANIEL STEWART

Our dear Sister Helen Stewart was called from this wilderness of woe on May 1, 2010. She was born May 2, 1924 in Danville, Virginia to Joel and Mattie Roach McDaniel who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Elder Lester Stewart, her brother, J. C. McDaniel, and sisters; Madeline Burnette, Margaret Barber, and Gladys Moschler. Surviving are her son, Ronald Lee Stewart and wife Shelia of Eden, her grandson, Brandon Lee Stewart of Wilmington, her sister, Shirley Vaughan and husband, Thomas of Texas as well as many nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor and assistant pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Thomas Solomon on May 5, 2010 at Fair Funeral Home after which her body was laid to rest in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the resurrection morn. That lovely spirit, which dwelt within her, has returned unto God who gave it to rest in Paradise with Christ.

Sister Helen was a member of our people over 50 years. On September 26, 2009 she was accepted into membership at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on profession of faith. For the last couple of years of her life, the writer was blessed to travel with her to many church meetings. She loved her God, her church, and her family. As was appointed by her Lord, it was her lot to fill the station of a minister's

wife. She was blessed to do that with much love and joy in caring for many of the Lord's little ones in her home.

Two verses of hymn 274, which she often requested from the Goble hymn book, best express the experience of our dear sister:

"I have sought round this verdant earth for unfading joy;

I have tried every source of mirth,
but all, all will cloy;

Lord, bestow on me grace to set my spirit free;

Thine the praise shall be; mine,
mine the joy.

I was brought to thy gospel, Lord,
from folly away;

Made to trust in thy holy word, which
taught me to pray;

Here I found release, here my wearied soul found peace,

Hope of endless bliss, eternal day."

Sister Helen's lovely smile and her warm embrace will remain etched in our memory. Her love for her Saviour and His dear people shone in her countenance. She is greatly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May all, who mourn her loss, be blessed with the comfort that only the Lord can give, and may all the praise, honor, and glory be His.

Humbly submitted by one who
loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath
said,—
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home, and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength
ever be.

“Fear not, I am with thee; O, be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause
thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand,

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of wo shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress

“When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

“E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be
borne.

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes,
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to
shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.”

G. Keith

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EDITORIAL

Recorded in John 8:56-58 are the words, **"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."**



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

He was a man of sorrows

What manner of man is this? The prophet Isaiah said He had no form nor comeliness and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and re-

and acquainted with grief. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He bare the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross. Yet, He was God in the flesh, "for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He had all power. He knew all things that were to come to pass because He had purposed them and ordained them. He was the Word that was in the beginning, that was with God and that was God. He was the One by whom all things were made and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Even the wind and the sea obeyed Him. No man took His life from Him, but He willingly layed it down because of the great love wherewith He loved His elect. He had power to lay it down and He had power to take it up again. But His body of flesh, without sin, was a veil that the carnal eye could not penetrate nor the carnal mind comprehend. There were some such as Peter to whom this man was revealed as Christ, the Son of the living God. However, many of the Jews were not blessed to believe in Him and in fact, despised Him and desired to kill Him. But His hour had not yet come and they could not lay their hands on Him.

On the occasion of the above scripture, the Pharisees were contending with Jesus over who He said that He was and who His father was. They said that Abraham was their father and seemed to believe that this natural tie of the flesh entitled them to be the children of God. But Jesus told them that He knew they were the seed of Abraham; and He also

said, *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But, now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father."* Then, they began to profess that they had but one father, which was God. They had no understanding of this One who stood before them. No man can come to the Father, but by Christ and no man can come to Him, except the Father which sent Christ draw him. For the Father and Christ are one. Very bluntly, Jesus said that they were of their father, the devil. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

Then, Jesus told them that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. They had no idea of what He was speaking. They replied that Jesus was not even fifty years old and how could He have seen Abraham. They only knew Jesus after the flesh. They knew nothing of Him spiritually because He did not reveal Himself to them. The world today knows nothing of Him spiritually. They have never experienced His love and mercy. Psalm 107 says, "O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." The redeemed of the Lord are the only ones who can say the Lord is good because they are the only ones who have experienced His love and mercy. Jesus told them that before Abraham was, I am. God is under no law nor time. There is no past nor any future with Him. It is an eternal **now**. He is the eternal I AM THAT I AM. As written in

Exodus 3:13-15, "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Our finite carnal minds cannot begin to comprehend this name of God. He had no beginning and has no end. He doesn't age as we do. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Therefore, in heaven, His people will not age, but dwell with Him in one eternal **now**.

When God commanded Abraham to take his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) whom he loved and offer him for a burnt offering, He gave Abraham the faith to believe God and that God would provide. So Abraham took Isaac and two young men and began their journey to this certain mountain. This was Mount Moriah upon which some 1,000 years yet to come Solomon would build the temple and yet another some 1,000 years Christ would hang on the cross. So it was not by chance or accident that Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac on this particular mountain, but by the divine purpose of this holy and all powerful God. On the third day, Abraham

lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. I believe that Abraham saw more than just a natural mountain. The third day sets forth the gospel day, the day of grace. On the third day, Christ rose from the dead, having fulfilled the righteous, holy law of God to a jot and tittle. With the law having been fulfilled, the day of grace had come. Abraham was given an eye of faith to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world as He hung on the cross on this very mountain some 2,000 years in the future. Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ. He saw the place afar off. Therefore, he could tell the two young men to wait there and he and Isaac would go yonder and worship and would come again to them.

As Abraham and Isaac journeyed toward the mountain on which God had commanded him to offer his son, Isaac asked his father, "*Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?*" Abraham answered, "*My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.*" By faith Abraham was given to see the day of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that God will provide **Himself** a lamb for the offering. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 5:6 and 13:8). The holy, righteous law of God required a holy, righteous sacrifice to satisfy it. No one of Adam's race was qualified. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one." Therefore, God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As Abraham bound Isaac and laid him upon the wood on the altar and reached for the knife, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. The ram was a type of Christ and I believe the horns set forth the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:23 says that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Abraham rejoiced to see His day and he saw it, and was glad.

You, dear children of the heavenly King, also rejoiced to see the day of your beloved Savior and you saw it, and were glad. When the Lord imputed His righteous, holy law into you and you were brought down in condemnation to see yourself as a sinner and the vilest of sinners, you felt your lost condition and were given to know that you could not keep the law. As the Apostle Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, the Lord appears as the Sun of righteousness as He arises with healing in His wings. Therefore, you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. You experience the warmth of His comfort and peace in His love and mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto

mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Works of the flesh are done away and grace has come. The Lord feeds you with the bread from heaven which is Christ, the bread of life. As you are calves of the stall, God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Having seen by faith the day of Jesus Christ, you can witness with Psalm 31:7, "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy."

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

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

1-28-12

Tony Horton:

Enclosed is a check for \$30.00. Please renew my subscription for another 2 years and use the rest as you see fit.

Thanks for all you do in getting the paper out to us each month.

In hope,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd
Panama City, FL 32404-4434

To Tony Horton:

Here is my subscription for another year of the Signs of the Times. Thank you so much for sending it.

Also, please change my mailing address to:

P.O. Box 132404
Tyler, TX 75713-2404

Sincerely,
Mollie Jones

2-12-12

Dear Brother Horton, and Elder Robertson:

Please forgive my poor handwriting. It will soon be time to renew my subscription. I don't even feel worthy to even receive these wonderful gifts each month. You both are so wonderfully blessed to be able to put these books together each month. We are blessed to receive these wonderful gifts each month. We see through a glass darkly while here in this life, one glad day if we be one of God's chosen, we will see all things in their fullness thereof. I hope I haven't bothered you too much. I hope one day we can be together and talk a little more. Please forgive my many mistakes. Remember this poor wretch, when at the throne of Grace, an unworthy brother, if one at all.

In bonds of love,
James Knight

January 29, 2012

Mr. Tony Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

2-16-2012

Dear Tony,

Please find the enclosed check for my subscription renewal for 2 years to the Signs of the Times. Please use the remainder as you see fit for the benefit of this wonderful publication.

Thank you,
Bruce Smith

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, NC 27513

Wayman Chapell
1598 Bonnie Dr.
Memphis, TN 38116

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here are some thoughts I have had on the the subject I have tried to cover from the standpoint of the Lookingglass that made up the foot of the laver in the tabernacle in the wilderness. Use it as you see fit. Since it is somewhat of an unusual subject I will understand if it doesn't fit with your needs, or feel it to be "offbase".

We appreciate your work on the Signs and taking the responsibility of gathering material as well as what I would suppose to be the greater job of screening. I am sure it is not an easy task.

Sincerely,
Wayman Chapell

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time to renew my subscription for another year. I am enclosing a check for \$15.00.

I have been receiving the Signs for several years, always enjoy reading it and looking forward to each issue.

May the Lord bless you and all staff in your efforts to keep sending this worthy publication.

With a hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese

ARTICLES

LOOKINGGLASSES

In the making of the various items or objects of the tabernacle, in the wilderness, and placing them together, Moses is instructed thus of the Lord; **"And thou shall rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount."** Exodus 26:30. They were a pattern or figure of spiritual things in Christ who was yet to come. See Hebrews 9:8-11.

The things of the tabernacle were made from offerings unto the Lord of materials for the structure and furniture by those of a willing heart. Exodus 35:5. Although brass was a gift used in the making of several items of, and within, the tabernacle the emphasis to be considered here is the seeming unusual material composing the foot of the laver.

The brazen laver contained water where the priests had many washings in their service of the tabernacle. The foot of the laver (base or pedestal) seemed to have some particular significance in that it was made of the lookingglases (apparently polished brass mirrors) which were given by the women assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

There seems to be very little direct scriptural evidence to indicate the spiritual value or significance of the polished brass mirrors that made up the foot of the laver. Therefore, any thought or position, regardless of how reasonable it might seem, should not be held dogmatically without more spiritual evidence than seems to be available. Nevertheless several things come quickly to mind and all scripture is useful when guided by the Spirit. See 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Consider: A mirror, or lookingglass, is used primarily for vanities sake and for correction. Vanity is apparent because **“All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes.” Proverbs 16:2.** But with spiritual eyes it is quickly recognized that **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it.” Jeremiah 17:9.** Then the situation of the troubled mind becomes fearful as did Isaiah when he saw the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up. Then he said, **“... Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips:...” Isaiah 6:5.** And then consider the seemingly impossible plight of the apostle Paul as expressed in Romans 7:15-24. Here, in

part, he sees himself and says. **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) - dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (vs.18-19).**

When approaching the Lord's table to eat the Lord's supper this same apostle Paul admonishes the members to examine themselves, which is a mirrored experience, and would seem to be relating to their thoughts and actions **“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” 1 Corinthians 11:29.** This would undoubtedly have the burdening conflict of a vexing ordeal when examining the actions and intent of the flesh. Yet it is an occasion of worship and praise when given to see that the victory has already been achieved and lies only in the finished work of Christ.

In Romans 7:21, the apostle finds a law that when he would do good, evil is present with him (the man of the flesh). Although he delights after the law of the inward man (the spiritual or born again man), yet there is another law in his members, warring against this law of the mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members. Is this not the experience of every child of grace? In self examination he rejoices in the evidence of a life in Christ and yet is plagued with the reality of sin.

The apostle in looking at his situation confesses that he, in his own strength, can not rise above the situa-

tion and cries out, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death” Romans 7:24.** The lookingglass of self examination is not flattering but condemning if this is all that is seen. But the apostle gives us more of his experience and which reveals the only answer that can give consolation to a yearning soul. **“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. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 7:25 & 8:1-2.** And further, speaking to the church at Corinth, the apostle Paul declares them to be the epistle of Christ, **“... written not with ink, but, with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart”.** II Corinthians 3:3. **“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is* there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.”** II Corinthians 3:17-18.

This is a different view that is reflected to the child of God than when he is given to see only the vanity of the flesh. He is changed, and changed into the same image which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. See Colossians 1:27. There is now the view of being clothed, not with vain works, but with the righteous

robe of the Saviour. Rather than shackled by the old law, he now can look unto the finished work of Christ as one looking into the perfect law of liberty. Being dead to sin and alive in Christ. Then with joy the view in the lookingglasses shows the children to be redeemed by the blood of Christ that they might receive the adoption of sons. **“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”** Galatians 4:6.

The lookingglass, then it seems, gives a view of what we are by nature; depraved beings without understanding and absorbed by the vanity of life. But, now having some evidence of the new creature (the one born from above), and beholding the finished work of Christ, are made to confess that though we see as through a glass darkly, yet are made to hold fast to an earnest expectation of growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, **“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”** Romans 14:17).

Elder Wayman Chapell

ST. MATTHEW 20: 1.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Joy Wrought By Pain

“Great writing is most often wrought from the throes of pain and suffering.”

This is a quote from an interview I saw the other day of a songwriter. It touched me profoundly for it focused my mind, for a moment, on what biblical writings...scripture...is most often characterized by. And, it placed another beautiful image before my mind's eye...the image of the children of God embracing in scalding tears of adoration. Tears of thankfulness branded upon a contrite heart by a gracious and forgiving Savior.

The religion of the reprobate is filled with confessions of joy and happiness. For the most part, the message is that once you have accepted Christ as your Savior, peace shall be yours from that day forward. You should go forth and spread the word of a new found joy. That is the way the intellect reasons and the natural thought process of human beings.

But the Bible speaks of a far different experience for the child of God. “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling”, “Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint...”. These are the supplications of a sinner in need of a Savior. There is nothing lighthearted about the cry of desperation from one who has been convicted of his total depravity.

Deliverance...a beautiful word to the one who has been graced with the knowledge of his need of it. His cry shall be, deliver me oh Lord for I cannot deliver myself. If justice be meted out to this

sinner, surely hell will be my portion. The fear is derived from the knowledge that all is naked before God and nowhere to hide anything. All is open and exposed to this all-seeing King. Yet fear is also a gift in that it is the by-product of wisdom that shows the sinner his profound need. His darkness is softened as he is allowed to see through a glass darkly.

My most coveted memories of church services over the last fifty plus years involved the moments when, individually or collectively, members of the congregation were made to melt in tears...even screams. I have been blessed to see a church filled with His children all removed from themselves and transported to an unspeakable place filled with His unspeakable riches for a short while.

Yes, the tears, the screams were for joy. And, thus, the duality of God's children was revealed in this solemn place. The flesh and the spirit...tears of grief and tears of joy...the feeling sense of His love and the separation from it. All these states manifest a unique relationship between God and His children as He brings them down and lifts them higher than the mountains. He refines them with fire and delivers them to a safe haven where their wounds are allowed to heal for a while.

But, for God's children there is no continuing city here. This warfare must rage within their hearts as long as their sentence continues until the end of their life here on earth. There is no other way for a sinner to be brought to the knowledge of what he is by nature and by practice and to be shown the riches of

the Father.

Great writing is often induced by pain and suffering, but so are the most precious of feelings and memories. His grace is sufficient, and He will perform a good work in His children as He turns their pain to never ending joy through the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Jerry T. Woodlief
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VOICES OF THE PAST

GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

The gifts of our Savior to the church have all been named in the Acts and letters of the apostles, and their order and purpose fully set forth. The apostles, first in order, had peculiar authority, which they made known to the saints on their first coming to them, claiming obedience to their judgments, not because of any superior merit in themselves, but because of their appointment as apostles "by the will of God." They were prepared by the inspiration of the holy Spirit to render infallible judgments, to declare the doctrine of God in the only form of words in which it can ever be expressed by men with absolute accuracy, and to set in order every ordinance of the Lord, and every gift given to the church, and all the forms of worship and service. They have

taught, as Jesus commanded them to do, the observance of all things whatsoever he commanded them, so that nothing is lacking in the Scriptures of the New Testament that is necessary to show to every true seeker his place and privilege and duty in the church of God, and to regulate his conduct in the world.

In regard to every other gift, beside that of the apostles, the church is the judge. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" No one but the apostles can say to the church, "I am sent to you by the Lord, and on this account it is your duty to receive and obey my words." In regard to all other gifts the judgment is with the church. Not only is the first recognition of the gift by the church, but also the call by which its character and exercise are to be acknowledged. The gift will often be seen by the church while the man in whom it is seen does not as yet know the nature and meaning of his own exercises, and he is often surprised and rebellious when informed of the mind of the church concerning him. Aside from the judgment of the church there is no reliable evidence of a gift.

The church is presented by the apostles as having possession and control of the members and gifts, not they of the church. The authority by which the gift is upheld is in the church, which is there shown, in figure, as a candlestick, upholding the candle. The gift thus recognized and upheld by the fellowship of the church reflects its light upon the body, and rules over the church with all the authority of the Word which has established and defined the gift and its order and province. The rule and authority are

in the office and in the word administered, not in the man as having superior qualities. Of this also the church is the judge as to whether the word is rightly administered and the office used well. The church set apart the seven. (Acts vi. 3.) The church, by the command of the Holy Ghost, separated Barnabas and Saul unto the Lord for a certain work unto which he had called them. (Acts xiii. 1, 2.)

To anyone who comes to the saints claiming to be sent to them of God they can say, "Tell us your message, and we will judge whether you are sent unto us from the Lord." Even in the peculiar work of the apostles there was a manifestation of their power and authority in the consciences of the saints, by which they were commended unto them as sent to them of the Lord. (2 Cor. i. 2; iv. 2; v. 11.) It is a man's gift, not his intellectual power, personal attractions or exalted position in the world, which makes room for him in the church of God, and "brings him before great men." This is true when one comes to the Lord's people in written communications, as well as when he speaks in their presence. We are to bear in mind, however, that there is no gift presented in the Scriptures whose ministration to the church is by epistolary communication except that of the apostles. There is much value in the written works of experienced men to edify and comfort spiritual readers; but the peculiar authority of a gift of Jesus to the church does not attach to that exercise. At least I find no intimation in the Scriptures that anything which has been written since the last of the apostolic writ-

ings has any such authority over the saints as do the inspired writings, and as does the proper exercise of the divinely appointed gifts in the church. For in the orderly meetings of a gospel church, and nowhere else, authoritative gospel work is done. Christ is in the midst of the church, even where two or three are gathered together in his name, and there is his judgment-seat.

The call came from Cornelius to Peter, not from Peter to Cornelius. Neither knew at first the purpose of God, who was directing each, but when Peter, who was an Elder as well as an apostle, had arrived, and each had recounted his experience, then Cornelius announced the authoritative conclusion: "And thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

And not only as to the gifts, but as to their proper exercise, the judgment is to be given by the church, not by the one exercising the gift. "**Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.**" —1 Cor. xiv. 29. No man or church can direct as to what message shall be delivered, but they shall judge as to its character and authority after it has been spoken. There is authority in the gift, but its exercise is in, and through, and with the faith of the saints, not over their faith.

The judgment of the saints when they judge angels is not the cold conclusion of natural wisdom and knowledge, but the warm experience of the word of truth in the new heart and in the cleansed conscience, coming "in power, in the

Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It is a sweet and blessed privilege thus to sit in judgment of angels, and of their messages and work, if they are truly the Lord's messengers; for even when the message is one of reproof to the soul it is a sweet token of the remembrance of our faithful and loving God. But when the power is lacking, and there is no commendation of the word spoken to our consciences in the sight of God, it is a dreary and desolate time with the soul of the hearer.

Wherever errors are seen in the doctrine proclaimed by any with whom we stand in church relationship, or in their walk, I regard it as a duty to take such a course with regard to them as is directed by the Savior and his apostles. In the proper performance of this most solemn duty divine authority will be felt, and its effect seen. The conversion of the erring brother is the only right motive for approaching him on the subject of his faults, and the salvation of others from the error is the only valid reason for speaking of his faults publicly, when their public character has made that course necessary. It is only by *causing one to see his error* that he can be converted from it, not by an assumption of authority to declare that an error is held, or has been committed, and only a plain exposition of the error by the Scriptures, not by the decision of councils, will be effectual for good to the brethren.

The communications of a minister of the gospel with regard to spiritual things should and will receive careful consideration from brethren generally, because of his office, in which he is

called to devote his life to attendance upon such things. Yet we must remember that what he says, either from the pulpit or the press, can only be commended to the saints by its own intrinsic value. The convincing power and authority with which it is given him to teach, rebuke and warn, will appear in the words spoken, as they are seen and felt to be according to the oracles of God.

To the above, which I find among my unpublished letters and fragments, I will add a few sentences. It seems to me very important that every member of the church of God should remember and feel his or her own individual place and responsibility as one of the members of Christ. While regarding all the gifts in the church as from the Lord, and esteeming them at their true value, and while humbly obedient to the gospel rule which the pastor has over the church, each member must stand before God in his own experience of Jesus as his life and righteousness. He is not lost, swallowed up, in any gift, but has an individual standing. He cannot take any sentiment or truth merely upon the assertion of another. He must have an experimental knowledge of it for himself, and whatever duty is laid upon his conscience by the Spirit he cannot throw off upon another, but must attend to himself. And in this sense there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, but all are members of the body of Christ, and members one of another, and all one in Christ. When led by the Spirit they all dwell together in unity, each one profiting by the exercise

of all the gifts which the Spirit divideth to every man severally as he will, because by the same Spirit each member of the body is taught the same things which are embraced in the ministry of the various gifts. While regarding very highly every gift, and especially those that have the rule over us, we must each be faithful to our own consciences, and speak only what we can see as the truth. But while we can take no sentiment merely upon the assertion of any man, we must hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of the apostles, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. We cannot set up any sentiment of our own contrary to any word of inspiration.

JULY 6, 1904.
Elder Silas H. Durand

“A PEOPLE NEAR UNTO HIM”

Psalm 148:14

“How great and glorious is the Lord! Who, by searching, can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? His works are great, sought out of them that take pleasure therein. The heavens, the earth, the sea and all that are therein are the work of His fingers. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. God hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heaven with a span and comprehended the dust of the earth in a

measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Lift up your eyes on high and behold, who hath treated these things that bringeth out their host by number? He calleth them all by names; for that He is strong in power, not one faileth. He ruleth by His power forever. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He sendeth forth His lightnings, He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, fulfilling His word. He ruleth the raging of the sea, He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? 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? The Lord hath said, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

This God, O believer in Jesus, is our Lord forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death. When we are led to meditate upon the eternity, unchangeable wisdom, the wondrous faithfulness of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, O what is man that God should take knowledge of him, or the son of man that He should visit him? Why should the Lord take pleasure in, why should he love and behold with delight such poor worms, who in comparison to His infinite being glory and power are counted

to Him less than nothing, and vanity? (Isaiah 11: 17).

And can it be that you, dear reader, that I, that we poor, vile sinners, are included in the number of a people near unto Him? Who is this people? They are the Israel of God; they are the chosen of God; chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world— Eph. 1:4— eternally loved of Jehovah (Jer. 31:3). They are the portion which God has chosen Himself, and are peculiar treasure (Ex. 19:5). Do we not, dear children of God, when led to read or think upon the glorious and unspeakable mysteries recorded in the Scriptures, feel that these things are too wonderful for such poor sinful worms to be embraced in, the eternal love and delight of Jehovah?

But, “the things of Christ,” though unknown, and exceeding all the powers of the natural mind to comprehend, are most sweetly revealed to the loved and chosen race by the Holy Spirit, who is the infallible Teacher of all the redeemed of the Lord of hosts.

“A people near unto Him.” O how very far off am I by nature! The Lord is holy and pure, but I am so impure, so vile. When thy eyes are turned within, truly I am nothing but sin: Then, at the thought of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, the Lord so high, and I a loathsome sinner, sunk so low. How can it be that I can be, that I can have hope that I am among “a people near unto Him?” Let us, dear children of God, take a glimpse or two into this precious subject as it is contained in the Scriptures, and I know you will agree that this can only be done unto edifica-

tion by the leading and instruction of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. O how blessed, how sweet, are those seasons in our life when we find in our souls to acknowledge our dependence upon our God, and are found longing for divine teaching, heavenly food and more and more revelations of the kindness and tender love of Jehovah to our souls. In the 8th chapter of Proverbs, Christ, “the wisdom of God,” 1 Cor. 1:24, says, **“The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: when He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up *with Him*: and I was daily *His* delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth: and my delights were with the sons of men.”** This is that One whom the Father calls “My dear Son,” speaking in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, for the

Son of God is the surety of this testament. Before the world was the Eternal Son of God, who in the fullness of time, was made flesh, took into union with himself the Holy Child Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, saw His seed, He beheld and delighted in the members of His body the church. Thus, in Psalm 139, speaking in David, He says, "My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of then." "Christ's body, which is the church," Eph. 1:22-23, was given to Him in the everlasting covenant by the Father. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." These are the elect of God, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. They were chosen not as apart from Christ Jesus, but in Him their Head. "Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect in whom my soul delighteth" (Isaiah 42.1). So, how blessedly the apostle sings, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). O how precious is the thought that our life is hid with Christ in God; God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. If we are favored with the sweet evidence of this, then,

"More happy, but not more secure
The glorified spirits in heaven."

For, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4).

No separation; from eternity to eternity one with Christ Jesus. Look at this wonderful record concerning the person of our Head, our Husband, our Redeemer, our All. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Thus we who now are poor, vile sinners, who mourn because of our iniquities, loathing ourselves in our own sight, and find ever springing up hungerings and thirstings after righteousness were chosen in Christ Jesus, and in Him given eternal life, blessed with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, and contemplating our fall in Adam, our earthly head, we, saith the apostle, "are saved and called 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. 1:9).

The church of Christ therefore as viewed in Him, her Head, has ever been in eternal unity of life with the Word, who in the beginning was with God, and is God; for in Him was our life, and our precious Christ declares in John 17:24: "Father, Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." And it is won-

derfully, blessedly true that all the elect, all the family of the Most High God, in heaven and in the earth, from the least unto the greatest, are in Jesus, the Word and made flesh, bound up in Him, the bundle of life with Jehovah, their God (1 Sam. 25:29). Therefore our Jesus says unto God, our heavenly Father, "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me; Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:23-24). "I was daily His delight" (Prov. 8:30). The Church and Christ Jesus are one; for in Him is her life, and thus she is in Him. Her name therefore is Hephzibah, Jehovah's delight is in her (Isaiah 62:4). "I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." Yes, Christ Jesus, the Word, loved His Bride, loved the members of His body. He, the Life, in the everlasting covenant, rejoiced before the Father, "Rejoicing in the habitable parts of His earth, and My delights were with the sons of men."

"A people near unto Him." From eternity near unto Jehovah, in eternal life oneness with Jesus, the Word, the Eternal Son of God. This is the source from whence is derived the foundation upon which is founded every aspect in which we view the nearness of the elect unto God. "A people near unto Him." "For in the person of His Son I am as near as He."

Before Thy hands had made
The sun to rule by day,
Or earth's foundations laid,
Or fashioned Adam's clay,
What thoughts of peace and mercy
flowed

In thy dear bosom, O my God!
A monument of grace
A sinner saved by blood;
The streams of love I trace
Up to their Fountain, God;
And in His sacred bosom see
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Thus the Lord possesses "A people near unto Him." They are "the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). This revelation in the gospel of Christ, like all other things belonging to the household of faith, is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world. It is altogether beyond the thoughts of the natural man, and he cannot know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Natural reason even of the saints of God would sometimes send forth the challenge. "How can a puny creature be a child of God?" How can a mortal man call the eternal immutable God "My Father?" It is all bound up in Jesus, the Son of God. He was with the Father before the world was—John 17—and in the fullness of time, according to the everlasting covenant, "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. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father" (Gal. 4:4-6). The will, the works of the creature, had nothing to do to bring this to

pass, but all proceedeth from the Lord of hosts, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

According, therefore, to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, whom He did foreknow (His loved, His elect), He predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:29-30). But you say, "I have felt and even now sometimes fear, that I am an alien, a stranger, a foreigner, and do not know that I belong to the house of God"; and others with no difficulty can say, "Our Father which art in heaven," I often feel this to be something too great for such a poor sinner like me. The popular religionists, who quite easily account themselves to be Christians, say in their doctrines that all mankind are the children of God, therefore it is the duty of every one to call God "My Father." But this is not agreeable to the doctrine of Christ, and is at variance with the experience of all who are the taught of the Lord. Among the first things that the sinner, taught of God, is brought to feel is that by nature he is an enemy to God by wicked works, that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. This bitter experience is learned by as many as are led by the Spirit of God, and such are the sons of God (Rom. 8:14). As outcasts from God, separated from the Lord by their sins, they feel they dare not call God

their Father, they feel they have not the marks, that they have not the spot of His children (Deut. 32:5). It is in the power of the Holy Spirit alone that we can feel and cry, "Abba, Father" (John 1:12).

In the experience of each one of the chosen family there is a set time when they are born again, "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the working of His mighty power, and receive Jesus as the Christ, who is all, and in all, their hope, their salvation. Jehovah, their Heavenly Father, sends forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." "Thou shalt call Me, My Father" and shalt not turn away from Me" (Jer. 3:19). This is experimentally realizing that God has translated us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (Eph. 2:19).

Oh, what an entrance is this among the dear children of God! We are made nigh by the blood of Christ, we, who were some time alienated, and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, presenting us unblamable and unreprouvable in the sight of God, and our Father. O when this is sealed home in our hearts by the Comforter (who takes of the thing of Christ and shows them unto us) then with what simplicity does the dear child of God approach unto the Lord and say, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." We feel to be one with the

Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God—John 17:4-5—who said to Mary Magdalene, “I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.” It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but all is settled, and my soul approves it well. “We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. We have received the spirit of adoption, and we are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:19-23). God shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself (Phil. 3:21). In the resurrection we shall awake in His likeness; this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. “A people near unto Him.”

FREDERICK W. KEENE
Raleigh, N. C.

ST. MATTHEW 20: 2-4.

And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Again he went out, about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

PSALM 114

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;

Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.

The sea saw *it*, and fled: Jordan was driven back.

The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.

What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?

Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

Which turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 04/12

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

**1907 - Out of Thee Shall
Come Forth A Ruler
Written by
William Middleton Smoot
March, 1907**

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me *that is to be Ruler in Israel*; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” - Micah v.2.

It has been the good pleasure of Israel's God to reveal His power, wisdom and preserving care over Israel from time to time, by reducing them in numbers, by bringing them to low and apparently impoverished conditions, from which no hand but His could deliver, and then to reveal His wisdom and power in gloriously delivering, sustaining, and, manifesting them as His own peculiar treasure. We have continued evidence of this in prophecy and in type, under the Old dispensation and in plain testimony under the New; and our own experience confirms the same truth.

The text under consideration is of this character. It was a prophecy made in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and at the same time when Israel had been reduced in outward appearance to a very small remnant and it spoke of a still further reduction, that Israel should be brought low in order that she might be uplifted by Almighty power and to the honour and glory of His great name.

“But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thou-

sands of Judah.” In selecting the place that should mark the advent of the King of kings into the world, this small and apparently insignificant city is chosen out of one of the smallest tribes in Israel, emphasizing the fact that it should not be by worldly might, nor power that this kingdom should be established, but by the Spirit of God.

And as this should be the case with the manifestation in time of the King, so should it be the nature of the manifestation of His kingdom: as it is declared by the prophet: **“The stone cut out of the mountain without hands” - Daniel ii, 45.** A *very small remnant*, a *“little flock,”* and *&c.*, are the figures used to designate the outward appearing of this kingdom whose God is the Lord. *“This people,”* He says, *“have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise,”* and all of His dealings with them reveal His wisdom, power and glorious way of life eternal.

“Yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me *that is to be Ruler in Israel*. “Wonderful prophecy! Manifesting the power and glory of the God of all time and eternity; His wise and mysterious manner of revealing His way in the development of His chosen people is crowned with glory .

The complete control and absolute predestination of Israel's God over all the surroundings of Israel; over all things in time as well as all things in eternity, is here exhibited in His selection of the place and manner of the incarnation of the Son of God.

It is useless to talk of Predestination that fails to cover all, whether in time

or in eternity, whether large or small events, whether righteous or unrighteous. That absolute decree that determines the coming of the Saviour must necessarily control all of the surroundings that pertain thereunto. And that predestination which decrees the development of the kingdom with each particular member thereof, must absolutely control all of the surroundings relating to that development. In order to do this He must control all events, circumstances, incidents and minutia; and to absolutely control them. He must predestinate them to come to pass exactly as He decreed it in His infinite wisdom. That

"Each opening leaf, and every stroke,

Shall fulfill some deep design."

This is true of the dealings of God with Israel in whole and in part, individually and collectively. Then from the little town of Bethlehem there came the Ruler exactly as He predestinated and revealed Him. He spake as never man spake.

He is and forever shall be the Ruler in Israel. And of *"the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end,"* upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. *"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."* - Isaiah ix, 7.

He rules in the hearts of His people. He governs in absolute control; and as surely as the kingdom shall not be left to other people (Daniel ii, 44,) so surely the princely power shall be ever held in the hands of this eternal and Divinely

anointed King: *"and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."* - Revelation xix, 16.

"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Daniel speaks of Him in somewhat similar strain: **"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire."** - Daniel vii, 9.

Ancient of Days! Wonderful name! Co-equal with and co-equal to all days. Truly the goings forth of such a Character must have been *"from of old, from everlasting."* **"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water."** - Proverbs viii, 23, 24.

Every revelation of the wonders of His will, (His goings forth,) has assuredly been from everlasting. Yes, when there were no (earthly) depths, before the mortal hills were formed. The deep laid ways of truth eternal must necessarily have been from "of old from everlasting," in order to outlive the transitory and fast-passing things of time.

It is said of the living creatures Ezekiel 1:18, that **"their rings were full of eyes round about them four."** They could certainly see backward as well as forward; backward to the fountain source, and forward to the grand consummation: hence a man claiming to be a Gospel minister shows the ab-

surdity of such a claim, when he fails to see backward, *i.e.*, the eternal existence of the Church in Christ, the chosen seed thereof.

But we pass to the application of our subject in the travel of Israel to-day; **“for whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” - Romans xv, 4.**

Multiplied types have clearly revealed the same truth presented in the prophecy under consideration. We might quote almost without limit from type and from prophecy:

Amos says. **“O Lord God, cease, I beseech Thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? For he is small. “Amos vii, 5.** Again; **“Thus He shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in His hand. “He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose, Builder and Maker is God.”- Hebrews xi: 10.**

The revelation of this heavenly building shall be to the honour, to the praise, and to the glory of God; to the debasing of every false way, to the setting aside of all earthly means, to the destruction of all mortal hope, and to the wreck and ruin of every vain mortal expectation. God alone shall be glorified. Hence He selected a time when Israel had been brought low, selecting a little city from among her larger ones, selecting a manger and not a palace, electing a carpenter, and not a worldly prince; that it might be by free and sovereign grace, and not by works; that it might be

to the glory of God and not to the pride of man.

And as that King was thus made manifest so shall the subjects of His kingdom be made manifest. Hence from the lowest callings in life He selected His apostles, so it was said that *“they were unlearned and ignorant men.”* -Acts iv: 13.

And the same wondrous truth is shown in the calling of the subjects of this kingdom. **“Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?”- James ii, 5.** **“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.” - 1 Corinthians 1: 26-28.** How comforting is this to those who feelingly find themselves poor in spirit, foolish, not wise, but base and despised for their faith *in* the Truth which is hid from the world and its religions? These are such that are glad that *“no flesh should glory in His presence.”*

Sweet in the contemplation of a “good hope through grace,” the world of the despised and unlearned, the ignorant and yet well taught by that anointing, being numbered among those with

an unction and "needeth not to be taught" can rejoice in a free, full, and accomplished salvation.

In line with this wondrous and Divinely appointed way of developing His kingdom, it is His good pleasure to bring His people low, that He might manifest His saving power, and wondrous way without the help of flesh. **"And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."** - Judges vii, 2. **"I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."** - Deuteronomy xxxii, 39.

Thus the children of grace are brought to praise the God of Israel, and look to His preserving care. It is written; **"Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."** - Isaiah lxii 3. Again; **"Thou shalt no more be termed 'Forsaken;' neither shall thy land 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."** Assuredly is the church a *"crown of glory"* in the Lord's hand, for He keeps her in Gospel order and doctrinally purity. **"This people have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise."** - Isaiah :xliv: 21.

As brought down to the depths of spiritual poverty, despair, desolation, and death and raised to the heights of

glory unfading; as a people exhibiting His unceasing preserving care, they are to His praise and glory and He has prepared them to sing the wonders of His grace. **"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand."** Psalm cxlix: 6.

"Filled with the delight of such rapture we view."

The sorrows, and trials, and cares of this world,

A very small atom; and simply to show,

His wonders of love, and God's glory unfold."

"Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." - Psalms cxlix, 2.

William Middleton Smoot

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30. Roaring River Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location:

the meeting house is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, N.C. 28685. From I-77, Exit #93. Turn west on Zepher Road. Go about 3 miles and turn right on Mountain Park Road. Go through the 4 Way stop at Mountain Park. Go to the next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Road. Go about 200 yards and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles and turn left on Trap Hill Road. Go 200 yards and turn left on Roaring Gap Church Road. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Road. Go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

**Skewarkey Union
(Eastern Kehukee Association)**

Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday of April 29, 2012. The church is located on Hwy 17 in Williamston, N.C. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the corner of Weatherford Drive and Music St. Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in April 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC on Sunday April 29, 2012. Preaching service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Psalm 8:1.

**O Lord our Lord, how excellent
is thy name in all the earth! who hast
set thy glory above the heavens.**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2012

Bruce Smith, VA	25.00
M.L. Richardson, FL.....	5.00
Raymond Adams, VA	5.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Alvis & Gay Beacham, NC	25.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00
John Schulz, WY	5.00
Phillip Hash, VA	10.00
Maxey Delp, VA.....	10.00
James Knight, NC	25.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Banks Conner, VA.....	25.00
Hewatt Fleming, GA	5.00
David Weber, VA.....	5.00

OBITUARIES

ORA AGEE GUTHRIE

Again I attempt to write an obituary for another member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Sister Ora Agee Guthrie who passed away December 30, 2011. She is preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Herman Guthrie.

She is survived by her son, Shelton Guthrie, a daughter, Judy Perdue, and

grandchildren Doug Perdue and Anne McCrosby, along with her husband Eric McCrosby. She was born February 28th, 1915 to Floyd and Kitty Agee, and had 10 siblings: Elder Roy Agee, Roscoe Agee, Andrew Agee, Zora Adams, and Ruie Poff have preceded her in death. Surviving are Ruby Dyer, Doris Hawley, Frances Lewis, Madeline Bonham, and Floyd Agee, Jr.

Sister Ora came to Salem Church in April of 2002, by letter. She believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Due to her health she hadn't been able to come to church for some time. She was 96 years old at death. God blessed her with a long life and lovely family.

Funeral Services were held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, January 4th, 2012 in the Chapel of John M. Oakey and Son Funeral Home in Salem, Virginia. Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Carl Terry officiated. Internment followed at Sherwood Memorial Park.

We trust that our loss will be her eternal gain.

Written in love by:
 Mary Poff, Clerk
 Carl Terry, Moderator

Psalm 113:3.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

POETRY

FEBRUARY 1, 1898.

"THERE IS NO SPOT IN THEE."

Defiled though I am, and a sinner undone,

I have hope, and rejoice in the crucified One.

The blood of his cross speaketh thus unto me,

"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

Often my heart aches o'er inward uncleanness;

I am wearied, I faint, I yearn for completeness;

Thy righteousness, Jesus doth say, is of me;

"Thy art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

In myself I'm all blemishes, wrinkles and spots,

I have comeliness none, I'm a mass of vile blots;

The Lamb's precious blood is my soul's only plea,

And Christ in my heart says, "There is no spot in thee."

A song I would sing to the Lamb on the throne:

Jesus suffered and bled, all my sins to atone.

How blissful, how sweet, is his sweet
word to me,

"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no
spot in thee."

O, I'm all imperfection, a vile, dark
spot;

Unsightly, I am one of the "things that
are not."

I'm sinful, I'm nothing, yet something
I am,

Through the obedience, sufferings
and blood of the Lamb.

Amidst my temptations, my trials and
grief;

Let the truth of the gospel my soul
bring relief;

O speak to my heart, to a poor worm
like me,

"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no
spot in thee."

O, 'tis all through exceeding riches of
grace,

That I stand all complete 'neath the
smile of God's face.

The voice of the Lamb is such music
to me,

"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no
spot in thee."

The accuser whispers, Thou art a
dark spot;

I am pained, I am shamed, I can an-
swer him not.

At the word of my Lord he nonplussed
doth flee;

"Thou art all fair, my love, there is no
spot in thee."

FRED. W. KEENE.
North Berwick, Maine.

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JOHN 3: 11-15.

**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We
speak that we do know, and testify
that we have seen; and ye receive
not our witness.**

**If I have told you earthly things,
and ye believe not, how shall ye be-
lieve, if I tell you of heavenly things?**

**And no man hath ascended up
to heaven, but he that come down
from heaven, even the Son of man
which is in heaven.**

**And as Moses lifted up the ser-
pent 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.**

EDITORIAL

“This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me: There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.” Eccl. 9: 13-15.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is a revelation of the wisdom of God unto a child of God. About 3,000 years ago Solomon was shown, and was blessed to write down in a figure, some of the great mysteries of God concerning His Son, His church, His people, Satan and his purpose, and finally the great victory of God on behalf of His own. God gave Solomon a vision and a hope in the finished work of Christ Jesus the Lord. These same things have been revealed unto the children of God through the ages even down to our time. We trust that, by grace, we are looking back to the manifestation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came into the world in the flesh to save His people, with the same faith and hope with which Solomon and others looked forward.

The children of God are taught that the people of God are the fewest of all

people upon the face of this earth, that they are a remnant according to the election of grace. They are taught that these people are gathered together into a little city, which is the church of the living God. This little city is separate and apart from all the other cities of this world and has only a few men in it. **“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because straight *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”** This is the City, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This city is built upon the Rock, which is Jesus the Christ. And Jesus, who cannot lie or fail in a promise said that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. And what He said must necessarily come to pass. **“For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast.”**

This little City has been and now is under siege, and without are strong forces that have sought to destroy It, even Satan and his host. He has built great bulwarks against the walls trying to break them down and overcome the inhabitants. This is not a visible military force that is strong in the flesh, but rather is a mysterious working of iniquity that is only recognized by the children of God. And they only understand this according to the faith of the Son of God, which is given unto them. The blessed apostle said, **“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against**

spiritual wickedness in *high places*."

The devil works against the little city by way of doubts, fears, deceptions, evil thoughts and imaginations, lies and accusations along with the threats of death. But thanks be unto God, there was a poor wise man found within those walls, who by His wisdom was able to overcome all the wiles of the devil. That poor wise man is the Lord himself who dwells with His people, and who will never leave nor forsake them.

This poor man became poor that we might become rich. When one said he would follow Jesus, He said to him, "**The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.**" He had no earthly possessions. When He was being crucified, even the clothes He wore were taken from Him, and lots were cast to determine who should have them. The living Word of God, who made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, put off His glory, left heaven and immortal glory, and came down to earth and lived in poverty to deliver His people from all that would destroy them.

The poor man's wisdom was not for Him to come as an earthly king with great power and authority, but Jesus came as the lowly Lamb of God. He was born of a virgin according to the prophesy that went on before Him. He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, yet He was without sin. Although He could have asked His Father, and His Father could have sent twelve legions of angels to deliver Him from wicked men, He did not. Rather Jesus said, "**My kingdom is not of this world: if my**

kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight..." He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He took our sins unto Himself and was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. By His wisdom He defeated Satan, sin, death, and the grave.

The poor man's wisdom was to destroy the power of the devil by giving His life a ransom for many. Jesus willingly bore the wrath of God for the sins of His people that He loved with an everlasting love. By His death, He paid the price of redemption for His beloved bride, in order that no charge could ever again be brought against her. When Satan accuses her, Christ intercedes on her behalf showing that the sacrifice of Himself is sufficient to atone for her sins. Satan has no power to make his accusations stand.

The poor man's wisdom was to destroy the power of sin by placing His bride under grace, and not under the law. He fulfilled the law to the jot and the tittle by living the perfect life, and by canceling her sin debt with His life's-blood, and imputing His righteousness to her, thereby making His bride perfect in Him. It is written, "**For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.**" No longer does the law have any power over the children of God, because they are delivered from its curse. They no longer operate under the principle of you must taste not, touch not, and handle not. They now live by the rule

that all things are lawful for them, but all things are not expedient or profitable for them. The grace of God has nullified the curse of the law.

The poor man's wisdom was to break the power of death, by His resurrection from the dead. No man took His life from Him but He laid it down of Himself and He took it up again according to His word. No man could touch Jesus until He willingly gave Himself over to them. He was raised after three days and nights in the grave, and after that He appeared unto His disciples and unto above 500 witnesses at once, then he ascended into heaven. Death could not hold Him. He is alive forever more, and because He lives, you shall also live. He is now in heaven where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And from heaven He shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation.

The poor man's wisdom was to take away the seeming victory of the grave. Many multitudes have gone into the graves before us, and we shall soon follow them if the Lord of glory does not appear before we die. Death seems so final to the natural mind. We hear many saying that this life is all there is. They say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we shall die." The worldly wisdom is to enjoy life to the fullest. The worldly mind seeks to gather all the wealth possible, to seek the approval of men, and to live in pleasure. But the children of God are exhorted to love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and

the pride of life. This world is not your home. You are strangers and pilgrims here. You are only passing through. But it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment. We must all die, but there is a resurrection to life for all that have done good (by grace). And there is a resurrection to damnation for all that have done evil. The grave cannot hold your body any more than it held the body of Jesus. **"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."**

No man remembered that same poor man. **"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:"** Men in nature do not see or know any spiritual things because they are foolishness unto them - they are only spiritually discerned. Men in nature worship the creature more than, or rather than, the creator. They worship men and the works of men, and never remember or know that same poor man who God hath highly exalted and given a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and in earth and under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

to the glory of God the Father. They do not see or know that He will soon return in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints. But all shall know Him when He comes in great power and glory. In that day, the wicked shall cower in fear and in dread of destruction, but the elect shall exult in God with exceeding great joy.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; And has made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

But the wicked shall have quite a different experience. **“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”** Every man shall stand or fall according to his master. If the Lord is our Master, we shall surely stand. **“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”**

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

J. B. Farmer

3-25-2012

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Brother Hutchens:

As you see this is an old letter. It was published in a paper called "Zion's Witness", November 1887. As I read it, O what memories were stirred up in me, how all the sore, bitter trials, the adversities I then endured were remembered to me.

I have copied it out of a bound volume and it will make, I trust, good reading to some of the tried family of God.

This "Zion's Witness" was published by Arthur Wilcockson at Hull, England. It is not published now. He died about 1889.

I am yours in the Lord,
Frederick W. Keene.

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus:

This precious relationship, I hope, truly subsists between us. I feel that you have expressed in your letter that which I have realized in my own soul, and which I believe belongs only to the redeemed of the Lord. You speak of feeling often times as though you were as a partridge hunted in the mountains (1 Sam. 26:20), so that you are made to cry unto the Lord for salvation. This certainly is the predestined path that "the very elect" are appointed by their glorious and gracious God to walk in while in this world. "Ye shall have tribulation," is what our beloved Jesus has declared to be the heri-

tage of those who are truly His beloved and His own, and if we are called to walk in this way, to bear the marks of His blood-bought flock, to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, happy are we, and highly favored indeed!

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." Often my soul has been hunted and chased in the mountains. Satan has been a cruel hunter; and with his fiery darts, has often distressed my soul. Doubts and fears have often (and do still) pursued and harrassed my life. I am frequently weary, faint, and cast down.

For the last few months, O the trials that have been in my life, so many, so varied, and O the anguish, the trouble, the sore distress I have been called to endure! Even last night I was in the deeps, in painful darkness, and there came an insinuation into my mind that I was like Saul whom the Lord had forsaken, and whom He answered not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. I thought this is very hard. But the enemy was not allowed to triumph altogether, for there was a still small voice which said, "Neither give place to the devil". This delivered me from this snare, but O, the trouble that I was still in, I could not pray! I felt to be overwhelmed (but, blessed be God, when I knew not where I was, or what would become of me, "Thou knewest my path" (Psalm 113:3). I could not sleep, because of my trouble, and while feeling my utter weakness, and plunged down in great discouragement and darkness, the adversary the devil, came in like a flood, and as with a voice of a roaring

lion, said: "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him" (Psalm 71:11). So sudden, and sharp was this, that I cried out aloud. My dear wife inquired of me, "What is the matter? What is the matter? What made you cry out like that?" I was so filled with pain, so distressed, so cast down, that I could make her no reply. Today I have felt a little eased, and comforted in this blessed portion of the Scriptures of truth: "By this I know that Thou favorest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." I cannot with pen and ink, dear brother, narrate the troubles of my soul. What trials I have passed through, especially in the last six years!

There is no creature to whom I can unbosom them-much is yet so dark, so very trying, but I have been wonderfully favored. The Lord has been very tender, and of abundant goodness to me, a poor sinner: and but a short time ago, the unchanging, glorious Lord said to my soul: **"The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry"** (Hab. 2:3).

In how many ways I have been led to trace the hand of the Lord leading me through cutting and cruel trials, and I have been brought into sweet reconciliation to the good pleasure of the Lord concerning me, and have proved the word true with which the Holy Spirit has often comforted my soul: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Your life, also, you tell me is much occupied in inquiring of the

Lord. Like the Queen of Sheba you are constrained to come, being drawn by the Lord; and such is the pressing need you are made to feel that you find it in your heart to inquire of, and commune with a greater than Solomon, even Jesus, of all that is in your heart (1 Kings 10:2).

Many are your inquiries, and hard your questions, altogether above what you or any creatures is able to settle and determine. But our beloved Emmanuel alone can answer all our inquiries, and fill our heart with His own comfort and peace.

This inquiring of the Lord is a precious evidence that we are the seed of Jacob, and they shall not seek the face of the Lord their God in vain. When Rebekah was with child, "The children struggled together within her, and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord" (Gen 25:22). How often, on account of the warfare between the old and the new man, the flesh and the Spirit, so bitter are the conflicts, so many questionings arising, are we led by the Spirit to inquire, "If it be so (that I am a child of God, if the object of Jehovah's love, special care, and infinite delight), Why am I thus?" Why thus plagued? and precious is the season with us when it is shown to us that it is in the Shulamite that there is to be seen, "As it were, the company of two armies" (Solomon's Song 6:13).

David sings: **"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple"** (Psalm 27:4). This is what in a measure has

been, and is, and will be the experience of the living family of God while here in this world of conflict and tribulation. All through the record in the Holy Scriptures this is declared to be a marked characteristic of the elect of God, to inquire of the Lord. Thousands of times has my poor soul been thus led, and O how very tender have been the dealings, the manifestations, of Jehovah's love to thy soul, but I have often ungrateful proved, often rebelled, but I have been brought down many times with sore travail, and cruel trials, and even now while I am writing this I feel to say, "Let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in His sight." Trials greater than I have yet known, await me, for the Lord has told me so. I sometimes shrink. I ask, "How shall I endure? Not so, my Father." Just now this word is whispered, I hope by the Lord, in my heart: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." I would desire in my heart, O Lord, to say: "Thy will be done."

I am not fitted to write just now to you, and it seems strange that I, who have been down in the deeps, in such darkness, temptations and bewilderment of soul, should have written as much as I have. If it be the Lord's will, I should like to hear from you again, of your welfare in the things of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours in tribulation,
Frederick W. Keene
February 18, 1887

The Lone Pilgrim, March 1929,
Vol. 7, No. 71

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

This article was distributed by Elder Stanley Phillips of Mississippi and we thought the readers of the "Signs" would enjoy it.

Editors

[It is likely the following Article was written by Jacob Winchel; the committee members that completed and recommended it was composed of Elders Gilbert Beebe, William Housel, Isaac Hewitt, John St. John and Hiram Horton. This Article is the Circular Letter of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association of New York, 1862.- SCP].

In accordance with our former practice, we address you this, our annual epistle of love, in which we desire to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of things which you already know, and to exhibit from the Scriptures some of those things which tend to everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. In order to do this, we will ask your attention to Psalm lxxiv. 12:

"For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth."

In the context the psalmist speaks of the desolate state of Zion: that the people of God were brought under the dominion of their enemies, who had broken down the carved work of the Sanctuary of God, and that God's people were made to howl, and to lament, in consequence. But in the midst of this desolation, a ray of hope was left them

"*God is my King of old,*" &c.

It is not infrequently the case that the children of God are brought to the test to know what their God is to them. The answer of faith assures them that all other gods are idols, but our God, the God of Zion, is in the heavens, and He is the King of old: He hath done whatsoever He pleased; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. To claim that God is *our King*, is to claim that we are subjects of His kingdom, and to acknowledge our obligation of loyalty to His divine government.

All earthly kings and their subjects are alike mortal, for they must all die: but the subjects, or members of the kingdom of our God, shall live and reign with their King, forever; they shall never die. Our King is the self-existent Jehovah, God over all, and blessed forevermore. "*I will extol Thee, my King, and my God.*" He is of old, "*from everlasting and to everlasting He is God.*" Our God is the Creator of the heavens and of the earth and of all things; He made the day and the night, the summer and the winter; yea, He "*hath made all things for Himself even the wicked for the day of evil; and all His works shall praise Him,*" and all His saints shall bless His holy name. His dominion extends over universal nature — and all things, from the fall of empires to the falling of a sparrow, to the fall of an hair of our heads, are under His immediate and personal control; Therefore, the subjects of our King may confidently sing, for,

"Not a single shaft can hit.

Until the God of love sees fit."

This assurance lays the foundation

of everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Our King sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be; He "*worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.*" Hell and death, and heaven, and earth, are all under His absolute power and dominion. With Him are the issues of life and of death; When He created the world, He spake the word and it stood fast — He commanded, and it was done. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament shows His handy work. All this is realized in the assurance that God is our King. All His works praise Him.

His sparkling glory shines in all our eyes behold, and causes us to desire to bow low at His feet and acknowledge His universal dominion. Who would desire to worship less? In all things, the less must yield to the greater, and so in His reign over nature, and in grace, "*He worketh salvation in the earth.*" Our King is the God of salvation, neither is there salvation in any other. "*There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*"

God is my shield and my glory, and the lifting up of my head; He is the first and the last in salvation; He went forth in the eternal counsel of His own will, and in the everlasting purpose of His sovereign grace — made all the arrangements of the fabric of salvation, and in His own counsel wisely ordered all in the hands of our blessed Mediator, in whom the church of God had her eternal life, "*which was hid with Christ in God.*"

All the rights of the eternal throne are secured in Jesus Christ, so that neither wicked men nor devils can effect

them. The very wrath of men shall praise Him, and the remainder of their wrath He will restrain; consequently all the subjects of His kingdom are forever secure from all their rage, and all their enemies shall loose their aim. To accomplish this, He bowed His heavens and came down—He rode upon a chariot, and did fly upon the wings of the wind; He appeared in a body of flesh, and manifested Himself as our Days-Man, who could lay His hands on both. With one hand He takes hold of the throne; the Father says to Him: *“Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of Thy kingdom is a right scepter.”* With the other hand He takes the poor feeling sinner, draws him out of many waters, and all their sins and sorrows, their shame and disgrace, He bore in His own body on the tree, and He arose from the dead for their justification, and after forty days ascended up on high!

“Thence He arose, ascended high,

And showed our feet the way:

Up to the Lord our flesh shall rise

At the great rising day.”

Christ is our Resurrection, and our Life: He is our King, and His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom!

“Jesus reigns, and heaven rejoices!
Jesus reigns, the God of love!”

The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and all dominions and powers shall serve and obey Him.

“Her walls are strength, and at her gates,

A guard of heavenly warriors waits;

Nor shall her firm foundation move,
Fix’d on His counsel and His love.”

What a source of consolation is this to the children of grace! He that made Israel never slumbers nor sleeps! Let Israel trust in Him that made him, who rideth upon the heavens in her help, and in His excellency on the sky. The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms: This is the Mount Zion over which God, and His glory shall be seen over them. All His subjects speak of His power and talk of His glory. In His kingdom there are no deaths, nor sorrowings, nor crying — their peace is like a river, and their joy is like an overflowing stream. In this kingdom they eat the Bread of Heaven and drink of the rivers of pleasure. Here they all speak the pure language of grace, and all speak the same things, which no others can understand. No discordant notes are heard. They all sing the praise of their God and King. Their theme is and ever was salvation by the free and sovereign grace alone, which they ascribe wholly to Him that hath loved us, and chosen us, and predestinated us to the adoption of children, and preserved us *in Christ Jesus, and called us with an holy calling.* They have no confidence in the flesh. The shout of a King is amongst them. In this kingdom a King reigns in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment. The Law goeth forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem which is above. Here the willing and obedient subjects follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Here the ministry of the word and all the gifts for the perfecting of the kingdom of Christ

are found, and nowhere else. Their King is the King of peace, and King of righteousness and strength. Such is their Redeemer, the Lord of the whole earth.

"Then let our souls in Zion dwell,
Nor fear the wrath of Rome or hell."

Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth - let nations dash each other in pieces - let the earth be removed out of its place, and the sea roar with the swellings thereof, yet undismayed and undaunted we can look up to our God and King.

Dear brethren, this is our high and holy vocation. If the Lord be our King, let us make it manifest in our walk and deportment. Though times grow dark and terrors spread widely around the earth, let His name be our Strong hold in the time of trouble.

"God is my soul's eternal Rock."

Obey the King of Zion — exhort one another to love and good works. Be often at the Mercy Seat, humbled as in the dust, as becomes us. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts - may He be your fear and your dread. And may a sense of what He has wrought in, and done for you, be the theme to move your tongues and inspire your songs continually, to sound His praise. Study the law of your King from day to day. Obey His precepts and walk in His ordinances. Think of the glory that is to be revealed in us at His coming, and the revelation of His glory, when He shall come with His mighty Angels to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not our Lord Jesus Christ. When He shall come to be admired by all who love His appearing, and

adored by all who believe, then God shall show who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Then shall He deliver the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. Then shall we see Christ and be like Him. This honor will be conferred on all the subjects of His glorious Kingdom.

Loren P. Cole, *Moderator*

PROVERBS 24:13-19.

My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste:

So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:

For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Lest the Lord see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked.

“And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” - Joel ii, 32.

Eight centuries were to pass away before the accomplishment of this inspired prophecy, yet notice the assurance and absolute certainty with which the prophet speaks: *“And it shall come to pass.”* The declaration is worthy of the great and sovereign power from whence it comes, for it is a message from the throne of God, it is as we are informed in the opening verse of the prophecy, **“The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel.”** The declaration bears the unmistakable evidence of sovereign power. Who but the eternal God of Israel could speak thus? No God who had left a single event to devolve upon *chance* could thus speak. It carries us back to the great Jehovah whose sovereign sway extends over all worlds, creatures and things, temporal or eternal, and the power of darkness as well as light. He is *JEHOVAH*, the self-existing God; and when we speak of Him as Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, we do not use such words for mere form’s sake, or in an idle manner, but desire to convey our knowledge of His Infinite wisdom and boundless power, the God who is present everywhere, and nothing can be hidden from His all-searching gaze. The revelation that He has been pleased to make of Himself informs us, **“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.”

The message that is delivered from His throne must therefore bear the unmistakable impress of His sovereign power. Joel, eight hundred years before, could speak with the same assurance as Peter, who in the opening hours of the fulfillment of this prophecy, declare: *“This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.”*

Firm are the words His prophets give,

Sweet words on which His children live;

Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spake and spread the skies abroad.”

Not only were the events perceived in the text and its connection foretold, but the very time in which they were to transpire. Peter, quoting from this prophecy, informs us, *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God.”* To this agrees the testimony in Ecclesiastes, that there is *“a time to every purpose under the heaven.”* The purposes of our God will assuredly be accomplished, each in its proper and appointed time. The *“last days”* referred to by Peter were the closing days of the Jewish dispensation, when the legal heavens were to be rolled away. There is a peculiar solemnity in the expression, *“the last days.”* The legal heavens, filled with just and righteous indignation, had long looked down upon a people who were

constantly engaged in violating the Law. Dark clouds had long been gathering, and all over the legal firmament were written the awful chastisement of the just and righteous God upon the people who had violated His law and trampled upon His covenant. The fountains of the great deep were about to be broken up, the windows of heaven opened, and the righteous anger of a just and holy God poured out upon the Jewish nation. **“And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”** - Joel 2:30-32.

“Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for *it is nigh at hand.*” A “day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness.” What strong figures are used here; what signs of awful importance are presented; the darkened heavens filled with fire and smoke, and a gathered nation trembling in the darkness of despair. This, Peter said, was fulfilled at the Pentecost’s baptism of cloven tongues. We will turn for a moment from the fulfillment of these things in the closing days of the Jewish dispensation, to their fulfillment in the experience of every redeemed sinner.

The “last days” come upon his soul;

the closing hours of the law-system’s “do this and live.” The legal struggle arrive. It is a time of midnight terror, the heavens are filled with awful fire, *“the pangs of hell gat hold of my soul,”* and signs of destruction, and he trembles before the revelation of the law’s holiness and his own sins. Where shall he look, or whither flee? The storm in its fury breaks suddenly upon his guilty soul, sweeping away his every refuge, overflowing all his hiding places and excuses and bearing him swiftly onward upon the dark river of death. His urgent necessity and deep distress forces him to cry out for mercy! The conflict is often concealed from his nearest friends; they meet him in life’s daily duties, sometimes with a forced smile upon his countenance, and little think of the fearful storm that is raging within his soul. But such an one rather seeks solitude, where the pent-up emotions of his heart find utterance in deep groans and cries unto God.

It is to such an individual as this that the promise of the above text belongs, **“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”** I desire to notice more particularly the *calling on the name of the Lord*. It is not the *cause*, but the *evidence* of life. Through the light of spiritual life eternal, the sinner is brought to see his true standing as a justly condemned sinner. He cries out under the bondage of sin. The felt-need of deliverance is itself the cry. *“Lord, save me!”* cried Peter, as he began to sink. It is said that a certain woman worshiped the Lord, saying, *“Lord, help me!”* These were but the expressions of what was *felt* within. It is the cry of the

soul to which I refer, and that cry is in the very need that one so sensibly feels of salvation from the throne of God. "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," is the constant cry of his heart, while the burden of sin rests upon him, and gloomy terror spreads around him. He has been taught that "vain is the help of man;" has come to the end of all creature ability; has climbed to the top of the highest mountain of legal merit, and the waters have still overflowed him there.

Unknown to him, and step by step, the Lord has brought him on, until the appointed hour of His great deliverance has at last arrived. And now the strong tower of salvation by sovereign free grace opens to his view, the *name of the Lord*. This is the name that is "above every name." "Neither is there salvation in any other;. for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Through the heart-felt experience to which I have referred, the poor struggling sinner finds shelter in the "name of the Lord." Nor shall any who come to Jesus in this way ever be turned empty away.

"Such news shall ne'er
Be told in Zion's street,
That some poor soul fell in despair,
And died at Jesus' feet."

The assertion is positive, "they shall be delivered." The word shall is used five times in the text, and twice in this portion of it. In the first instance it is said, they shall call. It is not left to their choice or decision then. In the next place

it is said, they shall *be delivered*. There is therefore no uncertainty about it. The matter is irrevocably fixed. Nor can the vile rantings of the ungodly, or the powers of hell below, prevail to break the eternal decrees of God.

I desire now to offer a few thoughts upon the *deliverance*. How great and glorious is the sight that falls upon the enraptured attention of the sinner delivered from the bondage of sin!

"Lo, from yonder opening skies
What beams of dazzling glory
spread."

The burden of sin falls from his heart, the deep thunderings of Sinai are hushed, and the radiant light of the Gospel breaks through the legal heavens, filling his soul with the never ceasing song of praise. Having changed the scene! The terrors of midnight must give place to the joys of noon; bondage to liberty, and the sorrows of death, to the joys of life eternal love. I have, however, met with a number of lovers of Gospel Truth who are greatly troubled because their conviction has not been as deep, and their deliverance as bright as some others have expressed. They were troubled because of sin, and were unable to extricate themselves from the horrible pit, and have a perfect hope of previous deliverance. They had thought that they shall never be grieved again, but sin is yet a disturber of their peace.

Yet it is still Jesus who is made unto them as their Savior, for their daily exercise is the *fruit* of that revelation. The saints of our God spend much of their time in their after-experience in "calling on the name of the Lord." Their troubles

are *different* from what they were at first; but they come again into straitened places, from which the power of God can alone deliver them. They need His guiding presence ever. They call upon Him for counsel in their hour of need -and they are always a "needy people." They desire to live upon His word and lean upon His arm in all their temporal journey. When their soul faints within them they cry unto Him for help. When temptations arise and the plagues of their natural heart are exposed to their sight, to whom shall they flee but unto Jesus and His righteousness? When the sorrows of life fall upon them, and the fiery darts of the adversary disturb their peace, where shall they find refuge but in the tower of salvation! So in all of their distresses and temptations they call upon His name; "*for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said.*" This clause of the text directs us to the great and only source from which deliverance or salvation flows. The deliverance of the text is confined exclusively to Mount Zion and Jerusalem; that is, to the church of the Living God. The psalmist informs us that "*There is a river, the streams thereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.*" The river does not pass through Babylon, but its healing streams are confined exclusively to the "*city of God.*" So with the salvation of the text, it *shall be in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem.* The salvation of the redeemed family is in the death and resurrection of our exalted Redeemer. Living waters go out from Jerusalem, and burdened souls are

made to relate to the chosen witnesses of our God. These chosen witnesses have ever been few, compared to the great number who know not the Truth as it is in Christ.

The Savior refers to His church as the "*little flock,*" and bids them to "*fear not.*" But in the aggregate they are an "innumerable number that no man can number," "*of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.*" The Lord knows each and all of them. It is written that He has numbered the stars of the heavens and call them *by name*; hence it is a small matter that He has numbered His children and "*knows them that are His.*" "*The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His.* He has declared that He will both search and seek them out, as a shepherd doth his sheep. In the text, they are spoken of as "*the remnant whom the Lord shall call.*"

I desire to notice the principle upon which His call is based. We are informed in the letter to the Romans that those 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" - *i.e.*, the very same that He foreloved, He predestinated to be conformed to Jesus, and the exact same that He foreknew and predestinated to this conformity are the very ones that He called to life and salvation. We must note, that none others are so foreloved, predestinated to conformity to Jesus or called to salvation. We see by this, as well as many other declarations

of Scripture, that foreknowledge and predestination precede the calling to life and salvation. And that those, and only those, who were foreknown and predestinated "to be conformed to the image of His Son," are called. Jude writes to "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." It is comforting to trace the way of salvation back to its eternal source, and contemplate the everlasting foundation upon which the salvation of the church rests. Here we see the broad Rock of eternal election which the gates of hell will not prevail. We find here that all the saints were chosen in Christ, and are informed this choice was "before the foundation of the world." - *Ephesians 1:4*. This, of course has reference to their spiritual existence in Christ. In the development of the church we find them manifested as sons and daughters of Adam's corrupt race, and each and every one of them in the appointed time of our God is called to the knowledge of this great salvation. They had from everlasting this salvation vouchsafe to them; and it was fully wrought out by the blessed Savior in His earthly advent for them. By His sacrifice they had a legal claim upon it, through they knew it not. But by this heavenly and unique calling, they are brought to the knowledge of what Christ has accomplished in their behalf, and this fills them with joy and endless praise to their loving Savior.

We see from the Scriptures that I have quoted that they were foreknown IN Christ, and predestinated to be conformed to His image - a spiritual image - and that the calling is the consequence

of this precious blessing IN Christ and His work of love; that they were "sanctified by God the Father,"; from eternity, and in that realm, they were "preserved IN Christ Jesus," and eventually in time, they are "called." These are important points in the knowledge of salvation. But let us inquire whether or not the "calling" to which I refer is based upon our works or our decision.

If it rests upon the foreknowledge of God and His predestination, how can it be also resting upon the act of the corrupt creature? Where would be the predestination in that, unless it was also held that the *creature* was predestinated to obey, which is not at all the popular idea? Again, if based upon the works of man, and if, as the Scriptures inform us, "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually," where are those works to come from? Certainly not from the heart "that is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Paul, in his letter to the Galatians (verse v. 19-21), informs us what the works of the flesh are. No one, I suppose, expects to be saved by those works he enumerates here. "They that are in the flesh," says Paul, "cannot please God." - *Romans viii, 8*. The child of grace, instead of being saved thereby, hopes to be saved even from his works, too. It was his works that caused him to flee from self to find a hiding place from his bondage to sin and death. Eternity and time lie open to the view of Him with whom we have to do. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" says the psalmist. "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there:

if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." - Psalm cxxxix. 7-10.

But let us proceed to consider the *fruit or evidence* produced by this call in the experience of the redeemed sinner. Through it he is brought to realize his justly condemned condition as a sinner in the sight of God. He is made to groan and cry by reason of sin, and finds no rest from the plagues of his own heart. The sins of his past life are opened to his view, and beyond his constant transgressions is the depravity of his nature itself. There is written upon his heart the expressive line,

"Show pity, Lord; O Lord, forgive.
Let a repenting rebel live.
Are not Thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in Thee?"

He finds no rest in his own works of self-righteousness; they turn to ashes in his grasp. I am confident that no person has ever experienced the deep, distressing sorrow for sin of which I write, only a "redeemed sinner." The natural man knows nothing whatever of a heart-felt sorrow for sins, though a natural man with a natural religion may speak somewhat against it at times. When caught in the snare of his own evil doings, he may fear the consequences of sin; this however, is vastly different from the *hatred of sin* experienced by a redeemed and saved sinner.

Oft times the peaceful answer of his pleas to his God may seem a long time coming, but it will come at the proper

time. Of course, the call of which I write is not an *invitation* tricksters imagine, as understood in the natural religious world. It is, as I have stated, the *sovereign, irresistible voice of God*, the mandate of Heaven, that falls with power upon the living soul of a living sinner. And the deliverance that he experiences in the Lord's holy mountain lifts his feet out of the horrid pit and the miry clay, causes him to breathe the pure air of Gospel liberty, and look with exceeding joy to the bright hour when he shall be delivered forever from the "*body of this death.*" He has come "*unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels;*" while all over the Gospel heavens is written in living light, Liberty, Eternal Liberty, *from the bondage of sin, and Life forevermore.*

Yours in Gospel bonds,
WM. M. Smoot,
Occoquan, Va., Feb. 14, 1880

PSALM 86: 1-4.

**Bow down thine ear, O Lord,
hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.**

**Preserve my soul; for I *am* holy:
O thou my God, save thy servant that
trusteth in thee.**

**Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for
I cry unto the daily.**

**Rejoice the soul of thy servant:
for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my
soul.**

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON THE MOUNTAIN

Signs of the Times, JUNE, 1938

IN MY MIND the transfiguration on the mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will" but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that He took with Him up into the mountain were the same three that He took with Him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of His transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and James must have not been of the progressive type of Christians we have today, who seem to think Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep" both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his rai-

ment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."

The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses, and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:1; Ezra 6:18). The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the draught to king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophet, by whom God manifested Himself as God. He later slew these prophets at Kishon (1 Kings 18). God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). He was the most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). In meditation, we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept, and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prophecy, saying that these

requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the prophets (Elias); I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. In my experiences I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiastes 12:18, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities (Isaiah 40:2). Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"** (Eph. 2:8-10). Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus.

In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law, prophecy and grace were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind the God of heaven spoke thus from the

cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The requirements of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

"Jesus was left alone." Yes, He was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, therefore, "Hear ye Him." What do we hear Him saying? We hear Him saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." "I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). We are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). There-

fore, the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus shoulders and He bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding His precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by His grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

Elder E. J. Lambert

**“IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?”
JEREMIAH VIII. 22.**

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to

Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, “For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.” And then he demands, “Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for com-

fort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up into Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2012

Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Eld. Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Betty Loville, NC	5.00
Alvis Shelton, VA	5.00
Flora Vest, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	25.00
Donald Arrington, NC	5.00

HEBREWS 12:1-4.

WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of wittlesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience, the race that is set before us,

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.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

OBITUARIES

MABEL LOUISE YORK RAY
Feb. 21, 1917 - Dec. 31, 2011

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Hwy 700, Ruffin, NC is saddened at the loss of our dear sister, Mabel Louise York Ray. She passed away December 31, 2011 at ninety-four (94) years of age.

Sister Mabel and her late husband Brother Jesse W. Ray were both members of Dan River Church. He joined the church May 25, 1965 and died February 3, 1983. She joined the church May 24, 1964 and was a very special and devoted member - through the years. Because of her health situation, it was necessary during the past few years for her to live away with family; and therefore was not able to attend service very often. In October 2011 with the assistance of family and friends she was able to meet with the Brethren once again for what turned out to be her final service at Dan River Church.

Sister Mabel was the daughter of the late Elmer and Martha Lusadie Williamson York. She was born in Greensboro, NC on February 21, 1917 and is survived by a daughter, Martha Louise Ray Davisson (George Nelson) of El Cajon, CA; and a son Jesse Willard Ray, Jr. (Dianne) of Pelzer, SC. Also surviving is a host of grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was preceded in death also by a sister Hazel York Yow.

Sister Mabel was a strong and firm believer of the "Word". She was blessed as was her husband, to love and appreciate the Primitive Baptist Doctrine. Sister Mabel loved the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and enjoyed so much mingling with those of like precious faith. You could witness to the fact she loved her Lord and Brethren. What a privilege it was to have had the opportunity to know and be a part of this sister's life.

This dear sister lived a long and active life. Until her health declined she had many ties in this area. Home though was really the Greensboro area where she was born, lived, and raised her family.

Her funeral was held in Greensboro, NC at Lambeth-Troxler Chapel on Saturday January 7, 2012. The interment followed at the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, 8864 Hwy 700, Ruffin, NC.

Elder Thomas Solomon, her pastor, conducted the service. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in the Church Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

We will all miss this dear sister but realize this earthly loss is her heavenly gain. May God reconcile us all to his will.

It is requested that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family and that one copy be forwarded for publication in the "Signs of the Times."

Written at the request of the Church
John Collie, Deacon

DORIS SAWYER

(Wife of Elder Joe Sawyer)

On February 24, 2012 our Heavenly Father called my precious mother home to be with him. She was 83 years old. She was the sweetest, kindest and loving mother. My family and I loved her very much and will miss her every day.

Mom was born and raised in Pitt County. Her parents were the late Chester Arthur Avery and Martha Margaret Tripp Avery. She was a graduate of Winterville High School. She retired with 30 years with Proffitt's Department Store and came back and worked part time till she was 76 years old. After her years working with the public, she started making and selling delicious cakes and was called the Cake Lady.

Mom married the love of her life, Joseph Lee Sawyer on February 20, 1947. She and my dad celebrated 65 years of marriage on February 20, 2012, four days later she passed away. They had three children, Pete Sawyer, Billy Sawyer and Judy Harrison. Her family meant everything to her. Mom and dad loved each other so much and where you saw one you saw the other. My dad has always said that mom was his biggest supporter. She and dad had the kind of marriage that everyone wants. The love and devotion that they had was so very special.

Mom loved going to the Primitive Baptist churches and she loved all the church people. She was very dedicated to helping and cooking for the unions and the associations. She enjoyed having the church people come home with her. She

always had a beautiful smile on Sundays when I would pick her and daddy up for church. She was very devoted.

I realize a mother's love is forever. As a child I couldn't comprehend or fully realize the meaning of my mother's love and how tender and wise she was. Her patience and forgiveness was part of everyday. The little things she did were so important. The older I get I realize her love and loyalty and other special things I hold so dear to my heart. Her memories will keep her so near to me.

It is so hard to lose someone you love but even harder when it is your mother whose place no one can fill. Even though it may not seem quite fair and though I may not understand, I will always think of all the times we had together and the joy it brought to me. I feel that God will wipe the tears from my eyes and my family's eyes and we will begin to go on with our lives, but we will think of her everyday. I feel that my mom has been carried to that perfect eternal glorious home to be with Jesus and she will have a perfect peace forever. I do feel that the Lord has a purpose and a reason for everything and we are not supposed to question his works but accept it as God's will.

Her funeral was conducted at Farmers Funeral Service in Ayden, NC on February 27, 2012 by Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Harold Pittman. The service was concluded at the cemetery at Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church by all three Elders.

Written by her daughter Judy Harrison on 3-20-2012 who loved her very much and will miss her.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Hungry, and faint, and poor,
Behold us, Lord again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain.

Thy word commands us nigh,
Or we must starve indeed;
For we no money have to buy,
No righteousness to plead.

The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! Hear the prayer of faith, and grant
That we may eat and live.

Newton.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/2012
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

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EDITORIAL

**THE WOLF ALSO SHALL
DWELL WITH THE LAMB.**

Isaiah 11:6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

There are many who believe that this prophecy relates to the second coming of Christ and that all people as well as animals will dwell together in peace. However, the context

of this prophecy relates to the birth of Christ and His work in and for His people. The first five verses read "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." The stem of Jesse sets forth David, the Branch is Christ, and the rod sets forth the kingship of Christ who shall reign in righteousness, as it is a symbol of power and authority. Revelation 19:15-16 says, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword; that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**"

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb." The wolf is the fleshly, carnal nature of humanity. While all humanity has the wolf nature, all humanity does NOT possess the lamb. Only the Lord's elect is blest with the lamb. The carnal mind

is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God and indeed cannot be. The Apostle Paul writes that by nature we were children of wrath even as others. He says that we were dead in trespasses and sins. We walked according to the course of this world having our conversation in the lusts of our flesh and fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. We all have a wolf nature in the flesh. As Christ said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." As the carnal mind is enmity against God, so is the wolf against the lamb. By nature the wolf is the greatest enemy of the sheep. It seeks to destroy and devour sheep. Christ said in John 10:12 that the wolf catches and scatters the sheep. Also in Matthew 7:15 Christ says "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." **Ezekiel 22:27 reads, "Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain."**

There is no clearer example of this wolf nature than the Apostle Paul when he was known as Saul before his conversion. The scripture says that he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He obtained letters from the high priest authorizing him to go to the synagogues in Damascus and bind men and women who were believers in Christ and bring them to Jerusalem. According to the scriptures, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and dragged

men and women to prison. His reputation was that of an evil man. This was a manifestation of the wolf.

But on the road to Damascus, a light from heaven shined round about him and he fell to the earth. He was brought down to the earth and shown that he was a sinner as black as the dust of the earth from which he was formed. Paul experienced the law being applied to him which was a condemnation of death. He says in Romans that he was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died. O dear children of God, can you not witness, at least to some extent, with this man when you think back over your life?

A voice spoke to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" As Saul had done these terrible acts to the least of the Lord's little ones, he had done them unto Him. Saul said "**who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**" The Lord had pricked the heart of Saul. Have you experienced these pricks and you began to wonder what was happening? You felt that maybe you were losing your mind! Saul trembled and was astonished at what had taken place. In his experience he would cry "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The wolf had been revealed to Saul and now the lamb had come. He experienced the love and mercy of God, was filled with the Holy Ghost and was baptized. The Lord had told Ananias that Saul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord to bear His name before the Gentiles,

and kings, and the children of Israel for the Lord would shew Saul how great things he must suffer for His name's sake. Now the wolf dwelled with the lamb.

Christ is the Lamb of God as John the Baptist proclaimed. He stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. As Isaiah described Him, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."

You have the lamb within you. The Apostle Paul writes in **Romans 8:8-11**, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ *be* in you, the body in dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." You are a new creature in Christ." **Corinthians 5:17**, "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he* is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The fruit of the Spirit describes a little lamb or sheep which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. Isaiah did not say there would be peace between the wolf and the lamb, but that they would dwell together. You know this is true from your

own experience. This is the old man and the new man, the carnal or fleshly man and the spiritual man.

The same analogy is true for the other animals. Only the Lord's people bear this cross which is the flesh against the spirit. As Christ said in **John 14:16-18**, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; *even* the Spirit of Truth; whom the would cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

"A little child shall lead them." Isaiah also prophesied "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." This child is Christ. **Revelation 12:5** "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne."

As Christ said, you must be born again and His elect experience a virgin birth of Christ in them, the hope of glory. He leads His people out of darkness and unbelief into His marvelous light of truth and understanding.

As the Apostle Paul writes in **Ephesians 2:1**, "And you *hath* he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

A lowly, little beggar
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Tony,

I am a sister of Elder Julian Williams, deceased. My residence is at a retirement home in Danville. I do enjoy The Signs. Do you have any additional writings of Elder D.V. Spangler?

He was pastor of Malmaison Church when I was able to first understand the doctrine.

Also he attended my baptism as I had often seem him in a dream.

In love,
Naomi W. Houser

4-5-2012

Mr. Tony Horton,

I see it is time for me to renew to the Signs for 1 year – use balance of check as you see fit.

Continue to enjoy the Signs very much – especially the Editorials and Voices from the Past – Some of the letters I read over and over. Would never want to be with out the Signs.

May the Lord continue to bless.

Sincerely,
Roland G. Allen

3-27-2012

To Mr. Horton,

I wanted to let you know, my mother, Jane Susan Carroll died on March 16 at 103 years of age. She

was buried in Ard Community in Yell county. Her service was in the funeral home Chapel. The Chapel was full with family and friends. We had a blessing to have her for so many years with a good mind. Her mind failed her in the last few days. We shall miss her. I know she's well and happy now.

She read her March issue of Signs of the Times. She looked forward to receiving it each month. She loved reading about people she knew.

Thank you,
Her daughter Janelle Tatum

April 5, 2012

Dear Bro. Cleo & Bro. Horton,

Enclosed find my check for \$15.00 to renew my subscription for the "Signs of the Times".

I am so glad to get it each month. God bless all of you that send it out to us each month.

A sister in hope,
Frances Brinkley

4-17-2012

Dear Brother Tony,

Please renew my subscription for 4 more years. I know I've run a little bit late with this.

Please forgive I'm getting older and forgetful. I have always enjoyed this paper.

In Christian Love,
Gracy Goodman

Dear Brother Horton,

It is time to renew Signs of the Times, April, I went to Springfield Church on Saturday night, second week-end of April 1968 and told those dear people I hoped I loved them. They accepted me with love. On 4th Sunday in April I was baptized at Weatherford Church. I love to think on these things: the dear brothers and sisters and wonderful sermons praising God. I enjoy Signs very much. May He lead us in the path of righteousness and may God be pleased to continue blessings needful for the Signs of the Times.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

Dear Bro. Horton, and Editors, of
the Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find ck. In the amount of \$30.00 for 2 years renewel, to the Signs of the Times. Use the rest as needed.

I enjoy reading the writings of the Ministers, and other able writers, who are blessed of the Lord, to write the truth as it is in our Dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I feel to have been shown many times over, what a wretched sinful condition that I am in. And as the Apostle Paul said, in Romans, 7, and 24th. Oh wretched Man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? These words of the apostle seem to dwell with me a lot, in my travels here in

this world of troubles, and sorrows.

Tis a point I long to know, am I His, or not. And if I be one of His chosen ones. The least of all, I feel to be. My hope that seems so small at times, and I am made to wonder if I have a hope. Yet I would not trade it for anything in this world. Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; from whom all blessings flow. 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.

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion city of our God, Wherein lies our hope, that when this mortal life shall cease, and time shall be no more, that We will be raised in His Glorious likeness, to ever be with Him, and be satisfied to praise and worship Him; In spirit and in truth.

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 God; through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. First Peter, ch. 1, vs. 3 - 5.

These blessed scriptures of Holy truth, seem to get more precious to me, each time that I am blessed of the Lord, to think upon them. Praying that the Lord will keep me humble, In my walk, in this life ever looking to Him; the author and the finisher of our faith, for all things that pertain to life, and Godliness in this world, and the one to come.

Dear One's, please do with this as you see fit, and all will be well with me. If not in harmony, with the holy scriptures please discard. It is poor at best. With love in the truth.

C. Fox

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I REMEMBER THEE"

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." - Jer. 2:2

Unless you have a heart to know the Lord, the things declared in this chapter will be altogether unintelligible; you can have no spiritual apprehension of their significance.

But if we are of those who fear the Lord, there will be found in this chapter very sacred things, which when unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit, will move our hearts to throb with manifold emotions. I said in my heart a few moments ago, here are love's chidings, chastenings, pleadings and grievings. Then came the question, "Is the Lord in very truth such as He is declared to be in the Scripture?" And my heart said, "In very truth He is." Then the question comes, "How can I so confidently pen this?" And this is my answer, I hope, in very truth, I know the Lord. O, it is wonderful that any poor

sinner should have the right to say this, and I feel it is only by a miracle of grace that I dare say, I know the Lord, or rather, am known of God (Gal. 4:9).

"Lord of my God, for Him again
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of Thee ere time began,
I choose Thee in return."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, say, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee.

This is marvelous condescension, that Jehovah should have regard to sinful creatures, that He should reveal Himself in such near and dear relations. **"Who hath God so nigh unto them?" (Deut. 4:7). "For that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare" (Psa. 75:1).** This may well excite the wonder and adoration of those who are made partakers of such distinguishing favor.

"Thus saith the Lord. I remember thee." As I look into the words, this gleams forth to my view: it is love's entreaty: it is the Lord declaring to His sinful, straying, ungrateful people that He loves them still, that He has never forgotten them, and cherishes remembrances of their love to Him. Thus He speaks, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." This is the constancy of the love of God. But in contrast to this, look at these words: **"Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet**

my people have forgotten me days without number” (Jere. 2:32). While the elect of God are dead in trespasses and sins Christ is unknown, undesired, we see in Him no beauty that we should desire Him. “At that time (saith the apostle) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2: 12). As I just penned this quotation a sort of a shudder passed over me as I looked upon the dark and awful picture of man’s unregenerate state. Ah, the whole world lieth in wickedness, pursuing its course in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and with no concern over their lost condition under the curse of the law, and no regard for the true and living God. “Without Christ,” “having no hope,” “without God in the world.” Such were we, “by nature the children of wrath even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” When God called us by His grace He awakened us and made us alive to our bondage to sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our life was unto us as in an iron furnace (Deut. 4:20); yes, we were in the furnace of affliction in very truth. We were alive to the knowledge that we were vile transgressors, and the frown and condemnation of the law weighed down our hearts. Like Israel in Egypt, we toiled in the field, but our hard labors were all insufficient to accomplish our daily tasks; we could not yield to the law what it in righteous-

ness demanded. Every day we came short, and we were beaten with stripes, the yoke of the law was more than we wretched transgressors could bear (Acts 15:10). Then we fell down and cried in our affliction for mercy unto the Lord. The Lord did not despise nor abhor the affliction of His afflicted ones in Egypt, neither did He hide His face from them, but when they cried unto Him, He heard and came in power and all graciousness, and brought them out of the house of bondage. He bore them on eagle’s wings, and brought them unto Himself (Exo. 19:4).

So the God of mercy comes to sinners whose souls He has quickened into divine life and called by His grace. Jesus comes to us, He is revealed by the Holy Ghost in us (Gal. 1:16). He shows Himself the Crucified One, our Saviour, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Poor, guilty sinners, we mused upon His sufferings, His wounds, His blood, we believed the story of our Paschal Lamb; His love, His sacrifice told to our sin-wounded mourning hearts good tidings, healing tidings, we believed the Gospel, we believed in Jesus; our loins girded, shoes on our feet, and with our staff in our hand we feasted on the Lamb of God, Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us (Exo. 12:11; I Cor: 5:7). The tribes of Israel went forth out of Egypt into the wilderness; they followed the Lord, who in the cloudy, fiery pillar went before them. He led them through the wilderness, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt (Jer. 2:6).

The time of the soul's espousal to Christ is a sacred and memorable time. Have we forgotten? Christ has not; He will recall it to our minds; He will awaken the memories of this season of our "first love" (Rev. 2:4). "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." Jesus found us poor and wretched, in our rags and filth -so sin defiled. We were sinners feeling "ready to perish" (Deut. 26:5). There was none to help; no comforter to relieve our souls; no eye pitied us to do any thing for our salvation. We must have perished in our sins under the curse of the law; when Jesus came, He looked upon us, and we looked unto Him (Isa. 45:22). His speech was full of compassion. His Gospel was good news indeed. We saw in His wounds and blood that love moved Him to die for our sins. We were drawn to Him confessing our iniquities and pleading His forgiveness. His obedience even unto death became the refuge to which we, in faith, fled for deliverance from the law's condemnation. With sweet tokens of pardon and salvation Christ espoused us to Himself, and in our soul's love to Him, our heart's sweet song was:

"Love moved Him to die, on this I rely;
 My Saviour hath loved me, I cannot tell why,
 But this I can tell, He hath loved me so well
 As to lay down His life to redeem me from hell."
 Yes, we believe in the Son of God -

we love Him. In those days our heart was ever kindly toward the Saviour - so desired was He. In His Gospel we caught glimpses of Him; and so longed for was the Saviour! Some sweet word of His Gospel was often brought by the Holy Ghost to us, and our sin-distressed heart said, Can such a kind word be for me? We were thrilled with longings, with hope it might be so. We sought the Saviour; we sent a secret petition to Him, asking, "Are such gracious words of Thine in the Gospel for me?" These were the days of our espousals -love letter days. He wrote to us, and in return our hearts moved us to send some poor, broken sentences to Him. Our letters were such a mixture of sighs and longings, trust and distrust. We told Him we were uncomely, and so unworthy of His regard, and after we had sent a letter to Him, we were ashamed of it. We said to ourselves, "It is just like myself - a poor, worthless sinner. He will see it is from an ignorant creature, and after a glance or two, He will cast it from Him into the fire. "I fear I shall never have another line penned by Him to me. His letters were so well written, so noble, so gracious, full of tenderness, that we could hardly believe they were written to us - so poor, sinful and ignorant - as we knew ourselves to be. Well, what do you think Christ has done? I will tell you. He did not throw these letters away, but He has kept them all, every scrap of them, locked up in His heart. "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." As I have intimated, this means He has treasured up all her love letters to Him-

self, and now He brings them forth from the casket of His heart, and reads them in her ears "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem." Can you, O backsliding daughter of Zion, disown these letters? Did you not indict them? Are they not Zion's penmanship? Were they not addressed to Him only? Was there at the time of writing them any other in her thoughts? Can she deny her own signature? Take a glimpse of these letters written by the saints of God in the days of her spiritual youth; there are photographs of the blithesome and gay, happiness in Christ the Lord sparkles in every word; some are tear-stained, beseeching Him to come, and in His pity redeem her from her miseries. All these letters have a sweet smelling fragrance. Was it not her own hands, dropping with sweet smelling myrrh, that perfumed them? (Solomon's Song 5:5). O the wayward backsliding believer cannot deny these things, and when the Lord comes saying in our ears, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," how we are stirred! We then remember, too, and we are ashamed and blush, and sigh beneath these memories of our early attachment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it was that "Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song; " then the heart flowed forth in its freshness, simplicity and fervor; then, O believer, thine heart was kind, and thoughts were tender toward the Lamb of God; thine eyes were often turned to Him with tearful entreaty and His smile was then thy heaven. Do you remember? In the days of our espousals to Christ we were hopeful and happy in Him, sin

was atoned for, we were pardoned, and we had peace with God through Him. Such loveliness and desirableness had been revealed to us in Him, the suffering, sin atoning sacrifice, that we were drawn to Him (John 12:32).

"His loveliness hath won my heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."

Yes, in the love of our espousals we crowned Him as our Husband, Shepherd, Saviour, King; Christ was our all. It was a time of reciprocal love and gladness. It was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart (Solomon's Song 3:11). He rejoiced over us with singing (Zeph. 3:17). His speech, His Gospel, was a gladsome song, and our happy, sin-pardoned heart in all kindness and love did sing, "He is altogether lovely, the Chiefest among ten thousand." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." No stranger intermeddled with the joy (Prov. 14:10), of Christ and the church in these espousal days. Of Jacob it is written, "**The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.**" (Deut. 32:12). All gods were utterly renounced and amished out of the land (Zeph. 2:11). They had cheated us, mocked us, in our distresses they gave us no sustenance, afforded us no help, they were lying vanities (Jonah 2:8), and we cast them to the moles, and to the bats (Isa 2:20). We now knew it had been very folly to say to the work of our hands, "ye are our gods" (Hosea 14:3). Now, in our espousals we could sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteous-
ness."

To Jesus we looked. He altogether satisfied us, and all things, and all others were now counted dung, that we might win Christ, and be found in Him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:8-9). He, Christ Crucified, had attracted us, won us, and we would win Him who had won us. For there was no other one to save a poor sinner (Acts 4:12), and no other was there that we worshiped, trusted, loved: we were leaning on Him alone. Are you able to enter into this mystery? Christ and the believer, these two, espoused, no third one.

"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Thus it was with typical Israel; forth from Egypt they came, the Lord, going before them in the cloudy, fiery pillar; after Him they went into the wilderness, a land not sown. Her God nourished them with bread from heaven (Exo. 16:35). He opened the rock, the waters gushed out to give drink to His people, His chosen. Israel was holiness to the Lord, a peculiar treasure unto me, saith the Lord, above all people. In the first happy season of the believer's espousals to Jesus, when He is saying, "My Saviour is mine and I am His," he thought, through a delightful land I shall go with Jesus, my Redeemer, until He brings me into His

palace on high. Israel having passed through the Red Sea as dry land (Heb. 11:29), sang most joyously, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously" (Exo. 15:1). From the Red Sea "they went out into the wilderness Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was Marah" (Exo. 15:22-23). Then and many times afterwards, "The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way" (Num. 21:4). Nevertheless a divine power drew them on; here and there they were led about in the wilderness; though unworthy and rebellious, "they found grace in the wilderness" (Jer 31:2). God kept them to Himself as the apple of His eye (Deut. 32:10), and at length He brought them into that land which is the glory of all lands (Deut. 11:12; Ezek. 20:6). In our first days of blissful intimacy with our Redeemer we dwelt and walked where the flowers sent forth their fragrance, and birds were sweetly singing (Solomon's Song 2:12). These were sacred moments, for we were drinking the forgiveness of all our sins of Christ, our Fountain of Living Waters (Jer. 2:13).

"Tongues cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

One such, some time ago, said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of

the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." A believer, in "the kindness of his youth" feels altogether willing to go anywhere with Jesus, and sometimes in his soul's simplicity he sings:

"Through floods and flames, if
Jesus leads,
I'll follow where He goes."

Ah, little does he understand what his loving heart is singing! Let me repeat once more that when Christ our Saviour betrothed us unto Himself (Hosea 2:19). He did not immediately take us to His palace, into heaven itself. No, the Holy Spirit gave us some pictures of it, and the "better country" (Heb. 11: 16; Isa. 33:17), we had foretasted of the heavenly felicity given us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and in this comforting earnest of our inheritance (Eph. 1:14), by faith we journeyed on in hope of eternal glory with our dear Saviour. It was a terrible wilderness we came into shortly after our espousal to Christ (II Cor. 11:2). It was a waste-howling wilderness, and there were scorpions and fiery flying serpents. Ah, how often do we find that we are in this wilderness even to this day! While we have the felt companionship of our beloved Saviour, while we are walking in the highway with Him, for in the wilderness, "an highway shall be there" (Isa. 35:8), while we are following hard after Him (Psa. 63:8), all is well. He is our Guide and Protector; but, O, when we step aside from the highway, scorpions and fiery flying serpents abound, and

fears and miseries, hunger and thirst plague our life. We thought in our youthful days our life henceforth as a ransomed, pardoned sinner was to be to live, to journey in a land of corn and wine, flowing with the loving-kindnesses of the Lord; but only for some little moments have we found our way to be such. We had to come into the knowledge of the dreary howling desert of the human heart. Our vile, sinful heart we have found to bring forth only briars and thorns; truly it is a land "not sown" with any good things (Rom. 7:18), consequently we can harvest nothing there from for our sustenance and spiritual comfort. Look back, O believer, to those days of the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals to the Lamb that was slain for thy sins. Was not thy heart all kindness toward Him? It was. But this coming into the wilderness astounded us, we did not know then that there could be such a horrible wilderness in us. We trembled, we blushed, we mourned, to the Saviour on whom we were clinging, we confessed it all to Him, and implored His compassion and salvation. Those fiery flying serpents, our sinful thoughts, are dreadful. A child of God cannot tell when or where they will attack him, and so he is often harassed and bitten and soul-sick indeed because of the plague of his own heart (I Kings 8:38). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and breeds the scorpions and serpents (Gen. 8:21; Matt. 15:19), and surely we need to be ever watchful and to have our healing balm near by.

"Precious is my dear Physician,

Oft I prove His power to heal;
 Curing every sad condition
 When He does His love reveal.
 Precious Jesus,
 Much I need thy healing power."

The world, its trials and temptations, are as a devouring waste to famish and shrivel up the ardor and blessedness of the love of our espousals; but through the rugged wilderness, through tribulations, the church of Christ must travel, and when our Lord is near, when we poor sinful ones are leaning on Him, we can hold on our way and tread temptations under our feet. Thus said the Lord, "I did know thee in the wilderness" (Hosea 13:5). Yes, dear Lord, thou hast owned us, pitied and succored us in all our dreadful straits. O, thou hast been pitiful indeed, so rich in mercy, ever revealing Thyself in all gracious intimacy to us vile, unworthy sinners. Though rough and thorny was the way, the kind words of Christ's Gospel revived our courage, creating for us here and there a grateful oasis. Out of the heart, wearying cares and conflicts of our pilgrimage, we entered these pleasant places of living green. The doctrine of Christ came to us in power in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. How transforming is the word that Christ speaketh to us! Then in the wilderness waters break forth, and streams in the desert; in fellowship with Christ, we drank of the brook in the way and our face was lifted up unto God (Psa. 110:7), and thus our scenes of desolation are made to become unto us as the garden of Eden (Ezek. 36:35). What though we are perplexed by Sa-

tan and our old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, weighs down our life in the dust, and with weak hands, feeble knees and fearful heart we are ready to halt (Psa. 38:17), soon all is changed when we are moved by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to look unto Jesus. In His atoning sacrifice, we see sin's destruction, our old man crucified with Him, Satan defeated, death and the grave swallowed up in victory. Yes, Christ is with the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), and through the world and all tribulation, with eyes of faith and love, she followeth Him to the realms of immortal love.

Read again with me our text: "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Have you no recollections of it all? "Thou wentest after me in the wilderness," but saith the Lord, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?" (Jer. 2:31). No, dear Lord, Thou hast not. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me" (Micah 6:3). Is there a voice in all the host of Israel to testify against the Lord? Not the first syllable is uttered, but all heads must be bowed with confusion of face before Him. O, there is not an instance in all our pilgrimage where Christ Jesus has been wearisome, a wilderness unto His people. Then why, O backslider, hast thou changed, become so degenerate, so cold, so indifferent to the things of

Jesus Christ? Why art thou so far removed from the fervor of thy First love? Why are thy blessings in the church of Christ so neglected? Come, dear brethren, let us not put away these searching questions. It is profitable to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Is Jesus Christ less precious, less needful, than in the days of the kindness of our youth, the love of our espousals? Is He not still the only Fountain of Living Waters? What are all things else, all others, but broken cisterns that can hold no water? Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts? (Gal. 5:24). Are you seeking FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Are you seeking your carnal ease and pleasure, so greedy for money, so swallowed up with the things of time? Are you so looking upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, that your eyes are become bleared that you can scarcely see the things which are unseen, which are eternal? (II Cor. 4:18). Can it be that temporal things have become more weighty with us than things which are eternal, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? If so, then our scales in which we are weighing these matters are in a wretched plight, we are miserably deceived, and we are in a dreadful condition. Perhaps, notwithstanding our profession of the name of Christ, we are none of His. (Rom. 8:9)

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." What, remember a sinner like me?

Frederick W. Keene,
North Berwick, Maine

SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
May 15, 1907, Vol. 75, No. 10.

**For the Signs of the Times,
Cape Elizabeth, Me.,
March 29, 1855.**

BELOVED AND ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST: - I wish to write a few words to you, although I am thrown upon a bed of sickness, which is to human appearance my last. I rejoice in the doctrine which your paper is established in, and have rejoiced for forty-seven years in the same; and yet it is new every morning; great is God's faithfulness. I am encouraged by your own short sermons which your paper contains. If one so unworthy might exhort you, I would say "Stand fast," and so you shall raise the drooping spirits of some weary child when I am no more. I had thought that if ever I were laid on a bed of sickness that naught but clouds and darkness would be my portion, but I find it far otherwise. I now can say I would not alter the purposes of God for he cannot do wrong; let him do what seemeth him good. My disease is a tumor growing in my left side, which causes much suffering, as I have to be tapped once in three weeks, and am expecting to be tapped again soon. I have no choice which way God takes down this earthly house of my tabernacle, his way is perfect; justice and truth are the habitation,

of his throne. Of all creatures I have the greatest reason to bless God for the hope which I am permitted to enjoy; it entereth, within the veil, whither Jesus has entered. I feel unworthy of the least of his blessings, although surrounded by all that is necessary for me; but because Jesus lives, his, people shall live also. Brother Beebe, do not faint in tribulation, God is faithful to his promise: I have been praying for my unconverted child, and had believed that I should see my desire before I went hence, although I was often sad because of hope deferred, the Lord is so good as to give me at this late hour my desire, and I can say, Lord, now let thou thy servant depart in peace, for thou hast made my lovely child to see thy salvation, and to rejoice in it. Brother Beebe, Jesus gave his life a ransom for many, and they surely come from the north and from the south, until the last jewel is made up, when the door of mercy will be closed. I have been sick about twelve months, although in this time I have had short respites from my sufferings, and been able to do my work and go abroad; in this time I have had enlarged views of God's plan of salvation, and of the Bride the Lamb's wife, such as I never had before. I can truly say, the comfort arising from them was worth more than a mountain of gold, or restoration to my former health. I have most of the time been confined to my bed, I have great reason, to bless God for his written word, and the precious promises it contains. Brother Beebe, do not doubt, do not doubt, I will repeat what he has said: and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

I had a desire to call in my thoughts, although I am very feeble, and send them to you for publication, hoping to encourage some one similarly situated, which I think: is the sole motive which now governs me. I love the Leader, and I love his people; I love him that begat, and I love them that are begotten of him. If it is not asking too much, I would be glad to see in the *Signs*, a short sermon upon 1st Thess. iv, 14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Why I mention this passage or scripture is, it was forcibly brought to my mind, sometime within the last fortnight, with a good deal of satisfaction while meditating upon it. We receive our papers directed to Cape Elizabeth since the 15th of March; my husband joins me in sending love to you; he loves the precious cause of Christ, and wishes Mt. Zion well, whatever becomes of him. - I must now draw to a close, and I would say to my brethren and sisters scattered up and down the world, bring in all the tithes into the store house, and write for the *Signs*; your communications have been to me as cold water to a thirsty soul, for I have had no other preaching for many years. Brethren and sisters, if we forget Jerusalem, let our right hand forget her cunning; if we do not remember her, let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth, if we prefer not Jerusalem above our chief joy. This is the last communication from your afflicted sister, probably.

Rebecca Wilson.

**1879 - Thanksgiving, Observation
and Exhortations By
William M. Smoot, December, 1879,
SIGNS of the Times.**

Dear Brother Beebe:- The closing hours of the swiftly passing year impart to me a desire to record an expression of thanksgiving and praise unto Him through whose kind and tender care my life has been preserved. It is well when we can feel a spirit of thanksgiving unto Him from whose kind hand the blessings of providence and grace are received. He is ever present with His people to guide, guard and keep them in His own right way. In fulfillment of the eternal decrees the years are gliding swiftly by, each of them accomplishing His purpose in its flight.

“Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some bright design.”

In solemn awe and reverence we bow before His awful throne, and plainly trace His hand-writing upon the pages of the book of time. During the year now drawing to a close many precious brethren and lovers of gospel Truth have been called to their eternal home; their predestinated inheritance reserved for them in heaven. They have passed through all of the ordained dark shadows of the present life, and over the river of death, to rest upon the eternal shore. Our souls have been filled with sorrow in looking upon them for the last time, but our faith has looked beyond to their eternal and blissful home. What a theme

of themes; a song of songs is that which presents the power of God in the salvation of poor, lost and perishing sinners.

“Not softest strains can charm mine ears
Like His beloved name;
Nor aught beneath the skies inspire
My heart with equal flame.”

In common with many of your brethren, I have been deeply pained at the uncalled for attacks that have been made upon you and others during the past year for firmness in defense of the Truth. A falling away in sentiments so commonly held is strange. The battle is not yours, but the Lord's, and Truth is mighty and must prevail. The faithful servant of God has no compromise to make in such a war as this, but in a firm and unwavering manner to contend earnestly for “*the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*” We cannot, as others are, yield, no, not for a moment, when an attack is made upon the Truth of our God. The Lord will assuredly sustain you in all of your labors in His name, and the rich crown of everlasting life awaits your final entrance into the saints' eternal rest. What the opening year is to unfold is known only unto Him who presides over the destiny of nations, and governs all etemal and temporal things. Many of those who are now in active life will no doubt before its close be numbered with the congregation of the dead. Be this as it may, and whatever may be the scenes, sorrows, joys or trials reserved for us in the opening year, we rejoice in the knowledge that reigns.

"Like floods the angry nations rise,
And aim their rage against the sky;
Vain floods that aim their rage so
high;
At Thy rebuke the billows die,"

Iniquity abounds, political and religious degradations prevail every where over our land, but in the true church of Christ we find peace and rest. She is as a field in the wood, the green grass of the desert, the bright shining of the clear light of heaven amidst the gross darkness and religious idolatry that spreads over our land. "*The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*" It is certainly pleasant to behold the gospel order and unanimity prevailing among the churches of our connection in different parts of the country. The watchmen lift up their voice together; the churches dwell together in the holy joys of Gospel fellowship, and follow after the things that make for peace. How happy and divinely blessed are brethren in such a case! How strong and durable is the bond of fellowship that unites them. How pure and holy are the joys that flow from heart to heart. In these things we taste the "*powers of the world to come.*" Let us as we may receive strength from above endeavor to show forth in our daily walk and conversation that we have been with Jesus.

In many respects it is a matter of but little consequence in regard to how much or little of worldly wealth or mortal dignity we may possess, but our stand-

ing in the Church of Christ is a matter of the greatest importance. Are we punctual in our accountabilities there? Or have we grown cold and careless? Do the passing years, filled as they are with the rich blessings of heaven, witness our lack of zeal in the Master's cause, from whose indulgent hand these blessings are bestowed? I hope not, but that the days of our temporal pilgrimage as they pass write in our heart a song of praise unto the Omnipotent God. He dwells in light, but the dark vial of mortality hides the perfect view of His glory from our sight. The streams of time are hurrying fast into the broad ocean of eternity, bearing in their final destiny the appointed generations of the children of men. The kind hand of God will soon roll back the curtain of life, and the unveiled glory of God and the Lamb will forever engage the enraptured attention of the redeemed; the boundless glory of the world to come; the final rest of the way-worn traveler, but beloved object of God's eternal choice. How full of rich comfort is the Truth of God! Here we see the crowning work of redemption in the resurrection of the bodies from the dead, and life in the world to come. Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel. The gospel does not bring the life and immortality, but it brings them to light. There is opened to our view the brilliant beauty of the eternal heavens, be spangled forever by the radiant light of the Sun of Righteousness, while the gathered host of eternity dwell forever in the presence and the eternal arches ring with shouts of sovereign grace.

As ever, yours to serve in Gospel bonds, Wm. M. Smoot, December, 1879, *SIGNS of the Times*.

HEBREWS 12:6

BELOVED ELDER BEEBE: - I would like to have you give your views on Hebrews xii. 6. I have never troubled you for your views before, knowing your time is taken up; but in our present bereavement we would be glad to have you write on that text.

THOMAS & MARY P. LEWIS.

REPLY

The text on which we are requested to express our views reads as follows: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

It seems so very natural for us, when smarting under the chastening hand of God, to conclude that he is angry with us, and in anger has withheld his tender mercies from us. The friends who visited Job in the days of his sore trials took this view of the subject, and added reproof and reproach to his over-burdened heart; and the heathen who saw the viper fasten his poisonous fangs upon the hand of Paul, thought it was in retribution for some dreadful crime that he had committed. The Jews also seemed to think that some unusual sin committed by the blind man or his parents was the cause of his having been born blind. Satan himself is ever ready to aggravate the distress of the children of God, when

pressed down to the gates of death by trials and afflictions, by his cruel suggestions that their tribulations are in evidence that they have no part or lot in the love of that God whose power and grace are amply sufficient to have averted the evil that has come upon them. The passions of our carnal nature are moved to resentment or approval of the treatment we receive from others as indicative of their hatred or love to us: we express our love by acts of kindness, and our hatred by acts of retaliation; but God's dealings with his children, whether in stripes or healing mercies, are always in love, for he is infinitely above being excited by impulsive passions. It is very true, he visits the transgressions and iniquities of his children with his rod; but even then he chastens them in love, and always for their good and his glory. But all the trials, afflictions and bereavements to which the children of God are subject, are not to be regarded as punishment for our transgressions. The most willing and obedient of the saints, as well as the more wayward, must pass through fiery trials, for the trial of their faith, which is more precious than the trial of perishable gold; and God has kindly provided that his dear children shall all have the full benefit of the furnace in which he has chosen them. The apostle Peter has drawn a discriminating line between the suffering which God's children endure for their faults, and such as they experience for the trial of their faith, and warns the saints, saying, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffers as

a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." - 1 Peter iv. 15, 16. "Wherefore," he continues, "let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Pardon the digression, if it be such, if we pause a moment to consider the apostle's admonition. Who is a murderer? "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." - 1 John iii. 15. Who is a thief? He who would dishonestly appropriate to himself that which belongs to another, or who would rob a brother of his standing and fellowship with the saints, or covet in spiritual or temporal things that which is his neighbor's. Who is an evil doer? He that perverts equity, or watches for the haltings of others, that that which is lame should be turned out of the way, and not rather be healed. Who is a busybody in other men's matters? He who is heedless of the beam that is in his own eyes, is quick to offer his service to remove an imaginary mote from his brother's eye. Such men, even if they are children of God, and do suffer, do not suffer as Christians who do the will of God, as his will is laid down in the examples and precepts of Christ in the New Testament.

But to return to our starting point in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, in which we find so much, not only to admonish, but also to encourage the poor, afflicted, tried and tempted children of our God. Having in the preceding chapter spoken of the severe trials of the saints from the days of Abel down to the present dis-

pensation, the writer arrays them as a cloud of witnesses, bearing testimony of the triumphs of faith, by which prophets and patriarchs endured as seeing him who is invisible, and admonishes the saints to lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before them. Looking unto Jesus, and recognizing him as the author and finisher of all genuine faith, as the author of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not seen. With a single eye, a steadfast reliance on him for support and protection, and looking unto him as our pattern and guide. Look to the race which he so patiently, perseveringly, cheerfully and successfully ran in the great work of our salvation, the sorrows he endured, the enemies he encountered, the reproaches he bore, the patience he evinced, the unremitting progress which he made, never once faltering in the race, even though sin, death, and all the powers of darkness stood so terribly in his way. Yet for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame. Ah, yes; with steadfast eyes look to him.

"Whose race forever is complete,
Forever undisturbed his seat;

Myriads of angels round him fly,
And sing his well gained victory."

See him now, exalted and seated at the right hand of the throne of God. And "consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind." What a wonderful protection from languor and weariness; what an antidote against fainting "His way was much

rougher and painful than mine?

Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

The infirmities of our nature are kindly considered by him.

"Who drank the cup with stifled groan, And said, My Father's will be done."

He knows what are the feelings of our infirmities, and how to succor them that are tempted. He knows that his spirit that he has put within us is willing to go with him to the prison and to the death; and well he knows too the weakness of our flesh, and that unless we have our eyes on him we shall be weary and faint. But we can say,

"Had I a view of thee, my God,
Kingdoms and men would vanish soon;

Vanish as though I saw them not,
As a dim candle dies at noon.

"Then they might fight, and rage,
and rave;

I should perceive their noise no more

Then we can hear a shaking leaf
When rattling thunders round us roar."

Considering him, and the crushing sorrows he endured for us when sweating what were as great drops of blood falling to the ground, will reprovably remind us that we have not resisted unto blood striving against sin; and that while complaining of our light afflictions, which are but momentary, we have forgotten, or failed to heed, the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked

of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Observe, this very exhortation and rebuke recognize those unto whom they are addressed as children; they are not addressed to them as aliens or as enemies, but as unto children or sons, as the counsel and parental admonition of our heavenly Father who loves us, and has our real welfare constantly in view. "My son," the development of that incorruptible and immortal seed, which is by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. My son, in vital union with your heavenly Father, begotten of God, the Father of spirits, in Christ your seminal head, who is the first-born among many brethren. My son, and as a son, an heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Heirs not only of his cross, but also of his glory. Loved of God your Father, even as Christ was loved of him. Not a mere prospective love, but with the same sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love with which your glorious and glorified Head was loved. "That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." -John xvii. 23. And in the next verse Jesus says to the Father, "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." With the same love with which the Father loved his only begotten Son before the foundation of the world, has he loved all his members in him. Mark the present tense of the love of God, "For whom the Lord loveth." It does not read, For whom he intends to love at some future time; but whom he loveth. If God's love is immutable, it has always been precisely the same, from

everlasting to everlasting; for he inhabiteth eternity, and his name is holy. But if it is not immutable, though he may love to-day, he may cease to love tomorrow or hereafter. Many earthly parents who love their children, unintentionally injure them by too much indulgence; but God, who is infinitely wise, provides for his children that discipline which is for their good and for his own glory. When in former ages he winked at the abominable idolatry of the heathen nations, he severely scourged his chosen Israel for every disobedience and transgression of his law; and by the severity of his judgments clearly demonstrated his special regard for them as a peculiar people, chosen from all the family of mankind to be the type of the chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation which he had chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And now while aliens, false professors and hypocrites are allowed to fill up the measure of their iniquities and to glory in their shame, the waters of a full cup are wrung out to his children; for all the day long they are plagued, and they are chastened every morning. But as their chastisements are in evidence of the special love of God to them, they are not to be despised, nor are the saints to faint when God rebukes them for their follies. None whom the Lord loves can or will escape his rod, for he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. The scourgings do not make them sons, for sonship is a vital relation; but it proves that they who endure it have a life which was in their parent before they

were born of his spirit; and the scourging proves that they are children, and that God is their heavenly Father. Nor does their being received of God make them his children. The prodigal was a son before he went astray, and when he was afar off, as well as when he returned, and his father received him because he was his son. The kind and gracious reception by the Father, while it did not originate the relationship, proves that it exists. Hence it is added, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (sons of God) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

So very essential then are our chastisements, we cannot have a reliable evidence that we are children of God or heirs of glory without them. We should not, therefore, despise or undervalue them, nor indulge the thought that we could do without them; and whether they be administered in sore bereavements, as in the case of our brother and sister Lewis, in the taking from us our Josephs, our Simeons, or our darling Benjamins, and making us feel as though they would bring us down in sorrow to our graves, or in stripping us of our earthly treasures, or exposing us to cruel persecutions, reproaches, and slanderous assaults of wicked men; or if it be by sending leanness and barrenness in regard to spiritual things, and allowing the tempter to hurl his fiery darts, or in causing us to walk in darkness and in the shadow of death for a season; still in whatever shape or form our chastise-

ments may come to us, they are in evidence that God loves us and regards us as sons, and all our afflictions are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the temporal things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, which are eternal, by faith "enduring as seeing him who is invisible."

Cease, then, ye chastened children of the Most High God, to fret and murmur, to weep and sigh and groan. Your tribulations are as essential to your spiritual prosperity, as your daily food is to the support and comfort of your earthly nature; we cannot do without them. At present they are not joyous, but grievous; but they shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them who are exercised thereby, and all the dear saints shall unite in the final ascriptions of praise, saying, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." All of Zion's conflicts shall end in peace.

"But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." How very important, then, is this evidence of a sacred vital relationship to God. None but sons are heirs of God, none but heirs have any inheritance in God our Savior; and all who are not chastened of the Lord are bastards, and not sons. Shall we then despise or murmur at the chastenings which we receive from the kind, loving and gracious hand of our heavenly Father?

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much

rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits? Our God is not the father of our flesh, or fleshly nature; but if we are born of his Spirit, God is the Father of that spirit which is born of him. We have had fathers of our flesh, fleshly fathers, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and the fathers of our flesh have corrected us, and as children of the flesh we have realized the benefit of their paternal discipline; and while we know they are liable to err in judgment, and to be controlled by their excitable passions, yet we have given them reverence; shall we not much rather submit to him who is the Father of our spirits, who is not subject to impulsive passions, whose wisdom, power and grace are infinite, who cannot err, but always chastens for our good?

Again, chastisement, whether it be from our Father which is in Heaven, the Father of our spirits, or of his spirit that is born of him, or from the fathers of our flesh, implies a discipline essentially different from vindictive wrath, or retributive vengeance, exacted only by the demands of inflexible justice: the former is a family discipline, administered in love for the good of the erring child, and in evidence of paternal love; while the latter is only in evidence of indignation and wrath, as in the case of those who despised Moses' law, who died without mercy. May we by grace be enabled in spirit to meekly say, Father in Heaven, thy will be done.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe,
May 15, 1880.)

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2012

Reidy Pickral, VA	50.00
J. D. Neely, AR	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00
Everette Goodman, TN	10.00
Lula Holley, VA.....	5.00
Charlie Fox, AR	5.00

OBITUARIES

ANGIE THOMPSON COX

Our most precious Sister Angie Cox was called from our midst on April 5, 2011. Her funeral service was held at Fair Funeral Home on Friday, April 8, 2011, after which, her body was laid to rest in Ridgeview Memorial Gardens to await the second coming of her Lord. She was born January 21, 1924 in Floyd County, Virginia to the late William Jeffery and Virgie Lawrence Thompson. Her husband of more than 55 years, Thomas Monroe Cox, preceded her in death as did two brothers, Sherman and Harold Thompson. Along with a host of brethren and sisters in Christ, she leaves to mourn her passing two sons, Garry (wife Karen) and Barry of Eden; daughter, Becky O'Leary of Eden; brothers, Merlin Thompson,

Bain Thompson, Brother Arlie Thompson all of Floyd and Breeman Thompson of Tennessee; six grandchildren, Christopher, William, and James Cox, Todd Wilson, and Joseph and Erin O'Leary .

Although Sister Angie had been among our people for many years, faithfully attending service and preparing lunch, she was not blessed to ask for a home in the church until September 22, 2002. On that fourth Sunday morning at the water as Sister Leah Brinson Brewer was to be baptized, Sister Angie asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. She was received and the two of them followed their Lord into the liquid grave. It was a lovely, blessed morning in which all seemed to be in harmonious praise to the lord. later when Sister Lottie Minter, who was not able to be among us that day, was told that Sister Angie had asked for a home in the church, she said, "Thank the lord." Joy in her Saviour and love for her brethren and sisters in Christ were evident in Sister Angie's countenance. The words of the hymn writer best describe it:

"How did my heart rejoice to hear
 My friends devoutly say
 In Zion let us all appear
 And keep the solemn day!
 I love her gates, I love the road
 The church, adorned with grace,
 Stands like a palace built for God
 To show his milder face
 My soul shall pray for Zion still,
 While life or breath remains;
 There my best friends, my kindred
 dwell,
 There God my Saviour reigns."

Though we know that our loss is her eternal gain, her lovely smile and warm embrace are sorely missed.

May the God of all grace grant her family, most especially Brother Arlie and all of us, who miss her so very much, with His comforting Spirit that we might be blessed to feel that the lord giveth and the lord taketh away. Blessed be His Holy and Righteous name. In all things may the lord be praised.

Submitted by one who loved and esteemed her greatly,

Mary Hawkins

4-16-12

Elder Robertson,

Enclosed please find an obituary for Bro. Lesley Sullivan. He loved the truth and supported our churches, even though not a member.

If enabled I wish you would publish the obituary. His family would greatly appreciate the publication.

Thanks,
In Hope,
James Pugh

**IN MEMORY OF
BRO. GILBERT LESLEY SULLIVAN**

It is with sadness of heart that I attempt to write this obituary for Bro. Lesley Sullivan. Even though Bro. Lesley did not have his name on any of our church books, he was a firm believer in

Salvation by Grace and Grace alone and the Absolute Predestination of all things.

Bro. Lesley supported the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association. Even though he was in bad health and could walk only with the aid of a walker, he was faithful to attend meetings when he was enabled. His sisters, Sue and Sister Agnes helped him in many ways by carrying him to church and to see that he was made comfortable. He loved the doctrine and what was considered his home at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church, where his mother had belonged and his sister, Sister Agnes Sullivan, is now a member.

Bro. Lesley is survived by his wife, Mildred Hallman Sullivan, one daughter Sheila Foster (Steve), one son Gary Sullivan, three sisters; Jimmy Nell Oswalt, Sue Quarles, and Sister Agnes Sullivan and six grandchildren.

Bro. Lesley was born July 12, 1925, and passed away on March 8, 2012, being 86 years old. Services were on Sunday, March 11, 2012, at Sunset Funeral Home with Jerry Montgomery and Elder James Pugh with interment in Sunset Memorial Park.

Even though our hearts are saddened with the passing of Bro. Lesley, we believe that our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder James Pugh

PSALM 4:8.

**I will both lay me down in peace,
and sleep: for thou, Lord, only
makest me dwell in safety.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
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SONG

GOD moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
He rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper.

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EDITORIAL

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.” Numbers 35:9-12



Elder J.B. Farmer

These instructions were given from God to Moses for the benefit of the children of Israel in their day. But these things, no doubt, were also given to the Church from the time of her institution in the days of Christ until the day He shall come again. They were given for her learning and for her edification concerning the mercies of God toward His people as manifested in the testimony of the life of Jesus. Jesus said the scriptures are **“they, which testify of me.”** Believing this to be true, we seek to know the deep, spiritual meaning hidden in this representation of the natural situation of Israel.

Being persuaded that the profound truth of the Gospel cannot be known apart from revelation, we must look unto the Lord to uncover His great mysteries for us, that we might be lifted up together into heavenly places in Christ, where we might show forth His praise for His many mighty works on behalf of His chosen people. May the Lord help us in our infirmities, for His ways and His thoughts are as high above our ways and our thoughts as the heaven is above the earth.

Six cities, three on either side of the Jordan River were appointed to give a convenient place for a person to flee, if he thought he should not be chargeable for his actions in the death of another person. If he had caused the death of someone without meaning to do it, the Lord was merciful to give him a safe

place to go. There, an impartial congregation would judge his case. The severe law was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life. But God, in His great wisdom and compassion saw exceptions to the law and made provisions for them. If a person willfully killed another, that was murder, and the murderer should surely be put to death. But if a person un-willfully killed another, he was considered a slayer, but not a murderer. And the slayer would be shown mercy.

Now we see a difference in a murderer, and a slayer. The murderer was filled with hate, which led him to kill another. The slayer had killed another un-awares, or not meaning to do it, or not doing it through hatred. This shows the difference between the wicked, children of the devil and the children of God. The apostle Paul, when he explained how he found mercy after persecuting and destroying the Church, said that he **“did it ignorantly in unbelief.”**

There are two kinds of offences. The one is deliberate and the other is not. The Lord said, **“It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.”** This is a deliberate, willful, hateful offence that must be repaid in kind by the vengeance of God. But in another place it says, concerning the children of God, **“In many things we offend all.”** These are the kinds of offenses that they give from time to time, either not thinking, or in a fleshly mind. These kinds of offenses shall be forgiven when the little one is blessed to acknowledge his error, and to beg for mercy.

In the day of Moses, the slayer fled to the nearest city of refuge and presented his case to the congregation. If they judged him to be a slayer and not a murdered, they protected him there from the avenger of blood. That one would be a friend of the deceased or some family member. The slayer was safe as long as he stayed there. But if he should go out of the city, and the avenger of blood should find him and slay him, the avenger of blood would be clear in the matter.

When the slayer continued in the city, there was evidence that he was not a murderer, because he was walking by faith according to the commandment given by God. But if he went out of the city, there was evidence that he actually was a murderer that had misrepresented his case. If he went out, he was not abiding in faith, but was walking unfaithfully. And he was worthy of death.

When David was driven from Jerusalem, and was in great weakness, Shimei, a hateful man, came out and cursed David and threw stones at him. One of David's servants enquired if he should go and kill the man, and was told that he should not. But before David died, he gave commandment to his son Solomon and instructed him not to let Shimei's hoar [gray] head come down to the grave in peace. David told Solomon that God would give him wisdom in the matter. After David died, Solomon called Shimei and told him to go to Jerusalem and build a house, and to stay in it. He told Shimei that if he should go over a certain brook, his life would be forfeited. Shimei agreed to all this.

Shimei stayed in his house for three years. Then two of his servants ran away to Gath. Shimei, thought it good to go after his servants, so he left his house and went to retrieve them. This broke the covenant he had made with Solomon. And when Solomon heard of it, he sent his servant and commanded him to fall upon Shimei and kill him with the sword. Death and destruction are the end of all willful unrighteousness and disobedience.

When the children of Israel were in Egypt, and the last plague was about to fall upon the Egyptians, the Israelite were commanded to kill a lamb, and to put its blood on the lintel and upon the doorposts. They were also commanded to stay in their houses and not come out until morning. They were protected from the destroyer when he passed over as long as they stayed in their houses. By faith, they obeyed God and were saved from the wrath of God that fell on all the Egyptians.

When Rahab the harlot received the spies that had been sent in to spy out the land before Jericho was destroyed, she made them promise to spare her mother, and father, and sisters and brothers and all they had. She was told that they must abide in the house until the destruction was past. If not, they would be destroyed with the rest of the inhabitants of the city. They obeyed by faith and were spared,

What is the common thread here? When destruction is about to fall, the children of God are shown a safe place to flee to and to abide in until the wrath of God is past. David spoke for all the

elect saying, **"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."** David was also blessed to say, **"I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I."** And, **"Deliver me, O LORD from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me."** The city of refuge for all those that fear God and fear the destruction that is about to fall on the whole world of unbelievers is Jesus.

The slayer, in the day of Moses, was told that he must abide in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. After the high priest's death, the slayer would be free to return to the land of his habitation. In that day, the death of the high priest signified the wiping clean of the slate. Any offense of those taking refuge in the city would be remembered as long as the high priest lived. But when he died, there would be no remembrance of those former things. The slayer could then go on with his life as before the offense. His sin was forgiven. And the avenger of blood could not take revenge.

Jesus is the great high priest. The blessed apostle Paul, in the book of Hebrews made this plain. Speaking of Jesus, he said, **"Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and**

tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.”

“There *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” If we are in Christ, we are in a safe place. The accuser of the brethren is cast down. He has nothing with which to condemn those for whom Christ died. The wrath of God has fallen upon Jesus instead of us. The penalty for sin has been paid. He is the high priest and the sacrificial Lamb, which took away the sins of the whole world of God’s elect. It is written, “**By one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.**”

We have noticed that some have come in among the saints from time to time, and have seemed to be satisfied with their ways and the things that accompany salvation, such as their love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, decency, order, fellowship and all the other blessings of the Spirit. After a while, for some reason, they become discontented and go out, and separate themselves, sensual. They may make excuse or point to some offense, but those things will not stand up. The apostle John was blessed to say, “**They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been**

of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out* that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” May we be given grace to abide in the household of faith all our days in love and peace and rejoicing in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer
5-11-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

May 18, 2012

Mr. Tony Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton:

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription to the “Signs” for another year. I look forward to receiving each issue and enjoy reading it. It is a joy to read the truths depicted in the older editions as I feel they are the same truths we hold dear to this day.

I feel grateful for the work that is done by all of you to get the “Signs” to all of us each month.

Use the extra for whatever is needed.

Sincerely,
Sarah Middleton Sidbury

VOICES OF THE PAST

**1904—CIRCULAR LETTER
THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST
CONFERENCE OF MAINE,
TO THE ASSOCIATIONS WITH
WHOM WE CORRESPOND.**

(Written by
Elder Frederick W. Keene)

BELOVED OF GOD:

Once again we send you our annual epistle of love and fellowship in Christ Jesus. The year that is past, like the years that preceded it, has abounded in vicissitudes to those who fear the Lord, but amidst them all our consolation is this: all the times that pass over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries (I Chron. 29:30), are only such as the Lord has ordained, and as we contemplate the character of our God, that he is just and holy, gracious and almighty, we may well bow in acquiescence to his ways, and sing, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6). Happy are we when in such a state of mind. The saints in times past looked unto God and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed, and shall we in our day look in vain unto the Lord our God? It cannot be, for with the seal of our mercy there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and he loves his own with an everlasting love, His mercy endureth forever. God is the eternal fountain of all our mercies, he is the confi-

dence of the church, and to him in these our times we would turn, saying with the congregation of old, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever" (Psalm 28:9). The Lord is the rock of our salvation. If this be so in truth it may well be said of us, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save his people from their sins. He gave himself a sacrifice for our transgressions, and unaided, by himself, he purged our sins; Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He has ransomed his people by his precious blood, ransomed them from the power of the grave, redeemed them from death, redeemed them unto God. He has gone into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. This now is the hope of believers, and in his salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, they greatly rejoice, "though now for a season, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations." This is our rejoicing, beloved brethren, that Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

During our earthly pilgrimage no other Savior have we than he who hath loved us and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood. To him therefore our song shall be ascribing "salvation to

our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10). As then we view the children of God encompassed with temptations and adversities our hearts are moved in their behalf, and our prayer is, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." The Lord has a people, as he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." They are his, for he hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. They are his, for he hath redeemed them, and very blessedly speaks to them, saying, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." They are his, for he hath put his Spirit within them, and they are born again, born of his Spirit; his fear he puts in their hearts, that they shalt not depart from him. He will say, "It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God" (Zech. 13:9). The people of God need, while here below, continual salvation from the power of their enemies. The world, the flesh and the devil are all combined against them, and the saints endure much damage and affliction from their foes. So subtle are our adversaries that we are often ensnared and wounded, and cannot discern that it is an enemy that hath done it. Our foes put on a friendly aspect, we are allured and become their prey; Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Our natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. We read of the deceitfulness of riches, and of some coveting after money who have erred from the faith and

have pierced themselves through with many sorrows (1 Tim. 6:10). We need salvation from men of corrupt minds, who wrest the Scriptures, and by their perverse disputings would pervert the gospel of Christ. They privily bring in damnable heresies, and their words are as a canker eating away the health and happiness of the household of God. The churches, dear brethren, today are being tried. O Lord save thy people. Every day, also, we need salvation from the indwelling lusts of our flesh, that we may walk holily and unblamably, glorifying our Father which is in heaven, in our body and spirit which are his. Whatsoever distresses may befall the people of God, so dear are they to us that our cry shall be, O Lord, save thy people, cause thy face to shine upon them, and they shall be saved.

The psalmist continues his prayer, saying, "Bless thine inheritance." The world is God's, and the fullness thereof; all the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, the gold and the silver are the Lord's. But, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (Deut. 32:9). "The Lord hath chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure" (Psalm 135:4). This is a very gracious revelation, for did not the Savior say, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"? (Matt. 6:21). Then if Israel be the peculiar treasure of the Lord, there is his heart also. O wonderful! Has he not said of Zion, "This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it"? (Psalm 132:24). Yes, unto Solomon God said, "I have hallowed this house

which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually" (1 Kings 9:3).

"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." Bless thine inheritance with sweet peace and fellowship in the gospel. Send down, O Lord, a bountiful rain of thy loving-kindness to confirm thine inheritance when it is weary. Though all the powers of darkness curse them, "Let them curse, but bless thou" (Psalm 109:28). How light shall be their curse when the blessing of the Lord is our portion. Look, gracious Lord, upon their dry, parched places, and pour forth showers of blessing (Ezek. 34:26), then shall thine inheritance flourish as the garden of Eden, and thy land shall be called Beulah (Isaiah 62:4).

"Feed them also, and lift them up forever." This also is our prayer to God for the church of God. We need our God himself to be our Shepherd, then we shall not want, for we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. The church of God needs continual nourishment, and only the Lord can afford us that food upon which we can thrive. The flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood craves the green pastures, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water. The Lamb of God is our Shepherd, and our Shepherd is our Husband, the Head of the church, our Mediator, our Sacrifice, truly he is our all. O, it is through him that there is revealed unto us all the glorious and comforting things of God; they shine forth in his face. He declares to us all

the excellencies of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

On His fullness in believing,
Daily we receive supply;
He, our glorious Head, is living,
Sure His members cannot die,
Precious Jesus, O how sweet to
live on Thee."

Thus saith the Lord, "I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land" (Ezek. 34:29). Truly this is our Lord Jesus Christ, he is our food, the green pastures, the bread of life, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The saints delight to feed upon the mercy and love of God, yea, all the attributes of God are to them most precious and nourishing to their souls in their meditations when the Holy Spirit feeds them. And where shall we find the green pastures of God's attributes? Creation affords us glimpses of God our Creator. His provinces over all his works excite the admiration of those who fear his great name, but O it is in the glorious doctrine of the gospel of Christ that all the fullness of God is made known. Here Jehovah in all his infinite and eternal excellencies is revealed, and here he feeds the people of his pasture, the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

"And lift them up forever." Viewed in themselves the people of God are sinful and poor, and are often in consequence of their felt disabilities found abased in the dust. Sometimes so mini

shed and brought low are they through oppression, affliction and sorrow, that they are as those trodden down beneath the feet of the enemy, as the mire of the streets. Poor, sinful and unworthy, shall they be despised, neglected, forgotten? O no, for this is the word of the Lord: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea." And the Holy Ghost shall inspire their hearts in faith to say, "Thou which hath shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Our God is ever mindful of his inheritance. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." O Lord, lift them up forever, lift them up above the condemnation of the law, exalt them in thy righteousness, O Savior, lift them up above the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive, lift them up to the highway, above every false way, above all the heresies of men and devils, exalt them in thy truth, lift them up above their fears and unbelief, lift them up above the powers of Satan, above the cares and vanities of the world, that they may live unto Thee and set their affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. When faint and weary and ready to perish in their warfare with sin and Satan, shew them Thy victories, O Christ, our Redeemer, over our sins, over death and the grave, inspire their souls to believe in Thee, then shall they be lifted up, and by faith shall sit with Thee in heavenly places. Blessed ear-

nest, blessed foretaste of the eternal exaltation of the church in everlasting glory. Then indeed shall the ransomed be lifted up above sin and sufferings, death and the grave, above corruption and mortality, and we shall be like our ascended and glorified Savior, for we shall see him as he is.

"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever."

Dear brethren, it has been with pleasure that we have received your messengers and correspondence, and desire the continuance of your fellowship.

We have appointed our next annual conference to assemble with the church at North Berwick, Maine, on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1905, when we hope again to receive your messengers and correspondence.

FREDERICK W. KEENE,
Moderator
JOSEPH HALL, Clerk.

ST. MATTHEW 3: 16-17.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

JULY 23, 1970

THE CHATHAM NEWS

ALMOST 3,000 ATTEND MEETING AT BIG MEADOWS*By Mrs. Jessie R. Seagroves*

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church was host this past weekend to the Upper County Line Association. Families began moving in on Friday in campers; also pitching tents to spend the weekend. Men in the neighborhood met several weeks ago to provide all necessary facilities to accommodate these campers: also for other visitors who attended the Association. In a grove of oak trees the outdoor arbor and benches had been erected. Huge galvanized water drums were located at several spots on the church grounds for the convenience of the almost 3,000 people present. Wires strung with electric lights were in abun-

dance. There was much activity on the grounds of Big Meadows. It had been a long time since the Meadows (as many old timers refer to the church) had been vibrant and alive.

Big Meadows received its name from the large meadows back of the church. At one time there was a school there which was also called "Big Meadows."

Big Meadows was formed on April 8, 1843 with the parent church, Deep Creek Church, being located in Caswell County, which is now northern Alamance County. The church records reveal that charter members included such names as Buckner, Lewis, Stephens, Johnson,



Dinner on the ground

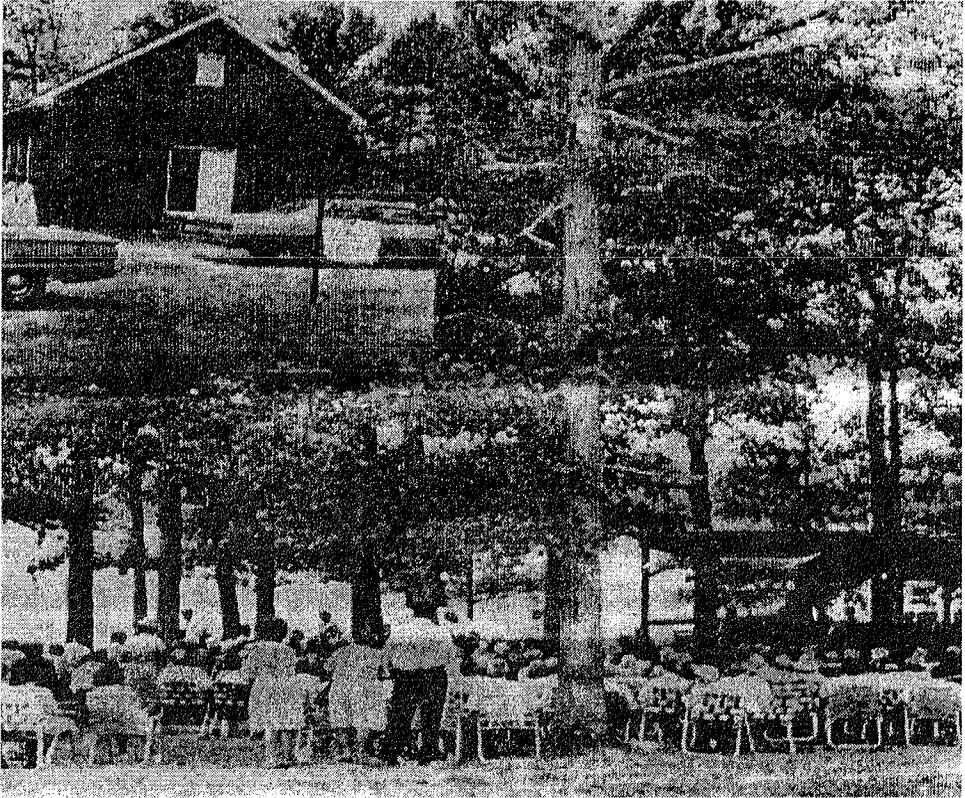
Some even camp out at the meeting



Dowdy, Baliff, Norwood, Hargrove, Jones, Richardson, all of whom have descendants scattered over the community.

Land for the Big Meadows Church was given by Peter Johnson. It is said the land was obtained by Martha "Patsy" Johnson who traded a woman slave to her brother, Elisha Buckner, for the 230 acre Johnson Plantation, three acres of which were deeded to the church. The first services, were held in a log structure which was near the present church. The log church was torn down in 1891 and the present church building replaced it. However, the present building was remodeled from a frame one to brick veneer, beginning in April, 1963. This was done while Elder Harvey Smith, Burlington, was pastor there. The church was a frame one without electricity. Elder Smith desired to see some improvements made. So one night in Sept. 1962,

he, along with Van Thomas, Kenny Jones, Ulys Cook, Audy Jones, Seymour Johnson, Lee Johnson, Chesley Johnson, Casey Johnson, Mrs. R. G. Buckner, Mrs. W. M. Wright, Jesse A. Crutchfield, Mr. Rudd and Henry Jones, Burlington, met at Crutchfields Store. Plans were formulated that night for the remodeling of the building. Van Thomas was elected as chairman with Audy Jones, Chesley Johnson and Casey Johnson being the other members of the Building Committee, Mrs. Jessie Ruth Seagraves was elected treasurer. Donations poured in from a wide area once plans were made known. The church was remodeled to its present form. Elder Smith didn't live to see the church fully completed. Elder Kenneth Key, Greensboro, the present pastor, helped put the finishing touches, such as the carpeting, stained glass windows, etc. He also added the attrac-



CROWD AT BIG MEADOWS

tive sign in front of the church which gives the date of the founding of the church. Elder Smith's dream came true. Many passers-by have remarked about the little church. It has a legend comparable to "the Little Church in the Wild-wood."

This weekend the "grassy greens of the meadows" was a beautiful place to be. While thousands flocked to other places to find peace and love, those who came to Big Meadows found peace, love and serenity. There were approximately 25 ministers present from as far away as Texas; also Virginia, as well as from all over North Carolina. One minister from Virginia was a doctor by profession. Elder W. C. King, pastor of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist

Church, extended the welcome. Elder King has sometimes been referred to as the "Dean of the Primitive Baptist Ministers." Elder King noted that this was his 53rd Upper Country Line Association meeting. Two of the late Elder Harvey Smith's sons were also in the group of ministers. They are Elders Wallace and Donald Smith, both of Burlington. Elder Smith's widow of Burlington was also present.

All age groups were represented from babies to residents of Lindley Oaks Rest Home. Many people brought folding chairs to sit in and would move them about "according to the sun." Highway traffic and parking were directed by Ulys Cook, his two sons, and J. R. Johnson.

Fellowship and informality were

SILER CITY, N.C.

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1970

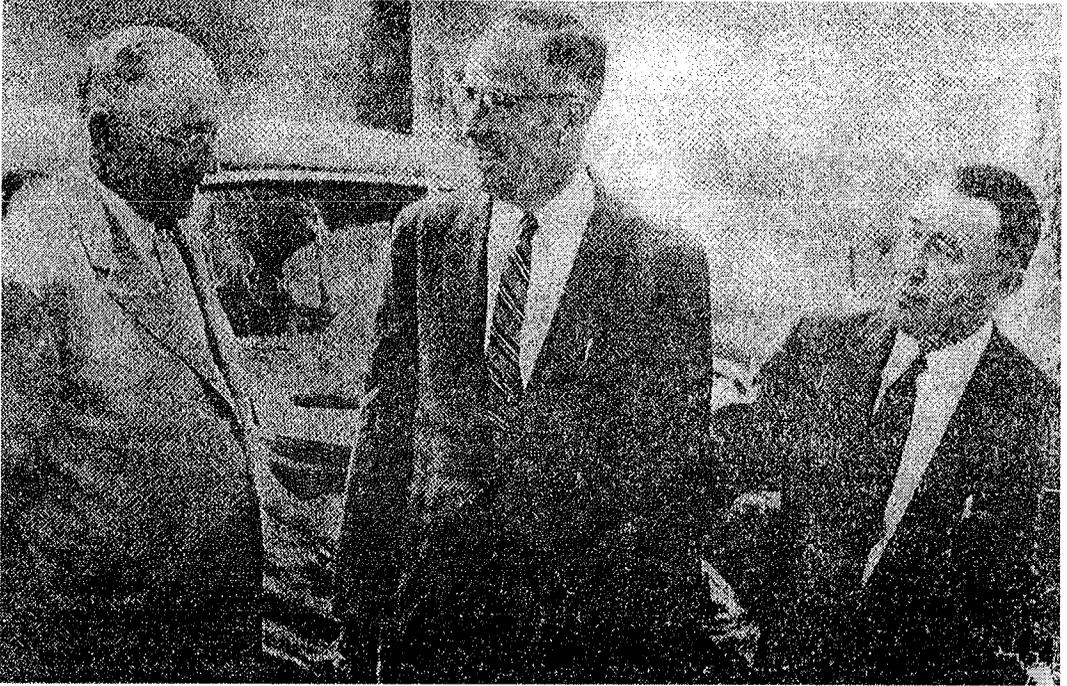


A COOL DRINK OF WATER

prevalent among the people present. One gentleman was comfortable in a pair of overalls while many others were dressed in other fashions such as the popular "Mod style." (Double breasted suits, etc.) At the lunch hour the picnic table was loaded abundantly with food. Everyone was welcomed to partake. Families who camped out for the weekend had tables setup under tents. They did their own cooking. Clotheslines were swaying with towels, linens, etc.

It was truly a sight to see and hear. The Bible verse, "For where two or three

are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" —Matthew 18:20 proved true, as Big Meadows has only two members. But the hundreds of people who attended services this weekend proved that there must be a true spirit of worship and fellowship among these people. Strains of such old fashioned hymns as "Amazing Grace," "How Firm a Foundation," and others filled the Meadows and countryside with a melody pleasant to the ears. As one person remarked, "It was truly good to have been here."



LEADERS OF ASSOCIATION GET TOGETHER AS PROGRAM STARTS

A. B. Ayers of Williamston; Elder W. Currie King, Greensboro; Clerk D. V. Spangler, Danville, Va.

1874 -THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH

By

Wm. M. Smoot, July, 1874,
SIGNS of the Times

[The following was written as a private letter to me, but as I think it will be of general interest to the readers of the "SIGNS of the Times," I trust that brother Smoot will excuse the liberty I take to submit it to Elder Beebe's judgment. Yours, Benton Jenkins.]

Dear Brother Jenkins: - I am reminded of the promise that I made to you when we parted at

Middletown (NY) on the 9th alt., the promise that I would write to you. I hope that an opportunity is presented to me upon this occasion to comply with that promise. I love to write to brethren, and to receive letters from them; but in writing I am led at times to mourn my barrenness, feeling almost entirely destitute of anything to communicate that will either interest, comfort or instruct. But these feelings, I believe, are peculiar to the saints of our God; we all have them to a greater or less extent. As this view of the subject enters my mind, there come with it the words of the Savior to Nicodemus, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth (pleases), and thou hearest the*

sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."- John iii, 8. The spiritual presence of our God with us in our after-experience is as it was in our first experience. Under a realizing sense our sins and our iniquities, we had vainly sought for salvation on either hand, by works of the flesh, or by decisionism, and had been brought eventually to a state of weakness and despair. When, at an unexpected hour, and in a way that we were not looking for it, the salvation of our God was revealed unto us. His life-giving voice was heard in our experience - "*Live!*" and we were enabled to rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This calm and heavenly frame of mind, this rejoicing in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, remains in the experience of some but a short time. Sooner or later, however, to a considerable extent it is gone! It is like the wind that springs up, blows for a time, and passes away. This is our first experience of the pardoning love, tender mercy and heavenly peace that flows from the spiritual presence of our God.

He comes unto us in the same manner in our after-experience. We have been mourning His absence perhaps for a long time. The evils of our depraved nature are now exposed to our view; we are better able now to see them; they stand forth in every form. The warfare between the law in our members and the law of our mind is now keenly felt, and in our experience we feel to exclaim with Paul, "*O wretched man that I am! Who*

shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We turn, and look at our past experience; our mind wanders back through the dark windings of the past, through the mysterious ways in which we have been led, and sweetly rests upon the precious seasons we have spent in the light of the countenance of our God. But will we ever experience another "first love experience" season again? Are we not too far gone now ever to feel His soul-reviving presence again? "*Will the Lord cast off forever?*" and will He be favorable no more? This is our condition now. But, suddenly, there is a melting away of these dark and dismal feelings. The presence of the Holy Spirit is felt again! The wind is blowing now. It may be almost imperceptible at first; but gradually it increases. Darkness gives way to light. The great storehouse in which are stored the treasures of our God is opened unto us. Its bolts are thrown back, for the Spirit opens up. The precious treasures therein stored flow unto us. We feel that they apply to us. We rejoice in the light of the countenance of our God and bask in His smiles. Another burst of spiritual growth or revelation of other Truths are now sweet to us as we grow in grace and knowledge of His great grace. His banner of love is extended over us on every side. We think again, that we will stay the winged Spirit; we will hold it fast now. But here again we err, for we have no power to hold it at all. It is not within our grasp. It is completely beyond our control. And ere we are aware it is gone! Like the gentle summer breeze that springs up, we feel its refreshing presence as it passes by.

It blows for a short time and passes away. We can not tell where it cometh and whither it goeth.

There is a difference also in regard to the power of the wind at different times. Sometimes it blows with more power than it does at other times. So is the presence of the Spirit felt. At times it is felt more sensibly than at other times. We realize it today in the calm and heavenly frame of mind that we enjoy, while its fruits, love, joy, peace, &c., are felt flowing from us and returning unto us. Tomorrow it is felt more forcibly. The wind blows with increased power. We feel the comforting assurance that our feet are placed upon the bright summit of the Lord's Holy Mt. Zion. The radiant and glory of the place are seen on either hand, while in our hearts and upon our lips we find a song of thanksgiving, praise and adoration unto Zion's King. Thus does every one who is actually born of the Spirit realize the Spirit's presence in his or her experience, refreshing and reviving them, and enabling them to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Each learns that the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of God, is absolutely sovereign in the display of His grace. So often His children are without the *felt presence* of His love and grace; made to mourn in its Beloved's absence; and caused to question his interest in redeeming love. But such self-reflection creates a strong desire to experience Him again, even if he has not before. It is a living manifestation of one's real love toward the dear Savior of sinners - a longing to be with the Bridegroom of his hope. Much might be written upon this interesting subject.

I have briefly glanced at it in a general manner. I have not now the time, nor would the limits of my letter permit me to speak of it in all of its vivid applications to us in our experience. But I must close now.

I reached my home in safety Monday following the fourth Sunday in June, after an absence of about six weeks while engaged in preaching. God favored me through the help of good health, and I yet enjoy to a considerable extent the same blessing. Many are the blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed upon me, and I feel myself to be altogether unworthy of the very least of God's favors. I hope that one of the leading desires that I have is to walk as becometh the followers of Christ, but I feel that I come far short of this. I feel it at times hard to deny myself and take up the cross. How to perform that which is good, I find not here in our experience. There is a continual searching for it, a reaching for it as hid treasure, but we find it not. Through all that we think, say or do, we behold the wretchedness of our depraved nature. Yet as strong and as firm as God's throne, the Truth of His declaration stands, that we "*are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.*" May this blest assurance be ever present to sustain and comfort us throughout the journey of life, and finally may we be gathered around the throne of our God in heaven entering into the enjoyment of the inheritance reserved there for those who are thus kept.

Yours in gospel fellowship,
Wm. M. Smoot. 1875

OLD AND NEW MAN

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” - Rom. 7:25.

If Paul had in him these two opposite principles, and both so identified with his person that with the one he *himself* served the law of God, and with the other at the same time *he himself* served the law of sin, was he like all other Christians in these respects? Have all Christians in them a mind with which they themselves serve the law of God, or can any man be a Christian who has not such a mind? And have all Christians, like Paul, a principle or law in their members which is at war with this law of the mind, and with which they themselves serve the law of sin? Or is the flesh of some Christians so purified by regeneration that they are unlike Paul, and have no wicked propensities in their flesh whereby they serve the law of sin?

If all Christians are like Paul in these particulars, and like him serve the law of their God with the mind, and with the flesh serve the law of sin, are both of these opposites born of God; Or is that flesh in them which wars against the Spirit, only born of the flesh: or has it been born over again and made holy by a spiritual birth? And if it has, why does the apostle admonish Christians to crucify it with its affections and lusts, and how can the Christian with it himself still serve the law of sin? If in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that which is born of the Spirit there dwells no evil thing, if that which is born of God cannot

commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and *he* or *it* cannot sin because he is born of God, is it heretical or wicked for a Christian to believe that all the corruptions within him are born of the flesh, and none of them are born of God, and that all that is pure and holy within him, is born of God, and no part of it is born of the flesh?

Of this mind with which the Christian *himself* serves the law of God, the apostle says, “We have the mind of Christ,” and another mind, or law, which he saw in his flesh he calls a *carnal* mind, which signifies a fleshly mind. With the mind of Christ he serves the law of God; but the *carnal* (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. These two minds must be very opposite. One of them is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God, and with the other we serve the law of God. Are both of these minds born of God, or is that mind which cannot be subject to the law of God, born of the flesh? The carnal mind is enmity against God, while the law requires love to God, and love to our neighbor, and on these hang all the law and the prophets. Is that fleshly mind which cannot obey the law of love, born of God? Or is that mind which can and does love God, with all the heart, might and strength, born of that flesh in which there is no good thing?

We think all Christians will unite in the conclusion that all within them that is carnal, earthly, depraved and vile, is born of the flesh, and will continue to annoy them until they shall be by death delivered from these bonds of corruption,

until this earthly house or mortal tabernacle shall be taken down, dissolved and fall, and that our mortal bodies will not be animated with immortal life until God shall change them and fashion them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer, and that change will not come until the resurrection, when if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in them. Then, and not until then, shall they be satisfied: when they awake in his likeness.

Strip the subject of all vain speculations, and all futile attempts to analyze the natural soul, body, or spirit of man, in trying to make out what we possess that is born of earth, or born from above, and it will be easy for every heaven-born child to perceive that all that we possess as identified with our persons in our present state that is born of God, bears the image of the heavenly, and all within us that does not bear the heavenly image is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit.

With a clear understanding of their complex character, as now in an earthly body which clings to the earth, and lusts after the things of the earth, and wars against the spirit of their mind, and makes them groan, being burdened, and also clearly understanding that they also are the happy recipients through grace, of eternal, or immortal life, that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory that God has revealed his Son in them, that God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God,

shining in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be prepared to appreciate what the inspired apostles have said of the *old* man, and *new* man, the *outer* man, and the *inner* man, together with the admonition to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.

A clear scriptural understanding of this subject will serve also to obviate the difficulties which may harass their minds in regard to the nature of the Christian warfare. The saints are often tempted to doubt the reality of their own experience because they find in them so much of what is earthly, sensual and devilish, so much unreconciliation to God, so much murmuring, such vile affection, and strong propensities to depart from the living God, and to run into forbidden paths. If, say they, we were born of God, would it be thus with us? Can a nature which is born of God, grovel in the dust, and be so opposite to the spirit and purity of God? Certainly that which is born of God cannot commit sin, cannot disbelieve or doubt what God has said, &c. But when they hear an inspired apostle declare that it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me, that the new man in them only, is born of God, loves God, loves holiness, loves the brethren, and serves the law of God, and that with his flesh, or earthly nature, he serves the law of sin, and does the things which he would not, and leaves undone the things which he would do, it gives them sweet relief. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Thus the apostle James interrogates the saints. Do they

arise from that new man which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness? Certainly not. They cannot proceed from that in us which is born of God, for that cannot commit sin, for the seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whence are they then? "Come they not of your own lusts?" Our flesh lusts against the Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Here is the source of wars among Christians. But as that which is assailed by the flesh is Spirit, and is born of the Spirit, it wars against the corruptions of the flesh. The life, or animation in the Christian which is of the flesh, shall die, and if we walk after the flesh, as the body is death, and it is dead because of sin, ye shall die. There is nothing else in the flesh; but if ye through the Spirit (which is born of God) do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Let us remember that if we walk after the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh. If the saints could at all times walk after the Spirit, there would be no wars and fighting among them; that is, no biting and devouring of one another; they would lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, and as new-born, heaven-born, spirit-born babes, we would desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. This spiritual food is adapted to the child of the new birth; it will not nourish the child of the flesh. Our fleshly natures are of the

earth, all their sustenance must come from the earth, and be obtained from thence by the sweat of the face. But that birth, which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, must be sustained by the milk of that living and abiding Word.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Middletown, N. Y.,
 November 15, 1858.

PSALM 24: 1-8.

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Galatians 1:9-11.

“As we said before, so say I now again, if any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.”

The Apostle Paul begins this epistle by stating, he being chosen an apostle is, “not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.”

We are most sure, without a doubt whatsoever, that if Paul was called of God, which we have every evidence to believe he was, to preach, he was also called to write as both are directed by the power of God. Therefore we have that certainty that whatever Paul is writing to the churches of Galatia is true in that day and is today.

Paul here is defending what he has preached and is preaching, as I believe each of God’s called ministers delight in doing today.

We are taught in the above scripture as well as His law written in the heart of all true believers, that of all that preach; many men do preach another gospel, or one that isn’t taught in the bible.

I think he is warning all that know the truth to beware of, to stay away from, notice the danger of, etc. making sure

they follow not or believe, any other gospel than that Paul is setting forth or that they have heard, the Word of God verifying all.

We have heard and believe that which is the nearest the truth is the most deceiving. Follow not doctrine which has an uncertain sound, but weigh all matter as to correctness.

Paul says “do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? There has never been an age or time in the world that the true and pure doctrine of God was pleasing to the entirety of mankind or would be received of the unbeliever or anyone the truth had not been revealed to. His people shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free and that means in part, free from a doctrine of gospel that is untrue.

Do I seek to please men or God? should be a question in the mind of all that know the truth, especially those who are called to stand before a God fearing people, as all His people are. Notwithstanding we know not which are His, yet to please men or to seek to please men, would erase each from being a servant of God. This is a serious matter brethren.

As God’s minister stands, or is given to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, is pleasing those he is before foremost in his thoughts? or speaking that which is indited in his heart, the fear of displeasing God, who called him by His grace. I fear many times, is it thus with me, but trust by the grace of God, there have been times, I cared not what men might think or say, but spoke from the heart, if ever I have. I don’t believe if

we were to try to please all that attend our assemblies we could preach the gospel of Christ.

We must declare He is of one mind, and changes not, the same today, tomorrow and forever. That all who ever know Him must be taught from above by His holy spirit. To know God is life eternal. Teaching we didn't choose Him but He chose us and called us into the knowledge of the truth at His appointed time. He looked down and there was none to help, His own arm, whom I believe is Christ, brought salvation.

Did not Paul declare as Jesus himself did while on earth, that all good and perfect gifts come down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness. neither shadow of turning. We see Him as knowing all things, then does He wait for us to ask for what we need before He knows? Are not all our blessings stored up in Him from eternity, not a possibility of us missing one blessing. We are being kept by His power as He brings us to desire many times the very thing He has determined to give. "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." Do we believe this, or are we apt not to declare He doeth all things well and none can stay His hand? This should be our theme if we believe in Him.

If we please men we are not the servant of God. Then do we declare all we believe or withhold part to please men. We read of a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess He is the Lord of glory. Have we been prone to water down the unchangeable gospel of

Christ? If so, we have not or will not be His servant. A servant tries to please the one he serves. If he serves people, he is loyal to his employer, in fear of being discharged. If a servant of God, expecting nothing as a reward, just made willing to serve God, in fear and trembling.

May we ever be found striving to declare that truth once delivered to the saints, giving His name all the honor, praise and glory for all time, trusting He will guide our hand to write, as well as our speech.

Submitted by,
Elder J. R. Williams

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-7.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in July. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, July 29th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30 A.M. Mayodan Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 426 N. 2nd Ave. US 220 Bus. N., Mayodan, N.C. 27027 coming north or south on US 220, turn south on 220 Business to Mayodan.

Go 2 miles to church on right. Coming NC 770, turn south on Janet Road. Go 2 miles to 220 Business. Turn right and go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

**PLEASANT HOPE
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

103 North Haley B
East Camden, AR 71701

Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Signs of the Times,

Would you please run the following announcement.

Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church (Huffines, TX) wishes to announce that effective May, 2012 the church will only meet on the 4th Sunday in May and October of each year.

Thank you very much
Annie Moore, Clerk

**SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)**

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of July 29, 2012. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2012

Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Rosalie Walker, VA	10.00
Sarah Sidbury, NC	5.00
Hoyt Adams, KY	50.00

OBITUARIES

**OBITUARY OF BROTHER
PERRY WRIGHT DILLON**

Perry was born July 20th 1922 in Franklin County, Virginia, a son of the late Herbert Taze Dillon and Hettie Ann Holland Dillon. He passed away on January 3, 2012, at the age of 89 from a stroke.

Perry was twice married, first to the late Eva Holland Dillon and then to Eula Moorefield Dillon of the residence. In addition to his wife he is survived by his son, Ronnie Dillon and his wife, Betty of Danville; his daughter, Vanessa Coffey and husband, Steve of Evington; two step-sons, Charles Andrews and wife, Judy of Rockville, MD and Gary Andrews and wife, Barbie of Lynch Station; one brother Farest Dillon of Rocky Mount; eleven grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by three sisters, Zeddie Hudson, Jo Perdue and Edna Hubbard; and one brother Clarence Dillon.

Perry was an army veteran of World War II serving with the 99th Division Infantry. He was the owner of Dillon Construction but retired on disability due to arthritis of the spine. He built the building for the Hurt Volunteer Fire Department and was a very active member as long as he was able. He loved the Fire Department and all the members. He was made a charter and lifetime member. Perry was an avid hunter for many

years and his garden was his hobby. He loved to plant and watch things grow.

Perry was gladly received into the fellowship of Union Primitive Baptist Church on May 2, 1990 on an experience of Grace. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. He was a blessing to the church and helped maintain the church, yard and driveway as long as he was able. When Union Church closed on October 3, 2010 he moved his membership to Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on the fourth Sunday in October 2010. Perry loved to go to church and always greeted everyone when he went in the door.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on January 6th, 2012 by his pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Marvin Brumfield and Ronnie Dillon. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Altavista Memorial Park to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Perry was loved by so many people and will be greatly missed by his wife, family, church family and friends.

Written By His Wife,
Eula Dillon
And
Brother-In-Law,
Brother William Midkiff

ST. JOHN 5:39.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

**In loving memory of our Sister;
Veocie Mae (Bell) Goad**

We at Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called home our Sister, Veocie Mae (Bell) Goad on March 5, 2012 at age 99.

Sister Veocie was born in Washington County, Virginia on Sept. 13, 1912 to the late Elder Rudy D. and Mary Emaline (Johnson) Bell. She was one of nine children and the last of her sisters and brothers.

She joined Mayodan Church on May 2, 1934 and married Roscoe Lee Goad Sr. To this union was born one son Roscoe Lee Goad Jr. She was a faithful member and loved her church very much and was the church clerk for many years. She traveled near and far to other churches and association and known as the Avon Lady in Rockingham County. As her health failed she couldn't attend church and later went into Jacob's Creek Nursing and Rehabilitation in Madison, NC. (Rock. Co).

Sister Veocie was humble, yet stood firm in what she believed was right and always defended the doctrine of predestination and election by the grace of God.

In addition to her parents; she was preceded in death by her husband Roscoe Lee Goad Sr. in 1970, seven sisters and one brother. Veocie is survived by her son Roscoe Lee Goad Jr. of Greensboro, NC and grand-daughter, Tiffany Goad of Marietta, Ga.

It is our sincere desire that God will be with her loved ones and comfort them from day to day. We at Mayodan Church extend our deepest sympathy to the family and our hope is God will reconcile all of us to his Holy and righteous will.

Sister Veocie loved this song:

*How firm a foundation,
ye Saints of the Lord.*

Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!

What more can he say, than to you he hath said.

You, who unto, Jesus for refuge have fled.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Be it therefore resolved that 3 copies of this obituary notice be made. One is for the family, one for the church record, and one for publication.

Elder Tommy Pegram is our pastor. Done in order of our church in conference, Mar. 18, 2012.

Elder Tommy Pegram, Mod.
Sister Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/2012
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 180

HILLSVILLE, VA., AUGUST 2012

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

'Tis winter in my soul; my sins
Like clouds o'erspread the sky;
While wailing winds and dreary rains
To me all joys deny.

My heart lies hopeless of relief,
And filled with deep alarm,
Like the cold earth, benumbed with grief,
Under the pelting storm.

I try to look to God, but sin
Forbids to lift my eyes;
My cries and prayers are all in vain,
Guilt will not let them rise.

O weary winter of the soul,
How sad and full of gloom!
The heavy hours, how slow they roll,
While griefs my heart consume.

And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?

Turn my captivity, O Lord!
Once more to thee I call;
And let thy sweet forgiving word
Make summer in my soul.

Then shall the streams of joyful praise,
Loosed by thy gracious hand,
To thy blessed name flow all my days,
In my heart's southern land.

Silas H. Durand

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EDITORIAL

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is a great and profound mystery, too high and wide and deep for the carnal mind to understand. As with all mysteries, we must wait upon the Lord, hoping and trusting that He would make His word plain, that we might not be in confusion concerning it. For the scriptures

to be of any benefit, they must be rightly divided, or opened up and laid out in truth. Only the Lord is able to do this. Beginning to write on this subject causes great fear within, because of the weakness of the flesh. But we must press on trusting that God will guide our thoughts to His praise, honor and glory. If anything is set forth contrary to the doctrine of Christ, it must be chargeable to me. But if anything is set forth in truth it is because God has been merciful to keep us in the way.

The Lord God made all things that were made in heaven and in earth, including the man, Adam. **“And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”** And God made Adam a help meet, Eve, that he should not be alone. The subtle serpent, which the Lord God had made, tempted Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He contradicted the commandment of God, and told Eve that they would not die, but that their eyes would be opened and that they would be as gods knowing good from evil. **“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat.”**

The devil was deceitful, telling half-truths and appealing to the fleshly desires of the creature. He set up in Eve the desire for what was forbidden, and tempted her to venture out and disobey God. He told her they wouldn't die - and they didn't fall down dead that day, but they would die in another way. They would die to their ignorant bliss and unknowing presumption. And the serpent told her that their eyes would be opened, and they were, but not in a way that they had thought. Their eyes were opened to their guilt and shame, concerning their disobedience and fleshly existence.

What does all this mean spiritually to us today. It wouldn't be of much benefit to us if it were only a story of what happened to two people some six thousand years ago. The apostle Paul was blessed to bring the meaning forward to bear upon his life, and to bear upon the lives of all those that would believe after him. He said, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, **"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid [It must not be.] Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence [desire for that which is forbidden]. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."**

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil surely stands for the law. It is beautiful to look upon, and one might think its fruit would be profitable for the increase of knowledge about the world and about the meaning of life. It seems that it would be a good place to go to gain comfort and peace. **"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."** But it was not put here for the purpose of giving life. Rather it was purposed to be the ministration of condemnation and death. And it also serves as the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that is blessed to believe.

God formed Adam of the dust of the ground, and Adam was, from the beginning of his existence, a creature made subject to vanity just like all that would come after him. This means that Adam was not some angelic being or spiritual creature. He was a person just the same as we are today. Before he was brought into the knowledge of the law and of good and evil, he went about doing fleshly things. The blessed apostle said, **"...we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind..."** But before the commandment was given to Adam, there was no law to transgress, therefore, there was no sin and no knowledge of sin. And after the law was given, and after they disobeyed God, Adam and Eve were condemned by the law. They were shown the truth about their fleshly lives and disobedience. And now they knew they had disobeyed the Lord God

their Maker, and that they were in need of mercy. Then, they were killed by the law. They were not killed naturally or spiritually, but were killed to their former way of thinking and doing, just as the apostle Paul was killed, and just as we were killed, if we indeed have a part with all saints.

The serpent used the commandment of the Lord God to bring forth in Eve the desire for that which was forbidden. Accordingly, the apostle said he was alive once, but when the commandment came sin revived and he died. Now, how did the apostle die? He didn't fall down dead naturally, neither did he die spiritually, but he was killed to his old way of life. No longer could he pride himself in his accomplishments, or his good deeds, or his supposed self-righteousness. He was killed to any thoughts of salvation by fleshly works. Is not this our experience? Were we not brought under that same law, and made to see that we are sinners with no hope of salvation by anything we could do? Was it not this knowledge by way of the law that brought us as a schoolmaster to Christ, helpless and in need of mercy? Only then could we look to Him as our Savior, the only Way of Salvation.

After the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the Lord God gave a pronouncement to the serpent, because of his deception of Eve. **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."** This scripture has stood from the time of its utterance until today to proclaim the re-

lationship between the devil and the woman, and between his posterity and her posterity. There is disagreement, and animosity between them, and it shall continue until the Lord comes and casts the devil and his host into the lake of fire.

Eve was made to hate her disobedience and the one who tempted her and led her in it. She was called the mother of all living, which means she was the mother of all those who were the natural offspring of Adam and herself. But spiritually, it appears that Eve stands for the Church of the living God. All her children are alive in Christ. All her posterity has been given enmity against the devil and his children. And the devil and his children have enmity against the Church and her posterity.

The devil does have children. This is plain because Jesus identified some of them saying, **"Ye are of your father the devil and, the lusts of your father ye will do."** How are they the devil's children? They are controlled by the spirit of wickedness, which brings forth every evil work. How are the saints the children of God? Not by natural generation, but by spiritual generation. **"Which were born [generated], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."** They are controlled by the Spirit of God, which brings forth the good works that they were before ordained to perform, by grace.

The Lord God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent, and that the serpent would bruise His heel. This stands out as a wonderful prophecy concerning the mysterious birth of Christ by way of the vir-

gin Mary , and as a sure prophesy of the ultimate destruction of the devil by the Lord, and as a fitting description of the crucifixion of Christ.

It pleased God in His great wisdom to send forth His Son into the world in a certain way. **“But when the fullness of the 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.”** God provided the remedy for the sins of His people in sending His Son into the world, in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin. God and not man was His Father. Jesus, in a great mystery that is beyond our reason or our speculation, was verily God and verily man. The virgin, Mary , was a chosen vessel, but was as much in need of the mercy of the Savior as any of the other children of God. She was not a person to be worshipped, and neither to be thought of as the mother of God, as many do. But she holds a special place in our hearts as a humble, loving saint who God used to carry out His eternal purpose of the salvation of His people – part of which was to be born of a virgin. Jesus surely is the fulfillment of the prophesy of the seed of the woman that would bruise the head of the serpent.

In the book of Revelation, we see one of the seven heads of the beast, as it were wounded unto death, and his deadly wound was healed. The seed of the woman, Jesus, bruised the head of the serpent and wounded it unto death. The power of Satan was broken when the Lord laid down His life to atone for

the sins of His beloved people. The devil no longer had any way to condemn the saints, since their sin debt was paid. This was a deadly wound to him relative to his being able to condemn the saints. And when the Lord gave His Holy Spirit to His children, the devil could no longer deceive them. This killed the serpent in his purpose to draw them away after himself.

But we see that Satan is still in the world deceiving and being deceived, and seeking whom he may devour. His deadly wound was healed in that he is still active in the world. But his time is short and he knows it. Because of this he has great wrath toward the children of God, and their mother, the Church. But Jesus has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church – which includes all her members.

The Lord God said that the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. Jesus suffered from the serpent and his posterity, many insults, cruel mockings, and was finally scourged and nailed to a tree, where he gave up His life willingly for those He loved. There are many pictures and sculptures of what artists supposed were accurate depictions of the crucifixion. But as with the truth of the gospel, and the doctrine of Christ, unbelievers have never been enabled to know the truth. Jesus said, **“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”** We see that the brazen serpent was put upon a pole in the days of Moses, and was lifted up. This was done, at the Lord’s command, so

that all who looked upon the serpent in obedience would be healed of the deadly bite of the fiery serpents that had been sent among them because of their sin. Likewise, Jesus also was fastened to a pole and lifted up, so that all who looked upon Him, by the gift of faith in their Lord and Savior, would be delivered from death and destruction.

It appears from certain natural evidence and from the scriptures that those in ancient times who were crucified had their heels pierced by nails; one to either side of the pole. Ancient archeological evidence exists in Israel of part of a man's foot with a nail still in place passing through the heel. Evidently, he had been crucified. And we have the scripture in Genesis saying the serpent would bruise His heel. And we have Job prophesying of the Lord, "**Thou puttest my feet in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.**" All this evidence, especially the scripture evidence, causes me to believe that the Lord's heels were actually bruised by the serpent in fulfillment of the scripture as He was nailed to the tree. This seems to be the true representation of the circumstances of death of our Lord, rather than what the world sets forth.

There are other things that are connected to the account of the garden of Eden that are wonderful such as the coats of skins, the tree of life, and the flaming sword. "**Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.**" Before the Lord God sent Adam and

Eve from the garden of Eden, He made coats of skins and clothed them. Mercy and compassion was shown to them as they were about to be sent forth into the world. To be clothed with coats of skins required the death of an animal. Jesus offered Himself up without spot unto God to secure eternal redemption for His people. He took their sins upon Himself, and gave them His robe of righteousness instead. They were made the righteousness of God in Him.

"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 whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This makes it plain that salvation is of the Lord. It cannot be taken hold of by anyone, contrary to what the multitudes say. The tree of life surely represents Christ, and the flaming sword, the Sword of the Spirit. Jesus said, "**No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.**" God has fixed it so that if anyone would glory in truth, he must glory in the Lord.

God is true and cannot lie or fail in a promise. His scripture is also true and contains all we need for our instruction, edification and comfort in spiritual matters. How merciful and kind He is to have

left on record for us the things that so warm our hearts and satisfy our minds about the things of the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness. May He lead us into all truth and keep us in the way of love and joy and peace.

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

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

5-3-2012
P. O. Box 787
Gretna, Va.

Brother Tony,

Please renew my subscription for one year. Use the balance as you need.

It is so good to receive the Signs. I didn't fully realize how precious it is until I could no longer go to services due to my husband's critical illness.

Brother Oscar and Sister Nellie Pickral called to check on us and we always get around to talking about the love and grace of the Lord. It is so uplifting to a weary heart.

Thank you all for all the hard work in getting the Signs out.

A sister in love and hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

PSALM 8:9.

**O Lord our Lord, how excellent
is thy name in all the earth!**

6-7-12

Mr. Tony Horton,

Please renew my subscription for another year. Use the rest as needed in memory of my brother Charles Hatchett.

I thank you and all your staff for The, "Signs of the Times." I enjoy it very much every month.

Thank you all,
Gladys Shelton

ARTICLES

GOOD AND PERFECT GIFTS ARE FROM ABOVE

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: (Eph. 1:3) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2: 10).

These two scriptures, taken from separate places in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2, express a strong foundational doctrine that runs throughout the scriptures and should never be discounted or diluted. In addition they are strengthened and amplified with many necessary admonitions and exhortations **"...that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom.12:2).** With this in mind there is an urgency seen in the question of the apostle Paul to the He-

brews; **“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; (Heb. 2:3).**

This question by the apostle does not in any way imply that the sovereign will or determinate council of God is changed by human action or the neglect of it. It does point to an earnest need for godly diligence in the believer, the strength of which comes from the Spirit. The admonitions and exhortations, when laid upon the heart by the Spirit, and carried out, are as necessary for the fulfilling of God's purpose as are any other scriptures. They are a part of the interlocking chain that binds together, in one perfect pattern, all the incidents of God's providence. Consider that the scripture, where the apostle Paul exhorts the Philippian church, **“...in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” ...Philippians 2:12.** It is immediately followed in verse 13, telling in what, or whose, strength it is done. **“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.”**

The nature of the flesh demands that no good work can begin in the flesh, **“Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. 8:7).** Yet, the vanity of the flesh, if left unchecked, will be quick to claim credit and wants it's reward for obeying the scriptures. It is blind to see and understand the words of Rom. 7:18; **“For I know that in me (that is, in the flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:**

for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.” This is the same Apostle Paul that instructs the church at Ephesus; **“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” (Eph. 4:31,32).** Does this not at first seem to be a contradiction?

The answer to the problem, if there is one, is that the admonitions and exhortations given are to the man of God and not to the world at large; To the inward man, and not the flesh, and likewise for good works. This strength of the inward man is only from above, **“...*there is none good but one, that is God:*” (Mat. 19:17).** **“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:17).** Therefore the admonitions and/or exhortations of a brother should not be shunned, but carefully considered and judged on scriptural principals. Consider the Jews at Berea. They received the word of Paul and Silas with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily on whether the things they heard were so. (Acts 17:10,11). With such God given caution and understanding, it should be remembered that the scriptures are heavily laced with instructions of things for the child of God to do and not to do, and all to the praise of him who supplies both the “will and

the do." And **"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;..."** (Eccl. 9: 10).

The Apostle John exhorts the saints; **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."** (1 John 3:18). There is no room in the doctrine of predestination for the rationalized philosophy of the stool of do nothing", considering that the "will and the do" is from above. But it is understood of words and deeds, however intended, do not benefit God. He needs nothing that saints can supply. In the words of David; **"...my goodness extendeth not to thee; But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight."** (Psa. 16:2,3). Though the scriptures exhort the saints; **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith."** (Gal.6:10). And further, Paul expresses to Timothy that a servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. (See 2nd Tim. 2:24,25).

It is clear that the goodness shown and expressed from saint to saint does not originate in the "will and do" of the old man, but is from God. Neither will it return to him void.

Therefore, **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good**

works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. 10: 23-25).

Elder Wayman Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER E. J. LAMBERT *Signs of the Times*, JANUARY, 1938

Elder W. D. Griffin

Dear Brother in Bonds:

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why anyone would stoop so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems

so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace.

I was reared by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the "Church of Christ" (Kelly division of Missionary Baptists). Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a, "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called, "Hard Shell," whom I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course, I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization of my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age, I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of, "Big I," and the foremost symptom of self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to, "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went

along smoothly for a while.

Now dear brother, the saddest, most heart-rending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and spoke thus: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shall be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call, old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out at the door and hide from everyone. As soon as I could, I went away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I

could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not. I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit, and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon

several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thought was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the holiest of holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law.

I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where my wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, for curiosity's sake, "I will go." I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time, to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go.

I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to

my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power, my foolishness and God's wisdom, I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw Him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with His blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) He kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was accredited to my account, my sins were laid on His shoulders and He bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for license. Of course, with all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other

things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face anyone. One night, at the home of Elder J. R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested I be called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year, and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

Elder E. J. LAMBERT

PSALM 63:6-7.

When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

Because thou has been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

LIVING WATER

Jesus told the Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's Well to draw water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, 'Give me to drink'; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee LIVING WATER." (John 4:10) The woman evidently did not know either the gift of God or who He was because she began to reason with Him on procuring natural water from a deep natural well. Her reasoning and questions were based on the same principles as that of Nicodemus as recorded in the first part of the third chapter of John relative to being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born again naturally. The woman thought He was speaking of natural water. Our natural finite minds can only conceive of that which is natural. Until we are born of the Spirit we cannot conceive that which is spiritual. I am thoroughly convinced that when Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" He was speaking of this same LIVING WATER that was under consideration in His conversation with the Samaritan woman. What is this LIVING WATER? What is its source? Through Whom does it come? What does this LIVING WATER do for its beneficiaries? These are a few of the questions in my mind. May God give us the answer in sweet meditations while we work through this treatise.

Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a WELL OF

WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVER-LASTING LIFE." (John 4:14) This well of water is placed in the individual. It springs up. Sometimes in our experience we may feel that it has dried up to the extent that our hopes are blasted - then, it SPRINGS UP to revive us again, which strengthens our faith, and our hope is renewed. Have you not experienced many times the SPRINGING UP of this well of water?

We read in Isaiah 12:3 "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the WELLS OF SALVATION." "This LIVING WATER comes from the wells of salvation. It brings joy and gladness to those who drink it. The Psalmist said, "*There is a river, the streams whereof, shall make GLAD the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.*" (Ps. 46:4) This LIVING WATER makes glad the grieved heart and brings joy to those who mourn because of their sins. It saves us from despair and gives relief to our parched soul. This water is soothing and enlivening. It is that Fountain that is opened to the Lord's people for sin and uncleanness. (See Zechariah 13:1) It proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Has God ever showed you what He showed to John as recorded in Revelations 22: 1-2? Have you seen this pure river of water of life flowing from the Throne of God through the Tree of Life? If this Tree of Life stood in the midst of the street of that River and on either side of it — surely, the river flowed through the tree. Every stream of mercy that has ever reached you came through Jesus Christ who is our Life. Yes, this LIVING

WATER, or water of life, comes from Heaven. These gifts of His grace come down from the Father through the Son to us. Every comfort received by the child of God is because of this LIVING WATER.

We have concluded from our meditations upon this subject thus far that this LIVING WATER gives to us the glorious and joyous portion of our experiences of grace. Many of the Lord's people who have been born of the Spirit have not yet rejoiced in these wonderful revelations. The first experiences of those born of the Spirit are grievous and condemning. Jesus cited two facts that must be revealed to an individual before they would ask Him to give them to drink. These two facts are that the person must know what is the gift of God and that Jesus Christ is His Son and Saviour of His people. A person learns much through tribulations after He is born of the Spirit, before he experiences these joyful experiences. A child of God must be born of the Spirit before he can SEE the kingdom of God. He must be born of the WATER before he can ENTER into the kingdom of God — before he can really experience the joys of Eternal Life Jesus said, "**Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**" (Matt. 7:14) It is a painful entrance into life. It is through much tribulations that we enter the kingdom. As the new-born babe comes forth into the natural realm crying; so, the new-born spiritual babe comes crying and lamenting into the spiritual realm. What does it require to constitute ETERNAL LIFE? Let us ask Jesus what is Life

Eternal and listen at His answer as recorded in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:3 - "And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." There are two lessons to be learned in this ordeal of ETERNAL LIFE. The first lesson brings the bitter experiences; the second lesson reveals the sweet. We learn the vengeance of an Holy God upon an unholy creature in the first lesson; we learn of His mercy and grace in the second lesson. We stand condemned creatures before a righteous Judge in the first lesson; we are freed from this just condemnation in the second lesson. We learn in the first experience that we are unable to lift ourselves from the pitfalls of sin into which we have fallen; we see Jesus lifting us out without any effort of our own in the second experience. We are tried in the fiery furnace and suffer great tribulations before we come to the position to ask Him, "GIVE US TO DRINK?"

Our first lesson has been such an ordeal that we are indeed THIRSTY. We have been made willing to be a beggar at His footstool and plead to Him for mercy and grace — for LIVING WATER to cool the fiery indignation! Hungry and THIRSTY our soul faints in us. Then, we CRY to the Lord in our troubles, and He delivers us from our distresses! (See Psalms 107:5.-6) How soothing is that first LIVING WATER experienced by a parched soul! Do you not remember when you plead with Him, "GIVE ME TO DRINK?" Do you recall the first time you experienced that sweet inviting command, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth,

COME YE TO THE WATERS, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price?" We learn in the first lesson that we have nothing with which to buy, barter, or trade. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes that with which we buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Let us turn to Isaiah 40:6-7 for a scriptural explanation of the effect of the Spirit so that we might better understand the need for this LIVING WATER. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass WITHERETH, the flower FADETH: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." The Spirit of the Lord causes our flesh to wither and our goodliness to fade away. There is exceeding dryness experienced by everyone upon which the Spirit of the Lord comes. It withers the works of the flesh to such extent that we have no confidence in it. Our faith in our merits is so withered that we can see no evidence of life. Our righteousness fades to such degree that instead of righteousness the very best becomes as filthy rags. This is the proper and appointed time for us to beg of Jesus, GIVE ME TO DRINK."

Have you ever looked upon grass and pronounced it dead because of its withered condition? A shower of rain comes and you behold greenness and see its drooping blades begin to raise up. Life is manifested in that which you thought and considered to be dead. This LIVING WATER enables you to lift up alms that hang down. It steadies the

feeble knees. It causes the lame to walk. This LIVING WATER gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might, it increaseth strength. It causes His people to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint.

When we are blessed to drink His righteousness it revives our drooping spirits. What a blessing to drink down greedily the streams of the Lord's mercies and to realize that the fountain can never run dry but endures forever! Yes, we drink His blood to cleanse our sin-sick soul. We drink the wine of the kingdom which stimulates us to press forward regardless of difficulties, and run with patience the race set before us. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Drinking from this fountain of LIVING WATER causes us to GROW in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. It saves us from despair and from sinking into oblivion.

Never shall I forget the hour that I was made to vehemently cry, "Give me to drink." My faith in self was shattered and my hopes were all blasted. I felt that I was forever doomed with the off-casts of the earth. I felt that hell was my eternal abiding place. One night God was pleased to bless one of His ministers to give me just one small ray of hope when he was blessed to preach Jesus as a complete saviour. I immediately grasped at the straw and began to plead to the Lord to have mercy upon me. I began crying, GIVE ME TO DRINK. The Lord had mercy upon me and showed me that His Holy arm was so mighty that it could reach down into the terrible pitfalls of sin and rescue a vile sinner like me, make

him holy, and safely secure his final abode with redeemed sinners! He showed me that His right hand was sufficient to keep secure from all harm so that nothing could pluck me from His hand. His minister was blessed to WATER so that my hope became anchored in that which was sure and steadfast. I trust that I drank many times from that Fountain through His ministers while they were being blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of the Love and amazing grace of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Corinthians 3:6, that "Apollos watered." Seeing that it is God that gives the increase through the minister it must be this LIVING WATER coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Your thirst has been quenched many times under the dripping of the sanctuary while feasting upon the preaching of a God-called minister. Were it not for the grand experiences of drinking this LIVING WATER while speaking from the pulpit, I feel, I would die in despair. It is an unspeakable wonder to see Heaven opened, to hear the Voice of the Son, and to feel the soothing effect of this LIVING WATER as it is calmly and sweetly applied to your soul. Oh how it does lift our drooping spirits and encourages us to persevere on our journey. Even though we feel to be lone pilgrims trodding in a desert land where there is no water — the Lord is gracious to us sometimes in directing us to an oasis where there is LIVING WATER for us. Could we enjoy these precious drinks as much as we do if this water could be at our command each and every step of our pilgrimage?

It is glorious when all of us can drink of the same spiritual drink — when we can drink of that spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus.

I am persuaded that it has pleased the Lord to bless us often with this LIVING WATER when we are congregated together in church capacity to worship God. Could that be the reason the Lord's people are so anxious to meet together regularly with one another in their church meetings? I have seen them from several states convened together in associations eagerly drinking that LIVING WATER as it flowed from the mouths of His ministers in such grand meetings. Such love and joy can only be experienced by the Lord's humble poor who are made to depend upon Grace for salvation to be experienced here and for eternity. I praise God that He has so arranged that His children can meet together from the different parts of the United States and worship together the King in such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in these associations. God forbid that anything shall come among us to mar the chain of correspondence that exists with our people interlinking them together with the whole of the United States and the British Isles.

I appreciate very much the love manifested for me by the Lord's children from the rivers to the ends of the earth. My interest is in the remote places from Canada to Florida — from Washington to California — All over the globe where those of like faith and order resides.

Please pray that this LIVING WATER will be enjoyed by me and mine as the Lord sees fit to distribute it to us. My

wife asks an interest in your prayers. The churches of my pastorate need your prayers. If you could stoop so low as to remember an insignificant thing like me — remember me when you are at the throne of God's Grace from which this LIVING WATER flows!!

Elder E. J. Lambert

PSALM XXXI. 15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN: — As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet has trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible

teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they

believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. **"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let, the multitude of isles be glad thereof."**—**Psalm xcvi.** I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that he—his will, purpose, love and grace—will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from

the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hand," and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, over-ruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be re-

membered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exalt that he-his times — were in the hand of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hand of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to

grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "My times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined." - Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that

walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hand of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hand of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidently and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hand. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken a way; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, ill whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently,

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground: "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well

again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hand of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as be-

fore. Our times are in the hand of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that veil. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hand.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,

My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

Elder F. A. CHICK.

Reisterstown, Md.

Feb. 1, 1888.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. -- Revelation ii. 29.

These words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to everyone to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."** Rev. iii. 20.

J.C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 5:8-9.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-fifth session of the Little Vine Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road, in Wyoming county, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 25 and 26, 2012. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 A. M. and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer,
Clerk

2012

One Hundred Eighty-Seventh
Annual Session
of the Pigg River Association
to be held on Chestnut Church Ground

Starting time on Friday
Singing 10:30 and 11:00 Preaching
Starting time on Saturday
Singing 9:30 and 10:00 Preaching
Starting time on Sunday
Singing 9:30 and 10:00 Preaching
Commencing on Friday before the
First Sunday
in August, 2012

We invite all Elders & Brethren of our faith and order, and all churches that we are associated with, to come and be with us.

Going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, turn right on to Route 724 (Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 miles to church. Going South on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, turn left at first stop light on Route 619 go 3.7 miles turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) 1 mile to church.

Elder Thomas Solomon. Clerk
255 Morgan Clay Drive
Glade Hill, VA 24092

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fifty-sixth annual session of the Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Paynes Creek Church located in Floyd County, Va. on August 31, September 1st and 2nd, 2012.

The church is located in Floyd County, Virginia off the Blue Ridge Park-

way between mileposts 150 and 151, about 18 miles north of Rt. 8. Church is on Rt. 639 (River Ridge Road) and in sight of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2012

Faye Brown, NC	15.00
Gladys Shelton, NM (<i>Memory of Charles Hatchett</i>)	25.00
Raymond Wimmer, WV	5.00
Carol Lansaw, VA	10.00

OBITUARIES

NOTICE OF DEATHS

It is with much sadness that we report two deaths of ones well-known to most Primitive or Old School Baptists. The first is that of Elder John Moses Newborn or J.M. as he was more widely known. The Lord called him from this life on March 17, 2012 at the age of 79 years. He was a member of Mewborn Primitive Baptist Church near Snow Hill, NC for over 56 years and served as

pastor for some 36 years. During his ministry he pastored several other churches including Willow Springs Primitive Baptist Church which he served for some 38 years. In addition to serving these churches, he was the owner and Editor of Zion's Landmark for over 38 years. He leaves to mourn his dear wife of almost 54 years, Susan Turlington Mewborn as well as children: Cynthia Eason, Lydia Smith, John Moses Mewborn, Jr., and Suzanne Campbell. Also, there are three grandchildren, one brother and one sister.

The second death is that of Zion's Landmark. This Primitive Baptist paper was established in 1867 and set forth the doctrine and order as believed and contended for by the Primitive Baptist for 145 years. The 2012 Winter Edition was the final issue due to Elder Mewborn's poor health and subsequent death. We feel certain that the longtime readers of Zion's Landmark feel as though it is the death of a family member.

It is our prayer that the Lord comfort and reconcile all those who mourn these two deaths.

Editor

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/2012
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 180

HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2012

NO. 9

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Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publica-
tion, all notices of meetings and all obituar-
ies should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson,
111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

WHILE winter's gloom was still o'er spread,
And on my spirit lay,
The voice of my Beloved said,
Rise up and come away.

For lo, the winter's past, the rain
Is over now and gone;
The flowers appear, and songs again
Of praises are begun.

The power and sweetness of that voice
Wrought wondrous change in me;
Made my poor, drooping heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.

In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes !
Spring's glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven;
The warm south wind is in that word
Which shows my sins forgiven.

'Tis this makes winter clouds depart,
And gives me brighter days;
The sweet spring time is in my heart,
And I am filled with praise.

What heavenly rest from cold and pain
In these soft airs that come
With blessed thoughts of Jesus' name,
And breathing rich perfume.

Thanks that the weary days are o'er;
Thanks for spring's gentle sway;
Thanks for the love that says with power,
Rise up and come away.

Silas H. Durand.

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EDITORIAL

Isaiah 43:1&2, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be with thee*; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

This chapter is very beautiful and very comforting. The Lord speaks through his prophet Isaiah concerning His work of grace. Jacob sets forth the fleshly or natural man and Israel sets forth the spiritual. When Jacob wrestled with a man all during the dark night, it was the spiritual manifestation of God applying the law to Jacob. For Jacob could say "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." The Lord touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and it was out of joint. Jacob would no longer walk as he once did relying on his own strength. But, the Lord was his staff that he would lean on and be his strength and help. As the light of day began to break, Jacob asked to be blessed. The Lord said unto Jacob "What is thy name?" Jacob had to confess my name is Jacob. I am a sinner. I am a deceiver. I am a supplanter. Then the Lord said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The nighttime of the law had past and the light of the day of grace, the gospel day, shined forth. The Lord blessed Jacob there.

How comforting the word of the Lord to His little children of grace, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." O how wonderful that with God there is no uncertainty, no chance, no leaving salvation to the fleshly man. With the Father of lights, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning for the foundation

of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." By His shedding of blood, death and resurrection, He redeemed His elect from their sins. They are His. He knows their name and calls them out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light. He said that of all the Father gave Him, He should lose none but should raise it up at the last day. He said He was the good shepherd and knows His sheep and am known of them.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." The waters set forth the trials, troubles and tribulations that His people must go through in this life. He doesn't say "if" thou passest through the waters, but "when." He has promised you tribulations as He said "In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though you will experience many trials, troubles, tribulations and sorrows in this world, He, who cannot lie, promised to be with you. He did not promise to take you out of the tribulation, but to be with you through it. The Apostle Paul besought the Lord three times to remove the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that was buffeting him. This experience of Paul was purposed by God to keep him humble and meek lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. So the Lord did not remove it, but He told the Apostle "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Through your trials you are made to look unto the Lord and beg for His strength, mercy love and grace.

"And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Do you ever feel that the rivers of false doctrines, lies from high places, persecutions and all the calamities of the world spewing forth from the mouth of the serpent are about to overflow and destroy you! The Lord speaks to you in that small, still voice, "Fear not, they shall not overflow thee." As David said in **Psalm 27:5**, "**For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock.**" David also said, "**He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings.**" You, my dear people, have been set on the foundation which is Christ and you cannot be washed away or destroyed. How do you think Stephen felt when he was being stoned and gnashed on with teeth because he set forth the truth in Christ and those non-believers were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. So they accused him of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God. These stirred up the the people, the elders and the scribes against him. The Lord filled him with the Holy Ghost and he, through an eye of faith, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Stephen saw Jesus as the Son of man who had suffered more than he was suffering; who had shed His blood, died and rose again. What great comfort! Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Stephen, called upon God, say-

ing, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And then "he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." I believe the Lord gave Stephen such peace and comfort that it was as though he just went to sleep. With his eye of faith beholding Jesus, I do not believe he was even aware of what was happening to him. You cannot see Jesus and the world at the same time.

"When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." **Isaiah 48:10 says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."** As gold is tried in the furnace of fire, so you must be tried by fire. The more gold is tried by fire the brighter it shines. So with you, the more you are tried by the trials, troubles, tribulations, sorrows, afflictions and persecutions the manifest is the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The three Jewish men who refused to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar set up were cast into a furnace of fire that was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. The flame of the fire slew those men who took up the three men of God. But these three were completely clothed from head to

feet. So the Lord clothes His people with the whole armour of God before they ever experience the fiery furnace. Therefore, you shall not be burned and neither shall the flame kindle against you. Your loins are girt about with truth. You have on the breastplate of righteousness. Your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. You go praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. The three Jews were not harmed in the fiery furnace and there was a fourth like the Son of God walking with them. So with a child of grace tried by fire, the very image of Christ is manifested.

Isaiah 43:13, "Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

Isaiah 43:21, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

May the Lord be with each of you and bless you with peace and comfort.

A little one in hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 75:1-2.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

CORRESPONDENCE

July 2, 2012

Dear Tony Horton:

Enclosed is my check for the (50.00) renewal of the Signs of Times for 1 year. Use the rest as you see fit. I was 97 years old in March, so I don't know how long the Lord has for me on this earth. My eye sight is poorly but I want to read all the "Signs" when I receive it. Thanks for all the writers.

A sister I hope
 Lessie M. Smith
 6942 Indian Wells Rd.
 Sanger, Texas 76266

Dear Tony Horton,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times again. Enclosed find check to cover cost plus a donation. Use as you see fit.

The Signs has always been in Praise, Honor, and Glory to God, may it always continue to be.

Sincerely,
 Ruby Queen

July 11, 2012

Editors of Signs,

Sorry I am late with subscription. It is so good to see you are keeping with the Old Baptist ways. It makes

one sad to see so many drifting away from Absolute Predestination. It seems the number that holds fast to the Old Baptist are becoming fewer each day; in Romans 11:5 we read of a remnant, according to the election of grace.

Mrs. C. H. Elledge
 563 FM115
 Scroggins, Tx. 75480

July 16, 2012

Elder Robertson,

This is the obituary of Sister Eloise Turman. She was the mother of Glenna Terry and a member at Indian Creek (PBC). Please put it in the Signs of the Times when you have the space. Hope you and your family are well.

Thomas Pegram, Moderator
 J.B. Mitchell, Clerk

1800 Arendell Street
 Morehead City, NC 28557

July 9, 2012

Please renew my subscription to Signs of the Times for four years and use the rest as needed.

I am always happy to see it arrive in the mail and cannot wait to read and re-read each issue. I never discard any and actually have old issues from many years back from my mother and grandmother's subscriptions. The ar-

ticles never grow old, because the scripture remains unchanged.

Nancy Pollack

June 29, 2012
 Tony R. Horton
 Circulation Manager and Treasurer
 1429 Howlett Street
 Hillsville, VA 24343

most beautiful thing he had ever seen, and that he would see it one more time before he died.

Humbly submitted,
 Charles Mathews
 P O Box 77166
 Baton Rouge, Louisiana
 70879-7166
 (225) 456-2062

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now. Sorry I am late renewing.

My prayer is one of thanksgiving, because the Lord continues to bless each of his Elect each day that we are here in this low ground, and I have a hope that I am one of the Elect.

I am sure you will receive an obituary regarding my uncle Elder David Godwin, of the Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church (near Reidheimer, Louisiana), but I just want to say something in advance about him. He passed away June 19, 2012 at the age of 102. He and I had several talks over the years, and I am familiar with many of his experiences. The one thing I wanted to mention at this time is that, about 2 years ago, he told me that he had seen the Light twice in his lifetime, that it was the

JOHN 1:1-10.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

Mr. Beebe:-In a former letter I requested your views on the absolute predestination of all things. I asked for information, and for nothing else; but I will excuse you for not answering me, for I know that I am not worthy of notice, but I am a poor unworthy worm of the dust.

Your unworthy friend.
R.S.

Reply. — We assure our friend R.S. that our apparent neglect of this request was not owing to any want of respect for him, nor to any unwillingness to give him such views as we have on the important subject of his inquiry. Those who truly feel sensible that they are poor unworthy worms of the dust, and yet have a desire to be informed in regard to the universal government of the supreme God, of his prescience and irrevocable decrees, are the very persons above all others, whom we desire to serve to the full extent of the ability God may be pleased to give us.

Predestination, as a highly esteemed writer in the *Signs* once remarked, does not require to be qualified by prefixing to it the word *absolute*, as the predestination of God must of necessity be absolute in every particular. Jehovah is an absolute God, and all that he purposes or performs must be

absolute. There can be no fiction nor anything merely nominal with him. Predestination is destination beforehand, and as nothing can be beforehand, or subsequent with him, the term as it is used in the scriptures is used in reference to our finite state, as creatures of time; or rather as creatures of God, but for the present, in the time state of existence. God inhabits eternity, and all things are present with him. The progression of time and development of events can add nothing to his stock of knowledge. We his creatures may and we certainly do, live and learn. He has himself called our attention to the fact that he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This declaration of the end from the beginning proves his prescience, so conclusively, that but few are so hardened in infidelity as to openly and in so many words, deny his foreknowledge of all events; for if he were deficient in knowledge he could not with unerring certainty declare the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things which are yet to transpire. But there are those who while they admit what is called the foreknowledge of God, deny that his knowledge is based upon his own purpose and determinate counsel. They urge the following objections to predestination. It is fatalism, it destroys man's free-agency, and his accountability, and makes God the author of sin; and some there are who go still farther and say if the doctrine of predestination be true, God in predestinating the events of time, etc., has transcended his right and is unjust.

Our friend R.S., we think, will agree with us, that it verily becomes poor sinful dying mortals thus irreverently, not to say blasphemously, to question the eternal right of God to do what seemeth to him good, in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, or to set up their standards of justice and denounce their creator if he does not abide by their decisions. Let all such first meet the searching interrogative of the inspired apostle, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel to honor" etc.? The holy prophet of Jehovah, by inspiration, has informed us that God is the potter, and we are the clay. Hence we must acknowledge his eternal right to dispose of all things, all events, and of all worlds according to his own pleasure. Let this be admitted and all murmuring against his predestination will cease. It is not our purpose to meet the objections urged by men to the doctrine of divine revelation, and by logical argument to put them to silence; nor do we design to attempt to make the doctrine palatable to the natural mind of man which is enmity against God, for all such attempts are without the least prospects of success. The enmity of the carnal mind is fully demonstrated in the objections which they bring, but we design rather to search out and call the attention of our inquiring friend to what God has revealed in the scriptures on the subject, and this we will do, if God permit, whether men will hear, or whether they forbear.

The term predestination, as we have intimated, has reference to the order and succession of events in time,

by which the eternal designs of God are brought to pass. And, so far as God's providence is concerned in bringing his designs to pass, predestination simply signifies that God had purposed, decreed, ordained, or destined the accomplishment of those things before they were, in order of time brought to pass.—Hence to us, it is pre-destination, with God it is destination, because his infinity connects and comprehends the end with the beginning, for he is himself the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.

Having, as clearly as we are able, defined predestination, we pass to enquire whether it be a Bible doctrine. If it be a Bible doctrine, we must admit it, or reject the Bible as a record of infallible and eternal truth, and take the open ground of infidelity. And who can trace the sacred pages of the holy book and say that it contains no testimony in support of the doctrine? In the absence of predestination how was it that the prophets of Jehovah foretold the events of ages, thousands of years before those events were actually fulfilled? Who, or what directed the prophetic vision of holy men of old, to look down the vista of intervening centuries, and in the name of the Lord Jehovah predict the things that should come to pass down to the end of time, and even the resurrection of the slumbering dead, and the judgment of the last day. If these things were not before determined of God, how were they known, and if they were unknown to God and man how were they foretold? And if they were foreknown of God, and he inspired holy men to foretell them, that

knowledge and decision of God was what the Bible calls predestination. But we have no need of ifs in this investigation. The scriptures do most clearly and emphatically declare that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and also that the spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. This was and is predestination. God spake by the prophets, saying, "It shall come to pass." Do not these words imply a decree when uttered by him who speaks the word, and it stands fast, who commands, and it is done? How harmoniously do both testaments agree in this fundamental doctrine. Throughout the first, or Old Testament, God, by his prophets, declared the things that should come to pass. Apostles and inspired evangelists in the New Testament respond, saying, "And it came to pass." But perhaps some may demand, What came to pass? We reply, all that God by the prophets said should come to pass. First, in reference to the advent of the blessed Saviour, for he himself declared that all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets and in the psalms must be fulfilled, and when dying on the cross of Calvary he exclaimed, "It is finished!" and in awful confirmation the retiring sun, prevailing darkness, the quaking earth, rending rocks, opening graves, rising dead, and rending vail gave ample demonstration. Daniel, in harmony with all the other prophets of the Lord, had predicted that at a specific time the God of heaven should set

up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, that the Messiah should come, should be cut off, should make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. The whole New Testament is a record of the faithful fulfillment of these predictions. Long had the prophet slumbered with his fathers, before the accomplishment of his seventy weeks, but the word of our God could not die, it liveth and abideth forever.

The predestination of our God also embraces all the heirs of immortality. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. 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."- This predestinated people is blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he (God) hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated them unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will. In whom we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after (or according to) the counsel of his own will."

There are those who admit the doctrine of predestination, so far as it applies to the coming of the Savior, the work which he was to perform, the sufferings which he was to endure, and the glory which was to follow; and also in relation to the good works which God

before ordained that his people should walk in; but reject the idea that his purpose and foreknowledge extends to the wicked acts of men and devils. But for ourself, it is our firm conviction that if a single event could possibly transpire from the creation of the world to the end of time, from the rise and fall of empires, to the falling of a sparrow, or a hair of our head to the ground, that such unforeseen and consequently unprovided for events would unavoidably endanger and render uncertain the execution of what is admitted to be ordained and decreed of God. How could it be otherwise? Can we consistently believe that it was predestinated that Christ should suffer on Calvary to redeem sinners, and yet that he did not foreknow that there would be any sinners to save? Did he decree that his dear Son should be delivered into the hands of wicked men; and yet not contemplate in that decree, either the existence of wicked men, or what they should do in condemning and crucifying him? But aside from all human reasoning, or vain speculation on the subject, God has informed us, by his inspired apostles, that Jesus was delivered by his determinate counsel, and foreknowledge, and put to death by wicked hands. And again, the inspired apostles break forth in praise to God, in devout acknowledgement both of the decree and of its accomplishment, that, "And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of the servant David hast said, Why did the heathen

rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontious 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. 24-28). Here let it be observed the holy apostles of the Lamb did not start back with horror, and exclaim, fatalism! this makes God the author of sin! or this destroys the accountability of man! They saw nothing in all this reflecting unfavorably on the character or purity of the supreme God; but they saw such harmony in the purpose, decrees, and actual accomplishment of the designs of God, as led them simultaneously and with one accord to lift up their voice in devout adoration and praise to the Most High God, whose providential government was so clearly manifested in controlling all events. The things which they now saw brought to pass were distinctly spoken of by David in his day, and pointed out by the slaughtered lamb which Abel, by faith, offered to God. some four thousand years before any of the actors in the crucifixion of Christ, were born. God had not only decreed what they should do, but he had also decreed what they should not do. "The enemy should not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him." "A bone of him should not be broken." "He should not be holden of the pains of death." His soul should not be left in hell, nor should his flesh see corruption. Nei-

ther death nor hell could go beyond the purpose and decree of God. None but Judas could betray him, without involving a contradiction of the purpose and decree which was recorded in the scriptures; the pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were numbered and recorded in the decree of God, as published by the prophet hundreds of years before Judas was born. The parting of his raiment, and casting lots for his garments, was all a matter of ancient record, together with all the minute circumstances which occurred; all of which we are informed were done that the scripture should be fulfilled. The murder of the infants by Herod, brought to pass the decree published by the prophets six hundred years before. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not. (Jer. xxxi. See also, Matt. ii. 18.) The case also of Joseph and his brethren is a very clear and striking illustration of the overruling government of God, as embracing all events. And who shall dare to charge God with unrighteousness, because he retains in his own hand a supreme control of all beings and of all events; because he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Who has a right to infer that God is the fountain of sin or unholiness; when we are informed that men with wicked hands, do whatsoever his hand and counsel before determined should be done? Paul when declaring what God had said of Pharaoh, that for this purpose he had raised him up to make his

power known in him; etc., anticipated the blasphemous out breakings of the human mind in opposition to the predestination of God. "Thou wilt surely say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault," or hold man as a responsible being, "for who has resisted his will?" But the apostle did not forbear to declare this doctrine because men resisted and blasphemed it; but says the apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" etc. When the enmity of the human heart is subdued by the quickening power and grace of God in regeneration, then the heaven-born child is reconciled to God, and loves to contemplate the power and glory of Jehovah. Then is he prepared, with the inspired psalmist, to rejoice that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; that all power in heaven and in earth is vested in the blessed Savior. But if left to doubt his all-prevading power and providence for a moment, now sinks his spirit at the fearful thought that some wheel in the vast, and apparently complicated machinery of nature might be suffered to revolve unbound by the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. If one of the wheels could work without the power and providence of God, its effects might be to ungear the whole system of divine government, and worlds on worlds be dashed in irretrievable ruin. When the enlightened mind of God's dear children contemplates the glory of this subject, they fall down before God in admiration, and with the four beasts, and four and twenty elders, cry Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty. They are filled with the most profound reverence for, and confi-

dence in the God of their salvation.

One reason we have thought why some of the children of God have seemed to be unreconciled to this doctrine is that they have failed to discriminate between the overruling power and providence of God and the effusions of his Spirit. "Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." When men are tempted to sin they are tempted of their own lusts, and by the devil. But how hopeless and desperate would be the condition of all who are tempted, if God had not the power and providence to control the temptation, and overrule its effect according to his eternal purpose and pleasure for the good of his tried and tempted children, and for the glory of his own great name. Our every temptation, though they flow not from God, are directed, and restricted and made serviceable to his saints, by him, is absolutely certain. Hence Peter assured the saints that God would control this matter. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond that which ye are able; but will also with the temptation make a way for your escape. That glorious High Priest which becometh us, was himself tempted in all points as his children are, and knows how to succour them that are tempted. Soon after he was baptized, he was led up by the Spirit, unto the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was not led there by the devil; but by the Holy Spirit of the Lord God which was upon him. Neither was he tempted of the Spirit of God which led him into the wilderness; but he was tempted of the

devil. The devil could neither afflict poor old Job, nor even drown the herd of swine, until he received permission of the Lord, and it is hard for us to think that any of the saints, however shy they may seem to be of the doctrine of predestination, really would wish or be willing that God should have less, or that sin or Satan should have more power. It is a blessed reflection to us that

"Death and hell can do no more
Than what our Father please."

Volumes have been written upon this subject, and volumes may still be written. It is too rich and boundless ever to be exhausted, but after all that we can say, it is the Spirit of the Lord alone who can present it in its beauty to the sons of men. He, the Spirit of the Truth, whom the world cannot receive, can slay the enmity of our carnal mind, and give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ. May that spirit in all its quickening power and grace be with our friend R.S. and all others who earnestly desire a knowledge of the true God and eternal life.

Middletown, N.Y., Feb. 1, 1854
Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 108: 4-5

For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

These words are a portion of that heavenly song of "a multitude of the heavenly host" sung at the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Glory to God." These are the first three words in the song. Is it not this very language of all the manifest elect of God? Others may glory in men, in their wisdom, might and riches (Jer. 9:23). They may glory in their own blasphemous doings, in their missionary societies to save souls, theological colleges, Sunday Schools, means and instrumentalities. They compass sea and land to obtain converts to their religion, and never fail to perpetuate the practice of those of whom the prophet Habakkuk writes, **"They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag; therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous."** But the taught of the Lord are cut off and saved from such doings. In themselves how can they glory? The Holy Spirit is pleased to discover to them what they are in themselves: poor, loathsome sinners, and under divine tuition they see, and learn that vanity is stamped on all earthly things. They have the same spirit of the psalmist when he cried, **"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake"**

(Psalm 115:1). Having had revealed to him something of the majesty and excellent glory of the Holy One of Israel in the condemnation of transgression in the law, and justification most sweetly realized in the blood and righteousness of Jesus, the believer is prepared and does in spirit cry, **"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"** (Gal. 6:14). The heavens, and the earth, the deep places, all proclaim the glory of God. Oh what wonderful works are to be seen in the creation of God. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Therein the holiness, the terrible majesty, and eternal justice of God are made known and felt in the hearts of the Israel of God. But the glory of the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of life doth exceed in glory (2 Cor. 3:7-10). In the gospel of the grace of God is that glory that far outweighs and outshines all other manifestations of the glory of the King of glory, it is "the glory that excelleth."

"Glory to God in the highest." It overtops all others. Oh, the surpassing infinite riches of the glory of the blessed God, which shines forth in the face of our beloved Emmanuel. The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the earth, and all that is therein, shall fade, and crumble, and be no more; and all the pomp and glory thereof shall pass away. As it is said of the law, the ministration of condemnation, so of all things else, they have "no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth" (2 Cor. 3:10). The

glory of the Lord in the universe is but transient, but for time, but in the Word, the Son of God made flesh, in Jesus, Emmanuel, is the eternal, immutable, superlative glory of the everlasting God. In this unfathomable mystery is the fulfillment of the eternal, immutable counsel and oath of Jehovah (Heb. 6:17-18). When the Word, the Son of God, came into the world, was made flesh, born of a virgin, made under the law, the covenant head of all the chosen and loved of God, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, then was fulfilled the word of God by the prophet Micah: **“Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”** This had been promised and foretold in the prophets, had been signified in the types and shadows under the law, and now “the due time” is come, and the Son of God in the joy of his heart, in his eternal love to his bride, the church, and in loving covenant obedience to God the Father cries out; **“Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God”** (Heb. 10:5-7).

“Glory to God in the highest.” The will of Christ was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and in fulfilling the “all things,” (oh blessed

be the name of the Lord, not in one jot or tittle did Jesus fail) ordered in the everlasting covenant (2 Sam. 23:5), all the attributes of the eternal Godhead in glorious, sweetest harmony were declared, **“God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory”** (1 Tim. 3:16). The Lord Jesus Christ went forth for the salvation of Zion, and in his obedience, suffering and blood he wrought salvation, brought in everlasting righteousness, redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, saved them from their sins, justified them in his precious blood, and reconciled them unto God. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, “being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6-8). Thus Jesus went forth for the salvation of his people. **“God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power”** (Hab. 3:3-4). It is in salvation that the eternal excellency of Jehovah is revealed. The justice and mercy, grace and love, yea, every per-

fection of God is declared to the eternal glory of the blessed God of Israel (Rom. 9:23; Rev. 1:6). This song which "a multitude of the heavenly host" sang at the birth of Jesus has never ceased to be sung. Even today it is the song of the believer in Jesus. While time shall last, and all eternity, all the loved, chosen and redeemed of the Lord will be praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest" (Rev. 4:9-11; 5:12-14).

"On earth peace." Oh what welcome, soul-cheering tidings is this to the distressed and oppressed child of God. What disorder and discord does the enlightened child of God behold among mankind. In that knowledge that flows from the operating of the Holy Spirit what a terrible and sad condition they realize themselves to be in by nature. It is their bitter experience to feel that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," though they labor most diligently to have it otherwise. The enmity still remains without abatement, this desperate and horrible plague rages within. It is their experience, and language, as recorded of the woman in **Mark 5:26: "She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."**

Those ministers of Satan, transformed as ministers of righteousness "in preaching" another gospel, which is not another (Gal. 1:6-7), urge poor sinners to make their peace with God. Oh what a task! How utterly impossible for a vile transgressor ever to accomplish! Oh what conflicts with sin and Satan, what tossings to and fro, what unrest, what anxious thoughts possess the poor quickened sinner. His sins are as an army of bitter foes in cruel war against

his soul, for the manifest child of God, called by God's grace, being made a partaker of the divine nature, being born of incorruptible seed, cannot be at peace with sin, but possessing Spiritual life he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the longings of his soul are for entire freedom from sin, to see, to feel, to know that all these hateful foes are forever annihilated. No sooner does the poor sinner experience the quickening power of God, then the warfare begins between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; there can be no agreement, no concord between them. Wherever these two are found there must be war. The sinner, therefore, in whom the Lord has begun his work of grace feels and fears there is no peace between his soul and the mighty and holy God. Oh how troubled is the poor soul amidst the abounding of his iniquities. The adversary, the gates of hell, fight against the loved ones of God, and there can be no peace between the seed of Christ and the seed of the devil.

"On earth peace." Such is the song of the multitude of the heavenly host. Jesus, of whom they sing, is "the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). He is the Mediator of the covenant of peace (Isaiah 54:10). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The dear Lord is our peace. Oh at what a cost he procured it. He made peace through the blood of his cross (**Col. 1:20**). "The

chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Oh, our precious Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, in his obedience and blood vanquished and made an end of all our foes; and the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, reveals in the heart what Jesus is, and what he has wrought in our behalf, then we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. All our enemies, all our transgressions are purged in Jesus’ blood; death and hell are overcome in the blood of the Lamb. The law, which is holy, just and good, has received at our Surety’s hand full payment of all its righteous demands, and the vessels of mercy in whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the wondrous doctrine of peace with God can indeed with the apostle Paul exclaim, **“Who shall lay a thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”** Oh what sweet tranquility flows into the soul when the poor troubled sinner is experimentally put in possession of the atonement of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul (Lev. 17:11). It truly is a peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind

through Christ Jesus. It is “perfect peace” (Isaiah 26:3). It cannot be bettered. There is no contingency therein. It is ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee (Isaiah 54:10). How comforting, O believer in Jesus, is this enduring, eternal peace, that not all the powers of sin and hell can ever mar. Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned (Isaiah 40:1). What! mine? Perhaps some poor soul is saying, So I at one time thought my sins were all gone, every voice of accusation was silenced, the devil and all his hosts fled when Jesus in his power and love and blood was revealed unto me, and in my heart his voice was most sweetly heard, saying, thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But oh what trouble, what wars and conflicts have I encountered since then. The evils in my heart; my sweet comfort and peace in Jesus has been most cruelly disturbed, and now there is warfare. I find I still have a carnal mind which is enmity against God. The old man is not gone, but is lively, and is so corrupt I fear that I shall be utterly overcome by indwelling sin, and prove a castaway. Oh what a mystery is the life of a child of God. The apostle Paul exclaims, **“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).** It is by faith that we now experience peace with God. And “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The Lord

Jesus has saved his people from their sins in his death. He died unto sins once. We rejoice to know that Jesus rose from the dead, and dieth no more. He rose for our justification, and is now within the veil for us, the Lamb as it had been slain (Rev. 5:6) in resurrection glory. O, dear people of God, we have hope that we shall be like him, though now sharp conflicts with sin and Satan are our lot. In these things we have a taste of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and if we suffer we shall also reign, when, in the resurrection, we appear with all the ransomed of the Lord. We shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. The Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself (Phil. 3:21). Then no more will the carnal mind, the old man, the lusts of the flesh, plague and distress us. Our conflicts will all be over, for Jesus, in his precious blood, has destroyed all our foes, and this by faith, of the operation of God, we believe. And in the power and goodness of the Lord, even now, by faith, we can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We shall overcome at last (Gen. 49:19). "On earth peace." When God giveth us quietness, who then can make trouble? (Job 34:29).

"Good will toward men." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" yea, he "worketh all things after the counsel

of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). "He will save" (Zeph. 3:17). Who or what then shall hinder? "Good will toward men." This is "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" (Deut. 33:16). Everything provided in the good will of God is precious. There is no lack, nothing faulty. Oh how good! It cannot be frustrated. It contains mercy (Rom. 9:18), grace (Exod. 33:19), eternal life (John 6:40), righteousness (Isaiah 62:1). Yea, all that the elect of God need for time and eternity is found in the good will, the covenant, testamentary will of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "Glory to God in the highest."

Elder Frederick W. Keene

Mr. Benton L. Beebe- Dear Brother in Christ:- We have learned with deep sorrow of the death of your beloved father. A cloud of sadness rests upon our churches, and awakens within us deep sympathy for your bereaved family, and tender recollections of the past, when we have mingled together with him in the holy service of our God. A faithful and war-worn veteran of the cross has fallen upon the field. He was found throughout his ministerial life in the front rank of the champions of sovereign grace Truth, earnestly contending for the faith "*once delivered unto the saints.*" Nor was his contention for Truth a mere "war of words." No! but with a zeal inspired from on high, we ever found him in the hottest of the conflict, a mark for the merciless assailants of Zion. Denounced as a heretic, his name cast

out as evil, his motives misconstrued, his views misrepresented, we find him with holy boldness and faithful firmness making *"full proof"* of his ministry unto the end. None of these things moved him, *"neither counted he his life dear unto himself; that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry that he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."* He was, as our dear brother Wm. S. Montgomery once remarked in my hearing, "a pioneer in the investigation of Truth, frequently reaching far beyond his brethren, soaring in the sublime height of revealed Truth." I have heard many of our able brethren dwell upon the wonders of free and sovereign grace, but I have never heard one yet who, to my hearing, excelled Elder Gilbert Beebe, when at liberty, in presenting the eternal perfections of Deity and the glory of His grace. With heavenly power I have heard him, many times, dwell upon the eternal, underived, unbegotten Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. To think that he should have been accused of preaching a "created Christ!"

Base indeed is such a charge. But while our hearts are filled with deep mourning at the death of this dear brother and father in Israel, let us look beyond the watchman, to Him who keepeth the city; for, *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."* Again, *"Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."* That all-seeing eye looks upon every shifting scene of time, and guards His people well. He

will continue to raise up, qualify and send forth His ministers as it seemeth good in His sight.

The eternal Truth of our Great God is not built upon the ministry. The eloquent voice, the cherished form, are seen no more, but the eternal Truth of our God remains, and must abide forever. *"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."* How expressive of this point of Truth is the closing expression in the autobiography of the deceased, published in the *Daily Press*.

"My voice," says he, "will soon be silenced in death, my pen will pass into the hands of another, and, I hope, abler writer; but the eternal Truth for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity. And when the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of lies shall bewail their folly and call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the Lamb, those who know and love the Truth shall in the Truth rejoice forevermore."

But we will pass from the consideration of the death of Elder Gilbert Beebe to another important matter intimated connected with it, the future of the SIGNS of the Times. From the brethren in all parts of our country an earnest, fervent cry arises, may we hope to the throne, that the same kind, guiding Hand hitherto manifested in its preservation

may continue to guide the course of the SIGNS of the Times. Without Him we can do nothing. The SIGNS has become to be "our family paper" and we are deeply interested in its welfare.

With the doctrine contended for in its columns we are in hearty accord. May the mantle fall upon him whom the Lord has chosen. Reference has already been made through the columns of the SIGNS to our dear brother Elder William L. Beebe in this connection. I am confident that this selection would be entirely satisfactory to our brethren in this vicinity, and believe that it would be to the readers of the SIGNS in all parts of the country. But as you have already announced, act as the Lord may seem to direct. May He guide your choice. With whomsoever you may feel called upon to associate yourself as assistant or assistants, I desire to continue to render all of the aid in my power to assist in the circulation of the SIGNS. May the rich blessings of heaven fall upon its future, and the bereaved family and sorrowing churches be led to the great Rock from whence all of the streams of strength and consolation flow to the tempest-tossed pilgrims upon earth's barren way.

Yours in Gospel fellowship,
Wm. M. Smoot. May, 1881.

Sanford, May 14, 1855

Brother Beebe: — Having read with much satisfaction a letter written by Sister Mary H. Lawson, of Augusta who is located about one hundred miles distant from the North Berwick Church, of which she is a member, and believing it would be read with much interest by the readers of the Signs, I herewith send you a copy of said letter

for publication in the Signs.

Nehemiah Butler,

Augusta, Maine, April 30, 1855

Brother Butler — I received a letter from you last week for which I feel very grateful. Situated far from those who are near and dear to me by christian ties, I esteem it a great privilege to hear from the brethren and sisters, although I feel my own unworthiness that I do it. I feel that I am poor and needy, sinful and polluted, possessing a heart which is naturally averse to all that is good, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and were it not for the free, sovereign and electing grace of God, I should despair of salvation. I have no works of righteousness to recommend me; nor any merits of my own, through which I can plead for redemption; but it is alone through the blood of Jesus Christ, that I can hope for pardon, and forgiveness of my sins. Truly we have great reason to rejoice that there is a way provided for the eternal salvation of God's chosen people. He finds them in a waste howling wilderness, estranged from him by wicked works, choosing darkness rather than light, dead in trespasses and sins, and without hope, and without God in the world. How strikingly is the power of God, and the utter helplessness and depravity of the sinner brought to view in the words of Paul. And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. It seems that this alone is sufficient to show us that nothing short of the irresistible power of God can prove effectual in calling one sinner from darkness, into his rich and marvelous light. Surely the plan of redemption is indeed glorious and worthy the praise and adoration of all the Lord's people.

Through this they attain an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. They are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. It is a sure foundation I and all the powers of hell and earth together shall not be able to prevail against it or destroy the hope of one of those who are built upon it. "The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Although the children of God may at times be tried and tempted and ready to sink into a state of despair and despondency, in view of their sinfulness and unworthiness, they still have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous. He has promised to be with his children at all times, to comfort, sustain, and direct them through all the trials, perplexities, and changing scenes of life, and give them strength equal to their day. As it regards myself, I find that I am making little or no advancement in the life of a christian; but rather, (as you remarked in regard to yourself) as if I was going back. I find that I have a sinful heart, which in continually leading me astray, and causing me to disobey the commandments of God, and had the Lord dealt with me according to my deserts, I should ere this time have been, cut off as a cumberer of the ground; but the Lord who is rich in his mercy, has spared my unprofitable life, and I am still numbered with those concerning whom there is hope. Surely the mercy of the Lord endureth forever, I hope I shall have an interest in your prayers, and those of the brethern and sisters of the church.

Please remember me to them all.

May the Lord comfort and sustain you, and grant you a double portion of his presence while you sojourn here below and eventually save you in his kingdom above, together with all the redeemed of the Lord.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

MARY H. LAWSON.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church in Holly Ridge, NC on October 13-14, 2012. From Highway US 17 turn east on Sound Road for approximately 3/4 mile to Stump Sound Road, turn left, the Church is located at end of road.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

On Saturday morning, September 15, 2012 at 11:00 o'clock, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in Eden, NC, a presbytery will convene for the purpose of examination of Brother Jerry Somers, and if found qualified he will be ordained to full work and service as Deacon.

Allen Carroll

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2012 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7, 2012. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Travel about 65 miles out of Raleigh and exit off at Exit 485. At the stop sign, turn left. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight (St. James Street). The church will be about one mile and sits next to the railroad.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, September 30th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. and preaching at 10:30. Haynes Creek Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3995 Rosebud Road, Loganville, GA

30052. From I-85, exit on Georgia 20 South. Go through Lawrenceville to outskirts of Grayson. Turn right on Rosebud Road. When Rosebud Road crosses Hwy 78, continue for 1½ miles to Church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and twelfth session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, located in Floyd County, Va.

This session will be entertained by Flower Gap (P.B. Church) located in Carroll Co., Va. Beginning on Saturday before the fourth Sunday and will continue on Sunday with dates being (Sept. 22nd & 23rd) 2012, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va. Those traveling on (221) or (52) or Route (8) come to Willis, Va. Turn on 787 go (approx.) 7 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of like Faith and Order also Brethren, Sisters and Friends to be with us the Lord willing.

Elder Thomas Pegram, Moderator
J. B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

**SKEWARKEY UNION
(EASTERN KEHUKEE
ASSOCIATION)**

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union, on the fifth Sunday of September 30, 2012. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order .

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2012.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217
1067 Spearsville Rd.
Spearsville, LA 71277
August 6, 2012

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mount Cross Road/Highway 844, Danville, VA in Pittsylvania County. Saturday before the fifth Sunday in September 2012 the song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton,
Assistant Clerk, Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

Sunday, September 30, 2012

Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday meeting on Sunday, September 30, 2012. Singing will begin at 10:00 AM and preaching at 10:30 AM.

The Church is located at 150 Pleasantville Church Road, Madison, N.C. From Reidsville, N.C. take NC65 west through Wentworth, N.C. Stay straight on NC704 for 2 to 3 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the right. From Madison, N.C. take NC704 and travel 6 to 7 miles to Pleasantville Church Road on the left.

We welcome all lovers of the truth, who are given a mind to do so, to be with us.

Elder Haywood Wray, Moderator
Mary Hawkins, Clerk

OBITUARIES

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 9 / 2012

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2012

Roger and Faye Holdren, VA	5.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA	5.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA	5.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Carol Cruise, VA	10.00
Pamela Screen, TN	15.00
Nancy Pollack, NC	50.00
Charles Mathews, LA	25.00
Lessie Smith, TX	35.00
Larry Byrd, NC	5.00
Sylvia Dixon, NC	10.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Ruby Queen, KY	10.00
Gene Howard, AL	5.00
Ned Barron, LA	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Jim Cote, ME	25.00

(In memory of Elder J.M. Mewborn)

ELDER DAVID GODWIN

Bassier City, LA

To all you lovely people at Signs of the Times, June 18, 2012.

My sweet brother Elder David Godwin passed away and I am sorry that it took me so long to get this to you, but he was so very special to me and it was hard to get around to doing this. I loved him so much, but actually he had wanted to go much sooner – but it wasn't God's time. He had told me so many times that he wanted to go home, they took him to his home and he said yes, this is my earthly home but I want to go to my heavenly home.

He preached the most beautiful sermons I ever heard, and loved his Lord so much. And I believe I know, he is where he wanted to be.

He preached the good Old Primitive Baptist belief for well over 50 years. And believed every bit of it. He would have been 103 years old had he lived until November 5th this year.

He had a beautiful service. Elder Joe Asbell did a beautiful job – so many of our old ministers have already gone home. And we were so pleased to get him. I know brother would have been so well pleased with this minister's words.

God Bless all of you,

I love you all,

His sister, Katherine Mathews

EDITH ELOISE TURMAN

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission of the will of our Lord in the calling home of our precious sister, Edith Eloise Turman, ending her trials and troubles and gained eternal rest forever.

Sister Turman was born November 4, 1918 and departed this life June 11, 2012.

She was highly blessed, by the Lord, after losing her husband in World War II and having to raise three small girls thru those hard times. It is the Lord that supplies all our needs In hard and good times. She was a true believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

Sister Turman joined Indian Creek Church March 27, 1949 and was a faithful member for 63 years until the Lord called her home. Her funeral was conducted at Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd, Va., by her pastor, Elder Thomas C. Pegram. The burial followed at William Quesenberry Cemetary. Singing was done by family and friends while the grave was being filled, "an old custom in these parts".

She leaves to mourn her church family along with three daughters: Nellie A. Vass and husband, Brad; Glenna T. Terry, Lena T. Gray and two grandsons, six granddaughters, thirteen great grandchildren and six great-great grandchildren and one brother, Reif Bond and one sister, Odetta B. Terry.

Though unable to attend church in

her later years she never wavered in her faith. A few months back, a few of the church members went to her home and she sang along with us the "songs of zion". This scripture comes to mind when thinking of sister Turman; 2nd Timothy, chapter four, verse seven " I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith". Be it therefore resolved that three copies of this obituary notice be made, one for the family, one for church records and one for publication in the Signs of the Times.

Done by Indian Creek Church
J. B. Mitchell, Jr. Clerk
Jean Mitchell

JOHN 16: 24-28.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that you joy may be full.

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SOVEREIGN Ruler of the skies!
Ever gracious, ever wise I
All my times are in thy hand, —
All events at thy command.

His decree, who formed the earth,
Fixed my first and second birth:
Parents, native place, and time, —
All appointed were by him.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree.

Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief,
Times of triumph and relief:

Times the tempter's power to prove;
Times to taste a Saviour's love:
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my heavenly friend.

Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die:
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit.

O thou Gracious, Wise, and Just,
In thy hands my life I trust:
Have I somewhat dearer still?
I resign it to thy will.

Thee, at all times, will I bless:
Having thee, I all possess:
How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with thee

Ryland.

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EDITORIAL

“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” Isaiah 35:8.



Elder J.B. Farmer

How shall we begin to write of the things concerning the kingdom of God, knowing they are as high above us as the heavens are above the earth? We must begin

by acknowledging the truth: How to perform that which is good, I find not. The minister of the gospel is charged with rightly dividing the word of truth, and this we desire to do, if the Lord has been pleased to place us in the way of wisdom, and has purposed to keep us there. But how to rightly divide the word of truth, I know not. God alone knows, and He alone is able to perform it.

There is a narrow way that the world or the carnally minded person has never seen, nor walked upon, and can never see nor enter into. This way can be entered into only by way of the strait gate. This gate is so strait or confining it is impossible to get through. To pass through it would be like a camel going through the eye of a needle. It cannot be done. Jesus said, **“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”** His disciples asked, **“Who then can be saved?”** And the Lord said, **“With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”** We must confess that salvation is altogether of the Lord. It is by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

This strait gate leads to the narrow way that leads to life. And few there be that find it. This is the way the prophet described. It is a highway that God has made in the wilderness. He has placed it there for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in. The wilderness is a hostile place. It is dry and hot and there is no water, nor anything to feed upon. That is how the world is unto the child of God, natu-

rally. In the book of Revelation, there is a woman (the church) described being persecuted by the dragon (Satan). And the dragon cast a great flood of water (false doctrine) out of his mouth to carry away the woman. And the earth (unbelievers) swallowed the flood and helped the woman. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle (the Holy Spirit) to fly away into the wilderness to a place God had prepared to nourish her for a time, times and half a time (I am made to believe this hearkens back to the three and one half years of drought in the day of Elijah, which, to me, indicates the whole time of the church in the wilderness, until the time of the coming of the refreshing rain, which to me, is the coming of the Lord in great power and glory). This highway was made through the wilderness to lead the Lord's children safely along, and to bring them home. This world is not their home. They are strangers and pilgrims here, and are just passing through. They are looking for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Those placed in the world to preach the gospel are given the commands of what to do and what to say unto God's poor and afflicted elect children that are upon the highway in the wilderness. **"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you."** And the children are shown the promises of the Lord unto them. **"Then the eyes of the blind shall be**

opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each *lay*, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." The gospel is good news. The word gospel means good news. Those in a dry inhospitable place need good news that cannot fail, and can be depended upon. They are taught that it is impossible for God to lie or to fail in a promise. So the little ones believe the promises of God to the saving of their souls. They hope and trust in Him to come, and to deliver them out of all their troubles. And when He comes they receive Him and follow Him, just as the sheep follow the shepherd they love and trust.

The Lord found Jacob **"in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of His eye."** The Lord was his Shepherd. He also is your Shepherd. Jesus said that He is the good Shepherd that cares for His sheep. He said of the good shepherd, **"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."** The Lord Jesus, the good shepherd, loves his sheep to the extent that He laid down

His life for them. He said, **“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.”** He loves the sheep and they love Him. We know that a loving shepherd spends time with his sheep. He handles them, and examines them for any wound or disease or anything that would cause them discomfort. He treats any place that needs attention. He carries those that are not able to walk on their own, until they are strengthened. His sheep love his touch. They love the sound of his kind voice. They trust him because he has always done them good. He has always led them to good pastures and plenty of water. When threatened, they run to him for their protection because they know he is strong and that he always watches over them, and drives away or destroys any beast that would hurt them. They know the good shepherd would never leave them nor forsake them. He is there with them, and is seeing to their every need.

The loving shepherd is with his sheep in the way that he leads them. The prophet was blessed to say, **“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness.”** According to this, we know that there shall be an highway there, but what is the way referred to? There is a way in the highway. I am made to believe that the way is the Lord himself. Jesus said, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”** There is Jesus, the Way, in the path of rightness with the sheep, leading them along their journey to its end, which is eternal life. It is written, **“The path of the just is as the shining light, that**

shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” This is according to experience, and is so sweet to meditate upon. How precious it is to be given to hope and to trust in the Lord who is that light, and to be assured that He shall shine more and more all the days of our life. David was blessed to say, **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”** The living Word is that lamp and that light. And David was given to say in full assurance of faith, **“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”**

I would like to relate a dream about a white way that I trust was given to me for my comfort and strength in a time of great trouble. Some do not believe in dreams, and that’s all right with me, but I cannot deny that which has been of so much help to me. I had been very ill with a heart attack, and was very weak and not able to do much. I could only walk a little way, and then would have to stop and rest. I didn’t know what the outcome would be, whether life or death. But one night I dreamed that I saw a straight and narrow way. Everything was pure white—the road, the grass, and everything in my sight was white. The road was paved with smooth stones, and there was grass on either side. The road was on a slight incline that went up and over the top of a distant hill. And I thought that if I could just get to the top, where it went over the hill, I would be able to see over into the heavenly city, and go down into it for my eternal rest. But I had no strength for it. I was exhausted and sit-

ting down. Then a voice said unto me, "Just take a few steps and then sit down and rest." And the voice came again saying, "And then take a few more steps and sit down and rest again, until you reach the top." And I was encouraged to press on, in my great weakness, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I was blessed to think that a way had been made to bring me to the end of my journey in peace, to my great comfort and joy.

The way the prophet spoke about was a way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it. This way is not for the world, nor for those drunk on worldly religion, nor for the self-righteous, nor for those who say they are working for the Lord. But it shall be for those, the way-faring men. Wayfarers are travelers. They are constantly on the road. They are men without a home in the world. Jesus said, "**The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.**" The Way is leading the wayfarers through a strange land to their eternal home. You are in a strange land. You are like Lot who vexed his righteous soul from day to day with the unlawful deeds of those in the world about him. You have a vision of a better place where there is no more death, nor sorrow and crying, no more sin and disappointment, no more pain and suffering, no more weariness and exhaustion, no more fear and dread. Even though you feel to be so ignorant and Unworthy and unfit for the least of God's mercies and truth, this Way is for you. And you will not err in it. Why not? Because the Lord is

with you. He is your helper, and your guide, and your strength. He is all and all to you. David said, "**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.**"

The prophet was blessed to say of the way, "**No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting Joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**" What a blessed hope, what a blessed promise, what a blessed assurance. What is the most desired thing of your life? Is it not that you might be blessed to be faithful unto death that you might receive the crown of life? Is it not that you may behold the Lord of glory face to face, that you may see Him as He is, and be made in His likeness, and be satisfied? Is it not that you may be found at His right hand and hear His words? "**Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**" Jesus also said, "**Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**" He has loved you with an everlasting love, and is pleased to keep you unto the end. Jesus said, "**My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**" And He said, "**For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of**

him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but shall raise it up again at the last day."

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Those redeemed by His precious blood, who were given to Him by the Father, who are born of that eternal Spirit shall return to their home, heavenly Zion, the perfection of beauty. For this they have yearned, ever since they were given a hope in the perfect, finished work of the Lamb of God. And it is all joy. To you, all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen. Even though in the flesh we must have tribulation, in the Spirit it is all joy. You shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon your head, you shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Thanks be unto God for His goodness and mercy toward His little ones. May He ever be praised, world without end.

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

Elder J.B. Farmer
8-20-2012

PSALM 40:8.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

1052 Middleview Dr.
Forest, VA 24551
July 31, 2012

Dear Brother Tony,

Enclosed is my subscription renewal to the Signs of the Times for another two years. The balance you may use as you see fit for expenses. I do not know adequate words to express what the Signs have meant to me down through the years and if not deceived I hope that love is even more fonder today. I can read an edition of the Signs that is 150 years old, and then read the latest edition today. The doctrine is still exactly the same: Salvation by grace and grace alone, and the Absolute Predestination of all things. Why anyone would desire to love any other way I do not understand.

If I have any love at all, I hope it has been shown to me by Divine Providence. I have no worthiness, but I feel a constant desire to be among the Old Baptists and I hope I am numbered among them. If not, it has still been a precious walk while in this time world. Please remember me when the Lord gives you a desire to pray.

Love,
Steve Everett

8-21-2012
8118 Jamison Pl. Ct.
Charlotte, NC 28227

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Tony Horton,

Please subscribe me to the Signs of the Times. Enclosed is a check for 2 years and use the rest as needed.

I grew up with the Signs of the Times in my home and would see my dad reading and enjoying them as well as my mom and myself.

I was visiting Mary Ruth Moody and Elder Jim Moody at the rest home and saw she had the July copy and it reminded me of this paper and I had a desire to subscribe.

May God bless you all,
Janet Taylor

7/25/2012

Dearest Brother Cleo,

I'm enclosing a copy of the letter Brother Spangler wrote in regards to Sister Mildred when she lost her finger. It was published in the November, 1940 Signs.

I asked her permission to send it to you and she agreed.

I hope this finds you doing well. Please remember me at the throne of grace when given a mind and heart to do so. May the Lord bless and keep you, my precious Brother.

With much love and fellowship,
Mary

Danville, Va., March 11, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: — I have had a mind to write you a line for some time, but have put it off from time to time. I appreciated your thoughts of me in regard to my father's death. It was a great shock, though we expected it sooner or later. I miss him very much, - especially at service, as he was with me very often at Dan River and Cascade. Many things happen in the course of a year, and the last year has brought both sorrows and joys, yet I have realized that one is set over against the other.

We had a very peculiar thing happen last year. Our oldest daughter, Mildred, who is nineteen years of age, came down to the store one morning to get the morning paper. When she started out the door she caught her class ring on the strike of the door lock on the door facing, and when she stepped down her weight was thrown on the ring and it stripped the meat and muscle entirely off her finger, throwing it half way across the room: I had dreamed the night before of seeing a snake bite her, and told her of it at the breakfast table, telling her to stay out of the weeds. As she is in college, it seemed that the thought of having to have this finger amputated would almost kill her. I carried her to the hospital, and they did not give me any encouragement in regard to saving the finger, but agreed to put the meat back on and try it until Mon-

day. This was Friday. This was done to pacify her more than anything else. Between Friday and Monday I was brought through one of the greatest trials of my life, seeing her suffer so severely over the thought of losing her finger. I knew she had been exercised in a spiritual way more or less, and often defended the doctrine of grace, but she would not talk of these things very much. On Sunday night when I left the hospital she said to me, Father, pray for me tonight, that I will not lose my finger. She knew the decision would be made in the morning. That was a dark night, the moon and stars hidden, prayer was gone. Oh the anguish, the wrestling I had! The next morning when she went to the operating room she was crying aloud. She said to me when she started, You did not pray for me, did you? God would not give you a prayer. She said, I tried to pray, but could not. When she began to awake after the finger had been removed, the first words she said were, Daddy, God held my hand. He stood by my bed. His face was so bright. He said to me, I will go with you, and I will be with you the rest of your life. God loves me. He told me he did. I have been afraid to die, but I am not afraid to die now. What is a finger compared with God? What is a hand compared with God? I think she repeated a dozen times, or more, He is a gracious God. He is a wonderful God. She went back to the time when she was eight years of age, and told of a conviction of sin, and the day, etc. I shall never forget that time. My grief was turned unto joy. I then could sing as I had never sung it before,

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!

What more can he say than to you he has said,

You who unto Jesus for refuge has fled?”

Well, it seems I am writing mostly about myself, but I just felt I wanted to tell you of this experience.

I hope you have been well and enjoying God's felt presence. I have been favored to turn in a number of subscriptions to the Signs of late. I think that brother Roy Smith has done some good writing. I have heard a number of favorable comments on your and his articles.

Elders Lefferts, Westbrook and Cobb plan to be at Gooch Memorial the second Sunday in May, at the yearly meeting. If you plan to be down this summer, please try to arrange to be here on second Sunday, if possible, and visit Gooch Memorial with me.

With best wishes to you and yours,
yours in fellowship,

D. V. SPANGLER.

[As the good news contained in brother Spangler's private letter to us, regarding his daughter, far outweighs the sad, we are taking the liberty of sharing it with our readers, feeling assured they will both sympathize and rejoice with them both. — R. L. D.]

The brethren and Churches of the Maine Predestination Conference, assembled at North Berwick, Sept. 5, 6 and 7, 1856, to the brethren and churches with whom we correspond, send Christian salutation:

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD: — Through the providential care of Israel's God, who is the sole arbiter of all events in heaven and on earth, we have been permitted to enjoy another yearly conference, according to our usual custom. For this privilege, no less than for all the hopes and blessings of the Gospel, we would acknowledge our obligations to the God of all grace. We are conscious that by reason of sin and transgression we have ruined ourselves, and had we been dealt with according to our works, we should long before this time have been cut off among hypocrites and unbelievers, where light and hope never could have reached. And we do, moreover, confess, that in this, our just condemnation, God's law would still remain holy, just and good. Our only hope, therefore, of *eternal salvation* from sin to holiness, is in Christ, who saves his people and calls them with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began - 2 Tim., i. 9. We yet believe - although there are gods many and lords many, held forth in these last days - that there is but one true and living God, who is eternal and immutable; who is the God of purpose, and who will do just what he has purposed to do, and whose power is equal

to his will. Possessing, thus, almighty power, he meets with no disappointment, but "works all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. We are yet firm in the belief of the total depravity of mankind in a state of nature, they being destitute of spirituality, and dead in trespasses and sins. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned - I Cor., ii. 14. A man must be born a spiritual birth before he can be spiritual, or enjoy anything that is spiritual for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit, John, iii. 6. We believe that Christ is the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved; for he declares that his Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him. We further believe it to be the duty, of all that are heaven-born, to repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, Acts, ii. 38. Also, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which in them, works both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

In our faith and practice, as respects the order of God's house and in his worship, we recognize only one Missionary Society, as from heaven, and that was organized over 1800 years ago. Under that constitution the gospel was preached to the Jews first, and afterwards to the Gentiles; and so the Gospel is now preached to the poor under the same organization, and will continue

to be preached as long as any of God's poor and afflicted people remain in the flesh. Neither do we recognize but one Sabbath School, as from heaven, and that was constituted of Christ and the Apostles over 1800 years ago. Under that organization we meet together from time to time to teach and to be taught the lessons recorded in the Bible, which is the only book used in this school, under the direction of the spirit, which takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to his people. That in this school we may continue to be taught, and grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, is our earnest prayer.

We have been comforted by the brethren who have visited us, and by your letters, and desire the continuance of your christian correspondence. Our next annual Conference will be held with the church at North Berwick, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, after the first Monday in September, 1857.

WM. QUINT, Moderator.
LEONARD COX, Clerk.
North Berwick, Maine,
Sept. 9, 1856.

ROMANS 8: 26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1877

THE CHILDREN'S FOOTPRINTS

By

William M. Smoot; March 23, 1877.

Dear Brother Beebe:- I recently received a letter from an esteemed brother, in which occurs the following language: "Dear brother, my sheet is now full, and I have said nothing worth your trouble to read; and if you think that you discover any of the footprints of a child of God in all I have said, when you write again (which I desire you soon) tell me where they are for I am still a great mystery to myself." I have felt like offering some thoughts upon these "footprints," which are seen along the way over which the believer travels in his earthly pilgrimage.

It is impossible for him to see these "marks by the wayside," only as the light of God shines in his heart and upon the way, for there are times when he is led into the dense forest, through the dreary wilderness, and the thick gloom of distress and darkness, where the howling of beasts is heard as "night sets upon him," and he feels himself entirely forsaken and lost. Yet whether in the wilderness, in the valley, or upon the mountain, as the light of God falls here and there upon him and over the way, he sees the footprints of those dear saints who have passed on before him, who have crossed the river telling the triumphs of their King, and resting forever in the presence of their God.

He finds the "Slough of Despond," and "Doubting Castle" with its "Giant Despair," then comes the "Delectable

Mountains," and in the dim distance he occasionally sees the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, while the voice of eternal victory as the echo of a distant melody falls upon his ears. The traveler may come into a dark place, where for the time he feels entirely alone in his experience; none have ever been there before him, his is a "peculiar case," some "strange thing has happened unto him," "I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." But after a while, in the dim shadows of returning light, he beholds, it may be, a solitary track, and what joy and gladness springs up in his heart, as in the light of returning day he sees everywhere around him the footprints of fellow-pilgrims who have gone on before him.

When in thick darkness, a lonely wanderer in "a solitary way," how refreshing, encouraging, and with what comfort and joy does he receive a promise sent from God. It comes as a footprint in the sands, a day of bright light in the darkness of midnight, a cup of cold water from the clear, crystal river, to cheer the weary, thirsty soul.

But I had some thoughts of presenting from the written word the experience of holy men of God who have passed on before us, to present their experience as footprints in the pilgrim's way, that we through a correspondent experience may have comfort and hope. The word contains the measuring of a Gospel experience, and that experience which does not correspond with the word is evidently false, and worse than none. A great number of the religionists of the day will tell you in substance: "I found that

God had done part of the work, and I had to do the rest, so from our united efforts I was able to get out of the pit." Or, "God is not going to do for you, what you can do for yourself," believing that one had far more *ability* than dead men really have. We look into the word and find that "Salvation is by grace." "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit." "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 3:9.) Sometimes we hear a different view than this, that, "Eternal salvation is of the Lord; but time salvation is left to our duty." The latter view is built upon the "works principle;" and we lay this rule down on the aforementioned experience, and it proves that the experience will not do at all! There is too much of it; and when we come to test it in the crucible, the word of God, we find that it is not composed of the proper material. - See Romans 11:6. These people talk about going as far as we do, and "a little further, too." The Mohammedan comes as near the Truth as that! Says he, "There is but one God." This much will do; but then he goes further, and says, "Mohammed is His prophet." The modern Pharisee will talk about salvation by grace and then talk of "salvation by works, too." He will tell us of the "sovereignty of a God that does not predestinate anything in this "time world." He adds the fallacious theory of Free Agency" to his do-do precepts. Is not this a "linsey-wolsey" doctrine? The religious theory of these people is something like the heathen god, Dagon, with a head like a man, and a tail like a fish.

But I may be digressing. I spoke of the experience of brethren in other days

as "the footprints" in the pilgrim's way. We hear them complaining of feeling destitute, and poor in spiritual things, and tell of their trials and darkness, with now and then seasons of comfort, which come as refreshing showers from heaven, and as the dew "that descended upon the mountains of Zion."

How truly and clearly does this present to us the experience of the believer to-day! His Beloved is like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains. For a moment it appears to view, and is again lost sight of in the surrounding forest. Yet the faint view, the momentary sight which the believer has of that lovely form, sufficiently and more than compensates him for the earnest seeking, the anxious watching, the toils and trials of the way. Everywhere in the word of our God is found the experience of His people. Patriarchs, prophets and apostles have spoken upon this subject with an unerring testimony. Let us consider some of these marks of eternal life, and diligently inquire whether or not there is any corresponding thereto in our own experience.

"But I am poor and needy." - Psalm lxx. 5. "O that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days when God preserved me; when His candle shined upon my head, and when by His light I walked *through* darkness." - Job xxix. 2, 3. "I am the man *that* hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He hath led me, and brought *me into* darkness, but not *into* light." - Lamentation iii, 1,2. "From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righ-

teous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." Isaiah xxiv. 16. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - Romans vii. 18-24. "Entreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God." - Ruth 1:16. "Behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house." - Judges vi. 15. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." - 1 John iii. 14. "All these things are against me." - Genesis xlii, 36. "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried; he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." - James 1:12. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" - Psalm lxxvii. 9. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear! *Even* cry out unto Thee of violence, and Thou wilt not save!" - Hab. i, 2. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." - Psalm xlii. "My

soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”- Psalm lxxxiv, 2. “Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.” - Psalm xlii. 11.

I have quoted from the word an experience of poverty of mind, of great darkness and trial, and a calm, abiding hope in God for deliverance, with a heart united to His people in the strongest of ties. Let me pause and ask the reader here, Have you ever felt any of these things? Dead men do not feel. Do these strong declarations from persons of undoubted experience find an echo in your own? Have you felt with the psalmist that you were “poor and needy,” to cry with Isaiah, “My leanness, my leanness,” and to feel with Gideon that you were the least in your “Father’s house?” Have you ever felt to cry out with Jeremiah, “I am the man that hath seen affliction;” and with the psalmist, “Hath God forgotten to be gracious?” to realize with Paul a perfect knowledge that in your flesh “dwells no good thing,” and how to perform that which is good you “find not;” on the contrary, the good that you would you “do not,” but the evil which you “would not,” that you do? Has that bitter, agonizing cry of Paul, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Ever been felt in your experience? Yet in the midst of all this, while sensibly realizing your unworthiness of their fellowship and esteem, can you lift your hands toward the people of God, and in your heart imploringly cry with Ruth, “Entreat me not to leave thee,”

or to return from following after thee? I am confident that there is not a child of God under the broad canopy of heaven whose heart has been opened to receive and understand His truth, but who has felt the power of these strong expressive declarations. These mark “the footsteps of the flock.” I have quoted but a few of the many in the word of God.

I might continue to quote until the columns of the SIGNS were entirely filled, and still there would be many more. In all of this experience we read our own. But the quotations that I have made present seasons of severe trial and great darkness; as before stated we find this experience interspersed with moments of comfort and great joy. We might quote from the word declarations of this nature strong and expressive, and as applicable to Christian experience as those already made. We might speak of the psalmist, who filled with exceeding joy could call upon his soul to “bless the Lord,” and all that is within him to “bless His holy name;” of Paul, who, “caught up to the third heaven,” “heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter;” of Jacob, who, wrapt in holy vision, beheld the ladder upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, and who was made to exclaim, “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” We might speak of the spouse in the “Song of Solomon,” who sat down under the shadow of her Beloved with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to her taste, who was brought to the royal banqueting house of her God, and “His banner over me was love;” we might

speak of that people to whom Peter writes, "who rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and again come to the psalmist, and hear him exclaim with rapturous joy, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness." We might continue to quote, and yet there would be more.

In our travels we experience the joys as well as the sorrows. There are moments of exceeding joy which stand out as bright spots in the dark past, oases upon a dreary desert, seasons of refreshing from the presence of our God. The things of which I write are footprints along the way over which we travel onward and upward to a higher and nobler life. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They may become faint when the way is dark and dreary, but the Lord renews their strength, and they press on with unabated zeal.

"Through flames and floods, if Jesus lead,

I'll follow where He goes."

"Though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." We trace them on as strangers and fellow-pilgrims, hated by the world of the ungodly, "everywhere spoken against," persecuted unto prison, and ridicule. But the walls of salvation are around them, the banner of love over them, and the everlasting arms underneath. Time, the great book upon whose pages are written the irrevocable decrees of the unchangeable God, unfolds His purposes—His eternal counsel before us, each in its appointed time, place and circumstance.

"Each opening leaf, and every stroke,

Fulfills some deep design."

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." The sands of time are swiftly passing away, and though thousands of years may be to come, yet but a few more days, months or years at most remain for us. The bounds of our habitation are appointed that we cannot pass. Every trial is measured by the rod of His love, and all of our times are in His hands. We can securely rest in this Truth. The prospects of final deliverance from this "bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," animates us with heavenly joy, "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

Then may the Lord, if it be His will, guide us through all our changes, and at last receive us into endless rest, in the glory of that city to which the footprints of the pilgrims are leading. In the unclouded realms of perpetual glory, where

"The saints of all ages in harmony meet,

Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;

While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,

And the smile of the Lord is the feast of our soul."

Yours in Gospel fellowship,
WM. M. Smoot,
Mar. 23, 1877

“GET THEE OUT” (Gen. 12:1-5)

“COME” (Acts 7:2-3)

It has pleased our God, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, to give to his people, in the person of Abraham, an example of his eternal, electing, covenant grace. Abraham was called, and led and taught of the Lord, and faith was wrought in him to confide in God; he was taken into such nearness, such amiability with the Lord (though Abraham confessed himself to be but “dust and ashes” (Gen. 18:27), he was called the “friend of God” (James 2:23; Isaiah 41:8). Our precious Christ declared, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad” St. John 8:56. Who and what was Abraham? Before the Lord called him by his grace he was by nature a child of wrath even as others of Adam’s race. He did not know God, but was with his fathers, a worshipper of idols in Ur of the Chaldees (Joshua 24:2). All the particulars of what he was in his darkness, ignorance and alienation from God need not here be portrayed, but look yourself, child of God, unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, and that will suffice (Isaiah 51:1-2). Oh the heights and depth of the sovereign graciousness of God to us vile, wretched transgressors, who walked according to the course of this world. Oh the corruptions in the hearts of Adam’s race! The hole of this horrible pit is deep and foul, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? Poor sinners

quicken by the Holy Ghost are in a measure feelingly made to know how vile they are, and to cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” The Lord hewed Abraham from the rock, and digged him out of the hole of the pit, and established his goings. Others who lived in Ur of the Chaldees were left in their abominable idolatries, dead in their trespasses and sins. “I called him alone, and blessed him” (Isaiah 51:2). “God caused me to wander from my father’s house” (Gen 20:13). His journeying, then, from his father’s house was not of his self-determination, but God moved him to go. The Lord was the gracious cause. So it is with all Zion’s pilgrims who are journeying to the better country, that is a heavenly, to the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. The very first step in this path, and all the steps of our faith, are wrought and caused by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost. The Lord called Abraham alone and blessed him, and he obeyed and went out, but he did not go forth alone. For Stephen, just before he was stoned to death, declared, “Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, **“Get thee out”** of thy country, and from thy kindred, and **“come”** into the land which I shall shew thee” (Acts 7:1-3). What power was in this voice! How kind, how assuring was this voice! Abraham knew this voice was not the voice of any devils, the idol gods (Lev. 17:7), which he had been worshipping, but a voice of gracious, commanding,

persuading power. It took hold of his heart, and he obeyed and went forth with the invisible, blessed God of glory. For that word "**come**" signified, I will be with thee, I will show thee the way, and show thee the land. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" (Gen 12:1-5). God brought him to see the land and was his upholder and defense, his counselor and friend. The Lord was mindful of his gracious covenant with him, and as he went from one nation to another he suffered no man to do them wrong. Yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm (Psalm 105 : 13-15). Abraham walked by faith in fellowship with God. And if we are of faith of our father Abraham (Rom. 4:12), then truly our fellowship will be with God our Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

As we remember all the way wherein thus far we have come surely we must acknowledge that his abounding mercies have been our sufficiency.

We have been poor sinful mortals all the way, frail and worthless nothings, often wayward, inconstant, backsliders in heart. I need not attempt to tell the story of our sinfulness and nothingness. Our father Abraham confessed unto the Lord that he was but "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). But, by the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost, we have continued to cleave to the Lord, to yearn for his presence to be with us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly country, the promised inheritance of eternal glory with our dear Savior, our much loved and worshipped Head and Husband, our Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham went forth not knowing whither he went, and we do not see what steps we are to take today, or what shall be on the morrow. But to the end of our journey our path will only be as our all-wise God and father has ordained; this we know that the Lord hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". That sweet word "**come**" tells us so. The Lord said to Jacob, "**Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave Thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of (Gen. 28:15)**". There will doubtless be rough places before us, temptations and afflictions. It is not the purpose of the Lord to carry us to the skies on flowery beds of ease, and it is not for us to determine how it shall befall us. But if tomorrow there are floods for us to pass through, or fiery trials to endure, no strange thing will have happened unto us, for tribulations have ever been the lot of God's elect and redeemed people while in this

world. Jesus saith, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Our gracious God saith, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Jonah, when in the belly of the whale, exclaimed, "I am cast out of thy sight," but he was mistaken. Ah! how many mistaken thoughts of God have arisen within us. But though the Lord may be often out of our sight, and we may be saying with Job, "**Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him,**" but we are never out of his sight. The Lord sees us in the deepest darkest dispensations of his providences that we are passing through, for the darkness and the light are both alike to him, and all our portion, our lot, is such as is ours in the counsel of his own will. Truly it is wonderful, the love of God our Savior unto his chosen. They are accepted in the Beloved, and in him have obtained an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.

And now, believers in Christ Jesus, we are journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it thee (Num. 10:29). We can only endure and hold on our way as we are found leaning upon our Beloved (S. Song 8:5). Christ, in his espousal of us unto himself, said, "**come**", and we were so drawn to Christ crucified, so leaned upon him, that we went after him in the

wilderness (Jer. 2:2). And it is our comfortable hope that he will bring us home to our Father's house on high, we shall enter into the King's palace in eternal glory. Oh, we shall be like him in immortal beauty, our whole spirit and soul and body glorified, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Frederick W. Keene,
501 Cleveland Street, Raleigh, NC
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CHARITY MAY, 1947

IT IS ALARMING to me when I am given to meditate upon the strife and confusion that exists in Zion today! It is heart-breaking to find brethren trying to devour and subdue one another. It makes me shudder to note the coldness that seems prevalent in our own midst. All this perplexity of mind has made me to inquire of the Lord for an understanding of His Spirit of love. May He define charity for us and make manifest that spirit in us.

Let us now consider the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians where Paul was inspired to write to the Church at Corinth on this grand subject. I realize the modern usage of the word is the giving of alms, but the 3rd verse of this chapter states the possibility of bestowing all goods to feed the poor, yet be destitute of charity. I am persuaded to believe that charity is the love of God, love of Christ, and love to saints. God loves us with a godly love. This same love is reciprocated.

cated and also includes Christ and the brethren. We love God because He first loved us. God's children do love one another. I think that Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was blessed to treat upon the greatness of charity and its properties. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." To be enabled to speak with the tongues of men is a natural gift from God, but to be able to speak with the tongues of angels is a spiritual gift from God. Man naturally cannot learn the language of the truth as pertaining to God and the holy Scriptures. Though a man be spiritually blessed to speak fluently and eloquently of the doctrine of God our Savior and have not charity, he is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If a person be blessed so that he can understand all mysteries and knowledge and have all faith both believing and doing miracles and have not charity, he is nothing. Paul does not mean that these gifts are nothing but that the man possessing these gifts is nothing, destitute of charity. If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor in order to gain the reputation of men or for the purpose of obtaining eternal life it would be no profit to me. These deeds must be motivated by love to God or to Christ or to the saints before they could be rightly considered as profitable for me.

Now let us consider the properties and characters of love as Paul was inspired to note them. "Charity suffereth long." The person blessed with charity is patient. He is slow to anger, and not

hasty to revenge. He is enabled to bear much; has the grace of forbearance, and is blessed to forgive. "And is kind." He does good to all men, even to his enemies. "Charity envieth not." He that is possessed with this wonderful grace of God's love does not envy the temporal happiness of others. He rejoices when he beholds a brother is blessed with gifts both temporal and spiritual. He does not envy the happiness of others even though they are decidedly more blessed than he. Joseph's brethren were not charitable when they envied Joseph because he had a greater share in the affections of their father. The charitable person does not envy one of God's children whose usefulness and success in spiritual undertakings are decidedly greater (seemingly) than his. "Charity vaunteth not itself." He does not boast of either his natural or spiritual wisdom or possessions. He does not boast of what he does as his motive is love and not for the applause of men. "Is not puffed up." He is not swelled with pride but is humble. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." He is not unbecoming in his conversation or actions and has due respect for the aged and those of authority. "Seeketh not her own." He is not seeking to promote his own selfish ambitions and desires but his care and concern is to the glory of God and to the children of the kingdom. "Is not easily provoked." He is not easily offended. "Thinketh no evil." Not that he is free from evil thoughts such as are sinful and vain, for testimonies throughout the holy scriptures affirm to the contrary. God's children are forever desiring to be delivered

from these sinful thoughts that are daily experienced. But I think that this character will forgive a brother his trespasses and will not try to find some way of revenge. He thinks not upon how to *get even* with someone who has wronged him.

“Rejoiceth not in iniquity.” He mourns because of his own iniquities. He is grieved because of the sinfulness of professors. He is troubled when he meditates upon the profanity and immorality of the world. “But rejoiceth in the truth.” He rejoices in the doctrine of God, our Savior, he is pleased when God is praised and man is set forth as nothing, yea less than nothing. Salvation by grace is his meat and drink. “Beareth all things.” He feels that all things work together for good to them who love God, even the suffering, persecution, and *affliction* is not in vain. He bears *them* without complaint, feeling that if *justice* were meted out they would be more intense. He does not feel that he should revenge wrong doing. “Believeth all things.” Everything that exists is according to the decrees of God. All things are for the praise of God and for the perfecting of God’s saints. None of the things existing is by chance. “Hopeth all things.” All things yet future is predetermined so that nothing will frustrate any of the promises of God from being fulfilled. Endureth all things.” He is confident that all things are embraced in the eternal decrees of an all-wise and all-powerful God. He endures all the afflictions and persecutions for the elect’s sake and for Christ’s sake. The last to be endured is death.

“Charity never faileth.” It may fail in the lively exercise of it. Selfishness and the cares of the world may be prevalent at times, but the love of God will not permit a child of God to fall finally into perdition. Charity is everlasting. It is ever the same. Prophecies will be fulfilled then cease to be prophecy. Hope will become a reality thus cease to be hope. Faith will terminate into a reality. Charity will be charity in the beyond the same as it was before the beginning of time. Every object of God’s love is just as certain for heaven and immortal glory as before time began. There is no change in the love of God for His people.

Now, I feel that the Lord has blessed us with a few sweet thoughts on the properties and characteristics of God’s love as made manifest in brethren. Permit me to say, By their fruits ye shall know them. I wish to suggest to the citizens of Zion, that you beware of imposters. Beware of those having a form of godliness but not manifesting the grace of charity. I believe the time has come to watch as well as pray. May God grant us the grace of charity and the eye of watchfulness.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ST. JOHN 20:26.

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be with you.

EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING

On the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th, the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked

me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and the "Signs," in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed almost as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the

day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making fifty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me by the dear Saviour: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." From that day to this my *needs* have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my *wants*.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul, and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 28th. On that day my next older brother

James was baptized by Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: "Come unto me, etc." So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Walkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the meeting in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought

he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called *from* the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text *used* by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made *alive*." But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her. My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text, and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but "it is raised a spiritual body." Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all

(which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever

had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept my promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to depend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, "Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that "the bars of the earth were about me forever." But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of everyone of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Elder Silas H. Durand

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

(This poem was composed about two
o'clock one morning, after being
pressed in spirit to arise and pen these
thoughts. I have had several requests to
re-publish it.)

When the moon in all it's glory,
Cast it's brilliance o'er the earth,
Then I thought of Jesus, Saviour,
And about his humble birth.

Soon I saw him in a manger,
Glory shining all around;
By a heavenly host surrounded,
Shouting, glory to his name.

Then I saw him meek and lowly,
Walk the earth in grief and shame,
All to save poor, wretched sinners,
Who will ever praise his name.

Next he bows inside a garden:
Sweat like drops of blood flow down;
All the earth about him silent,
As he kneels upon the ground.

As he prays in solemn anguish,
For the cup to pass away;
Yet he knows that he must drink it,
To prepare the glorious way.

Then upon the scene most softly,
Came an angel dressed in white,
Touched him gently, said, look upward,
Soon the darkness will be light.

Soon the scene of darkness changes;
Darkness breaks, the light appears –
Heaven opens to receive him,
Never more to bow in tears.

He appears in heaven for sinners,
Who were purchased with his blood:
All his intercession for them
Is because his life is love.

Then dear God, may all his suffering,
Guide me on this heavenly road;
May I never, never murmur,
As I think about my God.

Though my soul is oft in sorrow,
Soon these things will pass away.
Sickness, sin and all my trials,
Will be over in that great day.

Then our garments will be spotless
As we gaze upon his face.
We will need the Moon, no never,
For the Sun will take it's place.

When his children all shall meet him
On that bright and shining shore,
Where our sorrows, pains and trials,
Will be over, ever o'er.

Soon, my brethren, we shall meet him,
May his love be all our guide,
And his grace and tender mercy,
Land us safe on Heaven's side.

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EDITORIAL

“How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.” 1 Corinthians 14:26.



Elder J.B. Farmer

The worldly religious professors cannot examine their beginnings to see whether their faith stands in the wisdom of men. They cannot study their history to see if their faith and practice has been or is in accord with that of the church that Jesus

built upon the Rock, which is Himself. They are not enabled to trace their line to see if some man or woman came up with some idea contrary to the gospel, and wrote it down, and published it, and sent it out in order to draw away disciples after themselves. They cannot discern, since their religion is money based, that it would immediately fail if the money were withheld. They are deceived and cannot even ask if they have a lie in their right hand. They go on in the traditions and teachings presented to them, and seem to be satisfied in them. Many don't even realize that they call Jesus, Lord, but deny His plain teachings. Jesus said, **"And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"**

It is not so with those who were foreknown of God and predestinated to be conformed to His image. It is needful for them to know whether they are in the faith of God's elect. It is needful for them to know whether they are being held in the practice of the ancient church. It is needful for them to know whether they are being kept in the true order of the saints. It is needful for them to know whether this is the true love of God wherein they stand. I am made to believe that only the children of God are concerned about such things. Nothing false will satisfy them. By the discerning Holy Spirit that is within them the faithful children are made to examine all things-external and internal - and to reject that which is false and cleave to that which is true. Jesus said, **"If you love me, keep my commandments."** And He said, **"By this shall all men know that**

you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

God has left on record His written word for the benefit of His people. **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."** His written word is conclusive evidence for His children as to what is the true faith, practice, and order of the saints. I must believe that God's little ones are constantly seeking evidence that they are not deceived, and that they are truly in that narrow way, which leads to eternal life.

Some seek to prove that the Primitive Baptists are directly linked to the original church that Jesus established by examining church histories written by men. I am made to believe that approach to the truth will always be unsatisfactory. This is because the true churches were so small and despised that they were not recognized by the historians. I am made to believe that the true history of the faith is found in scripture, by the example laid down there. The inspired apostle said to Timothy, **"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."** We see from the scripture that spiritual things were committed from faith to faith. The faithful apostle committed these things to faithful Timothy,

who was commanded to commit these things to faithful men, who shall be able to teach other faithful men also. The apostle has shown us the pattern over four generations, and I must believe that God who made heaven and earth did sustain that true pattern from the beginning unto our day and shall sustain it unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. What God has done is forever, and is unchangeable.

Yes, I cannot help believing that the doctrine, order, practice and love, which we experience has come to us unbroken from the beginning. If you are blessed to trace your spiritual heritage back from faith to faith for several generations, you may be assured that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand. If you are blessed, without doubting, and in full assurance of faith, to say in truth that you love the brethren, you are in the narrow way. Some may think these statements are too bold, but God has assured us in the scriptures, **“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”** If you are blessed to truly say in your heart that your greatest desire is to please God, you have evidence that you are walking in the light.

If we are blessed to test the practices of the churches which we walk among, and are blessed to find them in accord with what the apostles practiced in the beginning, we may have confidence that we are not deceived about them being in the ancient way. The apostle Paul was blessed to lay out the practice of the church in the brief scrip-

ture listed at the head of this article. He listed a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation, and an interpretation as those things that were brought during their meetings. May we examine our practice by these things.

When we come together, we begin our services with the singing of spiritual songs and hymns. We understand that some of our hymns are based upon the psalms of David. All are spiritual and edifying.

And we find our ministers humbly setting forth the sound doctrine of Christ, and rightly dividing the word of truth. The doctrine has many parts such as the sovereignty of God, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, salvation by grace through faith, election, the bodily resurrection of the saints to glory, the bodily resurrection and judgment of the wicked to condemnation, the second coming of Christ, the present reign of Christ in His kingdom, the total depravity of the flesh, the warfare between the outward man and the inner man, the certainty of salvation for the elect. And the list goes on and on.

A tongue is a language. And we know that there are foreign tongues or languages with which we are not familiar. If one should speak to us in a foreign language, we would not understand anything he said. The scriptures were originally written primarily in Hebrew and in Greek. If one would read to us from the original, we would need an interpreter to know what was read. And we know that some of our sound brethren have, from time to time, interpreted an

original word, either in the Hebrew or in the Greek, to help explain the meaning of a passage of scripture. This is one kind of tongue. Another tongue that is spoken among us is that pure language of grace, which cannot be understood by the world, but is perfectly clear to the household of faith.

The apostle also listed a revelation. This is in line with what we believe about all truth. It is hidden to all unless it is revealed. It is forever hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, but is mercifully revealed to God's little ones as they are enabled to receive it. Sometimes a dream is given, and for it to have meaning to us there must be revelation. In the prophet Joel and in the book of Acts it is written, **"Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."** One time Elder Kenneth Key told me what he thought that meant, and I didn't seem to understand it at the time. He said he thought the old man was the outer man, and the young man was the inner man. Since that time I trust that this passage has been given a deeper meaning to me according to experience. I have had natural dreams that were very unusual and mysterious. After meditating upon them, it seems that they had a spiritual meaning. And sometimes I was given to tell others what they meant, or another would tell me what they thought they meant. The dreams were natural according to the outer man, but the visions were the meditations and the revelations of the meaning, and the prophesying was the

telling of the meaning. God is still working in and among His people today.

The blessed apostle also listed an interpretation. This does not speak of a guess, or of an opinion, or of a position that one has taken about the meaning of a scripture. But it speaks of the rightly dividing of it. We are taught that if any man should speak unto the children of God about spiritual things, he must speak as the oracles of God. or the utterances of God. He must not speak maybe this and maybe that, but rather, thus sayeth the Lord. When one is blessed to speak the truth, he is speaking the things of the kingdom with the full assurance of faith. It is written, **"Knowing this first, that no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."** It is no wonder it is such a fearful thing to stand before the Lord's people to speak. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

And the apostle concluded the list of the practices of the churches by saying, **"Let all things be done unto edifying."** Whether it be singing a song, teaching the doctrine, or explaining a tongue, or relating a revelation, or giving an interpretation of the scripture, it must be to the building up, strengthening, comforting, and good of the Lord's people. And **"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is no variableness nei-**

ther shadow of turning.” Thanks be unto God for His many mercies to us.

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

Elder J.B. Farmer

ROMANS 8: 27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*

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.*

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder & Mrs. James C. Young
1218 N. Park Ave APT #5
Tifton, Ga. 31794-3973
IN GOD WE TRUST

Please find enclosed check 1157 in the amount of \$50.00 for four (4) subscriptions for “The Signs of the Times”.

I no longer “work” fulltime or as pastor – we have moved to Tifton, GA. I thought as long as I have some funds I do not want to have my subscription to expire.

Our gracious, Sovereign Lord has provided for me for many years. I have enjoyed it for more than 35 years. I am not of your order but I am a Particular Predestinarian Baptist.

I had a stroke 7 years ago and have deteriorated as you can tell in my scribbling – Please forgive me.

Brother Jim Poole is a gracious friend.

Thanking you and may our Lord bless you and your efforts.

Elder Jim Young

Sept. 11, 2012

Elder Cleo Robertson,

In reference to your editorial in the September issue of the “Signs” (Isaiah 43:1-2.) I must admit I shed tears of joy as I read the words from your pen that expressed the Truth that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I believe the Lord laid the same spirit of truth upon your heart that was laid upon the hearts of those patriarchs of old as they spoke to the ancient Hebrew families.

Aren’t we glad, Elder Robertson, for the “FEW” that still stand on the foundation of Christ and the prophets that spells out Salvation is by the free and unmerited grace of God?

I believe we are now living in the time Paul the apostle had reference to when he wrote the second epistle to Timothy, Chapter 4 “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine etc.” In the question asked in the eighth verse of Luke 18 – “Neverthe-

less when the son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Thanks to almighty God I believe that question was answered in Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians when he wrote in verse 51—Chapter 15 "We shall not all sleep" etc. There will be some still believing and preaching the sovereignty of God when

Jesus returns to take his children home.

You and your staff are to be commended for the selection of material printed in the oldest Primitive Baptist Periodical in America.

In his grace,
Elder Velden B. Linn



Elders at New Valley Church

August 27, 2012

Dear Elder Robertson,

I wonder if you or some of the readers of the "Signs of the Times" could help me in identifying the Elders in this old photograph?

On the back of picture is written the following: "Oct. 1956 Virginia corresponding meeting New Valley Church."

I recognize two of the men. The

slender man in the middle is Elder E. J. Lambert and man on the far right with the overcoat on is Elder David Spangler. The identity of the other 3 men I do not know? I also would like to know the location of New Valley Church.

You are welcome to publish this picture in an upcoming edition of the "Signs" if you feel it would be of any interest to others.

I also have a number of other photographs much older than this one, of

various Primitive Baptist Elders, which are all identified.

Would you consider publishing some of them from time to time if I sent some copies to you for consideration?

My humble thanks to you.
In hope of eternal life.
Steve Everett

In response to Steve Everett's request to identify the Elders in the picture he sent, we agree that he is correct in identifying Elders Lambert and Spangler. Also, the second from the left is Elder John Wood. If anyone can identify the first one from the left and the fourth one, please let me know. We are always interested in pictures of old Elders and churches. The only information that we have on New Valley Church is to take Hwy 15 from Leesburg, Va. towards Lucketts, Va and turn on New Valley Road. We appreciate the picture and your correspondence.

Editor

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here are some thoughts I have tried to put together concerning Israel and the crossing of Jordan. Re-reading this, it seems to be rambling at best, but here it is. Use it as you see fit. If it seems unsound, or unclear to the point of being misunderstood then it is

much better as trash.

We understand that Elder Farmer as well as Elder Bradshaw plan to be with us at the annual meeting of Soldiers Creek on the 2nd Sunday in August. In recent years it has just been a one day meeting but very enjoyable never the less.

As you should know you have a standing invitation to come and be with us at any time. We have a meeting somewhere most every week.

Sincerely,
Wayman Chapell

ARTICLES

YE HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY HERETOFORE

When the children of Israel came to the river Jordan, and before they passed over, they were told; "When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests and the Levities bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place and go after it" Joshua 3:3. They were to follow the ark (sign, or symbol of divine presence) into the Jordan river and thus into the promised land of Canaan which was a fearsome trip. They were to stay about 2000 cubits (3000 ft.) behind the ark that they might know the way, but come not near it. This was a totally new experience. They did not know the way and neither had they ever been that way before.

This whole episode of the crossing of Jordan seems, in many ways, to pre-

figure the travels of a child of God, under grace, when called out of darkness into his marvelous light. "...I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." Isaiah 42; 16.

When there is no other way to go, and though the way may seem rough and perhaps uncertain the indwelling instructions are clear "Follow Him." Wonderful and fearful things are happening in a deliverance that the natural mind can not fully comprehend, much less understand. It is a wonderful deliverance from nature's darkness into the kingdom of God.

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overflowed all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood and rose upon heap... And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground..." Joshua 3:15-17.

As sin seems an impossible hindrance in the path of a believer, when first made to see what he is by nature and what he must be by grace, so was the deep waters of Jordan to Israel. But as the Jordan was rolled back when the priests' feet were first dipped in the water so is the unquenched guilt of sin rolled away when a child of God is brought to understand that the blood of Christ is all

sufficient.

Though the river bed was now dry ground it does not take much thought to understand that doubts and fears must have been part of the journey's experience as they moved forward. They could say, "The Lord God is my strength and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me walk upon mine high places." Habakkuk 3:19. And so is the assurance of a child of God. Yet, the experience and testimony of the father, as recorded in Mark 9:17-24, who had a son that had a "dumb spirit", seems to ring out when things look impossible to the natural man. When told by Christ that if he could believe that all things were possible to him that believed, the father quickly responded, "...Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Notice that the dumb spirit came out of the son showing that the father's faith was helped. (All spiritual faith is the gift of God.)

Israel had not passed this way before and the way was no less fraught with doubts and fears than are those of a child of God when gripped by the heart-felt desire to follow the Savior. With the promised land of Canaan now in sight, (A home in the fellowship of the saints) troubles would seem to be over. Now, in the fellowship of the church, the spiritual substance of the promises that were given to Abraham, concerning the bounty of the land, can now be enjoyed—or so it was thought. **"And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought Thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou**

buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.” Deuteronomy 6:10-12.

Though the land of promise was now in sight it was soon to be felt that the road ahead was not an easy one. As when Paul and Barnabas, preaching the gospel at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, went about... **“Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Acts. 14:22.** The land and the blessing in the land had been promised and were there, yet there were many spiritual lessons to be learned and many battles to be fought. And, such it is with the child of God as he grows in grace and the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The experience of the Jordan crossing was not lost to those who may later ask what these things mean. The Lord spoke to Joshua telling him to take a man from each of the twelve tribes and each would take a stone from the midst of Jordan from the place where the priests' feet stood firm in Jordan. They took the stones over with them to where they were to lodge the first night. The stones were a sign that when the children ask of their fathers the meaning of the stones they were to be told that it was for a memorial of how the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the

covenant of the Lord when it passed over. It was to be a memorial to the children of Israel for ever. And such are the interests to the children of God as they follow in this way which they have not been before. The spiritual experiences of brothers and sisters, though no two may be exactly the same, can be a great consolation when doubts and fears arise.

One of the last chores for Joshua, before leaving the dry river bed of Jordan, was to set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests stood, which bore the ark of the covenant. These were not the same stones that were carried over to Gilgal (the place of the first night's lodging) by the twelve men and for a different purpose.

The text seems to indicate that the twelve stones set up by Joshua were on dry land in the middle of the Jordan river bed and then were covered by water, when the river returned, and ...”are there until this day”... Though not seen any more by the natural eye, the stones and the crossing that they represent, were surely impressed firmly on the mind of Joshua and would, in the trying times ahead, serve as a witness of what God had done in their deliverance through Jordan. In a somewhat similar way, or in like manner, are the early experiences in the spiritual life of a believer. They are often memories by which courage is made strong and faith strengthened when doubts and fears arise. And there is a growing understanding **“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be**

found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”
1st Peter 1:7-8.

Elder Wayman Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

For the Signs of the Times.
 North Berwick, Me., July 9, 1855.

BROTHER BEEBE: - As God's people have but one heavenly Father, all being born in God's spiritual kingdom, they are all of one family, brothers and sisters in Christ, and as they are united together, with the cords of God's eternal love, they of course are always ready to listen to any account that they can receive from each other, especially when they are much scattered, in a dark cloudy day, and surrounded by a multitude of enemies who are saying all manner of evil about them, and prophesying that they soon will become extinct, and are doing all within their power for the same. I will say that we, the Old School Baptist church of this place, having obtained help of God, continue until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things then those which Moses and the prophets did say should come; for we think that we can see that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. The foundation of the

apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. And as we believe this foundation stone to be the rock of eternal ages, we have no desire to trust in, or to lay any other foundation than that, which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. And as men in these last days have studied out, and formed (what they call) soul-saving institutions, to bring people on to this foundation, we have no confidence in them to accomplish any such thing; but our whole confidence to accomplish this, is in that soul saving institution which was established by Christ himself, over eighteen hundred years ago, for Christ said, "On this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We can see no cause why we should leave the bible to follow after the commandments of men. But I will close by saying, we yet continue an afflicted and poor people, and much interested at times to hear from our brethren and sisters who write for the *Signs*, for they tell our feelings better than we can ourselves. I will also inform you that on the 6th of last May I had the privilege of baptizing two candidates in fellowship of the church, and yesterday I had the privilege of baptizing two more, so the Lord is good to us.

WILLIAM QUINT.

GALATIANS 3:22.

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

GOD CALLS AND SENDS HIS SERVANTS

967 Maxey Street,
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Dear Brethren:

“The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

When Jesus called to himself his twelve disciples, who were called Apostles, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Matt. 10:1) They were commanded where to go to preach, which was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God’s servants today are called and sent as they were then, to preach the gospel, bearing good news to them that ‘are called to hear the gospel: which is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.”

We understand that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and just as many as are ordained unto eternal life believe in God. To believe in God is the work of God by Him whom He hath sent. Christ was sent to them that were lost. **“He came unto his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to**

them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:11-13)

I do believe that the ones Christ comes to are the very elect of God, which were chosen in Christ before the world began. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind, and we should not therefore be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of Paul his prisoner; but partakers of the afflictions of the (2 Tim. 1:7-9) gospel according to the power of God. **“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”**

Today the ones who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and have the sound mind given them, are humble creatures and desire to be at the feet of their brethren, and abound in love towards their brethren as much as is in them is. They look not at the things of this life, but unto Him who is the author of their faith by which they walk. We study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We think much of our time that we are unprofitable servants, and cannot think of anything good we have ever done. I believe that when I would do good evil is always present, and can say

with the Apostle, That which I would do, I do not, knowing that in me dwells no good thing.

Sometimes, brethren, I try to rest in the thought of being one of God's elect; and if I am one it is because everything has been done for me, and not by me. Grace is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and not in our heads. I believe in heart-felt religion, and it is the work of God that we believe this. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that is born of God is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We have asked ourselves, have we been born again, and wonder how this is and how it comes: we know that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this I wonder about; but I know that I love my brethren, if I know anything at all. We know that God loved his children before they loved him. He is all in all, upholding all things by his power; and every soul is subject to God. There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Now we understand that the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Doesn't this show the power of God, that we creatures go as God directs, as his disciples and apostles had to go. God will never leave himself without a witness. Those that are called will go where he leads

them. He goes before his sheep; He feeds his flock: they find rest at noon-time, and the kids are fed by the shepherd's tents.

God speaking by one of the prophets, said, "I leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people." These are the people God raised up for himself, who shall show forth his praise. They are poor in spirit, but rich in faith. James says of these people, "Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" So the promise is to them that love him, and it is eternal life that is promised them. "God is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Brethren I believe the same doctrine is being preached and taught today among His people that Christ taught his disciples to preach to the edification of the brethren in that day; and which we enjoy as good news from a far country. This good news strengthens our hope, which we have as the anchor of our souls sure and steadfast. If our hope did not go beyond this world we would be of all men most miserable. We hear some say that their hope is so little, and we don't like to hear this, for our hope is in Christ Jesus the Lord of glory, and this hope cannot be measured. Aren't you glad that your hope is felt so plainly sometimes that you have to say, I know I have a hope in my God, and he will give me everything I need.

Brethren, we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (Romans 8:24,25)

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Herbert R. Prince
September, 1968

ACTS 3:1-11

Of all the signs and wonders that the apostles did through the power of God, only those are recorded in the scriptures that are needful for the instruction of the children of God in righteousness and the confirmation of their faith. The first eleven verses of the third chapter of Acts relate an incident in the apostolic ministry of Peter and John that occurred soon after the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the visible church on the day of Pentecost. Peter and John visited the temple at Jerusalem at the ninth hour of the day, a special time of prayer, and saw a lame man that had been carried daily and laid at the gate of the temple, that is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that came to the temple for worship, and who was about to ask alms of the two apostles. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Peter then took the cripple by the right hand and lifted him up, and the bones of his ankles and feet received strength. The cured man leaping, stood and walked and entered with them into

the temple, praising God. Those who witnessed the miracle were filled with wonder and astonishment at that which had happened to the lame man, who held Peter and John, as they ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Peter and John were witnesses of this demonstration of the mighty power of God. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. These two apostles were thought to be the oldest and the youngest of the apostles respectively. It seems appropriate that they should participate in this miracle, for it is by a miracle of grace that every child of God enters savingly into a knowledge of the truth, from the time that the first one of the family of the redeemed tasted that the Lord is gracious, until the last one finds a place in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Peter and John went together into the temple, denoting that blessed fellowship that the children of God have together in spiritual companionship when they sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Peter and John were together at the trial of Christ, they ran together to his sepulcher, and they came to the temple together, not to offer up the sacrifice of lamb or bullock on a Jewish altar, but to attend to prayer and to offer spiritual sacrifices, also to preach to the Jews who assembled in numbers at the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon.

This was one of the hours observed for prayer and sacrifice by the Jews. It was the ninth hour when Jesus Christ on the cross commended his spirit to God

as he gave up his life, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Prayer is the christian's vital breath, his means of communication with God. A sigh, a cry for mercy, a groan because of sin from a burdened soul is prayer, is indited in the heart by the spirit of God and is heard and registered in heaven. When the high priest under the law dispensation made intercession for Israel, he took a live coal of fire from the brazen altar of sacrifice and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. As the fragrant incense vapor ascended, perfuming the place of worship, the high priest offered prayer. When a child of God, one of the priesthood of believers, prays, there is a work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, convicting him of sin and teaching him the justice of his condemnation and the righteousness of that fiery law that went forth from the hand of the Lord at Sinai. It shows him his lion in nature, and in its application consumes all the combustible material of creature effort and legal works. The law burning in the bosom of the convicted sinner as holy fire shows him the vileness of his heart and causes him to groan within himself and to cry for mercy. The creature was born in sin, and to live unto God, must die to sin and realize his need of Christ.

As the ninth hour was observed as an hour of prayer in Jewish worship, there is in this a spiritual signification. It denotes judgment in the sense that when a sinner prays for mercy, he acknowledges the righteous judgment of God for his sins. It was not far from the ninth hour when the first passover lamb was offered

up at the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt for the promised land. This lamb died typically in the place of and for the Israelites, and by the sprinkling of the blood of this passover lamb on the lintels of the door posts of the houses of the children of Israel, they escaped the wrath of God and became a nation. Jesus met the judgment of God for his bride, the church, at the ninth hour of the day. He suffered for her and in her stead all the penalty that she would have had to endure if he had not been a propitiation for her sins. By his death and resurrection the church became a holy nation and a peculiar people of the Lord. At the very hour Jesus died, the high priest in the temple was about to slay the passover lamb when suddenly the earth shook, rocks were rent, many graves were opened, and the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest was now made open, that the type had ceased, as Christ the true passover lamb fulfilled the requirements of the law and made the observance of ceremonial rites no longer necessary. At the ninth hour Jesus died with a prayer upon his lips as he commended his spirit to the Father. When we enter the church, which is the true temple of God, it is through prayer and supplication; it is because of the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; it is through a sense of guilt having lain heavy on our conscience and our inability to lighten the burden. We can not stand or walk in our own strength before God. The man who was healed in the miracle under consideration could neither stand nor walk. He was lame

from his mother's womb. All mankind is conceived in sin, born under its curse, unable to meet its just requirements and under its condemnation. This man had been carried daily to the temple that he might receive alms. This shows he could not stand or walk or live of himself, and that no man could relieve his infirmity. Vain is the help of man to relieve the sinner.

The word certain is used by the Holy Spirit to designate this man from all other individuals and shows him to be a representative character. A subject of grace is distinguished from all other individuals not receiving God's favor. This man represents a sinner who is convicted of sin and is slain by it. Such a character is separate from the world. This man had no strength or means by which he could relieve himself and was fully aware of his physical infirmity. He had to be brought to the gate of the temple to which reference has been made. It is the law that brings a subject of God's redeeming love to a realization of his need, for the law is the schoolmaster of believers unto Christ that they might be justified by faith. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin and the ceremonial law points to the remedy, but is powerless to apply it. The law therefore is a ministration of death. Sacrifices under the law dispensation were offered daily, but could not take away sin. The repetition of these sacrifices day after day and year after year emphasized their impotency to purge the conscience or cleanse forever the foul stain of sin. The daily presence of this invalid at the temple to beg alms proved the gravity

of his condition. He was incurable by any aid of man.

Peter and John bade this man to look upon them, not that they could of themselves effect a cure, but that through their ministration he might look to Jesus who is the fullness of grace and truth. Peter bade the afflicted one in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to rise up and walk, stating that he had neither silver nor gold to give him, gifts that perish with the using. Jesus had resided a considerable time as the word made flesh in his holy humanity in Nazareth. So the lame man was bidden to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the holy one who had left the shining courts of heaven's effulgent glory to assume holy human flesh, that he might bring many sons to glory. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem his church, which was under the law. The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus likewise partook of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them that all their lifetime are subject to bondage. The law of God required obedience in the flesh, therefore Jesus was manifest in the flesh. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the matchless name of Jesus the lame man was bidden to rise up and walk. Peter then took the afflicted one by the right hand, which denotes acceptance, fellowship. Those that enter into fellowship with the Son of God are placed at the right hand of Christ when the Lord shall come with His angels and sit upon

the throne of his glory. Immediately the lame man was lifted up, his feet and ankle bones received strength and he was able to leap and walk and to praise God.

The poor child of God who has felt the plague of his own heart, and to be without hope in the world, leaps in a spiritual sense when his burden is removed, when peace is spoken to his soul, when he discerns Jesus as his great salvation, when he is lifted up from law into grace, when he enters into manifest life in Christ, and his soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his Savior. It is then that he walks, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. It is stated that the healed man entered into the temple. When the child of God is lifted up above the condemnation of the law, he enters into that rest prepared for the people of God and has his place in that antitypical temple of lively stones built up for a habitation of God through the spirit. The lame man, fully restored, resorted to Solomon's porch, one of the precincts of the temple that then was. Solomon typifies wisdom as well as peace. In the spiritual temple the subject of God's grace learns that wisdom that is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. Jesus Christ is made unto his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. By nature we learn wisdom from man, which is foolishness with God, but through the healing power of the Great Physician of our souls, we are taught the wisdom of God. The lame man did not enter the temple until he was healed, and the little ones in Zion do not learn the wisdom that is from above until they

are made alive spiritually. It was in the temple that the healed man praised God. It is in the true church that God's redeemed family praise him. Of such it is written: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The lame man was cured without the use of silver or gold, which emphasizes the truth that all the gold, that all the natural wealth of men poured into societies and organizations of men, whether at home or, abroad, can not suffice to save a single soul from bondage to sin and death. Only from Jesus comes the priceless blessing of eternal life.

(The above was written by the late Elder Arnold H. Bellows and appeared in the Signs of March, 1943.)

PSALM 89:1-5.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

THE ONE TALENT (Matt. 15:24, 25)

Brother E. McKinney, of Missouri, desires our views on Matt. 25:24, 25, "**Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I know thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.**" These words are part of a parable which was spoken in connection with the several parables of servants left in charge of their Lord's household, to give them their meat in due season, the parable also of the ten virgins, and of the sheep and the goats; all of which, we think, were spoken in admonition to the disciples and especially to the servants of the household of our Lord, who were about to be left by our Lord to rule, and feed the members of his house in due season until he should return from his journey. A special application is probably had to the time of his being delivered up to be crucified, and extending to the period when he should, by his spirit, return to them, as he did by his spirit on the day of Pentecost. This was a time of peculiar trials, in which they did not know at what hour their Lord would return to them. These servants, according to chapter 14: 42-51, were his, Christ's own servants, on whom he had bestowed gifts qualifying them to feed and watch over the household; and those of them who should at his coming be found in the faithful discharge of the du-

ties enjoined on them were pronounced blessed; but if any of them should say in their hearts, My Lord delayeth his coming, and should begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant would come in a day when they looked not for him, and cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites; and there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We do not understand this to mean that these unfaithful servants should be sent down to hell; but that in the wholesome discipline of the church and kingdom which was to be set up, they should be cast out from the fellowship of the saints, and mingle with hypocrites; for within the walls of the holy city is the tree of life, and they are blessed and happy who do the commandments of Jesus, that they may have right to the tree of life — to the privileges of the church of God; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites, etc. — Rev. 12: 14,13.

Then, at that time, when the king should return and sit in the throne of his Mediatorial glory, shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins; for the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey. Observe these recipients of the talents were not only servants, but they were his own servants. They were of different capacity or ability, but all alike as his own servants, and the gifts were distributed

according to their several ability. Even so has God set the gifts in the church which is the body of Christ, as it hath pleased him. He knows the several ability of all his members, and has wisely varied the gifts which are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, so as to accomplish his design; and he that has but one talent, has as much according to his capacity as he that has five, and is under no less obligation to be actively engaged in the use of it as he would be if he had five. It may be thought an easy matter to say that this slothful and wicked servant was an alien. But has our Lord ever bestowed any gift for the feeding and edifying of his church on any but his own servants? And may we not press home to ourselves a still more soul-stirring inquiry, Have we not ourselves complained almost in the very words of this wicked and slothful servant? Have we always been free from murmuring when paddling our little canoe so near the shore, while we have witnessed the superior gifts bestowed upon those of greater capacity bounding over the raging billows of the broad ocean with safety and ease? Nay, have we not concluded, and said in our heart, Our gift, if it be indeed a gift, is too small to be of any use, we will hide it in the earth; for if the Lord requires us to occupy a gift, he is a hard master, reaping where he has not sown? If our Lord would give us five talents, and make us equal in point of gifts and ability to the most gifted, then we would be satisfied that he had sown, and had a just right to reap; but as he has not, we are afraid,

and think it more prudent to hide or conceal what little we have, and return it to him at the day of reckoning.

This wicked slothfulness is not peculiar to those who are called to the work of the gospel ministry. Some of the newborn children have said in their heart, My hope, which I cannot quite throw away, is so small that I am afraid, and will keep it hid, in the earth, in the secret chambers of my earthly heart, and wait until the Lord shall give me as clear an evidence as I think he has given to others, then I shall not be afraid, and will no longer hide it. I will then go and tell the church what the Lord has done for me. Our Lord is entitled to a revenue of praise for every gift however small it may appear to us, and if we cannot use it to any great profit and edification of others, we should at least put it in the bank, or church, where it would be appreciated by the saints and through the saints produce usury, of praise to God.

At the time of reckoning, the slothful servant of the one talent is severely reprov'd, and chasten'd. The enjoyment even of his little hope or talent is taken from him, and given to him who has ten talents, and the slothful servant is cast out from the light and liberty of the faithful, into darkness, and in company with hypocrites where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." If we understand correctly; it is the chasten'd child of God who for his disobedience is cast into outer darkness who weeps, for none but God's own dear children weep when cast into that darkness which is the element of the ungodly. They truly weep when

they remember Zion, and the privileges which they once enjoyed. But it is the company into which they are cast who gnash upon them with their teeth. Derisively their enemies require of them to sing the songs of Zion in the strange land; for without are dogs, sorcerers, hypocrites and scoffers.

May we all be admonished by the application of these parables, especially those who are called to feed the church of God, when allured by the delusive vanities of the world to drink in the intoxicating doctrines of men, and to smite their fellow servitors — or to neglect the gift that is for them, however small it may be, for, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Nor would we have the little trembling ones who feel afraid because they have not as great an evidence as others, fail to ponder well the application of the admonition of this parable. Small as their talents may seem, it is the Lord’s, and in the improvement of it they shall be enlarged; and shall enter in through the gates into the Holy City, and have right to the tree of Life. But with their Lord’s money hidden, they must have for their associates the scoffing enemies of the cause of God. “Joy is sown for the righteous,” and “The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land;” but the disobedient shall be beaten with many stripes.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 71: 1.

**In thee O Lord, do I put my trust:
let me never be put to confusion.**

“PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS”

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

Jesus and what He has done for his own people, (who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world,) is all there is to preach. We find that Jesus was prophesied of even in the Garden of Eden, and that all the prophets spoke of him. Isaiah said, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

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

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

Then we have the testimony of Simeon when Jesus was brought to Jerusalem, to be presented before the

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

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

Then Jesus chose his twelve disciples to bear record of the things he did and the things he said; and he performed many miracles, such as raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, as well as healing all manner of diseases, and casting out devils. He associated with publicans and sinners, and began his work among the lower classes who were despised by the proud hierarchy of the day. He made it plain that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; to give his life a ransom for those the Father gave him. After he had performed all that the Father had assigned him, even the fulfilling of the moral and legal law, He lifted up his eyes

unto heaven, and said, "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee... I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do... I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me."

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

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the disciples all being present, the Holy Ghost from heaven came suddenly as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the whole house, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance: manifesting the assurance of the promise that Jesus had made to his disciples, saying, "It is needful that I go away, but I will pray the

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

Many were pricked in their hearts. and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the re-

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

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

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

Before he went away Jesus told his disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercessions for us; for in Him is our identification, our justification, and our hope. It gives us courage to press toward the mark for the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking for the coming of our Lord and Saviour: when we will enter into the full benefits of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time.

“Then Phillip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.”

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

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

der of Presbytery this 15 day of September 2012.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Mod.
Elder Cleo Robertson, Clerk

Ministers present:
Elder Carl E. Terry
Elder Raymond Goad
Elder Jimmy Gray
Elder Mark Terry
Elder Thomas Solomon
Elder Cleo Robertson

Deacons present:
R. Allen Carroll
Tony R. Horton
Herbert Edwards
Wayne Edwards
Larry E. Byrd
Randolph N. Wells
Fred Murphy

MEETINGS

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on 9-15-2012 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church a Presbytery composed of Ministers and Deacons of Old School Primitive Baptist examined Brother Jerry Somers and found him qualified to fill the office of Deacon. The Presbytery then proceeded by laying on of hands with prayer. Brother Jerry Somers was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Primitive Baptist Church. Done by or-

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2012

Elder Ralph Gaines, NC.....	5.00
E. H. Gunter, NC.....	10.00
Dan Sokolovic, NC.....	15.00
Hazel Garland, MD.....	25.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA.....	25.00
Jerry Somers, VA.....	5.00
David Pittman, VA.....	35.00

“In memory of Elder Julian R. Williams”

OBITUARIES

Dear Elder Robertson,

With sadness in our hearts, I am enclosing the obituary of the death of one of our precious brethren at the Newfound Church that Elder Jerry Farmer moderates. It is the church members' wish for brother Frank Belcher's obituary to be published in the Signs of the Times.

A sister, I hope
Sue Reed

FRANK J. BELCHER

Hear me cry , O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Frank J. Belcher, 85, passed away Thursday, September 6, 2012 at Raleigh General Hospital.

Born March 21, 1927, he was the son of the late John and Nancy Jane O'Neal Belcher.

Frank was a member of the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church for many years. He loved to work on electronics and enjoyed gardening. He was very kind and considerate. He was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by everyone.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his son, Eric Belcher.

In addition to his wife, Patricia Lee Belcher, he is survived by four daughters, Priscilla Belcher and fiancé, Andrew Trent of Rhodell, Eve Lester and husband, Denver of Alpoca, Sherry Mullins and husband, Ricky of Alpoca, and Ann Bell and husband, Allen of Princeton; four sons, James Belcher and fiancé, Terrika of Alpoca, Lonnie Lester, Jr. and wife, Sherry of Covell, Ricky Shrewsbury and wife, Denise of Alpoca, and Buster Shewsbury and wife, Tammy of Princeton; grandchildren, Destiny and Jacob Lester of Alpoca, James Jr. and Tareska Belcher of Alpoca, Rickey Jr., Tyler and Justin Mullins of Alpoca, Lonnie III and Kody Lester of Covell, and Joe O'Neal of Skygusty, Samantha McBride of Covell, and Julie Humphrey of Delmar, MD; and one great-grandson, Aiden Lester of Skin Fork.

We are sad, according to nature, to report the passing from this life of our dear friend and faithful brother, Frank Belcher. He was a constant and true member of the Newfound Church for about 35 years. He will be greatly missed, but we know he is gone from the troubles to come and that all his trials and afflictions in this world are finished.

We are happy to believe and trust that he was one of the little lambs of God, and that he is now resting in the bosom of Abraham.

Written by Sister Sue Reed.
Elder Jerry B. Farmer, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 180

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 12/2012

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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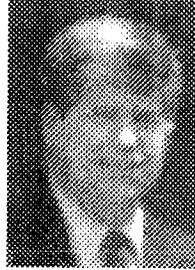
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EDITORIAL

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.” Hebrews 6:1-3.



Elder J.B. Farmer

The apostles were given the keys to the kingdom. Jesus said unto His disciples, **“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”** In the language of the apostles it was, “Truly I say unto you, the things which you shall bind on earth shall be, having been bound in heaven. And the things which you shall loose on earth shall be, having been loosed in heaven.” What the apostles would set down as the unshakable commandments of God given to His people on earth had already been fixed in heaven. And what they would set down as the areas of liberty to the church on earth had already been established in heaven. The apostles were given heavenly wisdom to write down scriptures that would stand for eternity. They were blessed to write down all the things that the saints would ever need to know concerning the doctrine, church order and discipline, and the way their lives were to be conducted in the world. The apostles were given authority the like of which has never ever been given to any others.

There have been many, since the days of the apostles, who have said that they are apostles, and have said that they have authority to set down new rules and commandments. Many men and some women began to speak perverse things in order to draw away disciples after themselves. This is the reason

there are so many denominations and factions and heresies of religion. But these things are also necessary, as all things are appointed of God. Those in the false religions, to me, are represented, in the book of Revelation, by the earth that swallows up the flood of false doctrine, which helps the woman, who stands for the church. They who attempt to take the apostle's authority to themselves are all liars according to the scriptures. The risen Jesus said to the church at Ephesus, **"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."** The children of God, even today, are still examining all things, trying the spirits, whether they be of God. They are holding to that which is good, and rejecting that which is evil, according to that holy faith they have been given.

The apostles set down the first principles of the faith, that the little children of God might be established in the doctrine of Christ. This is the milk of the word. Those who are called to stand and preach to God's little ones are commanded to speak as the oracles of God. This, to me, means to set forth the very utterances of God — thus saith the Lord. This, by the grace of God, is to rightly divide the word of truth. This is to give the sense or understanding of the scriptures in truth. This is to depart neither to the right nor to the left, but to remain in that narrow way which leads to life. The first principles of the oracles of God are these, according to the apostle: repen-

tance from dead works; faith toward God; the doctrine of baptisms; the laying on of hands; the resurrection of the dead; and the eternal judgment. After these principles are established in the hearts of God's children, then they may go on to perfection, or to understand more and more of Christ, and what grace is all about. They must grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once the saints are established on any point of doctrine, no one is able to move them from that rock that they have been founded upon. What God has taught you is unshakable. What He has done is perfect and forever, no man can add anything to it or take anything away from it. Who could convince you that God did not create the universe, the world, and all the things in it? Who could convince you that God does not rule and reign over all His creation? Who could convince you that Jesus is not the Son of God, or that the fullness of the Godhead is not in Him bodily? Who could persuade you that God did not love His elect children, or that He did not give them grace in Christ Jesus before the world was? Who could convince you that Jesus did not pay the sin debt of His people? Who could make you think that even one who Christ died for would finally be lost? Who could compel you to deny the resurrection of the body, and the eternal happiness of God's little ones? None can undo or change the work of God in your heart.

The first principles of the doctrine are also firmly established in the hearts of the saints. All have been made to repent from dead works, or to turn away

from thinking that any natural man can save himself by anything he could do. He is made to know he is a sinner, and in himself, that is in his flesh, there dwells no good thing. He is taught that salvation is altogether the work of God. He (The Lord) looked and there was none to help. And His own arm brought salvation. The lambs are blessed to believe the words of the apostle, **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”**

All the little ones have been taught concerning faith toward God. They are given to know, beyond a doubt, that faith is the gift of God. They know that all men have not faith. They are assured that all saints are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. They believe that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the foundation for your hope. Faith is that which enables you to view that heavenly city afar off, and to view the Son of God upon the throne, and to see His glory and majesty. Faith is that which keeps you pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The little lambs are taught concerning the doctrine of baptisms. There are only two baptisms that I know anything about. One is a submersion in and a lifting up out of water. The other is the immersion in the Spirit. Those that God has purposed to become members of His visible church submit to water baptism. Some believers are not blessed to

be baptized in water, and are not blessed to become members of the visible church. We know this because the thief alongside Jesus at His crucifixion was a child of God and had no opportunity for water baptism, or to ask for a home in the visible church. We are assured he was a saint because Jesus said unto him, **“To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”** Water baptism is a figure of death to the old life, and resurrection to newness of life for all saints. When Jesus came to be baptized of John the Baptist, John at first refused. But Jesus said to him, **“Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.”** Then John baptized Him. In my understanding, all believers who were never baptized in water in their lifetime were baptized in water, in Jesus, when He was baptized. He fulfilled all righteousness for all of His people.

All of the saints of God are baptized in the Holy Spirit, whether or not they were ever physically baptized in water. Baptism of the Spirit is essential for all saints. To be baptized in the Spirit is to be killed to your old way of wickedness, selfishness, self-righteousness, arrogance and pride. It is to be raised up with a lively hope of eternal life. It results in putting off the old man, by the grace of God, and putting on the new man. Its effect is to be blessed to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Its outcome is to cause one to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The result of being baptized in the Spirit is that the child of God is now blessed to walk in the way of holiness, for without

holiness no man shall see the Lord. The baptism in the Spirit is similar to water baptism in that you are helpless in it, and have nothing to do with the performance of it. You are completely passive in it. It is done unto you and for you.

The lambs are taught about the laying on of hands. We see those who have been called to serve in the ministry as deacons and elders having hands laid upon them. This is a very solemn occasion, as these chosen of God, are humbled before the gathering of the saints, having the hands of the highly esteemed, and faithfully proven elders placed upon them. This is done before the congregation, just as Moses laid his hands upon Joshua, showing that this one was surely approved of God to stand before the living God as a servant to His people. Some in the past have insisted upon laying hands upon all who came asking for a home and were received. I am made to believe they did this in imitation of the apostles. But the apostles have passed, and their wonderful gifts have passed with them. This practice is not observed among the old Baptists today according to my understanding.

The resurrection of the dead is part of the foundational doctrine for all saints. Some have denied the bodily resurrection. They think that when one dies, his spirit returns to God, and there is no need for the body to be raised. Their logic is that when one, in spirit, returns to God, he is happy and blessed and complete. But that logic will not stand. A child of God is a whole person, body, soul and spirit. And a spirit without a body could not be a participant in any-

thing, but only be an observer. But the saints in glory are whole. They shall be altogether spiritual, body, soul, and spirit. They shall fully participate in gathering around the throne to sing eternal praises to the Lamb that was slain to redeem them from all sin and wickedness. We have the entire fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians affirming the bodily resurrection of the saints to life eternal. The apostle said, "**But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 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 firstfruits of them that slept.**" And another scripture given by God through the apostle in the book to the Romans speaks of vessels made unto honor. He said, "**And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.**" The vessel is the outer part. In one place it is written, "**But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.**" This earthen vessel

shall be changed and made spiritual, and shall be joined to the soul and spirit, that the child of God may be preserved, body soul and spirit — a whole spiritual man, with nothing lacking.

The last part of the first principles given by the apostle is the eternal judgment. Many say that at the end of time all shall stand and give an account unto God for all the things which they have done while here in this world. This may be true for the wicked, since they are judged out of the books. But this is not true of the children of God for several reasons. First of all, their sins have been forgiven and put away. The apostle said, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** And David said, **“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”** Jesus has given Himself up, the perfect sacrifice, **“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”** Another reason that their sins shall not be brought against them is that they have been blessed to confess their sins and have been cleansed from all unrighteousness. They, as dear children of the Father, have been chastened and corrected all their days for their sins. As the apostle was blessed to say, **“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.*”** I am

made to believe that this occurs not at the end of the world, as some say, but day-by-day and moment-by-moment. Can you not remember times when you were made to gasp and groan when thoughts of what you have said, done or thought are brought to mind? Can you not remember the many times you were made to cry out within yourself, God have mercy upon me a sinner? The world knows nothing of this correction, or chastening of God, so it must assume that the judgment will be at the end of time.

If we are children, we are taught precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. May the Lord almighty give us grace to be established in these first principles that we may grow in Him, and follow on to know the Lord, and the power of His resurrection.

Trusting that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life,

Elder J. B. Farmer
8-22-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Use the rest of the money for your use.

Thanks so much I enjoy the Signs very much. May the good Lord bless all who has a part in this Signs of the Times.

Thanks so much,
Flora Stutts

October 15, 2012

Dear Brethren,

Please renew my "Signs" for another year, use rest as needed. May the Lord bless you, in each new day.

In bonds of Love & Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson
229 S. Conecut St.
Greenville, AI 36037

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Enclosed is my subscription renewal of the Signs of the Times for 2 years. Please use the rest of the balance as you see fit for any other expenses. I do deeply appreciate getting the book and enjoy the articles.

Thank you,
Ruby Kincaid

Vera N. Potter
486 Highway 590
Ellisville, MS 39437

October 24, 2012

Signs of the Times, Inc.
1429 Hewlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton:

Please renew my Signs for another 2 years.

I appreciate the edifying articles in the Signs and have for close to 40 years. I especially enjoy the articles of saints' experiences. It gives a hope that I may have traveled the same road as some of them have.

We are living in perilous times now and we need the fellowship of believers more than ever even as we see the numbers declining in all our congregations. May God have mercy on us and our nation and give us strength to overcome what may be headed our way.

Thank you for all you do! I hope the Lord enables you to continue until He returns.

A Sister, I hope,
Nell Potter

VOICES OF THE PAST

BORN UNTO YOU THIS DAY A SAVIOR.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. - Luke ii, 8-12.

According to our computation of time, near two thousand years have passed away since the heart-thrilling notes of this heavenly song were first heard by the humble shepherds upon that ever-memorable night. Years have rolled into centuries, and centuries have been lost in the ever-flowing stream of time, which has borne generations after generations, like billows upon the river's surface, into the boundless ocean of a never-ending eternity.

[Shepherds were tending their flocks, guarding them by night, which clearly attest that the season was not during the dead winter months. Thus, a lie has been born by religious tradition to sully the beauty of this "good tidings of great joy."]

By faith we go back through the long dreary years of the past, and behold again the startling scenes in and around this little city of Bethlehem, scenes long foretold by the prophet of the Lord: "**And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My people Israel.**" I hope that I have had a faith's view of the glorious scenes attending the dawn of this never-ending Gospel-day. The night season was the time selected of the Lord to pour upon a darkened world the glorious light of the eternal morning. Truly it was a night season in more than a literal sense, for darkness covered the earth, and "great darkness the people." "The people," said the inspired writer, "sat in darkness," and "in the region and shadow of death." This

was and is an awful condition. No mortal tongue or pen can paint or tell the horrors that surround the pathway of the sinner dead in trespasses and sin. This awful cloud of the darkness of death it is said "covered the earth." In its high and low places, in all of its conditions of society, in its temples of religious idolatry, and its low places of immoral crime, then as now the darkness of death reigned supreme. It covered the mind of brightest intelligence, as well as the feeblest lunatic, holding its deluded votaries in its grasp, and bearing them swiftly down to final and irretrievable woe. This was the condition of the earth that night, and is still the awful condition of all whose sins were not laid upon the blessed Jesus, "by whose stripes we are healed."

Look abroad upon the scenes of earth to-day. The heart is saddened at the sight. Degradation reigns supreme in every avenue of life. Confined for a moment this view to the political, social and religious condition of our own highly favored land. See the "temple of liberty" desecrated by the presence and crimes of the most worthless of men, who, in the corrupt and degraded state of public opinion, attain to the highest positions in political life. Mark the development of the "mystery of iniquity," the dark doings under the garb of religion in the idol temples that cover our land like so many tomb-stones to mark the dwelling places of these congregations of the dead. Tell me no more of Pagan days or Pagan temples, in a land where such unhal- lowed institutions as the self-styled "Plymouth Church" on "Brooklyn Tabernacle"

give force to public opinion, and the religious rantings of the deluded creatures that occupy such pulpits are quoted from one end of the country to the other, as worthy the credence of a Christian public. Nor do we find a better state of things in the social system of our country. The honorable barriers that should ever stand around a proper social intercourse, to a great extent, have been rudely torn down in many instances by the ruthless hand of that archenemy of all righteousness, the pharisaic religion of our day. What mind, unfettered by the terrible chains of religious superstition and darkness, but could mourn over the spectacle presented to our country a short time since, when the streets of many of our villages and cities were desecrated by bands of "praying women," marching from one bar-room to another in an unholy crusade against the liquor traffic, mingling among the low, coarse rabble ever found about such wretched places; and then to be informed that these misguided women were gathered from what are falsely termed the "best circles of society." How expressive of this system of religion is the language of Solomon in describing the "strange woman," (antichrist): "She is," says he, "loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house. Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner." I refer to these things as unmistakable evidences of the fact that darkness reigns over our own society as well as other lands in the present century, notwithstanding the arrogant assertions regarding its so-called "enlighten." The Lord has so decreed, and thus it must continue.

Long before the memorable night referred to in the text, the prophet had foretold this Gospel dawn; "Arise," says he, "shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." The place selected by our Lord for the dawn of this wonderful display of His great goodness and mercy was the "field of Juda," which represents, I suppose, the church of the living God, the cultivated "good ground," of the Lord's planting, enclosed by the bulwarks of sovereign grace. The individuals elected to hear the holy strains of this immortal song were the humble, faithful shepherds quietly feeding their flock. The word "flock" is used in the singular, and, I presume, represents the "one fold," comprising the saints of every age and clime. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." "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." Here was a "song as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel." Light broken upon the darkness of the night, a light that Paul

afterwards declared was "above the brightness of the sun;" while the immortal strains borne from the eternal throne by the "heavenly host" fell upon the enraptured ears of the highly favored shepherds. The quietude of night had never before been broken by such a wonderful scene! No wonder that the fear of God fell upon the startled shepherds. The heavens are opened, and the scenes of earth are banished.

"From the heavenly plains
Are borne the songs that angels
know."

"Glory to God in the highest."

What thought can reach the immortal theme? And through the succeeding centuries the heavenly music of that immortal song has soothed the sorrows, softened the cares and healed the wounds of those divinely taught to know "the joyful sound." The glory of the Lord has shone round about His people, a light to guide them in the pathway of Truth.

But the heavenly angels encouraged the trembling shepherds with the joyful message, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." "The Lord hath anointed Me," says the Savior, "to preach good tidings unto the meek." Here are the clear, ringing notes of the Gospel, "good tidings of great joy." Truly the tidings are good; the battle is fought, the victory won, the joy is great.

"..... Angels raise
Fame's eternal trump of praise!

Let the earth's remotest bound
Hear the joy-inspired sound."

There are times in our experience when the eternal hills seem near, faith draws back the curtains of time, and the boundless glory of the heavenly world chains our undivided mind. The music of heaven stills our earthly passions. Sin and self are lost sight of in the glory of God. Such, I presume, was the effect upon the occasion mentioned in the text. And these good tidings it was said "shall be to ALL people." That is, to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, to people in all classes and conditions of society. The number of this people, and their election to this salvation, is distinctly declared in the first chapter of Matthew: "And thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Notice the assertion that this salvation is for "His people." The text, as stated, refers to them as among the Gentiles and Jews, and in all conditions of society. "For the grace of God," says Paul, "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." We know that is not in the absolute sense, for all men have not had salvation brought to them. The text also declares that this salvation shall be to them. There are no conditions here. It shall be, says the Lord. "He spake," the psalmist declares, "and it was done; He commandeth, and it stood fast." How absurd the popular idea, and inconsistent with the eternal perfections of God, to suppose that the God of heaven should send His Son into the world to suffer and die the awful death of the tree, and then leave all of this

great work to be finished and made effectual by a poor, blind, ignorant and impotent mortal, whose very breath is held in the hands of the Omnipotent One!

“Shall mortal worms presume to be More holy, wise and just than He?”

This is an awful presumption, totally outside of the perfections of our God; yet this is the very foundation upon which the Antichristian structure of modern religion rests. It all turns upon the act of the creature, which creature is “dead in trespasses and sins.” It was this principle that led the Pharisee to boast in the temple and pray “with himself;” that led Cain to become “very wroth” when he found that the works of his hands were rejected; and that culminated in the crucifixion of the blessed Savior, And the declaration of the text is one of the many that the preachers of this dark system attempt to distort from their original meaning to prove that black is white in religion. These things cannot be too clearly and constantly kept before the saints, that we should shun the ways of the “strange woman” “in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”

It is inconsistent with our profession to give countenance, secret or open, direct or indirect, in any possible manner to this system of religion; for he that thus bids antichrist “God speed” “is partaker of his evil deeds,” and upon him in the Lord’s own time and way must fall the chastisement of a just and righteous God.

But I will consider the closing verse of the text: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.” This was the cause of all their joy. Aside from this there could be no joy in the Christian’s heart. It is the source from whence all their songs of joy flow. Truth is written in the personal experience of the saints. “Unto you,” was the message, is born a Savior. The sinner is brought to know that he is the sinner. It is written, “in every imagination of the thoughts of his heart.” Salvation in Jesus comes to him with power, and that mighty name is exalted above every name in his experience. There are times in his experience when he is made to see that Jesus died for him, even him, poor, weak and worthless as he is. And that auspicious hour of the Savior’s birth was selected, with all of its attending circumstances, before the world was, when the heavens were to be lit up with the glory of God, and the quietude of night broken by the immortal strains as they fell from the heavenly throne. Our brethren in prophetic days looked forward as we look backward to the Savior’s birth, each of us receiving the inspiration of his song from the wonderful event that broke the stillness of that eventful night. A Savior was born! He was not “offered,” or to offer salvation either! But to **bring** salvation to His people. His people had always been “His people,” even before He came. “He shall save His people from their sins,” was spoken even before Mary gave birth. No uncertainties clothed His mission - failure would never be entertained! **“For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but**

the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." - John vi. 38, 39.

A Savior was born; not a Failure was born! Not in a gilded palace, surrounded by mortal pomp, but in a manger. "Ye shall find the babe in a manger. "What a rebuke to the vain show that surrounds the earthly religion of our day; no gilded papal palace; no lavish cathedral! More becoming is this vanity, these unnecessary trappings, these gilded Sanctuaries, this silver and gold, for Belshazzar's feast, than for the kingdom of Jesus. He robs not the poor to plaster the walls and ceilings of His places of worship. Upon these things antichrist has fixed his throne. The name of the Savior given from above is, "Christ the Lord," announced the angel. The name represents His sovereign power as "Lord over all." "For thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called." He is not a Savior of limited power. He does not have to beg His way into the reprobate's heart. His "arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies." His is a word of triumph, and the crown of victory adorns His brow. "All power," He says, "is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."

Thus He goes forth to conquer. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." He "was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "His dominion is an everlasting dominion" and His kingdom that which

shall not be destroyed. Time sweeps earthly thrones away, nations and governments rise and fall, but the kingdom of God endures. It shines in spotless splendor through the ages and nations of time, clothed in the righteousness of its exalted Redeemer. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," sang the inspired David. Our soul has been touched with the power of the song. We have seen the King in His glory, in the "ivory palaces" of His grace. It is not only once a year, on Christmas, or once a week on Sunday, that the saint is reminded of the Savior's birth. Through all his mortal pilgrimage Jesus is the strength of His life and his portion forever. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee." The glory of the Savior's presence gilds the pathway of life, soothing its care and sweetening its toil. It is one perpetual worshiping mom, one everlasting Sabbath day to him, while he rests in the arms of Jesus, and listens to the gracious words that fall from His lips. "The powers of the world to come" are upon Him. The glory of that eternal song banishes sorrow and care, lifting the enraptured soul in the highest heavens of praise. "Glory to God in the highest!" When the storms of life are over, in the peaceful scenes of the eternal heavens the ransomed Church shall be divinely qualified to sing the praise of God in the highest, while His glorious presence shall make one perpetual feast in the never-ending day.

We stand in the opening of another year (1881). What it is to unfold is known only to Him who presides over the des-

tinies of nations and individuals. We rejoice to know that it can bring nothing but what He irrevocably fixed before the world began. Many now in active life will no doubt be borne to their final destiny. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." From His all predestinating hand falls every event that can possibly darken the pathway of time, be it small or great, important or seemingly indifferent. In this fact we sweetly rest. Our God is over all—"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." Thus our days are determined, the number of our months is with Him; He hath appointed our bounds where we live and move that we cannot pass.

We are much pleased with the management of the Signs. May it continue to come among us a bold, fearless and uncompromising advocate of Truth. There is not a single point of doctrine or order of the Gospel that we can afford to yield. All must be held dearer than life itself. May we cleave to these things with unwavering fidelity through the year and through life.

Sincerely hoping that the Lord may pardon our innumerable sins, and grant us grace in the Redeemer's name, I remain, as ever, yours in Gospel fellowship,

Elder W. M. Smoot,
Occoquan, Va.,
January 4th, 1881.

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

JANUARY, 1946

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions, If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."-1 Kings 18:21

THIS TEXT has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to why halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor why but how long halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions. He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made Himself manifest unto them that He was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time (as they thought). The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and

even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine, seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice; they even advocate that the people may choose their Savior and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen His people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God a people until God sees fit to burn out this false opinion by making Himself manifest.

Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar so as to fill a

trench. After doing this he prayed quietly to the Lord to make Himself manifest and to prove to Israel that He was the Lord God and that He had turned their hearts back again.

"The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" 1 Kings 18:38, 39.

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability— in fact, every thing, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes Himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would.

It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is

that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Peter was halting between opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law, and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Elias disappeared and the, Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part of law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedi-

ence and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion.

It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences; therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions—opinion of man and opinion of God—until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping and looking forward to the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

Brunswick, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861

Dear Brother Beebe:

Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on **Rev. 22:14** "**Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the holy city.**" More particular on the city. What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it? yours, as ever,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

Reply-The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the Holy City, New Jerusalem - which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the Church of the living God, which is also called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people, and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a Bride, a Wife, a tabernacle, &c., all of which are elsewhere in the scriptures used to represent the Church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not forget that figures familiar to us, are employed by the Spirit, to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city, presents the subjects of grace, as a congregation of the Lord, in their congre-

gation capacity, as fellow citizens, in the Church or City of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship.

And in this City, are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort; for protection and safety. In this City the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he has said, "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you:" and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey his new commandment: for, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." As Citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship; such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the City, and on either side, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruits every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden, and kept back from the tree of life, by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children in this New

Jerusalem, all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the Bride saith, Come: and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely.

While as citizens, they are a multitude which no man can number, as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife they all make but one Bride, one Church, one Body. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then, is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the Body, the Church, and the Church is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. As the Bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the figure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Baptist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth without and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This City is

the City of God, and Ezekiel says (xlvi. 35) The name of the City shall be, THE LORD IS THERE. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called Sought Out, A City not forsaken, Isaiah 62:12.

From this last mentioned passage, we learn that the city is composed of the Redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, is a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind; and they are redeemed into God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ in immortal glory. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the Holy City, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song. We have a strong City; Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about; and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her Shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O, City of God: Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not

one of her cords shall ever be broken.

Much more might be written in answer to the first enquiry of brother Campbell, What City? But we trust enough has been said to show that we understand the City mentioned (Rev. 22:14) to be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament; and which is designed to describe her in her gospel organization, and primitive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered to gather in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has recorded his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the Psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The Eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the Eternal, Immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees; wrapped up in the bundle of Eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the Eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in

himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain, when the world shall be no more. She is found in the Election of grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the Sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in a furnace of afflictions. In this world she has tribulations, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world, is as the off-scourings of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bond woman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place nor continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of Gog and Magog; but sometimes she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indelibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent, for twelve hundred three score and six days; and if the writer of this article is not mistaken, that period is about to run out, and to be succeeded by three days and an

half, in which the witnesses shall be slain and be trodden under foot in the streets of the Great City which is spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. But whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the assurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of her testimony. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. 1:4, we regard the citizens as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Jude 1, 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. 1:9. Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people that this man was born there. Psa. 87:5, 6. Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ—and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumer-

able company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. - Heb. 11:24-26.

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed, (Rev. xxii. 14.) the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates, is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. - John 3:3, 5. The city in which the tree of life yields her fruit is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called *Praise*. — *Isa. lx*, 18. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. — *Psa. 87:2*. David says, **“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.”** — *Psa. 122 :1-4*.

As the tribes of *Israel* went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes of *the Lord* go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his

holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel, are written on the angels of the gates — Rev. 21:12. — we learn that the ministry of praise — embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges — belongs to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion, which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel, and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God's people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises, of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom into the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer's kingdom, and talk of his power. **"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city, Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."** Isaiah 26:12. The gates of the Holy City are only open to the *righteous nation*, for who else can enter by the gates of Praise! They are not accessible to those who love and make a lie, but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

"Those holy gates forever bar Pollution, sin, and shame,

None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." The commandments of him who says in the preceding verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning

and the End, the First and the Last." Who also says, in verse sixteen, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you, these things in the Churches, I am the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star." He is the King of Righteousness, the King Eternal and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the Holy City, and are applicable to all who are under the law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in to their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and may eat of its fruits freely, and live forever; for their right is a birthright — it is their inheritance, and it is their Father's good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom.

There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship; not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them; and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them a profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King, but throughout their whole course it is by their obedience to the Lord Jesus that their feet are to stand within the gates of christian fellowship.

Should any of the citizens walk disorderly, and neglect to observe and to

obey the commandments of Christ, the order and discipline which he has instituted, will dispute their right to the privilege of Church fellowship, until God shall give them repentance; and while shut out from communion and fellowship of their fellow citizens of Zion, they will be associated with dogs, and sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. And they shall weep when they remember Zion; for how can they sing the Lord's songs when in a strange land?

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love of fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell; but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe
Nov. 1, 1861)

PSALM 112:1.

Praise ye the Lord, Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

“From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” – Psalm lxi. 2.

There is something in this expression in our text, “rock,” which seems, to my mind, to throw a sweet and blessed light upon what Jesus is to the poor and needy. The rock must go down to the bottom of the deep waters, as well as rise out of them, to be a sufficient place of refuge for the shipwrecked mariner! If the rock did not go to the bottom of the deep, it would not be firm; it would be but a quicksand. Is not this agreeable to the Spirit's testimony concerning the humanity of Christ? How deep that went into all our sorrows, into all our sufferings, into all our sins, into all our shame! However deep the waters may be, the rock is deeper than all; however deep the sufferings, sins and sorrows of the Church may be, the sufferings, sins, and sorrows of the Church may be, the sufferings and sorrows of “Immanuel, God with us,” were infinitely deeper. But the waves and billows beat in the vain against the rock; they cannot move it from its place. So it is with the rock, Jesus. All the sins, temptations, sufferings, and sorrows of the elect, with the wrath of God, and the fury of hell, beat against that rock, but they never moved it from its place. But this rock is spoken of in our text as “higher than I.” There we have the Godhead. For if Jesus were not God as well as man, the

God-man, what support could he be to the sinking soul? what efficacy could there be in his atoning blood? what power and glory in his justifying righteousness? what suitability in him as a Saviour to the utterly lost? But being God as well as man, yea, the God-man, the great and glorious Immanuel, he could descend in his human nature into the very depths of the fall, and rise up in his divine nature to the throne of the most High; and thus, like Jacob's ladder, the bottom of it was upon the earth, but the top exalted to the clouds. Then will not, must not, this be ever, as the Lord is pleased to raise it up, the cry of our soul, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I?" No salvation anywhere else; no peace anywhere else; no consolation anywhere else. Buffeted by the waves, and well-nigh drowned by the billows, away from that rock; but if led there, brought there, kept there by the blessed Spirit, finding it a safe and sure standing for eternity. And what else but such a rock can save our souls, or what else but such a Saviour and such a salvation, without money and without price, can suit such ruined wretches?

J. C. Philpot

1 John 4:7-10.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, December 30th, 2012. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Flower Gap Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 3481 Flower Gap Road, Cana, VA 24317 from US 52, turn west about 5 miles north of Mt. Airy, NC, on Flower Gap Road, #691, at the foot of Fancy Gap Mountain, go about 3 1/2 mile to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, and sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during the meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

**SKEWARKY UNION
EASTERN KEHUKEE
ASSOCIATION**

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 30, 2012. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, N.C. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Staunton River Union meeting, the fifth Saturday of December 30, 2012.

The church is located on Business 29 (708 South Main St.) Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County.

The song service will start at 10:00 AM. We extend welcome to ministers of our faith and order, Brethren, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace, to be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

The fifth Sunday meeting purposed to be hosted by Big Meadows Church in December has been cancelled. However, Big Meadows Church, Lord willing, will host the fifth Sunday meeting in March. We regret this cancellation, but hope to see all of you in March, Lord willing.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2012

Lois Dalton, VA	5.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Flora Stutts, TX	10.00
Algie Martin, VA	5.00
Ruby Kincaid, OH.....	75.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK.....	50.00
<i>"In memory of Linda Hatchett"</i>	
Jerry Mourer, AR	50.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00
Emmie Grayson, AL	5.00
Vera Potter, MS	5.00

OBITUARIES

It is with a feeling of unworthiness and inability that I attempt to comply with the members and friends at Flower Gap Primitive Baptist church to write a few lines in memory of our brother and sister. However, we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in their passing from us.

Brother William (Billy) Dee Nichols Deacon at Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church.

In loving memory of Clifford Harold Hawks

To those who knew him, he was a man that God had given a humble heart. Always giving, and feeling unworthy to be among God's humble poor. Clifford loved the churches, and I believed bore much good fruit by the grace of God. Born September 10th, 1940, making his stay here on earth 71 years. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Bonnie Hawks, 10 sons, 2 daughters, 19 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren, and his brother Billy Hawks. Preceded in death by his parents William and Pearlie Hawks, grandchildren Aiden Nichols and Layla Mae Hawks, sister Shirley Hawks, brother Reavis Hawks. The funeral services were conducted at Flower Gap

Primitive Baptist Church June 11, 2012. Officiating services, Elder Carlton Brown, followed by Elder Tommy Pegram, Elder John Lyons, Elder Lowell Hopkins. Brother Clifford Hawks was united with Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church on March of 2002.

Belva Hall Sumner

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove this sister of the cross from our midst; a mother in Israel. Belva Sumner was born May 23, 1920. She had been blessed to live for 91 years. A sister who dearly loved all the churches and the word of God. Precious to all that spoke with her. The word and the church was everything to her. Belva Sumner passed from this world on November 16th, 2011. She was a member of Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church, joining October 7th, 1990. Seeing this sister deny her medicine so that she could go to church and to hear her witness of a merciful God was a blessing from on high. Belva Sumner was survived by five children, Maxine Felts, Bonnie Hawks, Wilma Dalton, Donald Sumner, Ima Morris, half sister Ida Chappell, 17 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren, and 5 great great grandchildren. Preceded in death by her parents Rufus and Lelia Harriman Hall, and Husband Claton Phillip Sumner. Officiating services Elder Carlton Brown and Elder John Lyons.