

ZION'S LANDMARK

Best

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY PRIMITIVE OR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST

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THERE'S COMING A DAY

There's coming a day, when we all shall rise,

And be carried home to glory and receive our prize;
The one Jesus died for on Calvary,

He died there for you, and, I hope, for me.

This little word, "HOPE", does not mean much to some,

But, it will mean all, when we arrive at home;
To that Celestial City on Heaven's bright shore,
And dwell there with Jesus forevermore!

All cares will be over, all heartaches gone,

When we reach Heaven and view The Throne;
Where Jesus is sitting at God's right Hand,
Making intercession there for sinful man.

He hears our groans, He hears our cries,

When we arrive there, He'll wipe our eyes;
And dress us up in A ROBE so white,

And of that City, HE'LL be the Light!

Oh! How I long for that great day,

When we get home, no more to stray;
There'll be no storm clouds

over there,
No aches, no pains, for us to bear!

Ray Young

(Deceased December 11, 2002)
(Please see Circular Letter of Brother Ray Young, written in 1995, that appears on Page 4 in this issue of Zion's Landmark.)

A MARK OF THE TRUE CHURCH

HISTORY RECORDED AN INTERESTING CONVERSATION THAT TOOK PLACE ABOUT 250 YEARS AGO BETWEEN A ROMAN CATHOLIC, A MEMBER OF THE ANGLICAN (CHURCH OF ENGLAND), AND A WELSH, PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST IN WALES (GREAT BRITAIN).

This interesting, historical account evolves around a Welsh Baptist by the name of Morgan Jones, who was born in Wales, Great Britain, during the year 1662, 17th century A.D., at a time of great persecution when this group was greatly despised. A remnant of them was blest to survive through the whole of a terrible encounter with Civil authorities in those days.

The information of this incident is taken from the Book titled The American Baptist Heritage in Wales, edited by Carroll C. and Willard A. Ramsey, 1976. On page Nos. 71 through 76 it tells of this persecution and the incident of the three conversationalists as follows. (Note: Spelling is unchanged from the original text.)

"They met to worship in various places where they could; sometime in a friend's house and often out. One day or night they would meet in some retired place of the Black Mountain, but when they understood that informers had heard of the place, they would change it and fix upon another spot; thus, they shifted from place to place. A

noted rock, they frequented for the purpose, is called (in the Welsh language) Y Darren ddn, on the west side of Olchon. It is well known still. A little below it, there was then a large wood(s) and there is part of it now intact. That wood(s) was often their meeting place. That was the estate of Mr. Hugh Lewis, a gentleman of property and influence, but no persecutor. His son, Mr. Nathan Lewis, was a friend and strong advocate for the persecuted Baptists. Mr. Thomas Lewis, another son, was a Baptist after and lived at Abergavenny. There was also a daughter, who was a member of the church. So upon the whole, they had favor and interest there.

"Notwithstanding all favors and cautions, these good people were often taken, beaten, abused, fined and imprisoned. They were hunted by the authorities like David, through woods, through mountains, and the rocks and crevices of wild goats. (Sixteen hundred years earlier the scripture records they were not the first to encounter such pain and suffering. 'Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.' Hebrews 11:38.)

"At times when they met to worship at friends' houses, it was running great risk and hazards. A place called Wernwen, where Mr. David Watkins and his brother, Daniel, lived, was often their meeting place. They were both worthy members of this persecuted church and society. Mr. Thomas John William's house was another place of worship: he was a plain man, but much adored the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in his life and death. Before this persecution was over, it is said that Mr. John Gilbert encouraged

them to meet at his house at Bailey Back. It was kept there at one of two houses until lately." The narrative continues.

ACCOUNT OF MORGAN JONES, A WELSH BAPTIST

"We left Mr. Morgan Jones in a sorrowful state, bereaved of his wife and his children. She had suffered greatly and her trials were heavy in this world.

"Mr. Morgan Jones had married a daughter of Mr. Griffeth Griffiths, a gentleman of reputation and family in Carmarthenshire. The daughter, wife of Morgan Jones, was a godly, serious, young woman, and a member of the Baptist Church: but the parents were no friends to that group of people. They were so displeased with their daughter in her marriage to him that they deprived her of what was her right and equity of her own inheritance. Their plea for such a conduct was that she had left the true, established Church of England, and had now turned to be a phanatic, with a loathsome people called 'Baptist.'

"By these things, with the repeated plunders and oppressions of former persecutions, that were but lately over, Mr. Morgan Jones was sometimes reduced to considerable straits. Mrs. Jones, his wife, bore an excellent character every way, but she died young and left children; yet, her parents absolutely refused to the very last to give or leave her her rights, either to her or to her children by reason of their hatred against that sect called 'Baptists,' though on her death bed she solemnly charged them as they were to answer before God not to deprive her husband and her motherless children of what was their just due."

"Morgan Jones was born

about the time of the entrance of that grievous persecution which began in, and before, 1662. He had seen much, and had heard more about those troubles from his father, grandfather and others. His heart was much weaned from this world by a blessing among his troubles. His meekness and patience were more than common; he was eminent in prayer, and had some peculiar answers to his petitions. His successor, Mr. John Davis, a Welsh Baptist, knew him well from his infancy, and had heard much about him.

"In 1776, the opportunity came to me to converse with him about his predecessor. He then related the following anecdote as certain fact. Mr. Jones at a certain time in a dire strait, borrowed a sum of money, not large. But the creditor demanded it sooner than it suited the borrower to return it. He threatened that if he did not return it on or before a certain day named, he should have trouble. The good man was much distressed, being so circumstanced that he could not devise where to have it, the time being so short. The day appointed arrived, and the money he didn't have. There was in a certain house in Swansea, (Wales) with a back chamber where Mr. Jones used to retire at times. Thither, he came on that day full of trouble in mind. To his chambers he went and earnestly tried to pray that deliverance might be granted by some means, and, yet, at the same time the Gospel not be reproached on his account, etc.

"The people of the house supposed that he was gone to his chambers to pray; while he was there, a person called at the door and inquired whether Mr. Jones was there. He was answered that he was expected soon. The doorman informed the inquirer at the door that Mr. Jones was expected soon. He then was informed that a man by the name of Mr. Beavan wanted to see him immediately without delay. There seemed to be uncommon haste. Mr. Beavan was one of those called Quakers.

"Mr. Jones soon came out

and was told that Mr. Sylvanus Beavan had sent for him to come to him with speed. He went and was thus immediately addressed. 'Art come, Mr. Jones? I am now ordered by friend, Pycard, of Barnstable to pay thee and Lewis Thomas, so much money. I will pay thee the two sums, if thou please, only then take care to it to Lewis Thomas.' So, Morgan Jones had the money. However, his own sum was not enough to pay his creditor that day. But the two were sufficient and plenty over. Thus, the whole money was punctually, cheerfully, and honorably paid. Later, when Mr. Jones saw Mr. Lewis Thomas, he related the whole story. They both rejoiced and were thankful. Mr. Griffith Davis said he knew the place where Mr. Jones was praying.

"Although Mr. Morgan Jones was so humble, meek, and passive, yet, he was very quick at replying upon occasion. It was to him a natural talent, and to do as taught in the scripture, 'to be ready always to give and answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.' (1st Peter 3:15.) In this gift he was greatly blessed, as the following will testify and verify. The instance may be given here.

HIS ENCOUNTER

"Mr. Morgan Jones happened to call at a house in Swansea, Wales, where two neighbors were engaged in a warm (energized) debate about religion. One had lately turned to be a Roman Catholic, the other a Churchman, (Anglican or Church of England). Mr. Jones, upon entering the place unintentionally and accidentally, was brought into the following dialogue.

Churchman: Oh neighbor! I was never more glad to see you.

Mr. Jones: Why? What is the matter now?

Churchman: My neighbor here is lately turned to be Papist at Rome, and he has the face and nerve to say that the church of Rome is the true, mother Church, and that the Church of England (Anglican) is but a bastard of the church of Rome.

Mr. Jones: Ho! Ho! Betwixt you two be it; I am neither of the one or the other, so I need not say anything in your debate or controversy; now you two plead it out.

Catholic: Good reason why, Jones, because you have nothing to say.

Mr. Jones: May be so; but what have you to say?

Catholic: What to say!! I say that the church of Rome is the true Catholic, Apostolic Church, and that the Church of England (Anglican Church) and all you phanatics (meaning Jones and Churchman) are but bastards of that church.

Mr. Jones: Softly, now neighbor; boast not too much, for if the children be all bastards, then the mother must needs be a whore, you know.

"Upon this word, the spirit of the Catholic sunk, and the other (Anglican church member) began to crow. Here, very probably the debate ended. Mr. Morgan Jones, the Baptist, cut it short, exited the place and was soon gone."

Compiled for Zion's Landmark

By J. M. Mewborn, Editor
February 27, 2004

COMMENTS AND EXPLANATION

It is truly amazing to see how those true Baptists two hundred fifty years ago were blessed, as Jesus said, "take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak", were blessed to take care of themselves in such unpleasant cir-

cumstances, as we have seen and read here.

When the Catholic called both Morgan Jones (who was a true Baptist), as well as the Anglican, fanatics, the latter with a stone (of truth) in his sling (as did David of old), let him have it between the eyes, so to speak. The truth prevailed and the enemy was disarmed, as David did for Goliath in the Valley of Elah. (See 1st Samuel 21:9.) Here, we see the Words of Jesus' command invoked when He said, "Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:16.)

Many may wonder, no doubt, while reading this article, why the Catholic in this narrative called the Anglican, Church of England "illegitimate". We cite the following record by way of explanation.

J.M.M.

WHO (AND WHAT) WAS THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND?

Early on, we shall say it was a dissident, disaffected daughter of the Roman Catholic Church. For proof and verification, please read as follows:

"King Henry VIII, King of England, born in the year 1491 and died 1547, separated the Anglican Church or Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church. Henry VIII is still famous in England's history today for his six wives. He was sometimes diehard autocratic and sometimes very cruel. But, he knew his people and knew how to handle them and hold their confidence. He ruled England, completely.

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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"When King Henry came to the throne of England in 1509, his first act was to marry his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon. She bore him five children, but only one lived - Mary, who later became Queen Mary. King Henry wanted a son to follow him as heir to the throne. He then turned his attentions to a maid of honor at his court, Anne Boleyn. Thomas Cardinal Wolsey, King Henry's chief minister to the Roman Catholic Church in Rome, Clement VII, requested the Pope, to annul the King's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Wolsey argued that it was wrong for King Henry to have married his brother's widow. But the Pope of Rome refused, and King Henry fired Wolsey in 1529 for his failure. This action led to the creation of a new state church in England that replaced the Roman Catholic.

"King Henry VIII was determined, regardless, to have his divorce. He immediately decreed that the Pope of Rome had no authority over England, and secretly married Anne Boleyn early in 1533. Then King Henry's new Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cramer, declared the marriage of Henry and Catherine null and void. Anne, his new wife, was then crowned Queen of England.

"After this marriage, King Henry VIII required Parliament to pass two acts in 1534 that decreed the break with the Roman Catholic Church official and also made the separation complete. One act declared that the Catholic pope had no more authority in England. The next act of the King made the new, Anglican Church a separate institution, and it also established the King of England as the new church's supreme, titular head.

"It is to be noted and pointed out that the King's marriage to Anne did not produce him a son, but rather a daughter, Elizabeth I. Thus, King Henry's and Queen Anne's marriage became very unstable. It followed in due course that King Henry VIII had his wife, Queen Anne, beheaded on a quick, conve-

nient charge of "infidelity". He found her very tiresome and had her condemned for unfaithfulness. Queen Anne was beheaded May 19, 1536, by orders of her husband. His fifth wife, Catherine Howard, whom he married quickly, was shortlived. In 1542, he had her convicted of misconduct and executed. His sixth (and final wife), Catherine Parr, (1512-1548), outlived him." (End of quote) (Note: This information was abstracted from King Henry VIII's reference from Volume 9, World Book Encyclopedia, Edition 1989 page 189.)

J. M. Mewborn

THE DOCTRINE AND ORDER OF THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD HAS NOT CHANGED IN 160 YEARS

(A REQUEST FOR REPUBLICATION)

Dear Elder Mewborn,

It was good to be with you and Susie at the Abbott's Creek Association, held with Tom's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Davidson County, North Carolina, on Friday, August 22nd, 2003. Friday was the only day we could attend, and we enjoyed it. We were also glad to see other friends that were present also.

We learned recently about a Circular Letter that was published in Zion's Landmark during the year 1914 that pertained to the doctrine and order of the church as were believed and practiced in the year 1845, when it was written for an Association at that time. We believe that publication of this article would be beneficial at this time since it sets forth what the church stood for over a century and a half ago. Please do not go to any inconvenience, but should you have space sometime, we would like to see it republished today since, we believe, it would be timely.

Both of us appreciate the hard work you and Susie do to publish the Zion's Landmark. We would hate to see it discontinued, and we support you in your endeavors in keeping it in circulation for so many people look forward to receiving and reading it.

May God continue to

bless, watch over, and keep you and your loved ones is our prayer, if we could be blest to that end.

With love for the Cause of truth, we hope,

Akers & Jane Mabe

Walnut Cove, N. C. 27052
September 3, 2003

CIRCULAR

(A Circular Letter written by Elder Johnson Heaton in the year 1845.)

Dear Beloved Brethren: —

The revelation of another year has brought on another period when you will expect an address on some subject. The subject that we will offer for meditation and the prosperity of the churches is that of CHURCH DISCIPLINE, as touching both public and private offences.

PRIVATE OFFENCES

Jesus says: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Matthew 18:15.

Now, this trespass is not a public offence, but private; not against the church, not against the cause, but against an individual; this is the reason why those two should be alone, that it might be kept secret; for when there is whispering and tattling, it is calculated to make the breach wider and wider. But, if he should fail to gain his brother, he should take it to the church; but, if he refuses to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican, that is, to exclude him from the church.

And in accordance to this Gospel Rule, Jesus says: "That whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven;" that God, the Judge, will sign and seal in Heaven whatsoever ye do on earth, if it is done according to His Word and not without.

But, if the offender should acknowledge his fault, the grieved brother should forgive him as touching private offences.

We will notice Peter's

question to the Saviour on this subject: "Then came Peter to Him and said: Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?" 21st verse. Now in order to encourage the spirit of forgiveness, Jesus saith unto Peter: "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Matthew 18:22.

Now, brethren, you may see that you have a right to forgive your brother, if he should offend in the plurality of times when he turns and acknowledges his fault as touching private offences, but not public.

In order to illustrate the importance of forgiveness, Jesus spoke a parable and said: "Therefore is the Kingdom of Heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants." (23rd verse.) "And when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents." (24th verse.) "But, forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made." (24th verse.)

Therefore, the servant in this parable acknowledged the debt by begging time to pay for it; therefore, his lord forgave him the debt. So, in like manner, ye ought to forgive your brother, who has trespassed against you, his fault, when he acknowledges and begs forgiveness, and not before; for, if his crimes are only winked at, it will have a tendency to encourage him in committing more evil; but, when he sees his fault, he will shun the path of evil and ask forgiveness; then forgive him from your heart, lest the consequence be as Jesus says in the close of His parable, "So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, that is to deliver him to the tormentors to be punished for the hardness of his heart.

PUBLIC OFFENCES

Now with these remarks, we will pass to notice public offences. In attempting to

discuss this part of the subject, we hope to remove one difficulty from the minds of the brethren with regard to public vs private offences. Some are of the opinion that any crime committed, if habitually, should be forgiven; but, we think not, that is, we think a brother should not retain his fellowship in the church who is in the habit of committing public offences; for if so, then would the church be like a den of thieves or a synagogue of Satan. Perhaps, one may say we are told, "that if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, etc." Galatians 6:1.

This is very true, but we will have you to know that the word "fault" does not mean faults, not in the plural but in the singular; not only so, but the word "overtaken" does not mean willful. And now, brethren, in order to show the thing more plainly, we will advert to Paul's direction in his first letter to the Church at Corinth. Having heard that there was fornication among them, he tells (and also admonishes them) – that – in the Name of our Lord Jesus, 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 the Lord Jesus. He does not tell them to deal with such an one in a private way but publicly; reprove him publicly, that they that hear may fear. (See 1st Corinthians 5:1-13.)

And now, brethren, you may see that you have a right to exclude any one that is called a brother, as soon as it is ascertained that he is guilty of either of these crimes summed up in the catalogue of transgressions. For the record's sake, we shall enumerate them, as they are recorded in 1st Corinthians 5:11. The Apostle Paul specifically lists these charges as follows, viz: "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 idolator,

or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; With such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person." "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sanctified for us." 1st Corinthians 5:17.

Now, this is to let the church know that if she holds in fellowship such a person, that it will be like leaven that diffuses its influence when put in a lump of dough; then the whole lump is leavened, so in like manner will the church be leavened with the leaven of malice and wickedness, if you hold in fellowship that wicked person.

Some may think or believe it is more charitable to forgive, or just let it pass by, and let such an one retain their fellowship in the church, but we feel it best to obey God rather than man.

Therefore, turn him out of the church that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you that you may keep the feast with unleavened bread of a sincerity and truth.

But, if you only wink at such crimes, it is calculated to weaken the prosperity of the church and she will cease to travel, as did national Israel of old, to succeed in battle on the account of Achan's crime, but as soon as Achan's crime was found out, and he was punished for it, the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger and He prospered and blessed Israel successfully. (See and read Joshua 22:20.)

And, now brethren, inasmuch as Jesus knew all things, He knew what was best calculated to prosper Zion and convince the transgressor of his error, and the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may sorrow with a godly sorrow. Now, when this is the case, you should comfort them, as Paul says sufficient to such a man is this

punishment which was inflicted of many, so that contrawise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest, perhaps, such a one should be swallowed up over much sorrow.

Now, Paul said to the brethren, "Wherefore, I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him." (1st Corinthians 2:7-8), that is the love of fellowship again in Zion. And, now, dearly beloved brethren, nothing short of obeying Christ's counsel and direction will give peace and harmony to Zion. But, when these things are attended to according to His Word, then will Zion shine brightly as the naked sun and clear as the full, cloudless moon, and terrible as an army with waving banners, then, and only then, is the Church of the Living God, as Jesus says, "YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, A CITY THAT IS SET ON AN HILL, CANNOT BE HID." (Matthew 5:14.)

Much more might have been said on this important subject, but brethren, only give attendance to the few hints that are offered in this, our Circular Letter, and peace and harmony will be retained in the churches.

And, now, may the Lord direct your hearts unto the Love of God and unto the patient, waiting humbly for Christ.

May we close this our letter by saying to the different churches composing our association, "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of Love and peace shall be with you all. – AMEN.

Johnson Heaton

(The above Circular Letter of the year 1845 was first published in the February 14, 1914, Volume XLVII, issue of Zion's Landmark, at page Nos. 155-157. Editor.)

CONCERNING A DEAR BROTHER, WHO DIED IN THE FAITH

"He Being Dead, Yet Speaketh"
(Hebs. 11:4)

Elder J. M. Mewborn
Coats, N. C.

Dear Brother Mewborn,

I talked with you briefly at the Abbott's Creek

Association last August 22, 2003. I enjoyed the meeting that day very much. I told you about one of my brothers having done some writing. I am sending you a copy of a Circular Letter that he wrote for the Piney Grove Primitive Baptist Association, and also a hymn or poem that he was blessed to compose. I hope you will find them worthy for publication in the Zion's Landmark.

Brother Ray Young, my brother, was told he had a brain tumor in October 2002. He had surgery at Forsyth Hospital, Winston-Salem, N. C., and was informed that it was cancer. They started treatments soon after which lasted for about 8 weeks. He finished the treatments, and passed away December 11, 2002, living hardly two months from the time of diagnosis. While he was in the ICU at Forsyth, he composed, and sang a hymn or song for the nurses who were caring for him. If you see fit to publish these two items, would you be kind enough to send his widow, Mrs. Joyce W. Young, Danbury, North Carolina, the issue of the paper in which they appear. They both were members of Pleasant View Primitive Baptist Church, Stokes County, N. C.

Brother Mewborn, you probably already know that Elder Lemly Gilbert and Elder Noel B. Gilbert were twin brothers, and also Primitive Baptist elders. Lemly was my grandfather and Noel Gilbert was Brother (Elder) Sam Gilbert's father. (Many Old Baptists throughout this region knew them for many years. My mother and Elder Sam Gilbert were first cousins.)

May it be God's will to continue blessing you with the publication of the Zion's Landmark, as well as your family. Love to you and them,

*An unworthy brother,
I hope, in Christ
Winfred Young
Lawsonville, N. C.
September 18, 2003*

(Note: the song or poem as compiled and sung for his nurses by Brother Ray Young in the ICU of Forsyth General Hospital, appears as the first item on the front page of

this issue of Zion's Landmark. Ed.)
CIRCULAR LETTER – 1995

TO THE PINEY GROVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

When you appointed me at the Association to write this Circular Letter, it put a fear and burden on me. I feel anyone could write a better letter than I can. However, I will try in my weak way, hoping and trusting the Almighty, merciful Lord will guide my mind to write that which will be beneficial and upbuilding to His great Name and sacred Cause.

First, I would like to say I do not feel worthy to go among you people and sit with you in the church meetings. So much of my time I go wondering and meditating with this question in mind, 'Am I one of God's little ones, or am I deceived in the whole thing?' As the old hymnwriter wrote many years ago,

"I AM a stranger here below,

And what I am 'tis hard to know;

I am so vile, so prone to sin,

I fear that I'm not born again."

This verse seems to fit me most of my time. This fleshly body is sinful and evil, but what is born of God in our poor heart is pure, holy, undefiled and without sin. Now, this is what I desire to be blessed to write about, if it be God's will.

The word, LOVE, has been on my mind for sometime. The Love I would like to write about is GOD'S LOVE. If we have God's Love in our hearts, we have Jesus Christ, the hope of Glory, born into them. There are two loves, just like there are two births. The first love, like the first birth, is natural and of the earth, earthly. This is the love we have for our natural family and friends. We loved our natural father, trusted him, and looked to him for help and guidance. The second Love, like the second birth, is spiritual, and of the Lord. This Love came about with our second birth. This is the

Love we have for our spiritual family, our brothers and sisters in the Lord. They do not have to be a member (have their name enrolled in a church book) to be our brothers and sisters, either. When this great Love first came into our heart, it was like no other love before. This LOVE is of God, and it is holy, pure and without sin. We can feel this Love from time to time, when God blesses us to that end. We are blest to feel that Love sometimes when we are enjoying a sweet meeting, or singing an old hymn. We can feel and see it in the faces and countenances of our brothers and sisters. This Love of God has no end, for it is of the Lord. I often think of and meditate on those beautiful words, "Beloved, let us love one another: for LOVE is of God; and every one that LOVETH is born of GOD, and knoweth GOD." 1st John 4:7. If we have this Love in our heart, it is worth more than all the earth's treasures. These will fade and vanish away, but this Spirit of God's Love will live on eternally. In being blessed to receive it, we are given a fear and are made to look to our Heavenly Father for all our help and guidance.

It seems most of my time, there are two of me. If I am a child of God, I believe there are two of me. In the first birth, there is the earthly or fleshly, sinful being in which nothing dwelleth that is good. In the second birth we are given the hope of a spiritual being of the Lord, which is holy, pure, undefiled and without sin. This second birth takes place within the heart. This spirit will never die. When this natural body of ours lies down in death, this spirit within our heart will return to God from where it came. It will rejoin that incorruptible, immortal body on the resurrection morning to be glorified like unto the body of Jesus and be carried home to live with our God and Saviour forever and ever.

I dreamed of walking a narrow path with my wife and two others, going to meet Jesus. When I awoke, I was sitting on the side of my bed, looking out the window into the eastern sky. You cannot

know how sad I was when I awoke. But, this gives me hope that I will meet Him some sweet day. That will be a wonderful, happy time for God's little ones. There is a warfare at all times between the two spirits within, except the times when God enables us to look to Him alone in His Spirit. Then, the old fleshly being is put in the background for a little while. Then, and only then, are we enabled to worship God in truth and in spirit. So you see, dear brothers and sisters, it is all of the Lord. Without Him, we can do nothing good.

We are not born here without God, we do not live without God, and we do not die without God. We can't pray, preach the Gospel, or hear the Gospel without Him. He says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herbs, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2.) We have nothing to do with the rain, the dew or the showers, and we surely do not have anything to do with the Gospel, or hearing it proclaimed. He has to give it to the preacherman, and He has to give us that hearing ear before we can hear it. Nothing dwelleth good in the flesh of all men, except that which is born of God. Jesus made this very plain when one called Him "Good Master". Matt. 19:16. Jesus answered saying, "Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, GOD." Matt. 19:17.

Now, if Jesus, the only perfect Man to walk this earth, said this, how can any of us claim to be good. The only good we have is that which is born of God into our heart, the hope of Glory. Jesus said by the prophet, Ezekiel, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:26.) This is the second birth under consideration, when Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

Now, you did not have anything to do with your first or

natural birth, so how can you possibly have anything to do with your second or spiritual birth? Jesus makes this very plain when He said in John 6:37-29, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and "that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Then in John 6:44, "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." Also in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit. So, there is a DRAWING from God for His chosen people. You cannot give your heart to Christ, because it is not yours to give in the first place. Your very being and existence here is by His Grace and Mercy, and your eternal Salvation is in His Hands also. Christ gives eternal life to them that the Father gave to Him in that Covenant of Grace before the world began. In Timothy 1:9 He says, "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." So, His people were given to Christ in the beginning. They are a chosen and called people because He said he would add unto the church daily such as should be saved. See Acts 2:47.

Now in Ephesians 2:8-9, "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." I believe God's chosen people have forever been in His mind and purpose. But, it took Jesus' coming to this low ground of sin and sorrow, His dying on Calvary's cross, His death, burial and RESURRECTION from the grave and His return to Heaven to complete God's purpose and way of Salvation for His Elect Church, His Bride. I also believe if I am saved, it is alone by the Grace of God, and not of any works whatsoever on my part or that I might have done. Salvation

is a gift from God. You cannot reach out and get it, you cannot buy it, for it is not for sale. A true gift is always free. To receive a gift, it must first be given, and this Gift of Salvation must be given by God, the Father, through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." James 1:17. God's Love is a perfect gift. All prayers indicted by His Spirit are perfect gifts. Preaching the Gospel, when inspired by the Holy Spirit, is a perfect gift. Salvation of the soul of the Lord is a perfect gift. Even the blessing of hearing the Gospel is a perfect gift. You cannot receive these spiritual gifts from any other source. They all must come down from God above. All of these gifts are made possible because of God's great Love for His chosen people.

Now in closing, I hope God will bless our little Association with love and peace, that we might continue to go among our brothers and sisters in our sister Associations and the independent churches, always looking and trusting in our Heavenly Father for all our help. If we have aches, pains, sorrows, heartaches and troubles, Jesus suffered more than we will ever suffer. If we are ever blessed to get any enjoyment from time to time of the good things of His Kingdom and Spirit, give God the praise. When the preacher-man rises before you, try to beg in his behalf. Last of all, try to remember me and mine, when you have a mind. May God bless you all. We love you,

A little Brother, living in
hope of Heaven,
Ray Young
Danbury, NC 27016

(Deceased - December 11, 2002)

(We are glad to publish the sound writing of Brother Ray Young, and appreciate his brother, Brother Winfred Young, sending it to us for publication. Ed.)

EDWIN S. SMITH

My beloved husband of 48 years, Edwin S. Smith, died Tuesday, January 21, 2003, at Heart of Florida Hospital, Davenport, Florida, from a battle with Black Lung Disease that had been ongoing for a number of



EDWIN S. SMITH
1930 - 2003
(Age 72 years)

years.

He was a son of the late Stewart Smith and Edna Hatfield Smith, and was born November 28, 1930, in Pike County, Kentucky. Edwin spent his entire life here in the same area where he was born, and was employed as a coal miner during this time. He was a Kentucky Colonel and recipient of a "Letter of Appreciation" from the Republic (Country) of Korea for his efforts in the Korean War (Conflict) in the early 1950's.

Ed grew up from day one at the very beginning of his life attending the Samaria Primitive Baptist Church, Ransom, Kentucky, where his parents, family and forebears were members and attended all their lives. His parents took care of these blessed people, the correspondents and friends, from many states and places, when attending the Mates Creek Association at Samaria, as well as the sister churches in eastern Kentucky for many years. When they died, Ed just picked up where they left off and continued on faithfully with the same love, devotion and zeal that they possessed. He and I truly enjoyed this blessed privilege of these wonderful times to the fullest in our humble home. The sounds of these wonderful occasions and times often resounded in his memory, as Solomon said, like "bread cast upon the waters that thou shalt find it after many days." (Eccl. 11:1.) He enjoyed these precious memories for years after each association, as they continued to live in his heart and soul.

No matter how hard life became, he was so divinely blest that he never lost faith. He did not murmur or complain at his suffering. I have heard him say hundreds of times, "The Lord has been so good to me. I will suffer every pain the good Lord saw me bear before the foundation of the world." Many of these Old Baptists, as well as their dear friends, have passed through this, our small, little house, many times. He would always be high on the mountain top every time they came on those first weekend

association meeting times of the Mates Creek in September of each year. His smile literally lit the room. You could just feel the love flow from him. He never felt worthy to walk by membership among the brethren and sisters of the dear old church, and would not, even now, feel worthy for his name to be added in memory with the others in these columns of the dear old Zion's Landmark. Yet, he felt so blest (and yet so unworthy) to be able and honored to entertain the church members, all of which took place every year from 1976 to 1997, a period of 21 years, as his parents had done before him. It goes without saying that he was one who truly loved His Lord and the old Hardshell Baptist people everywhere. His name was never on the church book, but his heart was. He was a true Hardshell. In his last moments, peace seemed to be with him.

One final note that I wish to say about him is that with all his loving manners and kind ways, he was a man of few words, and when they were needed and serious on his mind, these were always all that were needed, when he spoke them. He also enjoyed reading the pages of Zion's Landmark for a long time and looked forward to its arrival.

Besides myself, he leaves behind our daughter, Noveline (Greg) Hatfield, of Petertown, W. Va.; daughter-in-law and husband, Maureen and Walt Cifka, Shelby Township, Michigan; brothers, Moses (Christine) Smith, Warren, Michigan, Harvey (Ernestine) Smith, Ransom, Kentucky, and Bruce (Jeanne) Smith, Ransom, Kentucky; one sister, Bunia Gaye (Bob) Short of White Cloud, Michigan, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. (One son, Travis Smith, brothers, James E. and Billy R. Smith, and sisters, Sylvia Keesee and Elvia Smith, preceded him in death.)

His funeral service was held on Sunday, January 26, 2003, at the Hatfield Funeral Chapel, Toler, Kentucky, with Elder Elmer Smith and Elder Kenneth Hall, officiating. Interment followed in the Alley Cemetery, Ransom, Kentucky. Family and friends served as pallbearers with two of his very close medical physicians, Dr. Vallayan and Dr. Jain, whom he loved dearly, serving as honorary pallbearers.

I have purposely waited until now to undertake this writing, hoping that God would give me strength to accomplish it. Before I started writing, I tried to beg my God to give me the strength to write, and I feel He has answered my little prayer.

His lonely companion,
Christine Smith
Ransom, KY 41558

October 1, 2003
FLORENCE JACKSON APPLE

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Mrs. Florence Jackson Apple of Graham, North Carolina, on August 16, 2003, at the age of 93 years, 8 months and 7 days. Sister Florence was called by our gracious Lord and Saviour to her eternal home, and on these cool, clear evenings, we can see that new, shining star in the Autumn heavens.

Florence Apple was a faithful servant of the most High God for 60 years. She asked for a home with the James Street Primitive Baptist Church, in Burlington, North Carolina, on May 30, 1943, and was baptized one month later on June 6, 1943, by her pastor, Elder George W. Hill. She with her dear husband, Brother Morris Apple, served the Salem Association and James Street Church faithfully together for this period of time.



FLORENCE JACKSON APPLE
1909 - 2003
(Age 93 yrs., 8 mos. & 7 days)

Sister Florence was a faithful wife, homemaker and mother, and she and Morris were blessed with five sons, one of whom is deceased, 11 grandchildren, 3 step-grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren.

Miss Florence, as my wife and I always called her, will be remembered by family, friends and neighbors for many things, including her gentle, kind demeanor, kind and warm hospitality, and superb needlework. My father was first cousin to Morris, and my grandfather always considered Morris his favorite nephew. We, living in South Carolina, were privileged to visit Morris and Miss Florence several times a year on trips to my home state in North Carolina. We loved this gentle lady and will miss her terribly!

Florence Jackson Apple was born November 29, 1909, in Davidson County, North Carolina, to Addison and Bashie Garner Jackson. On March 27, 1926, she married Morris A. Apple in

Guilford County, N.C. She was predeceased by one son, George J. Apple, and grandson, Jeffrey Apple. Surviving are her husband, Morris A. Apple of the home, sons and wives, Ray and Jeanette Apple, Mebane, N.C., Alston and Lavica Apple, Graham, N.C., Edward and Norma Apple, Yoakum, Texas, and Richard and Barbara Apple, Haw River, N.C. This noble couple had been married for 77 years, a record probably with few parallels.

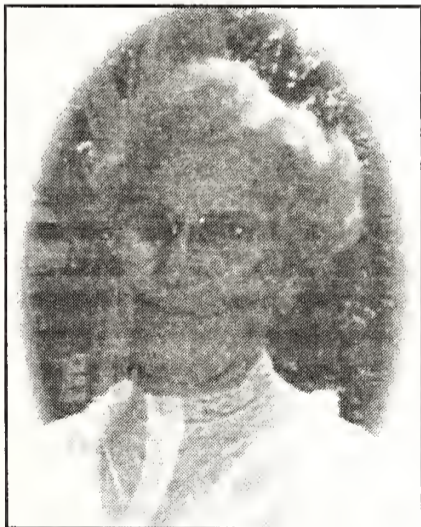
Her funeral services were conducted at the McClure Funeral Home Chapel, Graham, North Carolina, by Elder John Lee and Elder Wallis A. Smith with interment following in the Apple Family Cemetery, Ashland Road, Caswell County, North Carolina.

Written by request,
Jim Apple
(Apple Family Historian)
Leesville, SC

VALLIE CLEMENTS WHEELER

As foreseen by Him, our ever merciful God, Vallie Clements Wheeler was called at her appointed time on Thursday, July 24, 2003. Her health had declined over the preceding months at Liberty Commons Nursing Center, in Salisbury, North Carolina.

Blessed to be at her side was her daughter, Valinda W. Isenhower, of Salisbury. She was also survived by two grandchildren, Sidney Allen Williams, and



VALLIE C. WHEELER
1915 - 2003
(Age 88 Years)

Thomas Lee Williams, three great grandchildren, and a sister, Nannie Myrtle Thacker, all of Durham, North Carolina.

Sister Vallie began life's journey on February 26, 1915, as a blessing to her parents, George P. and Nannie Clements. As her travels in life continued, she met and married her husband of 52 years. Those of us who can recall, have fond memories of how Sister Vallie would always say, "W. A. Wheeler," whenever

she called him. They lived in the house that her Papa built, along with her brother, Roy, and her sister, Amerith. Vallie always spoke of her family with the deepest of love and devotion. You were always welcome to the warmth of her kitchen, as she and Amerith hustled in preparing the meals. Sister Vallie and Brother Wheeler were always so thankful to have company, (church, family and friends), in their home.

As her journey continued, Vallie was appointed to face many trials and tribulations. God enabled her to be reconciled to the passing of her two brothers, her sister, her companion, and her daughter, Gaynelle Wheeler Williams. Even though her body became frail, she endured her afflictions with patience and her faith and belief remained strong.

She was educated in the Durham County School System, and was employed with General Telephone Company for seven years and with Duke University Medical Center for 13 years.

Sister Vallie Wheeler joined Eno Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, North Carolina, on March 28, 1959. She was baptized by Elder Ernest Birchett in the Eno River, not far from her home. She loved to attend the Primitive Baptist Church meetings and associations far and near. After W. A. died, she was so thankful to ride with Brother Wade Watson and later, his daughter, Sister Helen Crabtree. She sought those precious moments of bliss with those who felt as she did. After declining health continued, her daughter, Valinda, would drive her from Salisbury to Eno Church until Sister Vallie was too frail to make the trip. She will always be remembered by her family and friends as a kind, generous lady, who never met a stranger and whose happiness came from making those around her happy. She was deeply loved and will be deeply missed.

Sister Vallie Clements Wheeler's life's journey is over. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. God has once again been so merciful to Sister Vallie by calling her home and to us for having known her. Her funeral service was held on July 28, 2003, at Hall-Wynne Funeral Chapel, Durham, N.C. Her pastor, Elder Bobby Daughtry, spoke on the occasion.

We at Eno Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N.C., extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, but know that she feels no more afflictions and pain. We believe that Sister Vallie felt that her life's blessing had all been a gift from God, and was ready to be called home.

Written by order of Eno Primitive Baptist Church in con-

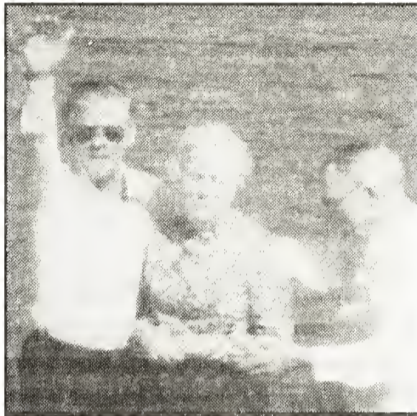
ference, August 24, 2003.

Ann B. Rudisill, Clerk
Gastonia, NC 28054

OMA A. JOHNSON KIMBLER

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write about my beloved sister, Oma M. Johnson. She was born February 23, 1919, the fourth child of the late James Boyd Johnson and Lucy Ann Bird Johnson. She died November 5, 2003, making her stay on earth almost 85 years.

Sister Oma was preceded in death by her husband, Ervin



Ordinance of Baptism Being Administered To Sister Oma Johnson Kimbler by Elder Elmer Smith, Assisted By Elder Charlie Whitt, Indian Fork Church, Culloden, WV, on March 6, 1983.

Kimble, an infant granddaughter, Misty Dawn Kimbler, and a brother, Bowman F. Johnson. She leaves to mourn her passing, a daughter, Rosalie Kimbler; a son, and his wife, James Ervin and Debbie Kimbler; two grandsons, Kris and Chad Kimbler, all of Logan, West Virginia; two sisters, Mildred Mitchell, of Roanoke, Virginia, and Callie Lake, Hurricane, West Virginia, along with many relatives and friends to miss her. Sister Oma was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother to her family.

She united with the Indian Park Primitive Baptist Church, Culloden, West Virginia, February 5, 1983, and was baptized March 6, 1983, making her a member of the church almost 21 years. She was a devoted member, and attended as long as she was able.

Sister Oma spent most of the past four years paralyzed from the neck down due to strokes. She suffered much pain, but never ceased to love the old hymns, her favorite being -

"We shall sleep, but not forever -

We shall rest beneath the trees;

We shall wake to live forever In the land where Jesus is:

Then weep not for me, Then weep not for me,

For I am going o'er death's river,

And you soon will follow me." We firmly believe that her

SPIRIT and **SOUL** have returned to God who gave it to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; then He will bring them with HIM to be reunited with the sleeping dust and be carried home to Glory to live forever and forever.

Amen and Amen!

Written November 28, 2003, in loving remembrance by her sister, Callie Lake Hurricane, WV

CLARENCE MORTEL KEARNS

On June 11, 2003, our beloved Brother and Deacon, Clarence M. Kearns, passed from this world at his home. Funeral services at Whitley's Funeral Home, Kannapolis, N.C., on June 14, 2003, were conducted by his pastor, Elder Calvin Harward. Burial services followed at Running Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Stanly County, N.C.

Brother Kearns was born March 4, 1911, in Randolph County, N.C. He and Sister Mentie Whitley Kearns were united in holy matrimony on April 1, 1934, a union that spanned sixty-nine plus years. Brother and Sister Kearns asked for a home in New Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Concord, N.C. in 1955. They were joyously accepted, and one month later were baptized by their pastor, Elder Clarence S. Mills and Elder Eddie Humphrey. On May 11, 1957, Brother Kearns came before a presbytery and was ordained a Deacon. On May 24, 1981, Brother and Sister Kearns asked for a home at Lawyers Spring Primitive Baptist Church, Peachland, N.C., by confession of faith.

Brother Kearns is survived by his wife, Sister Mentie Kearns of the home; one son, J. B. Kearns of Kannapolis; one daughter, Frances Wilson, Ellenboro, N.C.; nine grandchildren; sixteen great grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Mary Katherine Joyner.

This writer witnessed a strong bond of love and affection among Brother Kearns, Sister Kearns, their children, grandchildren and friends. This bond enabled Brother Kearns to remain in his home, receiving special care and attention until drawing his final breath. Our belief is that at the appointed time he will hear that Heavenly call from our Father, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34.)

We remember Brother Kearns as a pillar of the Church, faithful, firm in his convictions and diligent in the exercise of his stewardship as a Deacon. Brother and Sister Kearns traveled far and near, visiting with our corre-

spondents among the Old School Baptists. We miss his counsel and shall continue to miss him. His memory and esteem will endure. Our loss is his gain.

It is resolved by Lawyers Spring Primitive Baptist Church, Peachland, Anson County, North Carolina, that a copy of this obituary be given to the family, one sent to ZIONS LANDMARK for publication, and one be kept with the church records.

Written by request of the Church and approved in conference.

James M. Jones, Church Clerk

ROBERT VERNON FURR

It has been pleasing unto our Heavenly Father to call from this low ground of sin and sorrow our brother and deacon, Robert Vernon Furr, to rest in the loving care of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, until His second coming.

Brother Robert Vernon Furr was born February 1, 1924, to Brother Millard Hubert Furr and Sister Tina Lambert Furr, and departed this life on November 1, 2002. He was raised on a farm in Stanly County, North Carolina. He served our country in the United States Navy. Brother Furr was married to Sister Leola Almond on October 25, 1951. He asked for a home with the Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Stanly County, North Carolina, in 1969, and was baptized into fellowship of the church by Elder W. C. Allen and Elder C. D. Whitley. Brother Furr was ordained deacon on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in July, 1977, at the Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Church, where he served humbly until his death. Our brother strongly believed in the doctrine of election, predestination, and Salvation by the Grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that it is all a free gift of Him.

Our dear brother manifested what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren in the second chapter, 3rd verse, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves." During his tenure as Deacon in our Church, Brother Furr always was blest to put his brethren (his brothers and sisters) in Christ above himself. He demonstrated his love for his Lord and his Church by the many kind deeds that he did. He loved the preaching and the singing, and was blessed by our Lord to lead some of these old songs and hymns that give praise to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He was well respected and loved by his many neighbors and friends.

Brother Furr is survived by his loving wife and companion of 51 years, Sister Leola Almond Furr. Also, surviving are three children, Elaine F. Hinkle and husband, of Research Triangle Park, N. C., Sherry F. Ross and husband of Charlotte, N. C., and Bruce and wife of Albemarle, N. C.; five grandchildren, Kathryn Ross, Sarah Ross, Jacob Furr, Kyle Furr and Luke Furr; two brothers, Roy Furr and Coy Furr. Eight sisters, Rufy F. Furr, Annie Belle F. Almond, Ola Mae F. Harkey, Sister Irene F. Caldwell, Betty Jean F. Furr, Lillian F. Dellinger, Christine F. Drye, and Brenda F. Walker. He was preceded in death by his parents, Brother Millard and Sister Tina Furr, and one brother, Dave Furr.

His funeral service was held at Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Church at 11:00 A.M., on Monday, November 4, 2002, by his pastor, Elder Jimmy Gray of Timberlake, North Carolina. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, with the hope that he and all the elect family of God will hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (See Matthew 25, verse 34.)

Done by order of Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Stanly County, North Carolina, this the 1st Sunday in Nov., Nov. 2, 2003.

Humbly written by,
Sister Irene Caldwell,
and Elder Jimmy Gray

CARRIE EVANS ALLEN

We, the members of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina, desire to express our sorrow at the loss of our dear sister in Christ, Carrie Evans Allen, who departed this life on Monday, May 19, 2003. She was born May 4, 1903 in Dry Fork, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the daughter of the late Sidney and Laura Hall Evans. Her stay on this earth was 100 years and 15 days. She was married to the late Charlie G. Allen on November 5, 1919. To this union were born 8 children, 6 girls and 2 boys. Her husband and 4 of her children preceded her in death. Four children survive to mourn her passing.

She and her husband joined Flat River Primitive Baptist Church at a meeting held in their home in Roxboro, North Carolina, in the winter of 1959. Her husband was never able to be baptized. After his death, she was baptized on June 26, 1960, by her pastor, Elder L. P. Martin, in the Nick Allen pond. She remained faithful to her church as long as she lived and filled her seat as long as she was able. Sister

Carrie was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God. She bore her afflictions and burdens with patience. We will always remember her as a gentle and loving sister.

She was a good mother to her family and a good friend to all who knew her. We believe our loss is her eternal gain and that her remaining children will rise up and call her blessed. (See Proverbs 31:24.)

We, the members of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, will miss her. She fought a good fight, and we believe she is sweetly sleeping in the loving Arms of Jesus.

Her funeral service was held at 11:00 a.m., May 22, 2003, in Strickland Funeral Home Chapel, Roxboro, N. C., by her pastor, Elder Paul Clark. Burial was in Person Memorial Cemetery. We would like to send our love and sympathy to her remaining family.

It is requested by the church to send one copy of this obituary for publication in Zion's Landmark and one be placed in the church record.

Written in much love at the request of Flat River Church by
Martha A. Rudder

CYCRENA HOWERTON WHITFIELD

We, the members of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina, bow in humble submission to the divine Will of the Heavenly Father in the calling from our midst our dearly beloved sister in Christ, Cycrena Howerton Whitfield, on July 15, 2003.

Sister Cycrena was blest and enabled by revelation from God to believe in the doctrine of the predestination of all things many years ago. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and not of works of the creature. She greatly manifested her faith and love for the church and those of like faith and order, even unto the end.

She joined Flat River Primitive Baptist Church August 23, 1953, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder L. P. Martin. Sister Cycrena was a faithful member and attended her church meetings, even in her afflictions, which were many, until it was no longer possible. Her faith and desire to be with her fellow church members remained strong.

Her funeral service was conducted on July 17, 2003, at 11:00 A.M. at Flat River Church by her pastor, Elder Paul Clark and Elder Bobby Daughtry, with interment in the church cemetery.

She is survived by her husband, Maynard Whitfield, Timberlake, N. C., three sons and

daughters-in-law, William A. Howerton and wife, Wanda, Wayne T. Howerton and wife, Louvena, both of Rougemont, N. C., and Anthony L. Howerton and wife, Betty, of Timberlake, N. C. A stepdaughter, Edith Stewart, of Bahama, N. C.; two brothers, Clarence Chambers of Creedmoor, N. C., and John William Chambers, Eden, N. C.; also she leaves behind to mourn her passing eight grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren. She loved her family dearly and was very devoted to them and they to her.

We would like to extend to her family our deep, sincere sympathy. We loved her and miss her so much.

Done by order of Flat River Church in conference August 25, 2003.

Elder Paul Clark, Moderator
Alice W. Blalock, Clerk
Alice Blalock & Inez Rogers,
Committee

YELLOW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 177th Annual Session of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord willing, with Mt. Zion Church, Clark County, Georgia, on the second Saturday and Friday before in May, (May 7th & 8th), 2004.

Directions to Mt. Zion Church: From I-20 West, exit 172 (Thomson-Washington - Hwy. 78) - the church location is approximately 5 miles west of Athens City Limits on Hwy. 78 across from the Georgia Mall. From Hwy. 441 South, exit onto the North Athens By-Pass 10 Loop (and North 129). Travel 5.5 miles on 10 Loop and exit at the Winder-Atlanta exit (left section of the exit - not the side that takes you to the Mall) 1 mile on left across from Georgia Square Mall.

We look forward to and anticipate the continued correspondence of our brethren and sisters in the Lord to be with us this year, 2004. We trust that it will be His will to give us a manifestation of His love in our midst.

Hewatt L. Fleming, Clerk
161 Poss Road
Danielsville, Georgia 30633
1-706-795-3297

ZION'S LANDMARK

Bapt.

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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"Amazing Grace."

No kind of music, except from the heart,

Singing loud and clear, when the singing starts;
Thanking God above for the blessings He's given,

The "Hope" He has promised for eternal Heaven.

Oh! What a firm foundation, planted on "The Rock",

These dear Children of God, What a dear, little flock!
Seated (away) from the big, wide world, beneath that tall pine

In that little, white church called "Little Vine."

Avis King (Dec'd.)
(Written Feb., 1995)

(Note: Please see obituary of Avis L. King in this issue of Zion's Landmark on page 7. Little Vine Church, organized in the year 1872, is located in the little village of Sylvatus, Carroll County, Virginia, surrounded today by the beautiful, scenic Blue Ridge Mountains. It has been a member of the New River Association since its organization 132 years ago, and continues an active member of that body at this time. It was served for many years by Elder John F. Sumner and in late years by Elder J. S. Sechrist and Elder Sidney Rakes. Like all true churches of the Living God, it has had its trials and test of the faith through all of these years. The New River Association was organized in the year 1794, 210 years ago, and is one of the oldest, still active Primitive Baptist Associations in the United States of America. Editor)

IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL EXPRESSIONS, THE NEW BIRTH (John 3:3), and REGENERATION (Matthew 19:28 & Titus 3:5), AND IF SO, WHAT IS THAT DIFFERENCE?

Dear Elder Mewborn,

During the latter part of the year 2003, I have had occa-

sions to be engaged in and inundated upon the subject of regeneration. Even though this word is found only twice in the Bible (Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5), there exists differing definitions as to how the word is defined and how it is applied within the context in these two places of scripture. Primitive Baptist do not escape controversy over this word, regeneration, and in November, 2003, there was an organized debate between two elders, one believing regeneration and the new birth are the same, while the other declared they were not the same. All discussions or debates on this issue have this basic difference in agreeing or disagreeing as to what regeneration encompasses.

Disagreeing over regeneration apparently flares up over the years, which is evidenced by reading some of the old writings where this issue stirs pointed, if not heated, exchanges. In Matthew 19:28 Christ speaks, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Anyone insisting that regeneration and the New Birth are the same is unable to convince me of such, when after closely examining this verse of scripture. In this instance Christ is speaking of His regeneration after His death, when His Spirit would enter His dead body, and then He would come forth from the tomb to sit in the Throne of His glory. If regeneration means the same as the new birth, the scripture could not have any power or meaning, and would not make any sense because, if we substitute "new birth" here in lieu of "regeneration", it would denote Christ being born again of which there is no such thing. Further, the New Birth, as used in John 3 by Christ speaking to Nicodemus, means an occurrence wrought upon a person that is naturally alive; and in all the explaining

to Nicodemus, He did not use nor infer anything about a "regeneration". Therefore, we understand that Matthew 19:28 is Christ speaking of Himself being regenerated and then coming forth from the tomb, rising from the dead, and not being born again and then coming forth from the tomb.

The other place the word "regeneration" is found is in Titus 3:5, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." More opinions abound that surround this passage of scripture than does Matthew 19:28, but, even so, neither place indicates that regeneration and the new birth are the same.

Isaiah 53:8 asked the question as to who would declare His generation?; and in 53:10, there is noted that "it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand." Mention is made of these scriptures where it speaks of the generation of Christ, and that His seed would be seen and prosper prolongedly, because this is pointing to the death of Christ for the sins of His people with Him having a manifestation of His generation and seed (a spiritual generation and seed), without Him having any natural offspring. Many other places in the Old Testament bring out "generation" in which it is pointing to Christ in types and shadows of His "regeneration" made manifest in the New Testament, wherein His spiritual seed will have begotten



LITTLE VINE CHURCH

Standing all alone, beneath the tall pine

Is a little, white church, called Little Vine.

For over a hundred years, this little church has stood All by itself at the edge of the wood.

The first thing you see, as you walk through the door

Is the wood-fed stove in the middle of the floor;
Bare wooden benches with a cushion here and there

Gives the feeling of love that is felt everywhere.

No plush carpeting is on the bare floor, and

No fancy draperies are at the windows or door;

Clean, sparkling windows, pure sunbeams shining through;

All of this luxury for the likes of me and you.

No Sunday School, or hat is passed around;

No self-works in this little church is found;

You can tell by The Love you can see on their face,

That it all comes from

many offspring.

Those agreeing that regeneration and the new birth do not mean the same usually have at least a slight variance in explaining regeneration as shown in Titus 3:5. Some examples are, viz: one writer indicates the word regeneration implies the cleansing that is necessary for us filthy sinners to be made a part of the new generation, or the new order; while Elder Samuel Trott (1787-1866) wrote on this regard, that the work of grace comprises two distinct parts in the overall process of the start of spiritual life through spiritual birth:

"1. A quickening or implantation of spiritual life, which is the immediate, sovereign work of the Holy Ghost; with a second implantation being regeneration.

"2. A person brought into the liberty of the gospel, or a being distinctly manifested as a believer in Christ, a child of God, this considered to be the new birth."

More explanations or examples could be made of differing variances of beliefs on what is the new birth and what is regeneration, but the above will give the reader an idea of some beliefs, or, at least, variances on this issue. Of all the opinions or explanations I have heard and read, there are none that clearly and distinctly clarify in detail as to what is "regeneration" as it is written in Titus 3:5. There are many differences as to how Titus 3:5 is applied (whether it applies to the regeneration of Christ or an individual), but also as to what specifically is a clear, sufficient definition of the word within context in which it is used.

In my opinion Matthew 19:28 refers to regeneration as it applies to Christ and the process of His resurrection. Titus 3:5 applies to a child of God. Irrespective of Titus 3:5 applying to a child of God, I do not believe regeneration is a causative in the process which ends with the new birth of a child of God, but is always an integral part of the process, that is, it is there.

The procedure, including and ending in the spiritual birth, is in parallel or comparative with the procedure, including and ending in the natural birth:

- Conception
- Gestation

• Birth

Hosea 9:11 reads, "As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception." Here, we see the LORD explain that He found Ephraim (Israel) in the wilderness, chose them, and brought them up and made them prosper under His care, and they went astray, were not kept, and turned to other gods. Because of this, their glory (the glory He gave them, which was of Him, which was in Him, and that which they enjoyed in times of obedience) flew away like a bird, and there would not be birth, no gestation, and no conception. Hosea 9:11 points to the New Testament, where in the third day Christ arose from the grave and His children shall live in His sight. (Hosea 6:2).

After this, under the grace dispensation, this glory will not fly away like a bird, and by His mighty power there will be spiritual births, spiritual gestations, and spiritual conceptions. As this applies to a child of God, I see spiritual conception, gestation and birth, all carried out by the mighty working power of GOD, without any involvement of any human person or human agency; and these three stages are not synonymous with regeneration individually, or collectively. Instantly, the justifiable question arises then as to what is regeneration, if not synonymous with one or all of these three stages? In explaining what regeneration is to a child of God, it would be clearer or helpful to explain all four: (1) conception, (2) gestation, (3) birth, and (4) regeneration.

"(1) Conception: Spiritually, the seed of Christ is implanted into an individual by the Holy Ghost sometime between natural conception and natural birth. This implantation is the begetting of spiritual life.

"(2) Gestation: As in nature, spiritually, this is a time of struggle, in darkness and wonderments to a difference brought in that is acting upon the senses and faculties of the person, making the subject, person or persons, to abhor their sins in the flesh, causing and making them realize they are hell deserving, while being made desirous of better things than what is evident in nature's darkness.

"(3) Birth: Here, I find agreement with Elder Trott concern-

ing the spiritual birth.

A person brought into the liberty of the gospel (the preached gospel, bringing to light those things existing in darkness (2nd Timothy 1:10), a being distinctly manifested (now) as a believer in Christ, or a child of God.

"(4) Regeneration: As written in Titus 3:5, this applies to the case of a child of God; and as written in Matthew 19:28, it applies to Christ, both instances having previously been mentioned in the above writings. Either case does not support contending that regeneration and the new birth are the same. We have already written sufficiently on the application of Matthew 19:28 to Christ; so, we wish to now go into detail of what regeneration is, as it is written in Titus 3:5 and applies to a child of God. Our further belief is that regeneration does not regenerate a child of God, as they live here upon the earth, simply because in order to be regenerated, a person must first be generated. But, regeneration does have a most definite effect on a child of God, while he lives here upon the earth. Adam willfully partook of the forbidden fruit, and one of the things he no longer had was the communion/fellowship with GOD that he had before he transgressed in the garden of Eden. God's washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost once again, under grace, brings again (or restores) this communion/fellowship that Adam originally enjoyed and transgressedly lost, into activity between the Three-in-One GOD and the (now) spiritually-born child of God.

"Regeneration is always an

element of effect in a born again child of God, but it is not spiritual conception, it is not spiritual gestation, it is not spiritual birth (all these as are pointed to in Hosea 9:11), nor is it the mind or person of Adam (or his posterity in nature) before he transgressed. This communion/fellowship is a direct relationship between GOD and the born-again child of GOD, working without the need for or using a mediator, other than Christ (1st Timothy 2:5 and Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 12:24). Any communion/fellowship between God and a born-again child of God does not include the fullness that will be realized in Heaven and immortal glory, but while here upon the earth, they experience and receive the blessed pledge, "having believed, were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." (See Ephesians 1:13-14.) In the scriptures, this is referred to as "the Spirit of adoption." (Romans 8:15.)

I have written this to state my understanding or belief on regeneration, as it applies to a born-again child of God, and not to stir up controversy or debate. Other writings clearly include regeneration in the make-up of a born-again child of God, whether or not their belief is that regeneration and the new birth are the same; however, I have not found any writings that go into detail to explain what regeneration is, as I have laid out in this article. There may be other writings explaining as I have attempted to do, but the ones I have read did not come across to me in the same fashion, for which I may not have understood their writings. If in that event,

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should that be the case, I apologize and request them to count it against me for the lack of understanding. I humbly ask that if there are other writings that explain regeneration, as I have attempted to do here, would you please forward me a copy or let me know where I may obtain a copy.

May peace be to all, as it is in Christ, our Lord and S a v i o u r .

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December 25, 2003

“BORN AGAIN”, (John 3:3),
and “REGENERATION”,
(Titus 3:5 & Matt. 19:28)

By request I shall attempt to show by the scriptures that the above two scriptural terms, “Born Again” and “Regeneration”, while very closely related, are not fully synonymous in the import of their meaning in the doctrine and teaching of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Dear brethren today feel there is no difference, while others see it differently. Let us now look carefully at the scriptural meaning of the following expressions in order to discern this difference.

THE FIRST CREATION AND GENERATION OF MAN UPON THE EARTH (GENESIS 2:7)

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7. In reading the scriptures we find that God created three things in Adam. They are given from the scriptures, (1) his *body*, made from the dust of the ground, (2) *the breath of life* which is the spirit of man that He breathed into Adam's nostrils, and (3) *a living soul* that He also placed in Adam's body. In this first, natural creation, we find the first generation of man upon the face of the earth. (1) His body, (2) his spirit, and (3) his soul, as mentioned in Genesis 2:7, are identical to the same ones that are mentioned by the Apostle Paul in 1st Thessalonians 5:23 in the *New Testament*. I shall refer to the latter scripture later in this article. Man in his created being is

a trinity, that is because he has a body, soul and spirit, like the Triune God, who is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The number *three* has been said to be a perfect one.

THE FALL AND DEGENERATION OF ADAM AND HIS POSTERITY INTO SIN AND DEATH (Jeremiah 2:21-22)

The meaning or definition of the word, *degeneration*, is simple enough, such as having declined and become degraded, debased, or one degraded from a previous moral standard. Also to pass from a higher to a lower state of existence or being, a decline in quality, to undergo progressive deterioration, or going down. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's Holy law in the Garden of Eden, Eve having been beguiled and deceived by the serpent, (See Genesis 3:13 and 1st Timothy 2:14), they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had already told Eve, “Ye shall not eat it, neither shall ye touch IT, lest ye DIE.” (Genesis 3:3.) So “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” (Genesis 3:6.) God, then, pronounced the sentence of judgment on Adam, the first created man, saying, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. So, He drove out the man, and 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.” Right here was the fall of man in the beginning of time because the penalty for Adam's failure not to yield obedience and keep this law was DEATH! He sinned and from this transgression of His law, DEATH came to him. God fulfilled His promise to Eve, as well as Adam, her husband, because she was “bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.” This sentence of death passed upon all of Adam's and Eve's posterity forever since they are bone of their bones and flesh of their flesh.

We have no trouble seeing the result of this first, climatic (and traumatic) premillennial, human offense of sin until now. Just look around and see the number of funeral homes operating today in our neigh-

borhoods and communities. Many of them are doing a prolific business because of the power of death and its reality. My faith in these things in reality has supported me many times for the past 50 years, as I have been called to these places, afterwards to follow the hearse and grieving families to many cemeteries.

The prophet, Jeremiah, gives an excellent description of Adam and Eve with their fallen posterity after God removed them from the Garden of Eden in their fallen state of sin, iniquity and death, as follows: “Yet, I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the *DEGENERATE* plant of a strange vine unto Me? For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before Me, saith the Lord God.” (Jeremiah 2:21-22.) Jeremiah likens fallen mankind unto a degenerate plant that is utterly impossible to be cleansed by any human effort or means, all of which points to our need for the power of the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and “the washing of regeneration,” by the Water of the Word. (Titus 3:5.)

UNREGENERATION

From Adam's and Eve's fall at the beginning of time, his degeneration was transformed into a massive *unregeneration* of all mankind. It has included every single constituent of his posterity without exception with a vast, critical change to an immeasurable depth of unbelief from that pure, perfect, innocent, sinless state and existence in the Garden of Eden, to one of shame, sin, degradation, contempt, condemnation, corruption, filthiness, abasement and death. (We look around us today and see a sin-cursed earth, filled with *unregenerated* people, all of whom live and walk constantly under the shadow of timely, as well as eternal, death.)

The Apostle Paul describes the wretched, fallen condition and state of all mankind from that original state of innocence in the beginning that Jeremiah called “a noble vine, wholly a right seed” of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, saying, “there is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none

that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit. The poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.” Romans 10:18. What a sad commentary the Apostle Paul gave to the whole human race and all natural mankind, that resulted from Adam's fall and expulsion from the Garden of Eden in the morning of time.

The Apostle Paul also adequately describes the 100% total depravity of himself, as it had been revealed to him when he declared, “O Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24. The prophet, Jeremiah, in speaking of the human heart said, “it is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, and who can know it.” Jere. 17:9. Job said, “Behold, I am vile.” Job 40:24. All of the above witnesses lend a good hand at describing our fallen condition and standing before God in human nature at large.

THE NATURAL BIRTH and THE SPIRITUAL BIRTH

From common knowledge we all know that every natural birth is comprised of (3) three phases, viz: (1) the beginning of labor, (2) the time required to complete the delivery process during which the infant comes into a brand new, natural world, and (3) the end of the entire sequence with the severance of the umbilical cord. Life is in the living infant at the time of conception and it continues for the particular span of time allotted it by divine decree. Sin is ultimately finished in the body, sooner or later, and always resolutely ends in death. Irregardless, the birth of that individual *ended* when delivery was accomplished, while life, received at the time of conception and birth, continues on indefinitely.

The comparison of the *spiritual birth* of a child of God to the natural one of human kind is similar in many aspects;

however, the natural birth compares only in part to the spiritual. The end result of the natural birth, which is in possession of "the breath of life," terminates, while the result of the spiritual birth, which is the hope of eternal life in Christ never ends with a child of God. One is restricted and always has an ending, while the other is complete and eternal. In comparing the spiritual birth and hope of eternal life to the natural birth and life, we all know that types and shadows in the scriptures are never 100% complete or perfect in things they portray in substance; yet, they in part point to and bring to light many beautiful things and meanings of the Spirit of God and His Kingdom.

Likewise in the spiritual birth, as in the natural, there are three (3) stages, viz: (1) there is the beginning of the birth, (2) there is the delivery, and (3) the completion, (*terminus*), or ending of the birth. The Apostle Paul describes the spiritual conception in the child of God, "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." Phillipians 1:6. This DAY of Jesus Christ is the one in a child of God's experience when his eye of faith is opened after his deliverance and he sees and beholds in a new world that spiritual life and love in the Kingdom of God; also, when he is given to feel within that LOVE of GOD that is far better felt than told. With his raptured Eye of Faith, he sees the church and beholds that spiritual life in the Kingdom of God, the church and His blessed people. This DAY is the same one that Christ told the Jews, "Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see my DAY; and he saw it and was glad!" John 8:56. One of the two thieves, crucified with Jesus on Golgotha, saw it when He told him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43. Our glorious hope of that endless life will one, sweet day, terminate into blessed immortality of that glory world where sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death will be felt and feared no more.

The Apostle Paul spoke of the extreme labour in his life, when under the law as Saul of Tarsus saying, "I laboured more abundantly than they all:

yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1st Cor. 15:10. In this hard labour of his spiritual birth in being brought to understanding of the truth in Grace, he confessed, "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." It was a hard labour, as he confessed, "many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Acts 26:10-12. But, at midday, he said "A light above the brightness of the sun, shone round about me." When all of this labour was over, "Ananias put his hands on him," and "immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales." Paul had now received his sight and his (spiritual) birth was over. He was then in the Kingdom of God in a New Day and made his way to the people of God and was baptized. (See Acts 9:18.) He was then in the Light of "The Morning Star" of the daylight of Regeneration that would last with him forever. Rev. 2:28. The *Day Star* had arisen in his heart and soul. 2nd Peter 1:19. His life of Regeneration, that had its origin in his new birth, as he went to Damascus" (Acts 26:12) had now begun.

In the summation of Saul of Tarsus' experience, when his name was transformed to Paul, reminds me of the expression in that old hymn of years ago,

"Thou shalt SEE my glory soon,

When the Work of Grace is done."

In that immortal conversation between Christ and Nicodemus concerning the new (or second) birth, we observe the following qualities that He gave him in what is required TO SEE the church, as well as how His subjects ARE BROUGHT into it.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot SEE the kingdom of God," and,

"Except a man be born of WATER and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." (Matthew 3:3&5.)

In these scriptures Christ makes it unmistakably clear

that (1) without this birth, one cannot SEE His Kingdom, and also (2) that without being born of WATER and of His SPIRIT, he cannot enter into it.

In order (1st) to SEE it, and (2) to ENTER it, this second birth is mandatorily required. It is prerequisite in every sense of the word. (Note: The Regenerate life – or Regeneration – begins within the occurrence or time of the New Birth in the subject of Grace, and continues afterwards with him until his soul's departure from the realm of this mortal sphere or time world. The true evidence of Regeneration will be his Godly walk until it is finished here.

There are two kinds of blindness, (1) natural, and (2) spiritual. It is recorded, "the light of the body is the eye. If, therefore, thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light. But, if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." Matthew 6:22. The single Eye is the "Eye of Faith," possessed only by the child of God, that beholds only those hidden things of the great, revealed mysteries of God, that are securely hidden from the carnal understanding of men. The unregenerate do not have the single eye to behold the beauty of the things of God and will never see them. The two natural, human eyes of man only behold darkness, and Jesus said, "if that light be darkness, how great is that darkness." Matthew 6:23. To be blind both naturally and spiritually yields the greatest darkness known to man. Only the Regenerate are blessed to possess the "Eye of Faith."

The second requirement, as mentioned by Jesus, to enter His Kingdom is "to be born of the WATER and of THE SPIRIT." The word, WATER, as mentioned here, implies cleansing, and cleansing is directly related to *regeneration*. Direct reference is found in Titus 3:4 of this connection, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by THE WASHING OF REGENERATION, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

The prophet, Ezekiel, in Chapter 36, verses 25 & 26, sustains the new birth and the Washing of Regeneration, both of which are written in the language of Christ. Ezekiel's language says, "Then will I sprin-

kle CLEAN WATER upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

The removal of the hard, stony heart and the giving of the new heart of flesh, as mentioned by Ezekiel, is agreeable altogether with what the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 4:22-24, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation of the OLD MAN, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that ye put on the NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the INNER MAN." Ephesians 3:16. That new heart, that Ezekiel said would be given, is in that INNER MAN that is also put within the soul of the old man at the time of the new birth, when the stony heart of the flesh is removed. In this HEART OF FLESH IS THAT INNER MAN, THE NEW MAN, (The Lord Jesus Christ), that is spoken of in 1st John 3:9: "Whosoever is BORN OF GOD doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God." This New or Inner Man subdues and keeps the old man, or the outer man, and causes him to walk in the path of regeneration or a regenerate life.

WHICH PART OF MAN IS BORN AGAIN AND REGENERATED?

We have said that he has three parts, (1) his body, (2) his breath of life or his spirit, and (3) his soul. The question is now asked, which one of them is born again and regenerated? Which one is converted, quickened and sanctified?

If our human body or flesh, as such is born again, sanctified, quickened and converted, the Arminian theory, so prevalent in the world today and believed by millions of people, would be correct. The reading of the scripture would necessarily have to be changed to read from "through sanctifica-

tion of the SPIRIT," as recorded in the scripture, to — through sanctification of the flesh —, and we know that the latter is entirely impossible. (See II Thess. 2:16.) If there was such a thing as sanctification of the flesh, a person would be living a human, perfect, natural life above sin, which many say they are now doing, and we know also again that such is impossible.

Earlier in this writing, the total depravity of the flesh of all men (and mankind everywhere) was Biblically described from Romans 3:10-18, by the Apostle Paul, and when it is personally revealed to us, we declare as he wrote, "for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." (Romans 7:18.) Immediately within our being, there is this certain, inward feeling, "therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Every single, individual, descendent of Adam and Eve has a soul without exception to be saved or lost, and the awesome state and standing of that soul in nature for all of them before God is shown here, "Behold, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE." "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." (Ezekiel 18:20.) But on the other side of the page is this scripture, "THE LAW OF THE LORD IS PERFECT, CONVERTING THE SOUL." (Psalms 19:7.) The conversion of the soul here is synonymous with the meaning of the terms, born-again, begotten again, sanctified, quickened, in the scriptures.

In the quickening, conversion and sanctification of the soul, which is accomplished by the new birth within us, there is a union or marriage. The converted soul is joined together with the SPIRIT OF GOD. The sin in the soul of the old (or outer) man is purged and eliminated under the quickening and sanctifying power of the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and it is delivered from the power and bondage of the law of sin and death. The soul is converted, as the Psalmist declared, washed and sealed from sin by

the sanctification of the Spirit of God, as in Psalms 19:7. Sin dwelleth and is now condemned in the flesh. (See Romans 8:4.)

It has always been, since time immemorial in all legal marriage vows of human kind, the bride (or woman) takes the surname of her husband and his family. As in my case, my wife's maiden name was Mary Susan Turlington. When we were married March 29, 1958, her name became Mary Susan Mewborn. This principle has its origin and foundation from the scriptures (Bible) right here, "And this is his name whereby he shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jeremiah 23:6). This is the name of our precious Lord and Master. "And this is the name wherewith she shall be THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jeremiah 33:36.) Here in this marriage, the born again, converted souls of the elect family of God take the name of their Husband, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, or our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the sanctification of the Spirit of their souls, "they are SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of their inheritance of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Ephesians 1:13.) This is one (and the only One) marriage that will never be destroyed, separated, divorced or annulled. It is to the Church of the Living God. Death, life angels, principalities, powers, height, depth or any other creature will never be able to daunt or intimidate it, as affirmed by the scripture. (See Romans 8:389-39.)

Always, when the soul of one of the chosen, elect vessels of God's mercy has been born again, a marriage has taken place with the Spirit of God and the soul and spirit of that person. This fact of truth is borne from the following scripture: "Ye are become dead to the law by the Body of Christ that ye should be MARRIED to Another, even to HIM who is raised from the dead." The very close relationship between the Spirit of God and the spirit (or soul) of man in the new birth is shown here, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:16.) Capitalization of the word Spirit with the non-capitalization of the word spirit

refer to the Spirit of God with the spirit of man. The two are brought together and joined in this union. Our spirit and soul are made a part of His Spirit. When a soul has received this transformation from nature to grace, there is no earthly, terrestrial power that can ever get it back again under the curse and bondage of that law of original sin and death of Adam's transgression of guilt and condemnation. By reason of the new birth, that soul can never be brought back again under the curse of the law of sin and death.

A poet has beautifully expressed it this way,

"There, if thy Spirit touch the soul,

And grace her mean abode,
Oh! with what peace, and joy, and love,

She communes with her God."

Here, we have that relationship of the Spirit of God with the soul so vividly described!

"YE WHICH HAVE FOLLOWED ME IN THE REGENERATION OF THE SON OF MAN," (Matt. 19:28), and "ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY HE SAVED US BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION AND RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST." (Titus 3:5.)

The above words of Jesus, "Ye which have followed me in the Regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," with the inspired words of Titus, a beloved companion and friend of the Apostle Paul, "According to His mercy He saved us, by the WASHING of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" portray the reality and certainty of the Salvation of those born-again, restored souls of the covenanted family of God, those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Those born-again, regenerated souls were in the Body of Christ when "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and WATER." (John 19:34.) "This is He that came by WATER and Blood, even Jesus Christ; not by WATER only, but by WATER and blood." "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the WATER and the Blood, and these three agree in one." (1st John 5:6&8.) The WATER here cleansed those souls who He

bore in His own Body from their sins, and the Blood atoned and made full payment for their debt of sin for which they could never pay nor satisfy. The word "WASHING" (of Regeneration), as used here, implies the use of water and cleansing, the cleansing and sanctification of the soul.

The Apostle Paul declared in his new, regenerated life in Galatians 1:20, "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." His Old Man, Saul of Tarsus, had been crucified with Christ, and the life, Paul said, that he now LIVED is a new one, not the old sinful life in the past of the flesh, when he persecuted the saints of God; but, a New One (in the New Man, The Inner Man) that he LIVED by the faith of the Son of God. This new life is THE LIFE OF REGENERATION, and all of the born-again saints of God, throughout all ages of time, have lived and walked it from the time of their new birth until the time of the departure of their souls from this time world.

Peter said those who are blessed to live the new life of Regeneration are 'kept' in it, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." (1st Peter 1:5.) Peter's faith in being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, ties in and merges with the inspired language of the Apostle Paul, "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance" "UNTIL THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION," (Ephesians 1:14), which is the resurrection of our vile bodies at the last day. "Followed Me in the Regeneration," John said, "these are they which are not defiled with women; for they are virgins. THESE are they WHICH FOLLOW THE LAMB whithersoever HE goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto GOD and to the LAMB." (Rev. 14:4.)

"THE FIRST MAN ADAM WAS MADE A LIVING SOUL, THE LAST ADAM WAS MADE A QUICKENING SPIRIT."
(1st Corinthians 15:45)

When the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ, was born

into this time world, He had a body, soul and spirit. This fact is borne (or proven) by the following scriptures:

"This is my body which is broken for sin." 1st Cor. 11:24.

"My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." Mark 14:34.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23:46.

When God spoke to His Son in the morning of time saying, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," (Genesis 1:26), Adam was created likewise here with a body, soul and spirit. Also, the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ, is a "quickening Spirit." (This Spirit of Him is not His human spirit that he referred to above in Luke 23:46.) Yet, "He was made like unto His brethren" and "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15.) As the Son of man, He had all power to quicken and regenerate the souls of sinners and to raise the dead, "for as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." (John 5:21.) Christ was both Spirit and spirit. The Spirit here is Divinity, while the other spirit is humanity.

Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians (Chapter 25, 23rd verse) utters this inspired prayer in their behalf of their salvation, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be **PRESERVED BLAMELESS** unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." When the born-again, quickened, regenerated souls of the children of God are separated from their mortal body in this life, they **REST** in that glorious peace in the paradise of God, while their bodies **SLEEP** in the grave and in the dust from whence they came until that day when "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel." "We which are alive and remain unto His coming shall not prevent them which are **ASLEEP**." (1st Thessalonians 4:14&16.)

It is declared here, that those born-again, regenerated souls that are alive on the earth at His second coming, will have no preeminence over those souls resting in the **Paradise** of God and their **respective** bodies sleeping in the **dust**. They will be reunited

with the same identical, resurrected, immortal, incorruptible bodies, and those that remain, Paul said, "shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1st Cor. 15:51-52.) The soul of Christ was not left in His body when it lay in Joseph's new tomb, as it was prophesied by David in Psalms 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "He (David) seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ that His soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." Acts. 2:31. The soul of Christ did not remain with His body in the tomb, but it returned to the Paradise of God with those names written in the Lamb's Book of Life contained within it. Also, while it lay in the tomb, it (His Body) saw no corruption. Each body, soul and spirit of all the saints of God are **PRESERVED BLAMELESS** forever, even from the power of Hell and the final destruction of their bodies likewise from eternal death, hell and the grave. This is mentioned here only to show, that the born-again, regenerated soul of each of His saints, was never in the grave or hell after regeneration, as believed by some today in what is known as the "soul sleeping belief", where the soul sleeps with the body in the grave.

J. M. Mewborn
May 3, 2004

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ZION'S LANDMARK FOR YEAR 2003

Since the establishment of the publication, **Zion's Landmark**, 136 years ago, it has been the custom of the paper to acknowledge all outside contributions (those over and above the regular subscription rates and price of the paper) at least once each year. We wish to say to each of you, "thank you" many times for each and every penny, which is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated! We also want you to know that a portion of these funds is used to pay for subscriptions of those unable to pay, as well as for the continuation and financial upkeep of the paper. Thank each (and all) of you again and again!

J. M. Mewborn, Editor

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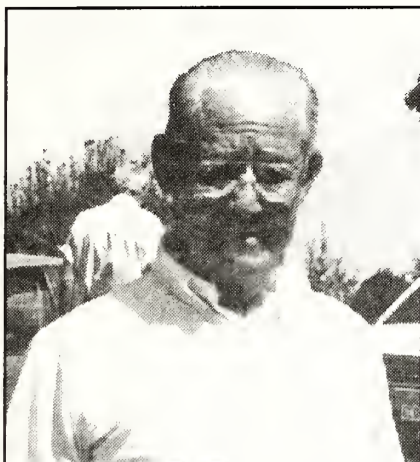
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JAMES HARVEY PAYNE

On October 22, 2001, the soul of our beloved brother in Christ, James Harvey Payne, was called home from this world to rest in Jesus until His second coming. He was born July 25, 1918, making his stay here on earth 83 years and 3 months.

Brother Harvey Payne was preceded in death by his Mother and Father, Cora Magdalene and Elder Ruben Hasten Payne; daughter, Deborah Walton, and is survived by his wife, Sister Hazel Payne; daughters and son-in-law, Carolyn and Carl Collin Wright, and Lois Akers; son-in-law Bob Walton; five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. His funeral services were held at Vaughan-Guynn-McGrady Chapel, Hillsville, Va., on October 25, 2001. Elder Sidney Rakes and Elder Kenneth Hopkins officiated. His body was laid to rest in Swecker Cemetery.

Brother Harvey Payne asked for a home with Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church, in Sylvatus, Carroll County, Virginia, and was baptized on June 14, 1953, by his precious



JAMES HARVEY PAYNE
1918 - 2001
(83 YRS., 2 MOS., 28 DAYS)

father, Elder Ruben Hasten Payne (known by all as Elder Duley Payne). At that time Elder Payne was serving several churches including Little Vine. This day was made even more special when Brother Harvey's wife, Sister Hazel Payne, asked for a home with the church at the river bank, and was baptized with her husband, Brother Harvey.

About two years later Brother Harvey had a vision or dream. He said while fishing one day, a Voice spoke to him about the troubles he would have to face while serving as Deacon of the church. The church saw fit to call Brother Harvey for our Deacon, and he was ordained in July, 1955.

Brother Harvey Payne served the church faithfully and with great devotion for 46 years. He believed that the church and her welfare always came first. He served in the upkeep of Little Vine Church building and grounds, making sure that the church business was always done with decency and order, and was always at the door with a handshake and smile. He truly loved working on the church building, and often said so. A pastor, while in the pulpit once said, "Brother Harvey spends as much time at the church building and premises as he did at home."

We at Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church, Sylvatus, Virginia, the New River Association, and all who knew Brother Harvey, will miss him very much; however, we are fully aware that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written at the request of Little Vine Church by,
Jackie O'Neil
Rockville, Maryland 20853

CHARLIE T. ("MIKE") STOOTS

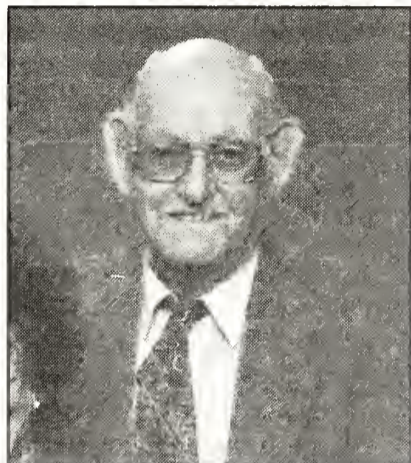
Brother Charlie Thomas ("Mike") Stoots was born in Wythe County, Virginia, on May 18, 1917, and passed from this life October 13, 2003, making his stay on earth 86 years and approximately 5 months.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years, Sister Violet Katrina Stoots in May, 2001, his parents, Michael Elbert and Mary Magdalene Winesett Stoots; two sisters, Edna and Sarah, and a brother, Robert. Surviving him are

a daughter and son-in-law, Myrna and Roger Burnett, Staunton, Virginia; a son and daughter-in-law, Adrian and Wilma Stoots, Wytheville, Virginia; four grandchildren, two great granddaughters, two special sisters-in-law, Mary Edwards, Bladensburg, Maryland and Avis King, Austinville, Virginia, with several nieces and nephews.

Brother Mike Stoots united with Little Vine Church, Sylvatus, Carroll County, Virginia, in June 2001, and was baptized into the fellowship of the church the second Sunday in July 2001 by Elder Kenneth Hopkins.

His funeral service was held at Barnett Funeral Chapel, Wytheville, Va., on Wednesday, October 15, 2003, at 11:00 a.m., conducted by Elder Kenneth Hopkins. His body was laid to rest next to his wife in



CHARLIE T. ("MIKE") STOOTS
1917 - 2003
(86 YRS., 4 MOS., 13 DAYS)

the West End Cemetery, Wytheville, to await the morning of the resurrection when the Lord shall come in a cloud of glory to gather His little ones to that eternal home. Brother Mike often spoke of the great love given him for the church of the Living God. He attended faithfully until he became too ill. His favorite hymn was,

"How lost was my condition
Till Jesus made me whole!
There is but one Physician
Can cure a sin-sick soul," etc.

Written at the request of
Little Vine Church by
Jackie O'Neil
Rockville, Maryland 20853

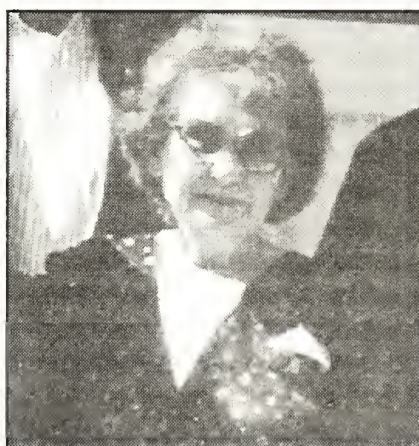
AVIS LEONA KING
1925 - 2004

The last verse of Hymn No. 144 (Goble Hymn Book) by Watts, "Why Should We Start And Fear To Die?", witnesses what, I believe, my dear, sweet Aunt, Avis King, experienced on her death bed. The day before she went to sleep in Jesus, she called me to her bedside and plainly stated, "The Lord Can Make Your Death Bed A Sweet Flower." Isaac Watts wrote this last verse as follows:

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast I lean my head
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

On January 8, 2004, this sweet flower closed her eyes and went to sleep in Jesus, making her stay

here on earth 78 years, 2 months and 3 days. She was preceded in death by her Mother and Father, Sister Marry Emma Surratt and Brother Charles Howard Surratt, who were both members of Little



AVIS L. KING
(1925 - 2004)
(78 Yrs., 2 Mos., 3 Days)

Vine Primitive Baptist Church, Sylvatus, Carroll County, Virginia. Avis King was married to Clinton Sutphin and to them was born a son, Ronald Sutphin, Austinville, Virginia, and a daughter, Mrs. Sandra Alderman Brooks, Wytheville, Virginia. She was later married to Hubert King and to them were born two sons, Mr. Jerry King, North Carolina, and Blake King, who died in 1980 in a drowning accident in the nearby New River. In addition to her three surviving children, Avis is also survived by seven grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, five step grandchildren, a sweet sister, Sister Mary Edwards, Bladensburg, Maryland, and several nieces and nephews.

Her funeral services were held at Reese Funeral Chapel, Austinville, Virginia, on Saturday, January 10, at 11:00 a.m., with Elder Kenneth Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram officiating. Her body was laid to rest at Little Vine Church Cemetery, until, as the Holy Scripture promises, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the Voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." He will gather His saints together in that last day whose bodies are sleeping in the dust. Then it reads "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord." (1st Thessalonians 4:16-17.)

The Lord sweetly blessed Elder Kenneth Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram with comforting thoughts and prayer. As we were ready to leave the grave, Elder Hopkins said, "Now as you leave here today, do not feel you are leaving your loved one unattended, because she is being attended to."

Avis King exhibited a sweet hope of eternal life. She dearly loved Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church. Throughout her life, she told of beautiful dreams and visions she had. One was a day when Elder and Sister Sidney Rakes had wanted to visit her after church meeting.

She said, as we entered her door, "your smiles and faces stand out so brightly that you look Heavenly and not of this world."

Avis King was blessed to write a beautiful poem about Little Vine Church. I am sending a copy, and, if you have space, would you please print it to accompany her obituary.

Jackie O'Neil
Rockville, Maryland 20853

(Please see the above poem on page one of this issue of *Zion's Landmark*.)

IRENE (MABE) JOYCE

It is with a heavy heart and great sorrow that I attempt to write this obituary for my sister in the flesh, and, I hope, in Christ, Sister Irene (Mabe) Joyce. She was born March 2, 1936, in Walnut Cove, Stokes County, North Carolina, to Roosevelt and Sally (Tilley) Mabe. She passed on to her Lord March 27, 2004. On June 3, 1952, she married William Odell Joyce, and to them were born four children.

Sister Irene was a faithful member to her church and attended sister churches and associations near and far. She joined Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church, Mayodan,



IRENE ("MABE") JOYCE
1936 - 2004

Rockingham County, North Carolina, August 14, 1965, and was a firm believer in the true doctrine of predestination and election by the Grace of God. She attended her church and went with Elder Meeks and myself for many years to different churches.

In June, 1996, she suffered a severe stroke and was paralyzed on her right side and used a cane walker. This did not keep her from attending church. Now she walks with God and doesn't need a walker anymore. In November, 2003, she was diagnosed with cancer. This battle she lost, with her family around her at her last hour. God spoke her name. She closed her eyes and her soul went peacefully to meet her Lord and Saviour. We, the church, feel our loss is God's gain. Her suffering here is finished and she awaits that glorious morning when Christ shall call her, "Come Home, my weary Children, and I will give you eternal rest." It is our sincere desire that God will be

with her loved ones and comfort them from day to day in their loss.

Her funeral service was conducted on March 29, 2004, by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Elder Hicks Meeks and Elder Tommy Pegram at Ray's Funeral Home, Madison, North Carolina. Her body, but not her spirit, was laid to rest in Ridgeview Cemetery, Eden, North Carolina. Her father, Roosevelt Mabe, her son, Wm. Odell Joyce, Jr., daughter, Penny Lynn Joyce, granddaughter, Nicole Black, and her brother, Vernon Wayne "Doc" Mabe, all preceded Sister Irene in death.

She is survived by her husband of 52 years, William Odell Joyce, her son, Kenny Joyce, daughter, Judy (Joyce) Black, one granddaughter, Jennifer (Black) Jackson, one grandson, T. J. Black, and three great grandchildren, Gabriele Jackson, Nicholas Jackson and Alec Cates, all of Stoneville, North Carolina. Her mother, Sally (Tilley) Mabe, Mayodan; two sisters, Mary (Mabe) and her husband, Floyd James, Mayodan, and Georgia M. Thomas, Mayodan; two brothers, Hobert C. and wife, Vera Mabe, Kernersville, N. C., Johnny W. and Shirley Mabe, Stoneville, N. C., special nephew, Staff Sergeant Michael Ray Thomas of the U. S. Marine Corps (with his wife, Cynthia and their three children, Christy M., Amanda D. and Tabitha S. Thomas).

We, the Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church, extend our deepest sympathy to the family, and our hope is that God will reconcile all of us to His Holy, Righteous Will. My sister dearly loved this old hymn, "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me; I one was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see." Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be placed in our church records, a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be sent to Zion's Landmark for publication.

Done by order of Mayodan Church in conference April 17, 2004.

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk

NANNIE WHITE DAY AIKEN

(Sept. 18, 1906 - Dec. 18, 2003)
(Age: 97 Years, 2 Mos. & 30 Days)

She was a native of Person County, North Carolina, born the daughter of the late Charlie and Jennie James Day. She was married to Romey Aiken on December 23, 1924, who predeceased her in death along with two sons, James R. Aiken and Clyde S. Aiken; also five brothers and three sisters.

Surviving her are two daughters-in-law, Mary Lee Gates Aiken and Frances N. Aiken; two sisters, Jennie Lou D. Rogers and Josephine D. Huff; five grandchildren, Linda Parker, Rich Aiken, Douglas Aiken, Jerery Aiken and Randall Aiken and six great-grandchildren.

Sister Nannie Aiken first united with Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church on the second Sunday in

April, 1934, and was baptized the following second Sunday in May, 1934, by Elder J. A. Herndon. When the U. S. Government took the church grounds to build what is now known as Camp Butner during World War II in the year 1942, she carried her letter to Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church, Roxboro, N. C., and later brought her letter to Rougemont Primitive Baptist Church on February 17, 1962, where she remained until her death, a most loving, faithful member, a devout, true believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace; no one could ever persuade her otherwise.

Elder Bobby Daughtry, her pastor, spoke so wonderfully at the funeral of her belief and conviction that was given her by GOD'S Almighty Grace. These words by the poet are so fitting to her case,

"It is not death to die -
To leave this weary road,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on High,
To be at Home with GOD."

We feel that her sister, Jennie Lou, did all that she could for her to make her comfortable in her latter days of over two years in the Extended Care Facility. We feel that her soul is now resting in the Paradise of GOD, awaiting that day of all days when the bodies of the elect family of GOD will be raised in His likeness to be free from all sin and contamination to praise Him forever and ever and be satisfied. Her body was laid to rest in Person Memorial Cemetery, Roxboro, N. C., beside the resting place of her dear husband.

Written by one who dearly loved her and for what she believed.

Blanche H. Garrett
Rougemont, N. C.

Done by order of Rougemont Primitive Baptist Church, Rougemont, Durham County, North Carolina, and approved in conference this 20th day of March, 2004.

Elder Bobby Daughtry, Moderator
Everett Hill, Clerk

ABBOTT'S CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 177th Annual Session of the Abbott's Creek Primitive Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, with the Church at Rock Hill, Asheboro, Randolph County, North Carolina, to be entertained by Gaines Grove Church, and to commence on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 2004, and will continue through Saturday and Sunday following, these dates being August 20th, 21st and 22nd, inclusively.

Rock Hill Church is located in Asheboro, North Carolina. Those coming from the north or south, take U. S. Hwy. 220 to its junction with U. S. Hwy. 64. Then take U. S. Hwy. 64 West about 1/2 mile to Old Farmer Road on your right. Turn right at this point to church location on your right, a short distance.

Those coming from east or west on U. S. Hwy. 64 or N. C. Hwy. 49 north or south, come to U. S. Hwy. 64 - U. S. 220 interchange and follow U. S. Hwy 64 to Old Farmer Road, as directed above.

We cordially invite our ministering brethren, brethren, sisters and friends to come and be with us this year, 2004, in our 177th session.

James M. Jones, Clerk
Katherine F. Harward,
Asst. Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME OF NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION TO FOURTH WEEKEND, EACH YEAR, FROM SECOND WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER, BEGINNING THIS FOURTH WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER, 2004

Dear Elder Mewborn,

Please ask all of our correspondents and friends to note the change in the meeting time of the New River Association, as noted above and below, beginning with this year, if the Lord will, 2004. If the Lord will, we hope to see you and Susan soon.

Sincerely and gratefully yours,
J.B. Mitchell, Jr.
Christianburg, VA.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 210th Annual Session of the New River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Indian Creek Church, Floyd County, Virginia and will be entertained by Indian Creek Church, beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, and will continue through Sunday following, the dates being September 24th, 25th and 26th, 2004.

Indian Creek Church is located on Va. Hwy. 787 in Indian Valley, Virginia. Those coming by Route No. 221, 52 or 8, take Route 221 to Willis, Va. Then take Route 787 appx. 7 miles west to Indian Valley and church location on your left. Those who travel Int. 81, take Exit (114) to Childress on Route 600; then on to Route 693, then turn left on 787; go appx. 15 miles to church site on right side of Hwy. If you should travel Route 8, come to Drive-In Restaurant; turn left on 693 - you will intersect on 787; turn left, go appx. 15 miles to church site on your right.

We invite our ministering brethren, brethren, sisters and friends to visit us during this session of our Association, 2004.

J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Christiansburg, Va. 24073

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING TO BE HELD AT MAYODAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, MAY 30, 2004

Dear Brother Mewborn,

Would you be kind enough to publish in Zion's Landmark that Mayodan Church will have the next 5th Sunday meeting (only on Sunday) in May, the date being May 30, 2004, or the fifth Sunday in May. We extend our heartfelt invitation to all our correspondents, associations and independent churches of our precious brethren, sisters and friends to come and be with us on this date, especially our ministering brethren.

If the Lord will, we hope to assemble at 9:30 a.m., with preaching service to begin at 10:00 a.m.

From north or south on U. S. Hwy. 220, turn onto 220 (Business) into the town of Mayodan. Church location is on the west side of the street. Those coming N. C. Route 770, turn south on Janet Road; go 2 miles to U. S. 220 (Business). Turn right and go 1 1/2 miles to church location on your right.

We hope you can be with us this 5th Sunday, May 30, 2004.

Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk
Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church

MILL BRANCH UNION MEETING

Dear Brother Mewborn,

Our Mill Branch union will meet with the Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, Bishopville, Lee County, South Carolina, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 2004, the dates being May 29th and 30th, 2004, if the Lord will.

Travel directions to Mt. Pleasant Church are as follows: Those coming U. S. Hwy. 15 south, go through Bishopville (for) about 2 miles; turn right on Brown Town Road; go 2 miles to Church Road; turn left to church site on your left. Those traveling Interstate 20, take Exit 116 to U. S. Hwy. 15 North; go 1/2 mile, turn left on Brown Town Road; go 2 miles; turn left on Church Road; Church site is about 200 yds. on your left.

To our correspondents we trust you will be blest to visit us this session in our Union Meeting, and we extend welcome in love to you to come and be with us, especially our brethren in the ministry.

Billy Boyd, Union Clerk
Loris, South Carolina 29569

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S4 P2

SONG OF THE SPECKLED BIRD

(The True Church Of The Living
GOD)

("Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour." Jer. 12:9.)

There're many birds of different wing,
The world delights to hear them sing;
But there is one that's seldom heard,
The poor, despised speckled bird.
This speckled bird is much abhorred,
By all who do not love the Lord;
And do you ask the reason why?
Her treasure is laid way up on High.

She lives on food which others hate;
What she calls small, the world calls great;
And food that others love to eat,
Is to her taste like putrid meat.
This speckled bird has food from Heaven,
Not bought by her but freely given;
It's food His children love to eat,
While hovering round the Saviour's feet.

All others live on tainted meat,
Just such as vultures love to eat;
Because the speckled bird won't join,
They all affirm she is unkind.
Upon her head her specks appear;

Look on her breast, you'll find them there,
On every part where feathers grow;
Her specks do shine and brightly glow.

This speckled bird delights to sing,
The praises of her God and King;
She views her specks as marks of Heaven,
And pledges which her Lord has given.
Thousands have tried to learn her song,
They do their best, but still go wrong;
Their notes will not do in every place.
Except among those who hope they're saved by grace.

The speckled bird will loud contend,
Her song too good for them to mend;
And when she brings them to the test,
They talk and do like all the rest.
All other birds unite and say,
Let us throw these little things away;
The things that split us are but few,
For we are birds, and so are you.

The speckled bird now shows her Robe,
The finest One that's on the globe;
And in this dress made clean and white,
She's satisfied that all is right.
This Robe's complete without a seam;
In it a fault cannot be seen.
For it is all the Gift of God,
And only found in Christ, our Lord.

The others then their robes bring forth,
From east and west, from south and north,
But warp and woof, and shape and size,
Are linsey-woolsey in her eyes.
She did behold, although combine.
They were not gold, although they shine;
For iron, brass, and steel are bright,
When polished well, and please the sight.

Then said one of the vulture

crew,
"We know not what to do with you;
If you are right then we are lost,
And all our aims of Heaven are crossed.
Now we can pray and shout and sing,
And make our meeting houses ring.
But if you ask us for the cause,
We must admit we're at a loss.

"Come every bird, we'll all unite,
To put this speckled bird to flight,
Although we do not see alike,
We'll all agree at her to strike."
The battle now is in array,
And they are sure they'll win the day.
Before they know what they're about,
The speckled bird puts them to rout.

They stand amazed and wonder why,
The speckled bird doth them defy,
But if they knew who's at their Head,
They'd wonder why they're not all dead.
While thus whipped out they cannot rest,
They promise each to do their best.
Each one pretends his heart is stirred,
And that he loves the speckled bird.

They are all an undivided band,
They work things to each other's hand,
Their own disputes they lay aside,
Till they the speckled bird have tried.
Each one has his own work assigned,
One pitiful and another kind,
Each one of them is now at his post,
And each one tries to do the most.

One tried so hard to arrange his dress,
And seems to be in deep distress;
They're willing now to be the tool,
If they the speckled bird can fool.
Their skill is tried but all in vain,
They have their labor for their pain.
The speckled bird is still secure,
Kept by God's almighty power.

(Soon on the wings of love she'll fly,
To join the saints beyond the sky,
And on the Hill of Sweet Repose,
She'll bid adieu to all her woes.)
The speckled bird at last shall rest,
From all her woes among the blest;
And Heaven afford her sweet repose,
When utter ruin shall at last confound her foes.

(Anonymous)

TO ALL THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS:

During the month of July, 2003, the churches of the Union Association of Texas found themselves without a pastor. Our Association today, which consists of only two small churches, is continuing to meet on the regular meeting days and times with singing, prayerful hearts, we hope, and scripture reading from the inspired Word of God, The Bible.

Since that time, one year ago, Thanks Be Unto God, HE Has Blessed Us with faithful preaching brethren and friends to come and be with us in our midst. Our God has said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord." Zephaniah 3:12. If not deceived, we feel at this time that we fall into this category.

On October 17th, 18th and 19th, 2003, we were blest to hold our Association because the Good Lord sent Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Stuart, Virginia (of Thomas Grove Church) and Elder L. M. Davis, Bishopville, South Carolina (Mill Branch Association), to be with us at Holly Springs Church, Anderson County, Texas. Along with these two elders, there were dear friends who also came to be with us from several states, as well as other places here in Texas, at the time.

It was on November 15th and 16th, 2003, that Elder J. M. Mewborn, Coats, North Carolina, and also again on March 13th and 14th, 2004, (with his wife, Susie), were blest to come to Zion's Rest Church at Tomball, Harris County, (near Houston), Texas. Both meetings were well attended and humbly received. (Their daughter, Suzanne, who was living in Fort Worth at the time, also came with them. We were very glad to have all three with us in these services.)

Again, on April 19th and 20th, 2004, Elder George Paul, Aynor, South Carolina, (Mill Branch Association), Elder Eugene Gunter, Gastonia, North Carolina, (of the Yellow River Association of Georgia) and Elder Kenneth Hopkins, were blest to be with us at Holly Springs Church for a wonderful two-days' meeting. Accompanying these three elders were Brother Hewatt Fleming, Danielsville, Ga., Brother Clifton Pegram, Ridgeway, Va., along with good friends, Dan Delp, Fincastle, Va., and Carlton Brown, Elkin, North Carolina. Upon arrival at our home on Friday evening, April 18th, they had, as they say in Texas, good hot "TEXAS SOUP", and afterwards lots of good fellowship and love, which we all were blest to enjoy so very much!

On May 7th and 8th, 2004 my dear wife, Edith, and I were blest to attend the Yellow River Association, held with Mt. Zion Church, in Athens, Clarke County, Georgia. This was an excellent, peaceful Association for both days, Friday and Saturday, after which on Saturday afternoon, we again were blest to witness the baptismal service of Sister Joyce Morgan, wife of Dr. Fred Morgan. (He had recently been received earlier in Haynes Creek Church, Gwinnett County, Ga.), also Judge Bryant Huff, (Retired) of the Superior Court of the Atlanta area. This sacred rite of the church, the ordinance of baptism, was administered to both candidates jointly by their pastors, Elder Eugene Gunter and Elder Kenneth Adams, respectively, in the presence of a large crowd of church members and family friends in the nice lake (or pond) on the home premises

of Brother Hewatt and Elizabeth Fleming, in Danielsville, Georgia.

After the rite of baptism, that was performed on Saturday afternoon, Elder J. M. Mewborn and wife, Susie, accompanied Sister Edith and me to their home in Coats, North Carolina. On Sunday morning following, May 9th, (Mother's Day), we attended the monthly meeting with them at Mewborn's Church, Greene County, (Eastern) North Carolina, where we met several Old Baptist members and fine people.

On Monday morning, May 10th, returning back home to the southwest, Sister Edith and I had a most pleasant visit with Elder Calvin and Lottie Harward, Sanford, North Carolina, and then on to the home of Elder Kenneth Hopkins and wife, Marie, on Wednesday morning in Stuart, Virginia, leaving them with a final farewell, arriving back at our home in Montalba, Texas, a one-way driving distance of a little over 1,200 miles, May 14th, in late afternoon. The good Lord blest us with a safe journey from beginning to end on this wonderful trip.

May we say in closing that we feel and believe we have seen and witnessed a glorious manifestation and carrying out of that ancient promise of the Living God to His blessed people, "though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His Hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet, have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor His seed begging bread." Psalms 37:25.

If it were not for you, God's dear people in the eastern United States with all of His will and purpose in our unworthy behalf, we would be having a long period, here in Texas, without hearing His blessed Word, or preaching.

We feel we have been truly blessed to enjoy all of your love and sweet fellowship with each and everyone. May God's great Love and free Grace be with all of you and His people everywhere! From the very least, an unworthy brother and sister in hope, if ones at all,

George A. & Edith Pinkerton
Montalba, Texas
June 4, 2004

**A HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE HISTORY
OF THE UNION
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS**
(Taken from Hassell's Church History. Please see footnote at bottom of article.)

Having received of Elder Ben Parker, a close family relative of Elder Daniel Parker, of Texas this historical record of the rise and progress of the first Old School Baptist Association in that State, we now proceed to give an account of it as follows:

The present Pilgrim Church in Anderson County, now a member of this Association, was first constituted in the State of Illinois, Crawford County, on the 26th day of July, 1833, by the authorities of four churches that were members of the Wabash District Association, and she moved to Texas in the Fall of the same year, 1833, holding their meetings within the circle of their wagons of their wagon train as they traveled the Indian trails and brambles through the perils of an unexplored wilderness. About a dozen families constituted the company, as they were led by the head of the expedition and their leader, Elder Daniel Parker. Elder Daniel Parker was a close family relative of Elder Ben Parker, the latter who has supplied this information as contained in this historical record, as we have stated.

Pilgrim Church was considered the first regularly constituted Old School Baptist Church in Texas, when Texas belonged to the Government of Mexico, and the Roman Catholic Church was the

established religion of that country. Texas was then a barren wilderness land, with only a very few settlers within it. Rarely, very, very seldom, only now and then, could a child of Grace be found. As immigration gradually increased, particularly after "The Battle of the Alamo" and the establishment of Texas statehood in April, 1836, other churches were formed, so that on the 11th day of October, 1840, four of them by their representatives, met with the church at Hopewell, near Douglas, in Nacogdoches County, in the Republic of Texas, and formed the Union Primitive Baptist Association of the Old School or Predestinarian Faith and Order.

Pilgrim, with messengers, Elders Daniel Parker, Garrison Greenwood, William Brittain, Brethren Eli Bowen, Richard Eaton and John Grigsby, with 56 members.

Mount Pleasant, with messengers, Elder Allen Samuels and Brethren J. W. Parker and Ransom Alphin with 25 members.

Hopewell, with messengers, Moses Waters, Josiah T. Cook, Eli Kassell (Cassell), John H. Russell, John N. Elliot and Boley Waters with 16 members.

Boggy Bayou, with messengers, Elder John Ray and James Jordan with 25 members.

The UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION of the OLD SCHOOL or PREDESTINARIAN FAITH and ORDER was the first Association ever formed in the State of Texas, and also the first (and oldest) ever formed

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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west of the Mississippi River in the United States of America. One of these original churches (the Boggy Bayou) in the State of Louisiana was about 300 miles off, and as other churches were added, some west of the Colorado River, they were 500 miles off from the place of the first meeting. Messengers from these churches traveling to the yearly Associations, bearing their epistles of love, had frequently to stake out or hobble their horses and spread their blankets on the bare ground for a bed at night, with only the starry Heavens above for a covering, trusting and hoping in their God to protect them from their savage foes, the Indians. They were very numerous in those days and hostile, to no end, in many parts of Texas at that time. Many were the trials and sufferings of these faithful ones in establishing, as far as in them lay, the True Church of the Living God in that day in a wilderness land of untold dangers and an environment that was completely unfriendly altogether; yet, they went through all with patience, and esteemed their hardships light when compared with the martyrs of old.

PEACE has abounded in their midst and steadfastness has prevailed through these many years among these churches. She now corresponds with eight other Associations of the same faith and order. She now numbers (year of 1885) seventeen (17) churches holding 300 members, and by the formation of other Associations, dismissed from her, her boundary now extends about 120 miles from north to south, and 100 miles from east to west.

There is one of her churches in Houston County; five in Anderson; three in Henderson; one in Vanzandt; and one in Kaufman, all these being east of the Trinity River. Then, there are two in Freestone County, two in Leon County, and two in Limestone County, west of the Trinity River.

At the Sulphur Fork Association of northeast Texas, held with the church at Mount Gilead, Upshur County, Texas, in October, 1872, the Union Association was charged with holding the doctrine of Two-seedism, and her correspondence was at first

rejected; BUT, the correspondence was continued after her delegates answered all the following questions in the affirmative, viz: (1) Were all the human race created in Adam? (2) Did any but the elect fall under the law? (3) Is God alone self-existent? (4) Is God the Creator of all things? (5) Will the dead, both the righteous and the wicked, be resurrected at the last day? Will the actual, original, natural bodies of the Elect of God be raised spiritual ones in the resurrection of the just at the last day?

(Note: This very interesting history of the Union Association was taken from the History of The Church of God, From The Creation To A.D., 1885, by Elders C. B. Hassell and Sylvester Hassell, page Nos. 913 & 194. Ed.)

UNPARALLELED HISTORY

Elder Ben Parker (a close family member of Elder Daniel Parker) left on record in Hassell's Church History a bit of early, interesting history concerning the Union Primitive Baptist Association of Texas, that is probably unknown to many people and unparalleled by any other religious order or group in the history of our country, the United States of America.

I call your attention to his statement as made in Hassell's Church History on page 914, which reads as follows:

"This was the first Association ever formed in Texas, and the churches were at first very wide apart.

One of these (the Boggy Bayou Church) in the State of Louisiana, was about 300 miles off, and as other churches were added, SOME WEST OF THE COLORADO RIVER, they were 500 miles off from the place of first meeting."

When I first read the statement, "SOME (CHURCHES) WEST OF THE COLORADO RIVER," I became intrigued. Overwhelmed I was, when I thought of the horzonitcal, mileage distance from what is now in east Texas, Douglas, Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, all the way across to westward points beyond the Colorado River.

I reached for my 2004 Rand McNally Atlas and determined that the Colorado River rises in the Rocky Mountains of

Colorado, flows southwest into Utah, passes through Lake Mead and the Hoover Dam at the Colorado-Nevada border, into Arizona, through the Grand Canyon, to form the boundary line between Arizona and southeastern California, and then across the Mexican border, terminating in the Gulf of California.

If we should draw a straight line from the east Texas area of Nacogdoches to areas west of the Colorado River, we find ourselves in extreme southeastern California, Utah and Nevada. This distance would be something like 1,000 to 1,200 miles rather than 500 miles. Elder Ben Parker, no doubt, miscalculated this dis-



Holly Springs Primitive Baptist (Meeting House)

Montalba, Texas. Church was constituted June 1, 1860, by a presbytery consisting of Elder Ben Parker and others. (See article in this issue of Zion's Landmark.)

tance in those days of the early 1800's, or 19th century.

There was a driving force of great power, incomprehensive to the carnal, mortal minds of men, in the hearts and souls of those old pioneer Primitive Baptists in that day to bring their respective church letters to the Union Association. Repeating the language and words of Elder Ben Parker, "Messengers to the (Union) Association, bearing their epistles of love, had frequently to stake or hobble their horses, and spread their blankets on the ground for a bed at night, with the starry heavens for a covering, trusting (alone) in God to protect them from their savage foes, the Indians. They were numerous and very hostile in many parts of Texas in those days. Many were the trials and sufferings of the faithful in establishing, as far as in them lay, the true Church of God in that wilderness land; yet, they went through all with

patience, and esteemed their hardships light when compared with the martyrs of old."

When we look at the 2/3rd's distance (mileage) space between east Texas to the New Mexico state line, then across the entire spanse of space of the states of New Mexico and Arizona into extreme southeastern California, it is almost breath taking to think how those hearty Old (Predestinarian) Baptists, pioneer people, could have survived those long, arduous rides on horseback. Yet, there was an unseen, **POWERFUL** driving force, as we have said, behind such devotion and calling which could only have been that great love of God for the truth that brought those hungry, thirsty souls together to "Not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching," (Hebrews 10:25) to associate and affiliate with those of like precious faith, even as it is today among the true.

Elder Ben Parker said "they had frequently to stake OR HOBBLE their horses." This meant, not only tying them to trees, but they tied their legs together at night to keep them (the horses) from straying or being scattered, when frightened, by wild animals in the area. As they slept on blankets at night, with the stars overhead, they had neighbors, not only Indians, but scorpions, rattlesnakes, mountain lions, bears and Gila monsters, that lurked the areas in the darkness. They were brave souls, and make no mistake, there was something behind their travels other than mortality.

J.M. Mewborn
July 8, 2004

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE BARBARIC PRACTICE OF EXECUTION BY BEHEADING?

On May 11, 2004, an American by the name of Nick Berg, age 28, Philadelphia, Pa., was beheaded somewhere in Baghdad, Iraq, by Islamic militants, who claimed to have ties to al-Qaeda, the Islamic organization of Osama bin Laden. The description from a local Raleigh News &

Observer of his execution reads as follows, "Nick Berg, apparently bound, was seated on the floor and surrounded by five men wearing black ski masks." "The executioner stands directly behind Berg with a piece of paper in his hands, according to a description by Knight Ridder Newspapers. There is a shout of "God is the greatest!" in Arabic, followed by a blood-curdling scream from Berg. The man behind Berg then draws a knife from behind his back as Berg, still staring straight at the camera, cringes. The executioner grabs Berg by the hair, jerks his head to the side and slices his throat. The video then shows the men zooming in on him, crowding over his body as blood gushes over his orange jumpsuit. The men struggle for at least 30 seconds before the head is finally severed from the body. The clip ends with one man holding up and displaying Berg's severed head to the camera."

On or about June 18, 2004, a man by the name of Paul Johnson, age 49, an engineer who had worked in Saudi Arabia for more than a decade, his job that included work on Apache attack helicopter systems for Lockheed Martin, was beheaded in or near Riyadh, (Saudi Arabia), where his body was dumped at the time. A U.S. report stated through our embassy there, "that the Web site showed Johnson's severed head and that his body had been found later in the eastern part of that city." Paul Johnson was a native of Eagleswood (Township), New Jersey.

Then on Tuesday, June 22, 2004, Islamic militants beheaded a South Korean hostage by the name of Kim Sun-li. His body was found by a U.S. Patrol in the Baghdad area. A video, shown on television, showed him kneeling and blindfolded, as five masked men stood behind him. One of whom, it was reported, "motioned toward Kim with his right hand, while another wore a large knife tucked under his belt." In one of the videos, I, (J.M. Mewborn), personally heard this poor man begging for his life, saying "I do not want to die. I do not want to die." He

sounded so pitiful! His body was later thrown from a vehicle in Baghdad, and our military recovered the beheaded body with the head. Kim was only 33 years of age, who was an Arabic speaker, having worked in Iraq for a year as a translator for a South Korean company, supplying goods to the U.S. Army.

The King James Version of the **Bible** mentions three (3) incidents of human beheading that occurred in the times and lives of the Prophets and Apostles of old, and we shall list or enumerate them as follows:

It is recorded in II Samuel 4th Chapter concerning the only recorded incident or beheading that ever took place within the Camp of Israel. It involved the punishment by death of those who did it by King David. (Please read this chapter.)

"And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. And the sons of Rimmon, the Beerothite, Recham and Baanah went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of **ISH-BOSHETH**, who lay on a bed at noon. And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Recham and Baanah, his brother, escaped. For when they came into the house, he (**ISHBOSHETH**) lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and **BEHEADED** him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night. And they brought the head of **ISHBOSHETH** unto David of Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of **ISH-BOSHETH**, the son of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my soul the king this day of Saul, and of his seed. And David answered Recham and Baanah, his brother, the sons of Rimmon, the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought

good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? Shall I not, therefore, now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth? And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of **ISH-BOSHETH**, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron."

The second instance of beheading is mentioned in Matthew 14:1-12 when Herod, the Tetrach (Governor) of Judea, and a lineal descendent of Esau, had his soldiers behead John the Baptist in prison. John the Baptist had exposed and condemned an adulterous affair between him and Herodias, his brother Phillip's wife, for John had told Herod "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Matt. 14:4. Herod wanted to have John the Baptist put to death right then; however later at his birthday party, her daughter danced before them, and it pleased Herod very much. It was so pleasing to him, what he saw and I have wondered if it was what the world calls in this day and time, the topless kind, "that he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry: nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat (witnessed) with him at meat, he commanded it be given her. And he sent, and **BEHEADED** John in prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel, and she brought it (John the Baptist's head) to her mother. And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus."

Herod (pronounced HEHR uhd) was the name of a ruling family under the Emperor of Rome in Palestine during the 100's B.C., and the first 100 years after Christ's death, while Palestine was part of the Roman Emplre. There were

four of them, and their lineage of rule embraced at least 4 generations. Herod the Great ordered the deaths of all the children "from two years old and under" in an attempt to kill the infant, Jesus. (See Matt. 2.) Herod Antipas, the one who had John the Baptist beheaded, was a son of Herod the Great. They were (all of them) direct lineal descendants of Esau, twin brother of Jacob, who God said He hated (See Romans 9:13). Esau married, according to scripture, the only daughter of Ishmael, and Ishmael's mother, Hagar, an Egyptian, was a descendent of Ham, one of the three sons of Noah. No people in all of the scriptures persecuted the children of God and His true Church upon the face of the earth anymore than did the House of Herods. Read the scriptures and you will find it true. One of them "set Jesus at nought, mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous, purple robe," just prior to His crucifixion. (Luke 23:11.)

The third (and final) mention of **BEHEADING** is found recorded in Revelation 20:4. The Apostle John said, after he had been exiled in the Isle of Patmos, in the Revelation God gave him, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were **BEHEADED** for the WITNESS of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." John the Baptist and Ishbosheth were most assuredly, definitely, two of "those souls that were **BEHEADED** for the WITNESS of Jesus." I do not know how many more, their names, but make no mistake, **GOD** knows everyone of them.

"AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SAID UNTO HAGAR, BEHOLD,

THOU ART WITH CHILD, AND SHALT BEAR A SON, AND SHALT

CALL HIS NAME **ISH-MAEL**." "AND HE WILL BE A WILD MAN:

HIS HAND WILL BE AGAINST EVERY MAN, AND EVERY MAN'S

HAND AGAINST HIM." (Genesis 16:11-12.)

"And Sarah saw Ishmael, the son of Hagar, which she had born unto Abraham, **MOCKING**, wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bondwoman and her son." Abraham complied with Sarah's wishes, and "he rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, **AND SENT HER AWAY, AND SHE DEPARTED AND WANDERED IN THE WILDERNESS OF BEERSHEBA.**" (Genesis 21:9-12)

A WILD MAN IN THE WILDERNESS OF BEERSHEBA
(See Genesis 16:12 & Genesis 21:14)

The definition of "wild" means - living in a state of nature and not ordinarily tame or domesticated; growing or produced in the wild without the aid and care of man, not subject to restraint or cultivation; easily overcome by emotion; marked by turbulent agitation; uncivilized, barbaric, (meaning wild with aggressive violence) and characteristic and expressive of that which comes from the wilderness or an uncivilized society. When we understand what we have just written, we can see today, after almost 4,000 years why we are today having **TERRORISM, SUICIDE BOMBING, AND BEHEADING**. Their origins began when Abraham, at Sarah's demands, put Hagar and Ishmael out the door. The descendents of Ishmael and Esau are now at war with the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel in the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan in this terrible conflict over the dispute of ownership of land rights that began in 1948, when Israel was restored as a nation after a lapse of 2,000 years.

HIS (ISHMAEL'S) HAND WILL BE AGAINST EVERY MAN AND EVERY MAN'S HAND AGAINST HIM (Genesis 16:11-12).

Where is Osama bin Laden? The American CIA and FBI with the assistance of other countries have spent millions upon millions of dollars trying to find this man, who introduced this war on a full scale basis on 9/11/2001, and they cannot find him. The above prophecy, "**HIS (ISHMAEL'S) HAND**" propheti-

cally speaking, has to be Osama bin Laden to this point in universal history. The United States of America is drawn into this terrible conflict by reason of its support of Israel as a nation. It is like "a hook in the jaw", which cannot be removed at this time, in our country, the United States without any immediate hope in the future.

Our president, George W. Bush, has condemned the violence of beheading, saying, "The free world cannot be intimidated by the brutal action of these **BARBARIC** people." Will this conflict one day ere long terminate in what the Islamic world is now calling "The Mother of All Battles?" It is well prophesied in The Books of Ezekiel and Revelation.

Thank God today that the Constitution of the United States of America prohibits "the infliction of all cruel and unusual punishments." This provision is found in the 8th Amendment of our Constitution, adopted September 25, 1789. God has wonderfully blessed our country, as taught in the scriptures, that the practice of **BEHEADING** is prohibited here and cannot be connected with the operation of our government.

The lapse of 4,000 years has not changed in the least, or one iota, the disposition, manners, habits, characteristics, occupation, government and dress of these people. Any society, whether barbaric or unbarbaric, 4,000 years old, is not likely to change soon. The "hook in the jaw" in the United States, as a third party in this terrible conflict, now appears to be well in place and fastened securely. A **TERRORISM** it is that gives rise to **BEHEADING** and **SUICIDE BOMBING** and **MILITARY WARFARE** in general, whether at home or abroad. As renegades, they are completely hostile, belligerent, and bellicose!

J. M. Mewborn
July 13, 2004

CREMATION OR CREMATE
(Is It Scriptural And In Accordance With The Teaching Of The Bible?)

As time moves on, the bodies of more people are being cremated after death than they were years ago. The cost of cremation of bodies today is much lower in price than the cost of burial of them, but, it is a heathen practice, and those who do not have the fear of

God in their hearts will follow this wrong practice. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:18). "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." (II Timothy 3:1).

The following scriptures show that it was a heathen practice of burning bodies after death, to-wit:

"Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and **OFFERED HIM FOR A BURNT OFFERING** upon the wall ——. (2nd Kings 3:27).

" — for every abomination to the Lord, which He hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their **SONS AND THEIR DAUGHTERS THEY HAVE BURNT IN THE FIRE TO THEIR gods.**" (Deut. 12:31).

"Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnon, and **BURNT HIS CHILDREN IN THE FIRE**, after the abomination of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel." (2nd Chronicles 28:3).

"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of To-phet, which is in the valley of the son of Hin-nom to **BURN THEIR SONS AND THEIR DAUGHTERS IN THE FIRE; WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT, NEITHER CAME IT INTO MY HEART.**" (Jer. 7:30-31).

They have built also the high places of Ba-al, to **BURN THEIR SONS WITH FIRE FOR BURNT OFFERINGS UNTO BA-AL, WHICH I COMMANDED NOT, NOR SPAKE IT, NEITHER CAME IT INTO MY MIND.**" (Jer. 19:5).

"For when ye offer your gifts, **WHEN YE MAKE YOUR SONS TO PASS THROUGH THE FIRE**, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and shall I be inquired of you, O house of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you." (Ezek. 20:31) - Also (See Ezek. 23:37, Leviticus 18:21).

(Scriptures That Support The Practice Of Burial Of The Dead)

The following Scriptures testify of the true, correct Christian practice of **BURYING**

the dead.

It is recorded in 1st Corinthians 3:16-17, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is Holy, which temple ye are." If we allowed men to **burn** our body after death, would we be defiling the temple of God?

The prophets of old **BURIED** their dead: "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel." (Genesis 50:1-2). "My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou **BURY** me. Now, therefore, let me go up, I pray thee, and **BURY** my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, go up, and **BURY** thy father, according as he made thee swear. (Gen. 50: 5-6).

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt." (Genesis 50:24-26).

Ruth, the Moabitess, said, "Intreat 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; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I **be BURIED**: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but by death part thee and me." (Ruth 1:16-17).

So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the Word of the Lord. And **HE (GOD) BURIED HIM (MOSES)** in the land of Moab, over against Beth-pe or: but no man knoweth of **his sepulchre** unto this day." (Deut. 34:5-6).

Please keep in mind that the **LORD BURIED Moses**.

Now in closing, I believe the Scriptures, quoted above, show that it is a heathen practice to burn the bodies after death, and that is the Christian (or Godly) practice and way is TO BURY them after death.

Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick Street
Bastrop, Louisiana 71220
May 1, 2004

**ABRAHAM'S LOVE FOR
ISHMAEL AND HAGAR WAS
ONLY NATURAL. IT WAS
SPIRITUAL FOR ISAAC AND
SARAH.**

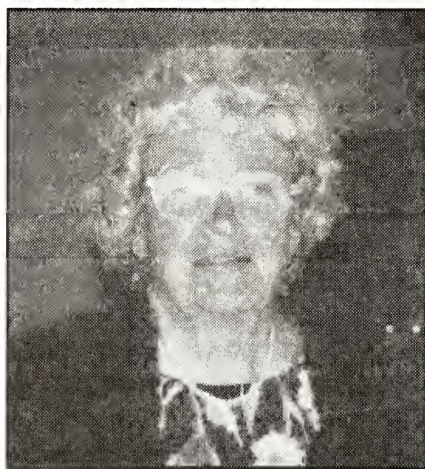
It was only a natural love that Abraham had for Ishmael. "And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, because of his son." (Genesis 21:11.) "And god said unto Abraham, let it now be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bond-woman." (Genesis 21:12.) There is great beauty here which shows God's reconciling power in the spiritual separation of our natural ties in the church today. Abraham, naturally speaking, loved Ishmael because he was his son, but God's Spiritual love must always precede (and come before) the natural or human relationship. The spiritual will always reign, and in this case it had to go to Isaac because he was the child of promise. It brought a grievous separation in nature to Abraham for Ishmael.

In our natural families today in the church we have this separation sometimes between the husband and the wife, and vice versa, and between the father, mother and siblings, but God undertakes in each case as He did for Abraham of old. The natural (human) tie must always be forsaken for the Spiritual kinship we have in the Church of the living God.

J. M. Mewborn
July 18, 2004

EDITH M. MARTIN

There are two scriptures, written to the Children of God that read, "ye must through much tribulation enter the Kingdom of God," (Acts 14:22), and "if ye suffer (with Me), ye shall also reign with Me," (II



EDITH M. MARTIN
1929 - 2003
(Age 74 Years)

Timothy 2:12), which so vividly portray the life of my dear little natural sister, and my spiritual sister in Christ, Edith Mewborn Babb Martin.

Edith was born August 17, 1929, in Greene County, North Carolina, the next to the youngest of nine children to our parents, Elder Joshua E. Mewborn and Sister Emma Turnage Mewborn, and died September 14, 2003, at the Kitty Askins Hospice Center, Goldsboro, N.C., of pancreatic cancer. She was married to her first husband, Herman Howard Babb, Jr., of Murfreesboro, N.C., on August 1, 1953, and to them were born three loving children, Vickie, Marti, and Howard.

Edith's husband, Herman Howard Babb, Jr., (nicknamed "Buster"), died suddenly on July 7, 1961, at age 33 years from a fatal cerebral hemorrhage, when his little son, Herman Howard Babb III, was only 23 days old. He had served as a 1st lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot and flew very high altitude (flight) missions over North Korea in the late 1940's and early 1950's during the Korean War conflict when cockpits of the early jet fighter planes had not fully been adapted and capacitated for such missions to withstand the tremendous pressure with adequate oxygen. Many people believed at the time that he sustained hidden, permanent brain tissue damage due to the lack of technology and advancement that eventually led to a weakened, ruptured blood vessel, causing death.

Herman (or "Buster"), after receiving his honorable discharge from the Air Force, attended N.C. State University, Raleigh, N.C., where he became an Architect, and was detailing plans for a new school building with a local (school) Board of Education meeting the evening he was stricken and died.

I will never forget the shock and sorrow our parents and fam-

ily encountered over his death at the time, begging for the reassurance of hope for that promise where God said He would not forget the widow, the fatherless and the orphan. (See James 1:27). My sister, Edith, in early life, had previously been blessed to obtain a Bachelor of Arts (Teaching) degree in Education at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, which was providential, and was soon able to gain employment in the Chapel Hill, N.C., School System where she taught for a number of years. It was said that "Edith was born to be a teacher, she loved it, and her students loved her."

With the help of the power of faith from our Gracious God, dear friends, and family ties in the area, she was able to earn sufficient means from teaching to support the four of them until about the year 1970 when she met and married Judge Robert M. Martin, of High Point, N.C., who provided for the four of them sufficiently and adequately until the children were grown and married. Edith never, never lacked for true love and devotion for her family.

Sister Edith asked for membership and a home with Mewborn's Church at the close of our May (second Sunday) meeting, 1987, relating a beautiful experience of her trials, deliverance and hope in this time world to the church. She was lovingly and gladly received into fellowship and was baptized by the unworthy writer on the second Sunday in September following, 1987.

At both hers and her family's request, I attempted to conduct her funeral service at Mewborn's Church on Monday, September 16, 2003, with interment in the nearby Mewborn Cemetery near the resting place of her parents and forebears in the glorious hope of the blessed resurrection.

Of the nine children born to my parents, six are now living; my oldest sister, Mrs. Thelma M. Smith, Robersonville, N.C., (she celebrated her 90th birthday in March, 2004); Mrs. Alma M. Mewborn, Wyomissing, P.A.; Mrs. Doris M. Ferguson, Murfreesboro, N.C.; Mrs. Ruth M. Martin New Bern, N.C.; and my brother Henry T. Mewborn, Snow Hill, N.C. One sister, Mrs. Grace M. Aycock, Chapel Hill, N.C., and one brother, J.E. Mewborn, Jr., preceded Sister Edith in death several years ago.

Of our 7 siblings, Edith, my youngest sister, and I were the only ones to unite with the Old Baptist Church. My father was an elder in the church from 1922 to 1985, and my mother was a member from 1956 to 1980, when she died. They were faithful and true

members to the Cause.

Sister Edith's presence is sorely missed today by her family, our church here, and other churches of our faith where she regularly attended, as well as my unworthy self. We believe her suffering is over forever and that her soul now rests in the Paradise of God with Jesus in eternal peace that shall never end.

Written at the request of Mewborn's Church in Conference December 13, 2003, by one who dearly loved her.

J. M. Mewborn

A LIFE

I am watching my mother die. Robbed of her golden and twilight years she lays in bed a shadow of her former self. I can see the cancer eating away at her Invading...consuming...devouring...corroding...destroying. She is calm now. Resigned to her fate she is welcoming and reverent, ready for her next journey. My mind scatters and jumps upon a million places. Remembrances... sad...happy...melancholic...angry...destroyed. Refusing to dwell constantly on sadness, I wander, remembering her sitting on the front stoop, as we play hide and seek, tag, spud, the fireflies twinkling all around us in the hot, humid summer twilights. Magical joys of childhood.

Widowed at 32, she refuses sadness, as she watches her children grow up fatherless. Lovingly and devotedly, her gift is a happy childhood as we rush onward to adulthood and the outside world. Cocooned and sheltered for so long those golden and joyous years are behind us now. Surrendering her own life and dreams, she devotedly ensures dreamlike memories of Christmases and birthdays. Ones of receiving everything we wished for. Refusing sadness creeping into our minds, she fulfills her destiny.

Giving...selflessness...loving...kind...patient...listening...counseling...teaching...learning...perfect... As her lifeless lungs gurgle and strain, I realize I cannot recall ever seeing her cry...frown...sad...unhappy. Where did she bury these things? Hidden and tucked away somewhere in her heart, she shows only happiness and joy of life. Of all who would carry a chip of resentment upon their shoulder, she refuses to let ugliness creep into the breath of our lives. Is there perfection? They say not. They say everyone has their faults. I suppose somewhere she had hers. I will never know. Because I never saw Imperfection in her. And that is as it

should be. For it is ok to remember only goodness, happiness, joy, devotion, guidance, patience. Never enough pages to record all the words of grace and thanksgiving. The memories will carry onward, reflected in her grandsons' eyes as I cherish the future and sharing my mother with them. She will watch them grow into adulthood. Unable to sit on the front stoop as they play innocently and sweetly, she will be content to watch unseen but not unfelt. Is she watching with my daddy? I hope so. For that is the only way to face the future and that is with her over my shoulder, in my soul, in my life.

Thank you, Mom. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for loving us. Thank you.

Vickie B. Johnson
Erwin, N.C. 28339
September 17, 2003

EXPERIENCE OF SISTER EDITH M. MARTIN (Dec'd.) THAT WAS WRITTEN AUGUST 1987, JUST PRIOR TO HER BAPTISM, SECOND SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER 1987.

Before my baptism that has been set for the second Sunday in September, 1987, I wish to write some of my religious experience, as best I can with the Lord's blessing and help.

Of myself I was made to know that I am a sinful person, going the way of the world until, I hope, my change and receiving my hope, prior to asking for a home with the church which I attended as a child with my parents and of my forefathers and ancestors in the Spring of 1987. All of this did not take place overnight for the Lord, I can see now, has been working within me since 1975, to rid and purge me of the ways of the flesh.

The year of 1975 was the year my parents sustained the terrible house fire that totally destroyed their home in March of that year and my father's death that took place in July of that same year. In between those two events while trying to come to assist my mother as best as I could, I was involved in a terrible automobile accident that, but for the Grace of God, would have been my end in this world, then and there, or I would have become a permanent invalid the rest of my natural life.

After being unconscious and having to have blood transfusions because of internal bleeding, when I came to, saw and counted my many blessings for having been spared as God had spared me from destruction, I tried to thank Him, if not deceived. The accident was on a Wednesday and it was about

Friday or Saturday when I came to consciousness after also having to have surgery for internal bleeding. On that Wednesday morning when I was getting into my car to leave, my family knew there was something not right about my getting into that car and leaving. My mother was expecting me, as I had promised her that I was coming that day to help her all I could after the total loss by fire of my parent's home in March, 1975. Someone remarked that I was on a "mission of Mercy" when it took place.

On that Sunday morning, while in the hospital, as the expression goes, I was in "low cotton." I felt very low down in my feelings and desired in my heart that God would send Spiritual comfort to me. At this time I realized it was church time. I turned on the television, trying to find some solace and comfort from the Lord by that means. I got but little, if any, out of what I heard. I do not recall for sure if I had turned the television off when it was over, but believe I had and the room was very quiet and all was still. There appeared in the room A LIGHT, and a calmness and resignation which I believed to be His Spirit. This had a strong effect on me, but I was still so sick and I knew that my recovery would be so long and great. The pressing needs of my earthly life and existence with the physical needs of my family were heavy upon me, but in all of it I never lost sight of that precious moment in the stillness of my room on that Sunday morning twelve years ago.

I continued to recover slowly during the months that followed, and while I did not lose sight of the joy and happiness I received in this experience, yet my thoughts and meditation upon it were not as great then as they were to gradually become later.

I had a stubborn, independent spirit that I had developed during those years when I was left a widow, (my first husband died in 1961), at age 33 when I had to take care of my two daughters and infant son who was only a few weeks old when his father had died. I had to do all that was done for all of us. In my trials and afflictions I was made to turn to the scriptures more, and, if not deceived, pray or beg the Lord more than ever before to have His mercy upon me.

My health and body were in terrible shape from 1975 until 1987. There were gradual, seemingly slow changes with my Lord and Master's relationship within me, but I knew that we (my family and I) were not living the true Godly or decent lives becoming to the children of God. I felt con-

demned. This was even more manifest since we were living at the home site where my dear parents, my father and mother, had been blessed by God's grace to live for many years in a Godly manner and way.

It was in a gradual manner over a period of about seven years, while living at the old homeplace with visitations from the Lord through the storms, thunder, lightning and wind that I was made to see His power and His control over all things by way of seeing His delivering Hand in my behalf and sparing me from utter destruction. I can see now that the Lord was warning me through the nature of His Omnipotent Power drawing me back in line as I feel now that I was out of line. He put a fear within me that I did not previously possess or have and I believe it is that same fear, spoken of by Solomon, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Proverbs 9:10. One time His power appeared in the burning pecan tree which stood within just a very few feet of our home after a severe lightning storm when the lightning had set it on fire just as He appeared to Moses in the burning bush on the backside of the desert. At another time shortly thereafter, I felt His presence when the lightning struck and killed a large oak tree by the barn.

Another summer, I was made to feel His presence in the garden after a cyclonic type wind had swept through. When I went out and saw how God had spared my family and me, I was made to feel that this was a warning for I still knew that we were not living the life becoming to the children of God. When I went out and saw the corn laying flat on the ground, with trees that had been broken off and also on the ground, I felt His presence again as I felt it that Sunday morning in the hospital. These experiences (His warnings and His presence) I experienced and felt all of them on this "Hallowed" ground where my dear parents had been blessed by God's grace to live such clean, exemplary, God-fearing lives while here in this world.

By the Winter of 1986 and following Spring of 1987, I could feel something coming on to the point I did not know what to do. There had been a longing desire of asking for membership at this church over the period of years that I had been living back out at our old homeplace. So much was the desire and as a matter of fact I was made resigned to ask for my name back from the church that I had attended in Raleigh, N.C.

Sometime during the early Spring, 1987, I had asked the

Lord for a miracle to heal my broken heart and my infirm, weak body. Over a period of several days the longing and aching in my heart was healed and God made me look to Him instead of earthly persons for the fulfillment of my needs. It was at this time that I felt the power of His healing Spirit. In my heart was the desire for true prayer to my Heavenly Father, and if not deceived, felt that I was blessed to pray to Him while reaching for the scriptures for I was hungering for His righteousness and His Word. There was a great desire for understanding and wisdom at this time. At this point there was a craving in my heart that God place within me (in my poor heart) His great love that "the first and great commandment" be fulfilled. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Matthew 22:37-38. I knew for this to be done that He must not only prepare my heart, but must also give me the answer. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD." Proverbs 16:1. I knew that if He would bless me in this manner that my prayers would be sincere and that He would answer them. How I craved that He would bless me in this manner! I knew it had to be sincere from my heart.

On the morning of the second Sunday in May, Mother's Day, 1987, I went to our old home church at Mewborn's, Greene County, North Carolina, with a heavy weight and longing of heart that God would bless me that day to offer to these precious people, begging them for a spiritual home. I had a lot to be thankful for that day. My son, Howard, who was only a few weeks old when his father had died 26 years ago, had finished his formal education and had a job, my daughter, Marti, said that she was going back to church. (My other daughter, Vicki, already was attending church with her husband and parents-in-law.)

That morning when I got to church, I had not said to myself, "I am going to offer to the church today," but in the back of my thoughts I wanted to, but still I did not know what to do or if I should. As they were singing the last hymn, "There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood", I said to the Lord, "Direct my footsteps and tell me what to do," for I did not know what to do. I felt so lost and so helpless. But in a few moments, I felt a power taking hold of me, carrying me to the front of the members and congregation and to confess my sins of unworthiness to be among and ask for a church home with these dear, precious people. I was relieved that

they would accept me so warmly and kindly, a sinner so vile as I.

I have been through an ordeal with surgeries this past summer, 1987, since I was received in the church, but I give the praise to my Lord and Master for having blessed me with good health care, my loving family, and, of course, God's loving care in bringing me through my ordeal of life. No one will ever know how I suffered and what I went through with these two surgeries for they were so close together. I know that my Lord knows for He suffered in body and soul here as no man has ever suffered.

Now I look forward to my baptism. I have been reading about baptism in the scriptures, hoping that He will teach and reveal to me more about its true meaning and also about the things of the Holy Spirit. At another sitting, I hope to write down some of my thoughts on more of what I have already said, perhaps, to elaborate a little more clearly and focus on certain points in my experience.

Edith Mewborn Martin

M. Elwood Spell

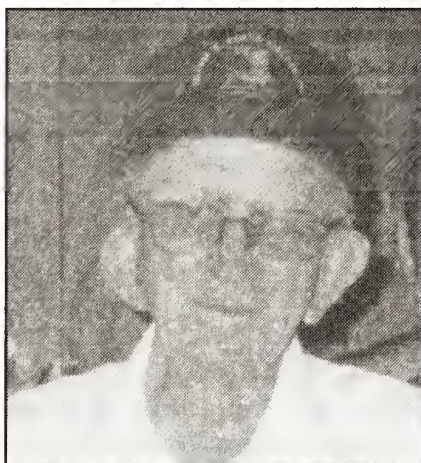
As the paper goes to press today, July 12, 2004, we have learned that Brother Elwood Spell, Tomball, Texas, passed away Saturday, July 10, 2004, at a hospital in Tomball. Funeral arrangements are scheduled for Monday, July 12, 2004, in Tomball. If the Lord will, we hope a suitable obituary will follow. Brother Elwood was a member and deacon of Zion's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Tomball (Union Association, Texas) for many years. He was well known and highly esteemed by many local citizens in his area, as well as many Primitive Baptists in several states. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to Mrs. Marie Spell, his widow, and his daughter, Patricia, and family.

Editor

SAMMY DAVIS HAZELWOOD

We, the members of Spoon Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick County, Virginia, bow in humble submission to the Divine Will of God, our Heavenly Father, in the passing from our midst, our dearly beloved brother and Deacon, Sammy Davis Hazelwood.

Brother Sammy was born October 10, 1925, to the late William F. and Eliza Chaney Hazelwood. Brother Sammy



SAMMY D. HAZELWOOD
1925 - 2004
(Age 77 Years)

was a kind, humble man who loved peace. He lived his life as a true believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone, and the predestination of all things from the foundation of the world; that God so loved the world (His Bride, His chosen Elect) that He gave His only Son who died on the Cross for His chosen people. Brother Sammy Hazelwood had that precious Hope that he was one of our Heavenly Father's chosen ones. His outward actions demonstrated that he was a man of love and peace.

He became ill in September, 2003, and was unable to attend his church meetings after that date. With his family standing by his bedside at the Kindred Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina, the Lord spoke his name. Brother Sammy closed his eyes and went peacefully to sleep on March 25, 2004.

Brother Sammy Hazelwood joined Spoon Creek Primitive Baptist Church on May 10, 1969. He was ordained to the office of Deacon in the early 1980's, and served this calling in the church with humbleness and honor to His Master's calling. Brother Sammy and his wife, Sister Martha, attended churches and associations near and far for many years. He always had a smile and firm handshake wherever he was blessed to go. He was a good man to know, always kind and very helpful to the Church, his neighbors, and his many friends.

On April 5th, 1958, he married Martha Wooten. To this union were born two children, Terry Davis Hazelwood and William C. Hazelwood. He was preceded in death by his parents, William F. and Eliza Chaney Hazelwood; five brothers, Johnny, Elmer, Albert, King and Roy Hazelwood; two sisters, Marine Hazelwood and Bessie Hazelwood Coleman.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Martha Wooten Hazelwood; son, Terry Davis Hazelwood of the home, and son, William C. Hazelwood and wife, Deborah of Stoneville, N.C. Grandchildren include Angel Bullins, Michelle Jones and Gary Jones, Jr., and one brother, Harvey Hazelwood.

Brother Sammy's body was laid to rest in the Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Patrick County, Virginia, to await the Resurrection of our corruptible bodies, when Christ shall appear in power and great Glory with Healing in His Wings. Then all the ransomed Church shall hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (See Matthew 25:34).

We, the Church at Spoon Creek, feel our loss is his eternal gain, and we of the Lower Mayo Association say, "sleep on, our dear Brother, and take thy peaceful rest; we loved you so, but God loved you best." May the family ever be blessed to look to the Lord, and may He reconcile them to the loss of their loved one.

We request that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, a copy given to the Church for its records, and a copy be sent to Zion's Landmark for publication. (This obituary has been written in behalf of the Churches of the Lower Mayo Association and the many church brethren and friends who loved Brother Sammy Hazelwood.)

Elder Bernard Hutchens,
Moderator
Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk

MILL BRANCH UNION MEETING

The Mill Branch Union Meeting will be held with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church, located in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, if the Lord will, on the 5th Saturday and Sunday in August, August 28th and 29th, 2004.

Those desiring driving directions to Pleasant Hill Church in Myrtle Beach are given as follows: Find your nearest Route to the U.S. 17 By-Pass with its U.S. 501 intersection. (U.S. Route 501 runs from Conway, S.C., to Myrtle Beach, S.C.) From the U.S. 17 By-Pass - U.S. 501

Intersection, go southward on the U.S. 17 By-Pass to first traffic light. Turn left at this point on Jetport Road. Go through four (4) stop-way stops; and then turn left on Route #15 to church location on your left for about one (1) mile.

We invite all of our brethren, sisters and friends, who have a mind, to come and visit with us during our Union Meeting in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Billy Boyd, Union Clerk
Loris, South Carolina

BOTH MEETINGS
THE FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING
IN AUGUST, AUGUST 29TH,
2004, AND ALSO LOWER
MAYO ASSOCIATION,
OCTOBER 1ST, 2ND & 3RD, 2004,
TO BE HELD ON RUSSELL
CREEK CHURCHSITE AND
LOCATION, PATRICK CO., VA.

Dear Brother Mewborn,

Please publish in the Zion's Landmark that our fifth Sunday meeting for Spoon Creek Church on Sunday only, August 29th, 2004, will be held on the grounds and site of Russell Creek Church, Patrick County, Virginia. We hope to assemble at 9:30 a.m. (EDT), with preaching service to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Also, the Lower Mayo Association will convene, if the Lord will, with Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church, on October 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2004, but also to be held on the Russell Creek Church grounds and site. This will be our 72nd Annual Session.

Traveling directions to Russell Creek Church site are as follows: Those who will be coming either north or south on Route #8, turn east on the Ayers Orchard Road, Route #653 (just inside the VA - NC state line), and go about three (3) miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn right at this point and go 1/2 mile to church location on your right. Those coming west on N.C. #704, turn right on Va. - N.C. Line Road #1730. Go one (1) mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Rd., #631. Then go 2 1/2 miles to church location on your left.

We extend our heartfelt invitation to all our precious brethren, sisters and friends to come and be with us on these dates in these meetings.

A sister, I hope, in the Lord,
Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk
Mayodan, N.C. 27027
June 26, 2004

ZION'S LANDMARK

Best

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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Having Thee, I all possess:
How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with Thee?

(Selected)

THE STANDARD OF FAITH AND DOCTRINAL POSITION OF ZION'S LANDMARK

In this issue of Zion's Landmark I am prefacing it with the republication of two articles that deal into the depths of the doctrine of predestination. The first one titled, "Was Adam Able To Stand, But Liable To Fall?", was written by Elder H. M. Curry, Lebanon, Ohio. It was written in the year 1895. In his day he was regarded as a strong doctrinal preacher, and was willing to speak up and contend for what he believed in defiance of learned critics who differed with him. To our understanding, the article has never before been published in the Zion's Landmark.

The second article, titled Predestination vs. Fatalism, was written by Elder L. L. Schenck, Williamstown, Kansas, sometime in the late 1950's or early 1960's. Elder T. R. Jefferson, who lived in Bakersfield, California, sent this article to Elder T. Floyd Adams during the month of April, 1973, just prior to Elder Adams' death on May 4, 1973. (Elder Jefferson was serving the churches of the Predestinarian Old School Baptist Union of California at the time.)

When Elder Adams received this letter in April, 1973, he was on his deathbed. I remember, however, that he still had clarity of mind, and after reading this article, he handed it to me saying, "please have this published as soon as possible. This is what I believe and I endorse the doctrine and truth contained within it." I remember Elder Adams saying that

he knew Elder Schenck, and that he had spent nights in his home in the 1920's, as I recall.

The doctrine, as expressed in these two articles, has been the cornerstone principles of Zion's Landmark for the past 60 years, and express the sentiments altogether of its current editor.

J. M. Mewborn
September 2, 2004

WAS ADAM "ABLE TO STAND, BUT LIABLE TO FALL," AFTER HIS CREATION IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

The Proposition that Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall, came first to my ears from Methodists and New School (Missionary) Baptists. The expression sounded puerile and illogical to me then, and sounds so yet. To me the phrase is meaningless; but grant it a meaning, it arrays itself against the whole tenor of Bible Truth, including all facts of human experience, as exemplified in the universal history of the human race.

Item No. 4 of the Articles of Faith of one of the oldest Primitive Baptist Associations in America, organized in the year 1769, reads as follows:

"We believe that, when God made man first, he was perfect, holy and upright, able to keep the law, but liable to fall, and that he stood as a federal head, or representative, of all his natural offspring, and that they were to be partakers of the benefits of his obedience or exposed to the misery which sprang from his disobedience."

Such sayings and phrases as this became current through lack of thoughtful investigation. I invite the reader's attention to the following discussion of this trite expression; and if, after impartially considering this matter, he should still be of

the opinion that "Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall," his position will be more clearly defined in his own mind, and perhaps entitled to more credit from those of contrary belief.

Let us now proceed to consider some of the *a priori* arguments. First, God had a purpose in man on the earth. When faith beholds the works of God in creation, it sees nothing in vain; the domestic beast of burden, the ravenous beast of prey, the wholesome grape, the deadly upas, the useful iron, the seducing gold, the wholesome food, and the destructive poison of the serpent, all answer some useful end, some wise purpose, some intelligent design of the great Mind that created them. Shall we confess this, and then say that man, the climax of the natural creation, was created without a purpose or design, either for time or eternity by the God of all wisdom? Did God create man, and then turn him loose in the world to ruin himself and all his posterity, to thwart His will and destroy all His pleasure?

The first purpose of God in placing man upon the earth was that he should multiply and replenish it. God made the earth not in vain; He made it to be inhabited. If Adam was able to stand, he was able to defeat God's purpose in this; for had he stood, there is no ground to believe that the earth would ever have been inhabited; for, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. These words of Jesus set forth a universal fact in nature, a deep, comprehensive truth. The same truth may be stated in these words: Without death there is no reproduction. In the vegetable world seed must die before they germinate and

...NIPOTENT POWER OF GOD (Psalms 31:15 & 84:1)

Sovereign Ruler of the skies
Ever gracious, ever wise!
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:

reproduce their kind. The same principle, although not so plainly exhibited, extends into the animal world. The animal organism embodies both animal and vegetable life mysteriously combined, and the power of reproduction, growth and repair, lies in the vegetable life. The multiplication of the human race did not begin until death passed upon the man; so from this it is seen that if Adam was able to stand, he was able to render the creation of the world in vain.

But grant that the multiplication would have gone on without the fall, what would have been done with the infinitely unknown, uncountable number of people who would have come into the world by this time? The garden of Eden would have been full to overflowing against this time. There would have been a continually increasing stream of humanity pouring into the world, and none going out. What would be done with them? Upon what would they subsist? Where would they stay? What would be their occupation?

Again, suppose Adam had stood, then each of his posterity would have been subjected to the same probation, to-wit; each one able to stand, but liable to fall.

Some, doubtless, would have succumbed to this liability to fall, and would have fallen, while some would have demonstrated their ability to stand, by standing. The human race would then be divided by death, some dying, and some living here forever. What a state of confusion this would be. Instead of the wisdom of the Creator being exemplified in the harmony of His creation, it would be impeached by this monstrous, unnatural, impossible discord.

It was, doubtless, God's purpose that the earth's resources should be developed, as exemplified in the various lines of human industry, enterprise and progress. The one essential element of human character upon which all industrial enterprise depends is the love of money. Money is declared in the Scriptures to be the root of all evil. (1st Timothy 6:10.) If it is

the root of all evil, it is also the prime impetus in all human progress, advancement, the competitive world in which we live, and improvement. Without it new countries never would have been discovered, explored and settled; cities would never have been built; civilization would never have developed; the arts and sciences would have remained unknown; there would be no such thing as social or political society, no commerce, no trade, no improvements, no progress, no luxuries, no conveniences, nothing! In fact men would all be savages. The fall of Adam enters into the very foundation of all the essential elements of the qualification of men to inhabit the earth. All the lust of the eye and pride of life are essentially necessary for the building up of human society, either social, political or religious.

Again, the world in its present condition is either as God purposed and intended it to be, or it is not. If it is not as God intended and purposed, then God's intention has gotten out from under His control. There are only three positions to be taken with regard to the first man: God either purposed that he should (1) fall, or (2) purposed that he should not fall, or (3) else had no purpose at all in the matter. If He purposed that he should not fall, but remain sinless forever, then the earth is peopled with an entirely different race of beings from what God intended; everything has gone contrary and awry to His purpose. If one man could reverse the purpose of God and ultimately change the course of the whole world and mankind both for time and eternity, of what account is God's purpose? Where are our obligations to call Him God, or worship Him as such?

Where is His right to call Himself God, and claim our confidence, reverence and praise? To say that God purposed him (Adam) to stand, but that man fell, is to plunge into the darkest, blindest, and most hopeless fatalism. If we say that God had no purpose one way or the other,

then what do we mean by talking of God's purpose? If we say that God purposed the fall, then there is no conflict between God's purpose and the existing state of affairs. We can then look upon the word purpose as meaning something; and when we talk of God being the God of purpose, our speech harmonizes; and when we speak of His purpose of grace, we can do so with just reverence and holy confidence.

Again, God purposed that man should be removed from the earth by death.

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3:19) One may say these words were spoken after man sinned. True enough; but did they come into the mind of God after man sinned? This is the utterance of a decree; but is the decree no older than its utterance? If God did not intend in the creation that man should return to dust, why did he create him from dust? Why did he not make him of some other material? But the very fact that He made him of dust shows that the decree, "Unto dust shalt thou return," was in the mind of the Creator when He made him. "It is appointed unto men once to die." Heb. 9:27. Death, then is an appointment. Who made the appointment? God made it. Has God any appointments now that He did not have from eternity?

Let us now turn to God's purpose of grace in Christ. All the provisions of grace for the salvation of His people were made in Christ before the foundation of the world. If

Adam had stood, what would have become of the purpose of grace? When we say he was able to stand, we say that he was able to defeat God's purpose in Christ. It is declared in the Scriptures that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Foreordained to what? To die. To die for whom? For men who might not need it, for a man who was able to stand? If Christ was foreordained to die, and Adam was the figure of Christ, is it not plain that Adam was included in the same decree of death? When Christ died, He was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and not by some provisional counsel, as a remedy, set up at the time as a quick protection and solution, provided to meet an emergency; not by His permissive counsel, as one permitted to be slain for the sins of others. There is no mention in the Scriptures of a Permissive Counsel, but Determinate Counsel. Then, if Adam was included in God's counsel at all, he was in His determinate counsel. The creation of Adam was in God's counsel, for He said, "Let us make man." (Genesis 1:26).

God's dealings with the man after he was made were in His determinate counsel, for He placed him in the certain environment, with certain restrictions upon his liberties.

One may say that God knew that Adam would fall, and provided the remedy before the calamity came. To admit God's foreknowledge of the event is to yield the

Zion's Landmark

**"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28**

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point that he was made to stand, for how was he able to stand if God knew that he would fall? This proposition is incompatible with foreknowledge. It is argued by some that God knew that he would, but he did not fall by God's decree. Then, by whose decree did he fall? If God foreknew the man would fall, the event was certain, inevitable and could in no wise fail to come to pass. Now, what made the event certain? What rendered it inevitable? What brought it to pass? One says that God's foreknowledge of an event does not necessitate its coming to pass. If God's knowledge does not, then what does? "Who is he that bringeth to pass when the Lord commands it not?" Lam. 3:37. Either God's decree makes the event certain, as foreknown, or it is purely a matter of total happenchance.

If Adam was able to stand, how long was he able to stand, against what was he able to stand, and wherein consisted his ability to stand? Was he able to stand forever? Was he able to stand just momentarily? Was he able to stand under all circumstances of his subjection to vanity? If we answer yes to any of these questions, then his (Adam's) ability to stand consisted in his infinite perfection, for nothing short of infinite perfection could stand forever under all circumstances. If he was infinitely perfect, to enable him thus to stand, wherein lay his ability to fall? Ability to stand and liability to fall cannot exist at the same time in the same creature; for where liability to fall sets in, absolute ability to stand ends. Ability to stand in this expression must be absolute or it cannot be considered, for it is not absolute, it must be relative, and relative ability to stand is entirely swallowed up in liability to fall.

Let us now pass to the *posteriori* arguments. The fall itself is evidence that the man could not stand. Had he not fallen, he would thereby have demonstrated his ability to stand; but he fell, and, consequently, he demonstrated his

inability to stand.

The transmission of his sin to his posterity is conclusive argument against his ability to stand. The total, inherent, hereditary, total depravity of the whole, entire human race is essentially and inseparably connected with this subject. Cavil as we may about predestination in Adam's case, it shows itself in all his progeny. They are all born sinners, grow up sinners, live and die sinners, without exception or remedy. What then has fixed the universal, unalterable, irrevocable reign of sin and death? Is it fixed by God, or does it come by fate? Is it the provision of infinite wisdom, or is it through the lucky intervention of some work of chance? Did God, either in ignorance or knowingly, leave the issue of life and death of unborn millions to the uncertain will of one man? If God did not know the consequence when He created man, then He is ignorant and stupid, and is not God. If He knew the consequence, and yet created the man, and gave him power to ruin his unborn progeny in sin, death and eternal destruction, knowing certainly that he would do it, is He not a strange kind of God? Is not such a course more like that of a madman, than like that of an all-wise God? Which is the greater display of wisdom, righteousness, justice and judgment; for God to leave the issues of life and death of an unborn world to the caprices of one man's will, or to fix all by His own infinite will and wisdom?

Which would faith choose as a source of consolation, that the well being of a world was left to one man, and he ruined it, or that God held the issues of life and death in His own eternal grasp?

The great stumbling stone today with many people in the way of their minds is the trite, meaningless expression that this would make God the author of sin. But is it not taught in the Scriptures that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children?

Where is there any human code of practice or standard of justice but what would pronounce that unjust, wicked

and cruel? Visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generations. Punish the child for the crime of its grandfather, a crime committed before the child was born, or even before its parents were born. If we are going to impeach God by human standards, we must impeach Him here, and declare Him wicked, unjust and cruel; and renounce His name, and abandon His worship. But again, Jesus said that the blood of all prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, that perished between the temple and the altar, shall be required of this generation. Where is the justice, from a human standpoint, in requiring all the righteous blood that had been shed for four thousand years, of that generation? Such destruction as had not been since the world began was sent upon that generation of men, women and helpless children, and God did it. Then, upon this point of God being unjust, if He does so and so, let the words of inspiration stop every mouth, and silence every tongue.

The law in its nature, design and effect enters into this discussion. Many minds are misled by their wrong notion of the law. The law was not given for men to keep. It only entered that the offense might abound. They say that God would not have commanded Adam not to eat, if He intended that he should eat. How do they know what God would have done? By what or whom do they judge? How could man transgress without a commandment? It required the commandment to answer the purpose. It is argued that God's decreeing the fall of Adam would destroy man's accountability. Would it be and worse, from their own standards of judging, to hold Adam responsible for what he was purposed to do, than to hold a babe born in the nineteenth century responsible for Adam's transgression by fixing upon it the sin committed by another six thousand years ago before it was born? The doctrine of hereditary, total depravity will not harmonize with the propo-

sition that Adam was able to stand.

Lastly, I shall call in the testimony of the experience of the child of God. Can he live here without sinning? Now, those persons who hold and teach that a man can live here without sin are deluded, fanatical heretics. If the child of God, who is born of God, washed in the blood of Christ, justified, sanctified, and led by the Spirit of God, cannot live without sin here in this time world, how can the natural man live without sin? Adam in his creation was a natural man of the earth, earthy. He had natural capacities, fleshly qualifications, propensities and desires; then how could this man in nature be expected to do what the most gifted saint cannot do?

H. M. Curry

(Written in the year 1895)

(Note: We are grateful to Brother Earl M. Hall, Austin, Texas, who was kind enough to send us this excellent article for publication in Zion's Landmark. *Editor.*)

PREDESTINATION VS. FATALISM

Dear Brother Adams:

There seems to be some among the Primitive Baptists who are confused and cannot see the difference between God's absolute predestination and fatalism. To me there is as much difference between the two as there is between natural and spiritual. Fatalism offers nothing, has no God and leaves the creature helpless. Predestination has everything, embraces God's dear children with love, gives them salvation by grace, keeps them like Jacob of old "as the apple of His eye." Psalm 23 proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that David was a man after God's own heart, was not only saved by His grace, but was kept by God's firm decrees to walk by grace in all obedience. Paul states very plainly, "that no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." Thess. 3:3.

Now, as to foreknowledge and predestination being one and the same thing, I have never heard an Old School

Baptist elder even insinuate that the words did not mean the same. I have heard them say that it was impossible for God to foreknow a thing without it coming to pass. I think it would be preposterous to say that God foreknew a thing and it failed to come to pass as He knew it would. I have never heard a minister of the Old School Baptist say that God gets as much pleasure out of the wicked acts of men as He does a gospel sermon, but I have heard it preached that God gets as much glory out of one piece of His handiwork as He does out of another. The above statement is true in my judgment, and I often make that statement in my discourses. God is not to be mocked. He works all things after the counsel of His own will, according to Eph. 1:11. Predestination cannot be measured short of God's own power. Unless we have been made to experience both the good and evil we will never know how God works in us both the will and to do.

Enclosed is a copy of an article, written by Elder L. L. Schenck. We would be pleased to have this article republished, as it is the view of the Old School Baptists here in California.

(Elder) T. R. Jefferson
Bakersville, California

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF GOD, OUR SAVIOUR (A DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH)

We are living in an evil age and a terribly disrupted world with wars and rumors of more wars. Bloodshed and all manner of debauchery, graft and corruption are being practiced on every hand from our highest public officials, and then on down to men and women of low rank. Truly, it was foretold in the scripture, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived." II Timothy 3:13. And, again, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," and that perilous times shall come. 1st Timothy 4:1. One need not be

a sage to see the development and fulfillment of these divine prophesies.

Recently, the doctrine of God's sure, absolute predestination has been assailed. And having a faint hope that God has placed me as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, I feel it my duty and obligation to, at least, sound a warning, and to offer what defense God will enable me to render. I feel it is no small matter when God's wisdom and power are assailed by men, for these are some of the very attributes of God. His very name, GOD ALMIGHTY, implies there is no power but of God. And I find this agreeable to scripture testimony, to-wit: "For there is NO POWER but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1.) I can find no exception to this divine expression! Therefore, the influence of these powers, whether it be for good, or whether it be for evil, is irrefutable, - they are ordained of God. But, though evil is everywhere extant, there is no danger that it will ever get beyond the control of God who created and ordained it. (See Isaiah 45:7.) These ordained powers are limited, while the great POWER of God knows no limit or ending.

Thus, according to David, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76:10.) The wrath of man is even dependent upon the power of God. Just why one should doubt or deny the absolute government of God is beyond me. Indeed, one cannot deny this true doctrine without acknowledging the existence of another power somewhere that controls that part which is not controlled by God; or else to say a certain part just goes and comes at random, which, of course, would be the height of absurdity; or to say that GOD has a superior rival. I would say - superior rival - from the fact there is a great deal more wickedness extant in the world today than there is good. Therefore, this so-called, fancied power out there in the unknown somewhere, whatever or wherever it may be, has great superior-

ity over GOD ALMIGHTY. This idea is no less absurd than the other, and it is easily defeated by a Thus Saith The Lord, as follows: "I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE ELSE; I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE LIKE ME. DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING, AND FROM ANCIENT TIMES THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT YET DONE, SAYING, MY COUNSEL SHALL STAND, AND I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE." (Isaiah 46:9-10.) "Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power: for THOU HAST CREATED ALL THINGS, and for thy pleasure THEY WERE CREATED."

(Revelation 4:11.)

Who would dare make the claim that any of these things whatever, or any of these things which ARE and which WERE created for His pleasure, should react to the contrary? Satan, the crooked serpent (See Job 26:13), is a conspicuous element in God's creation. God endowed him with a power and subtlety such as none of the beasts of the field ever possessed. He was ordained to perform his work, which none other could perform, and all of his devilish work from Eden down through the ages of time responded exactly to the eternal purpose for which he was created. Through his influence man sinned, but consider well, "was this a sign of laxity and weakness in the government of God?" "Was it the part of wisdom or lack of wisdom on the part of God when He placed these elements (all of them) in the garden of Eden?" "Did the serpent sneak into the Garden of Eden unawares to God and surprised Him there?" "Was God disappointed in the outcome of this venture?" If so, then we must yield the point and confess that God is not absolute, and that He possesses inefficiency of His attributes. We must confess that in that event matters began to go awry, out of control and amiss from the start and beginning, and that God has created a something that He could not control.

Such a conclusion is worse than folly. God is indubitable (unquestionable) and absolute. His purposes are

laid deep in divine wisdom. "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!" (Romans 11:33.) The devil and all his angels and creation cannot thwart Him in one of His purposes. He created the devil ("Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD GOD had made"). (Genesis 3:1.) And He created man and made him susceptible to the wiles of the vanity of the devil (Proof: See Genesis 1:27 and Romans 8:2), that in the end Jesus should at last be glorified in saving his people from their sins. To say that man, or Adam, was made able to stand, but liable to fall, would be equal in substance that God willed that he (man) should stand, but the devil overruled Him (God) in that purpose. Why did the law enter? Does its entrance betray a lack of foresight in God? Was it not that the offense might abound? And why should the offense abound only for the paving of the way for the operation of Sovereign Grace? It is written, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Romans 5:20.) It is, therefore, quite evident that God had a purpose, even in the existence, creation and entrance of sin into the world. How could Jesus have been glorified otherwise?

One might inquire, why did God create an evil nation? Was it not that His power over evil should be made manifest? His decree to Abraham was that his seed should serve an evil nation 400 years. Their bondage was timed to the minute and second. I should dare say to the very moment when they should be liberated from that land of darkness, Egypt. God even held the tongues (all of them) of all the dogs in Egypt that night. (See Exodus 11:7.) None of them could bark when His time came. Was this predestination? What power but that of God was, not only at the controls, but, in control in this whole affair?

It was no accident that the seed of Abraham came down, and were brought into, this evil nation, Egypt. Forasmuch as God had decreed it, everything else must of necessity work in perfect harmony with that decree. It necessitated great suffering (hunger) on the part of Israel to bring them to this evil nation (they had no choice in the matter), and their glorious deliverance was also predestinated, just as sure as their bondage! The arrangement of their sustenance, while they were there, was also fixed, even by the wicked act of Potiphar's wife to get Joseph in the prison by a most indescribable, despicable act of evil to bring their salvation into place. All of this involved great suffering on the part of Joseph. (Read Genesis 39:7-23.) All of these things were perfect links in the chain that were ultimately working for Israel's good. It was not a voluntary act of Joseph that he dreamed dreams that caused his brethren to hate him. But, as a brilliant type of Jesus, they hated him, too, Joseph (here a type of Jesus) without a cause. They abused him, and they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. (Read Genesis 50:20.) Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart repeatedly and effect his final destruction in the Red Sea? God, Himself, gives the answer: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that MY NAME be declared throughout all the earth." Exodus 9:16. Israel could not come (or be brought forth) until their bondage was complete. They were a long time in bondage, but God is not slack concerning His promise. It was God's omnipotent promise that after 400 years that they should be brought out with great promise. (See Genesis 15:13.) "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl. 3:1.

Why did not David allow his servants to slay Shimei, as he cast stones at him (David) and cursed him, as he went along? David said, "let him alone." "God hath commanded him to curse." (See II

Samuel 16:13.) Should one question the justice of God in this and similar acts? Again, God is absolute. His decree and His government, His predestination, and, indeed, all the attributes of God, are absolute. He governs the movements of all His creatures; yet, He Himself is above reproach. All creation is His and He holds the undisputed right to use His creatures and dispose of them in any way as it may seem good unto Him.

Why should anyone heap this indignity on His pure and Holy Name by saying, "if you say that God predestinated the evil acts of men, you make Him the author of sin." Since God is under no law, by what law can He be judged and tried? By the law of man, of course, but this verdict will not stand in the court of Divine Justice. He has declared, "I AM THE LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Isaiah 42:8. God has reserved unto Himself the right to do His will and this He doeth "in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest thou?" (Daniel 4:35.) "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? "What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He hath afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:22-23.) What, if God does this? Must His divine wisdom suffer impeachment in the laws of puny man? It cannot be questioned but what God could have softened the heart of Pharaoh just as well as to have hardened it, if that had been agreeable to His will. But, it pleased Him to harden his heart because His decree must be fulfilled. Some will say God is unjust (and that we make Him unjust) if He has not given everyone an equal chance to be saved. But the scriptures answer this con-

tion, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" (Romans 9:20.) God has declared, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I hardeneth." (Romans 9:18.)

Now, does this make God the author of sin? The deeds of a man do not make him either good or bad, but they reveal the true character of the man. His deeds are commensurate with his nature, whether they be good or evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them." (See Matthew 7:16.) Jacob and Esau, which are Israel and Edom, God loved the one, and hated the other, respectively, before they were born. Thus, it cannot be established that their works were a factor in shaping their future, final destiny. Their destinies were sealed before they were born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It was said unto her, "The elder shall serve the younger." (Romans 9:12.) The purpose of God in this, as in all cases, is preeminent. No power but of God was employed in shaping this allegory. So, may I repeat, "their works are merely commensurate with the nature God has given them."

Now, to the climax of the whole narrative that culminates in the tragic crucifixion of our Lord. God has said prophetically, "Awake Oh sword against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my Hand upon the little ones." (Zechariah 13:7.) The wicked are designated as His (God's) sword. Hence, the wicked come and go at His command, and are made just as subservient to the will of God as the weakest saint. So, in response to His divine command, wicked men led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter. Hence, it is recorded, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

(Acts 2:23.) And again, "For of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou has anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever Thy Hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:27.) They could do no more, and they could do no less, for in the Words of Jesus, "How then could the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matthew 26:54.)

Thus, we see a glorious, blessed triumph for the complete, full, absolute predestination of God overruling the powers of darkness to His own glory, and the ultimate salvation of all His elect people. Jesus died, and it was not possible that He should be holden of death. (See Acts 2:24.) He is now risen from the dead "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 3:14-15.) He, thus, addressed His elect saying, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore," and "because I live, ye shall live also." So to the wicked all down the line and ages of time, it may be said, as it was said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Romans 9:17.)

The Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified is all of our theme. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do, or ever will do poor, helpless sinners any good.

I have by no means exhausted the great array of supporting testimony relating to the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, but this may suffice for the time being. Thanks be unto God who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Ephesians 1:11.)

(Elder) L. L. Schenck
Williamstown, Kansas

(Note: I remember hearing my father, Eider Joshua (J.E.) Mewborn, and Elder T. Floyd Adams, say that Elder Schenck

was a gifted man in horticulture. When he came through our country preaching approximately 65-75 years ago, he helped them and other church members with their fruit orchards. He was excellent in trimming and pruning the apple, peach and pear trees in their orchards. J.M. Mewborn)

CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION

In our last issue of Zion's Landmark, the May-June, 2004, number was printed an article titled "Unparalleled History" regarding the early history of the Union Primitive Baptist Association of the Old School or Predestinarian Faith and Order of Texas on page #3 of this recent copy.

The statement of Elder Ben Parker, as published in Hassell's Church History on page 914 of that volume, "other churches were added, some west of the Colorado River, they were 500 miles off from the place of first meeting" is correct. Elder Ben Parker was referring to the "Colorado River" in Texas that rises northeast of Lamesa, then flowing southeasterly through Austin and into the Gulf of Mexico at Matagorda, and not the Colorado River in the western United States, which I mentioned incorrectly in my article.

The cause of this mistake is my ignorance of the existing rivers of Texas. Through the years I have been made aware of our principal rivers here, to-wit: the Rio Grande, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Columbia, the Hudson, the Ohio, the Colorado in western parts, and others. I mistakenly confused the Texas Colorado river with the Colorado River in Colorado, Utah and Arizona. Many kind brethren have lovingly called my attention to this oversight, and I want to thank each of you personally for doing this for me! It truly is appreciated for none of us ever get too old to learn. Thank you again for helping me with my geographical ignorance. I was not aware that there is a Colorado River in Texas, and confused the names of the two.

Sincerely and gratefully,
J. M. Mewborn
August 26, 2004

HISTORICAL REPLICATION

(The following record is transcribed from the January 15, 1891, (Volume XXIV) issue of Zion's Landmark, page 118, by me personally for republication, this January 29th, 2004. J. M. Mewborn, Ed.)

AN UNUSUAL MAN WITH A RECORD, PROBABLY WITHOUT PARALLEL (Taken From the Archive Records of Zion's Landmark)

"BILLY WHITLEY
(1778 - 1890) • (112 Years)
"Dear Brethren Gold and Lester,

I will send you a piece that I took out of the Carolina Watchman. Uncle Billy Whitley of Stanly County, North Carolina, died the first of this week at the advanced age of 112 years. He was a noted character.

D. H. Snider

"ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE YEARS OLD

"A correspondent of the Concord Times has found a man in Stanly County, N. C., one hundred and twelve years old. His name is Billy Whitley.

"The correspondent says of him: 'He remembers distinctly seeing the soldiers coming home from the Revolutionary War. He married at 33 years old —lived with his wife seventy-three years, who died at the age of 101 in the year 1881. He has in his possession a gun used in the Battle of Yorktown by a gentleman who heard the conversation between Cornwallis and Washington at the surrender on October 19, 1781, at Yorktown, Virginia.

"With this gun Uncle Billy has probably killed more deer than any other man in the State of North Carolina. He also has a pocket book that belonged to his father and is possibly 125 - 150 years old. He has his third set of teeth - not from the dentist, but from God. He cut his last set at the youthful age of one hundred and nine years.

"To show the strength of his manhood yet, as of now, it is enough to state that last winter he cut wood, then cut up and split into fine wood a large, dead tree, and last year sprout-

ed fourteen acres of ground.

"He has lived a consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for more than sixty years. He never was known to tell a lie, never had a law suit, never took a dose of medicine, and never had a doctor's bill. He fired off the old musket over the heads of an immense crowd in recent days, after which a tremendous shout of three loud cheers was given him. 'One felt like taking off his hat to him in the presence of this venerable man of four generations back.'
(Comments by Elder P. D. Gold in the January 15, 1891, issue of Zion's Landmark About Brother Billy Whitley)

"Almost one year ago in the early part of last year, 1890, this aged brother died. A noted man he was indeed! There are not many men now living that have ever seen a Revolutionary War (1775 - 1783) soldier, and how few of us think of their labors and many privations, as we reap the harvest of their toilful, painful sowing, today.

P. D. Gold, Editor"

(Editor's Note: There are many of our readers and subscribers today who know Sister Mintie Whitley Kearns, Kannapolis, North Carolina. Her husband, Brother Clarence Kearns, passed away June 11, 2003. Sister Mintie Whitley Kearns was also a sister in the flesh to Elder Jesse T. Whitley, who passed away June 2, 1985. He joined Northeast Church, near Jacksonville, Onslow County, N. C., where he was ordained to the ministry January 2, 1966. They were children of the late Brother L. Hosea & Eva Harward Whitley. Brother L. Hosea Whitley was a great grandson of Brother Billy Whitley, making Sister Mintie Kearns, and her brother, Elder Jesse T. Whitley, direct, lineal descendants of him. Editor)

AN INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF A RARE, GENUINE, JEWISH CONVERSION TO FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AS RECORDED BY ELDER DAVID BARTLEY

"In the last German-French War, after one of the great battles, a learned Prussian Jew, an army sur-

geon, was called to amputate a limb for a young French officer; but he found him fatally wounded on arrival, and told him death was near. The dying man asked him to send for his wife and little daughter, which he did; but, when they arrived, he was dead. "The widowed wife was inconsolable in her frantic grief, and the surgeon was much affected in sympathy. At last the child asked, 'Mamma, is Jesus dead?' The simple words stilled the sobbing woman, dried up her tears, and she became calm and peaceful. The Jewish doctor was amazed and awed, and deep conviction penetrated his soul. His very religious, proud, and wealthy mother had taught him to detest the name of Jesus, as a base impostor and deceiver; but, he witnessed a sweet power in this name, so desecrated by his people, which far exceeded any influence that their stern, formal religion could have over the sorrow of death; and he felt that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth must, indeed, be the promised Christ, and is alive; though his mother had taught him that His disciples stole His body away.

"From that time he had no peace, until two years later, when he was enabled to rejoice in the faith of Jesus. For this his mother, the widow of a rich banker, disowned and disinherited him, and the Rabbi excommunicated him under a fearful curse of damnation; but, he was yet full of faith, love and hope, and rejoicing in the precious Jesus, when I heard him relate this."

(Taken from Elder Bartley's Book titled The Resurrection Of The Dead By The Holy Son Of Man, at page Nos. 274 - 275.)

A LONE WITNESS (OF THE FAITH) LEFT TO DECLARE HIS GREAT NAME

Dear Brother Mewborn,
I love reading the Zion's Landmark. It is one of my few remaining pleasures and enjoyments that I have left and I look forward to getting

it. My sister, Hazel, loves to read it also. Also, my church and Gospel preaching are the only things I have left going for me in this life. If it ever gets so I cannot attend church and preaching, that will be a sad day for me.

Just last week we lost the last person connected with the Sea Level Primitive Baptist Church, Mr. Earl Hamilton; he died. He was a strong believer, but never united with the church. I am now the only one left, if I am one. The Atlantic Primitive Baptist Church, Atlantic, North Carolina, closed a few years ago, and no services are held there any more. Elder L. H. Hardy belonged to this church and served as pastor there for about 57 years, as I recall. He was well known, far and near, among Primitive Baptist in many states.

I cannot say that I know how the old prophet, Elijah, felt, when he declared, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." (Romans 11:3.) It must have been a lonely feeling, but, there was given him that Heavenly assurance, "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." I can only hope that I am one left in that remnant, and if so, it is alone by His Grace. Sometimes, I feel like one of the 7,000 that has not bowed the knee to Baal down here in eastern Carteret County, North Carolina.

Brother Mewborn, I know many people are not aware of the terrific, extensive damage that we suffered here in Hurricane Isabelle, that took place the first week in September, 2003. The storm surge sent water into every house in Sea Level, except 3, a big percentage. Extensive damage was done in Stacy, N.C., the neighboring community of Sea Level, as well as on Cedar Island, where I live. The personal property and belongings in countless houses here were totally destroyed. Water got several feet deep in the dwelling houses, including the

Primitive Baptist meeting house in Sea Level. Every bench (or seat) was turned over, and they were all piled together at the front end of the building from the storm surge.

Hurricane Isabelle was the worst one here since 1933, a period of 70 years, when Drum Inlet was cut on the Core (Outer) Banks from the Atlantic Ocean into Core Sound. I well remember it. I was only 6 years old. The school house on Cedar Island was so badly damaged that they held school in the old Primitive Baptist Church building on the east side of the island. (Another hurricane got that building later in the 1950's.) Our present church building had over one foot of water, and was covered with mud and debris. I was there this morning, still trying to get the mud cleaned off the floor. I clean as often as I can because of my physical condition, which is not good. I am badly afflicted with arthritis.

Brother Mewborn, I wish you could come down here and preach for us. Please come to see us when you can.

I hope we will all be blessed in the Lord,

Alton Godwin,
Cedar Island, NC 28520
December 16, 2003

(Our love and prayers go out to this dear brother in his loneliness and afflictions. Ed.)

THE EXPOSING OF SATAN'S TECHNIQUES IN THE NAME OF TRUE RELIGION IS GREATLY NEEDED IN TODAY'S WORLD

Dear Brother Mewborn,

It was good to have the opportunity to meet you last Sunday at the meeting at Pireway Church, Columbus County, North Carolina. Also, to hear Elder George Paul, Elder Billy Gore, Elder Ernest Duncan and you given liberty from on High to speak so ably to the congregation.

I was pleased to learn of your publication, Zion's Landmark. Sound writings that expose and identify the methods used by Satan today in the attempt to lead God's Elect, His chosen people, away from the truth of the Holy scriptures

are sorely needed. In this age, I believe we are witnessing the greatest corruption in the name of (so-called) Christianity since the advent of the Catholic Church 2,000 years ago. It is, indeed, a sad thing to see millions of (otherwise sincere) people with such a lack of spiritual understanding that they have unwittingly fallen into Satan's snare.

May it be God's will to continue His blessing of upholding you and all His faithful servants everywhere.

Yours in Christ, I hope,
Jeff Cartret
Whiteville, NC 28472

(It was our privilege and blessing to witness Brother Jeff Cartret's baptism into the fellowship of Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church, Columbus County, North Carolina, the third Sunday afternoon in June, June 20, 2004. The ordinance was administered by Elder George Paul and Elder Ernest Duncan in the nearby Waccamaw River with a nice crowd in attendance. Editor)

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The 72nd Annual Session of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, with Mayodan Church on October 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 2004, but to meet on the site and grounds of Russell Creek Church, Patrick County, Virginia, if the Lord will, for convenience.

Those who will be coming, either north or south on Route #8, turn east on the Ayers Orchard Road, Route #653 (just inside the VA - NC state line), and go about three (3) miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn right at this point and go 1/2 mile to church location on your right. Those coming west on N.C. #704, turn right on Va.-N.C. Road #1730. Go one (1) mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road #631. Then go 2 1/2 miles to church location on your left.

We extend our heartfelt invitation to all our brethren, sisters and friends, our correspondents and ministering brethren, to be with us again this year, 2004, in our association.

Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk
Mayodan, N.C. 27027

UNION ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

The 165th Annual Session of the Union Association will meet again, this year, 2004, if the good Lord will, on Friday before

the third Sunday in October, and will continue through Sunday following, the dates being October 15th, 16th, 17th.

We will meet at Holly Springs Church, Anderson County, near the community of Montalba, which is approximately 10 miles north of Palestine, and about 16 miles south of Athens on State Hwy. #19. Take FM 2330 west off Texas Hwy. #19, which is about 2 miles north of Montalba. Go 2 miles to the first black-top county road to your left. Turn left and church location is about 1/2 mile on your right in a grove of large oak trees.

We invite all of our dear brethren and sisters, and our God-given, true friends, who have that mind, to come and be with us, one more time, we hope, 2004.

George Pinkerton, Moderator
Palestine, Texas
Sam Pipkin, Clerk
Deer Park, Texas

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING TO BE HELD AT THOMAS GROVE CHURCH, OCTOBER 31, 2004

The Church at Thomas Grove, Floyd County, Virginia, has agreed to hold a fifth Sunday meeting on October 31, 2004. (Please note this meeting is for Sunday only. There will be no Saturday meeting.)

Thomas Grove Meeting House is located on the Blue Ridge Parkway, Floyd County, Va. From the intersection of Va. Hwy. #8 and the Parkway, go north on the Parkway 1.8 miles. You will come to a split rail fence on your left. Turn right onto Soapstone Hill Road. Then turn left onto church site on your left, a short distance.

Our sincere hope and desire is that the LORD will give many of the brethren, sisters and friends a desire to be with us at this time, especially our ministering brethren who labor in the cause. We extend a sincere welcome to each (and all) of you.

Elder Kenneth Hopkins,
Moderator
Clifton Pegran, Clerk

MILL BRANCH ASSOCIATION

The 134th Annual Session of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Association was appointed to be held with Simpson Creek Church, Horry County, South Carolina,

the first weekend in November, the dates being November 5, 6 & 7, 2004. Services, the Lord willing, will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Friday.

Those who will be traveling U.S. Hwy. 701, either from the north or south, please come to downtown Loris, South Carolina and take S.C. #9 (Business) east for 4 miles to Goretown. At Goretown turn right on Road #348; go 2 1/2 miles and turn right on Daisy Road for 1/2 mile to church site on your right.

We hope that all our brethren, sisters and dear friends will come to be with us this year, and we are looking forward to seeing you again.

Lucille Beasley, Clerk
Bishopville, S. C. 29010

MILL BRANCH UNION

The next session of the Mill Branch Union will meet, if the Lord will, with Mill Branch Church, Columbus County, N. C., on the 5th Saturday and Sunday in October, 2004, the dates being October 30th & 31st.

Those who desire traveling directions will travel U. S. Route 701 between Whiteville, N. C., and Tabor City, N. C. Traveling south from Whiteville, turn left at sign marked 'Vinegar Hill' on paved road to church site, only a short distance. Those coming from Tabor City will turn right (at same point) 'Vinegar Hill', only a short distance to church site.

We extend an invitation to our brethren, the sisters, and friends to visit us at our Union Meeting with the churches that compose it on the 5th Saturday and Sunday in October. Please keep Mill Branch Church in mind, as well as all of us, and come, if you can. We feel that we need you.

Billy Boyd, Clerk
Loris, South Carolina

CHARACTER

The highest and most valuable possession on earth, incomparably above all the material riches, honors and pleasures of a dying world, is an unblemished character,

A character of truth and righteousness,

A character that loves and does the right because it is right and not for the applause or reward of men, and

A character that dares to do right, no matter what the world may say or do.

Such a character was gloriously exhibited in our Perfect Exemplar, the Lord Jesus Christ, and should be exhibited by all who profess to be His people and His followers. Through His grace,

and by that alone, can we have and manifest such a character.

A high, moral character is worth more to a young man or woman than money, education, or health, and far more than all the degrees and diplomas awarded to them at any season by all the schools, colleges, and universities in the world. High character, the inward work of the Divine Spirit, is intrinsic and abiding - the sunshine of the heart and of the life; while these other possessions are extrinsic and transient, only flickering, dying candles, leaving their possessor in darkness during the last and most solemn moments of his life.

It is the evil tendency of this rapidly, degenerating age to put intellect, money and office above character. Such a tendency is, not from God, but from Satan, the god of this world, the prince of darkness, and unless it is divinely checked, it will plunge the human race into irretrievable ruin - into the avenging fires of the final, eternal and righteous judgment of God. It is not the wise man, but the fool, who says there is no God, who lives a godless life, dies a godless death, and is tormented forever in the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.

Elder Sylvester Hassell
(From The Gospel Messenger, June, 1903.)

(Note: The above words concerning "Character" came from a school commencement address of Elder Sylvester Hassell, made over one hundred years ago. After reading them we are made to wonder what he would think, if he could come back today and see the deterioration and degeneration of society in general with legalized abortion, legalized marriage between the same genders of people, legalized gambling, and many more adverse practices that stem from the corruption of the flesh, sin and Satan? This record supports the belief that Elder Sylvester was a true believer, a Godly man of whom the scripture speaks, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Titus 1:15. If not deceived, we see purity of soul reflected in his own character, as expressed above. Editor)

WRITING OF ELDER B.S. COWIN

The following article was an editorial, written for Zion's Landmark, by Elder B.S. Cowin, Williamston, NC, during the years 1935-1950, when he served on the staff of

the paper as an Associate Editor. It has been requested to be republished. Please see your copy of the "November-December, 2001," issue of Zion's Landmark for his experience of Grace and Call to The Ministry.

Editor (June 29, 2004)

THE TRUE CHURCH IS CLOTHED WITH THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. 7:14.

The true Church of God is not made up of any one denomination, or any group of denominations, but embraces the Redeemed of God out of "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Revelation 5:9. These are those who have been born again of an incorruptible seed, have passed from death unto life, who were once alive without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and they died to the love of those things which were once so precious to them, and such a great source of joy and pleasure.

The true Church is represented as clothed with the sun (The Sun of Righteousness), the Moon (or Law) under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She is represented to be in travail, which shows she is sorrowful, downcast, despondent, and in spite of her Heavenly decorations, she is meek and lowly in heart, for the great dragon, the enemy of all saints, is standing by to devour the Man Child as soon as it was born. But, she has the whole host of Heaven (The Angels of God) for a helper, and the earth also. She was given wings to fly into the wilderness from the presence of the dragon, and she is still in the wilderness (this natural earth) until this day, always coming up, leaning upon her Beloved.

Now, the false church is represented as sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy. She is clothed in purple, bedecked with gold and precious

stones. She holds in her hand a golden cup, filled with the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and from it she has made all nations drunk on her filth.

The True Church cries in her distressed condition, being in travail; the false church glories in hers, the one clothed in purple, which is the color of blood and depicts her murderous designs upon all who do not follow her pernicious ways. The True Church goes into the wilderness by the help of God, where she is sustained and tenderly "nourished for a time, and times, and half a time," (Rev. 12:14), "a thousand two hundred and threescore (or sixty) days", (Rev. 11:3), and "forty and two months." (Rev. 13:5.)

The false church goes down into perdition, and then finally into hell with all the nations that forget God. She has the nations of the whole world to help her, feed her, worship, honor and adore her, to heap honor and riches upon her, while she keeps them drunk upon the wine of the wrath of her fornication, which is none other than the false teachings which our Lord and Saviour has not authorized, and also which He has never recognized by giving her His Spirit which would enable her to see her lost, ruined, undone, filthy and abominable condition.

God's faithful few (just a remnant) are sad, sorrowful, dejected and cast down for they see in the Sea of Glass, upon which they stand, all their corruption, depravity, nothingness and insufficiency. They have nothing in which to glory, save in the Lord Jesus Christ, who found them lost. But, He searched the mountain, found them, and carried them to the fold, healed their sin-sickness, embraced them, gave the two pence to the innkeeper, saying, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Luke 10:35.

Jesus is always going to see His children again. Their hearts shall rejoice, and that joy no man can take away from them.

B. S. Cowin

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AND VIEWS CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP IN THE CHURCHES

Several readers and subscribers of the Zion's Landmark have asked me of recent date to comment on the subject of fellowship in the churches and associations, especially remarking on its restrictions and instances where the unanimous vote is required. Also, some want to know the origin of the rule where a unanimous vote is required, and, also, where it does not apply, or where it is not required.

In the outset I would like to say that I am fully aware that

this subject is one of serious, solemn, sensitive import and nature, as it involves the life of the Church of the True and Living God. Feeling altogether my unlearned, lack of knowledge, and uninformed status on such a sacred subject, I can only say as Peter said to the lame man, who had asked alms of him and John, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee." (Acts 3:6.) I can only give that, which I hope is from the Lord, to attempt to answer these questions. May it be His Will to guide me!

J. M. Mewborn
October 31, 2004

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP IS (AND MUST ALWAYS BE) UNANIMOUS ACCORDING TO PAST RECORDS OF THE CHURCH

I have endeavored to diligently search and research at hand every old church record book, including other resource books that contain and relate to the subject matter, about which the inquiry is made, at my disposal. At this time I have found only, what I feel are, three legitimate, critical references that contain qualified judgment on the

subject of gospel fellowship in the churches. We will give them below for the benefit of any and all inquirers, who are desirous of this information, 1. The first reference is found in Hassell's Church History at pages 696-697 that records the **RULES OF CHURCH DECORUM** of the early churches that comprised the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, organized in the year of 1769. I am printing herein below the first ten articles of this Decorum with Article No. 5 being italicized that include and provide the answers to the questions that dear brethren have raised in their inquisition concerning church fellowship. Will all inquirers carefully read Art. #5 in bold type?

If any of these ten articles have ever been amended or changed for the past 235 years, I am not aware of it. In the event that someone is conscious they have been amended or changed, will that person notify me immediately and I shall monetarily reimburse them for their expense for this accommodation promptly with oblige?

J. M. Mewborn
October 21, 2004

RULES OF CHURCH DECORUM - KEHUKKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION (ORGANIZED A.D. NOVEMBER 6, 1769)

Preamble: From a long series of experiences we (we who hope we are) the church of Christ, are convinced of the necessity of coming together as often as may be in order to hold conferences, and to discharge our duty in watching over each other as Christ has commanded.

Ordered, therefore, that the following decorum be a rule for the church to conduct

herself by in her future conferences. We will not forsake the house of God or the assembling of ourselves together. Neh. 10:39, Heb. 10:25.

1. The conference shall be composed of the members of this church, together with any members of sister churches that are present in the fellowship of the same faith and order who have liberty to seat with us. Acts 4:23; 15:6.

2. Conference shall be opened and closed with prayer to Almighty God. 1st. Tim. 2:1; 1 Thess. 5:17, 18.

3. One shall be chosen to preside, who shall be addressed under the appellation of Brother Moderator, and to whom every speech shall be particularly directed. 1 Cor. 14: 26-40.

4. The members' names, being regularly enrolled, shall by the clerk be distinctly called over, and a significant mark put to the name of all absent members. Acts 1:15; Neh. 2:18, 4:16; 4:20.

5. *A door shall be opened (when thought necessary) for the admission of new members into the church; but none shall be admitted but by UNANIMOUS CON-*

SENT, and who shall first verbally relate their experience, or give an account of the work of God in their souls; and secondly, of their faith and principles (if the church shall require it) and thirdly, the church shall make diligent inquiry respecting their moral conduct, and when full satisfaction shall be obtained, the pastor, deacon and moderator, shall manifest the same by giving them the right hand of fellowship, thereby receiving them in form. 1 Peter 3:15; Gal. 2:19.

6. No complaint shall be brought into conference against trespassing brethren

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respecting crimes of a private nature, until the aggrieved party has complied with the direction of the Lord in Matthew 18: 15-17.

7. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the conference unless withdrawn by the member who made it. 1 Cor. 14:40.

8. Every query presented shall be thrice read; and before it is received, the Moderator shall take a vote, and accordingly as there is a majority for or against debating it, it shall be answered or not. But the querist may withdraw it at any time - provided also that no intricate query shall be imposed or asked.

9. If the minority shall be grieved at any time at the determination of the majority, they are hereby directed to make the same known immediately to the church; and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, it may be necessary in that case to call for help from sister churches.

10. All the business of conference shall be recorded by the Clerk, in the church record book, and before the conference rises, the same shall be distinctly read and corrected, if need be.

THE CHURCH RULE OF DECORUM, REQUIRING UNANIMOUS VOTE FOR FELLOWSHIP, IS TRACED BACK TO THE YEAR 1834 AND BEYOND

2. The first entry in Book No. One, page 8, of what is known today as Mewborn Primitive Baptist Church, Greene County, N.C., contains a record of the first conference held there just prior to the time of organization and it reads as follows,

"At a conference, held at Mewborn's Predestinarian Baptist Meeting House on Saturday before the Second Lord's Day in June 1834, Elder Parrott Mewborn was chosen Moderator, Brother Moseley Swinson, Clerk. It was agreed that this Church have a copy of the Bear Creek Church Decorum for the rule and guide in Church

Discipline."

It is further recorded in this old church record book in connection with this first conference that was held on Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1834, the following statement reads concerning the Mewborn's Predestinarian Baptist Church as follows: "The Church was considered a branch of Bear Creek Church previously to her being constituted." The old Church book continues with entries of conferences being held at this Meeting House through the years 1835, 1836, 1837 and 1839, when "On Saturday before the third Lord's day in May, 1840, the Church was constituted."

I am publishing below a copy of this original RULES OF DECORUM that came from her mother Church, the Bear Creek Predestinarian Baptist Church, that dates back to the year 1756. In this set of the RULES OF DECORUM of the church, the principle that requires a unanimous vote for church fellowship in the true Church of the Living God, is clearly set forth under Article No. 12, in bold type, and is almost 250 years old, possibly older. I asked that all readers of this article read carefully Article No. 12 of this DECORUM below. It is printed in bold type, as follows:

COPY OF THE ORIGINAL RULES OF DECORUM FROM THE BEAR CREEK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, LENOIR COUNTY, N. C., ORGANIZED IN 1756, AND GIVEN TO MEWBORN'S CHURCH JUNE, 1834, AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST TO ORGANIZE THE CHURCH ON THE THIRD SATURDAY IN MAY, 1840.

We, the Church of Christ at Mewborn's Meeting House, Greene County, N.C., have unanimously agreed among ourselves to hold conference four times in every year at our meeting house or more often when necessary to carry on its regular discipline agreeable to the Word of God, and have established this as a rule by which we wish to be guided by the help of God. Art. I. Conference shall be opened and closed by prayer

and praise.

Art. II. A moderator and clerk shall be chosen when thought necessary.

Art. III. All corresponding letters shall be called for and read.

OLD BEAR CREEK PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE

(LaGrange - Lenoir County, NC)
(The "Mother" of Mewborn's Church)
A.D. 1840



Remaining vestige of Old Bear Creek (Predestinarian - Primitive Baptist Church) Meeting-house, sit. at 210 West Washington Street, LaGrange, NC. Church was formally reorganized 1756 by Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association on north bank of Bear Creek, Joshua Herring plantation, and moved two miles east to above location in 1850's after several members split the church to organize the First Missionary Baptist Church, LaGrange, NC. The building and property are now maintained and owned by the LaGrange Garden Club. The old church book states that Elder Sylvester Hassell preached for the church & congregation on the 5th Sunday in June, 1890, at this place from II Cor. 4:6, "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The Clerk recorded, "He was blessed to preach with great liberty."

Art. IV. A door of experience shall be opened for the reception of members.

Art. V. The state of the church shall be inquired into and proceed to business.

Art. VI. The moderator shall have the power to keep good order by reproofing disorderly members.

Art. VII. The sisters shall have their seats in order.

Art. VIII. Each person, first rising from his seat, shall address the moderator with the appellation of Brother.

Art. IX. Every motion made and seconded shall come under debate unless withdrawn by him that made it.

Art. X. Each person speaking shall fairly state the matter and not reflect on him that spoke before so as to make remarks on his slips and imperfections. Neither shall he be interrupted by any save the moderator until he gives his light on the subject.

Art. XI. The moderator shall be the last that shall speak on the subject, who may, if he please, give his light before he puts the matter to a decision.

Art. XII. The minority shall subject to the majority in all cases EXCEPT IN RECEIVING MEMBER TO FELLOWSHIP AND APPOINTING TO OFFICE IN THE CHURCH WHICH SHALL BE UNANIMOUS.

Art. XIII. No query shall be rejected until thrice read.

Art. XIV. No person shall have liberty to break from the conference without leave obtained from it.

Art. XV. No person shall have liberty to be whispering or

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"Remove not the ancient Landmark which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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laughing in time of public speech.

Art. XVI. The deacon or deacons shall look well into the conduct of the church and reprove privately all members who walk not according to Gospel ordinances or for a neglect of attending their meetings.

Art. XVII. All disturbances shall first be carried to the deacons or deacon, and it shall be their duty to settle it, if they can; if they cannot, it shall be brought before the next conference.

Art. XVIII. The two deacons or any three male members shall have power to call and adjourn conference from day to day, if necessary, so as to set God's house in order.

Art. XIX. The church covenant shall be read at least once a year, and oftener, if necessary.

Art. XX. The proceedings of the conference shall be read before the rise and as much as thought necessary put in the church book.

Art. XXI. On motion adjourn by prayer and praise.

(Note: The above Rules of Decorum of Mewborn's Church are still today in full force and effect, and have never been changed, amended or altered since their adoption at the time of organization on the third Saturday in May, 1840, 164 years ago. They have been tested and tried many times. The Bear Creek (Predestinarian - Primitive) Baptist Church, mother Church of Mewborn's Church, disbanded in the year 1937. The old building at 210 West Washington Street, LaGrange, N. C., still stands there today. Editor.)

THE (BAPTIST) UNANIMOUS RULE OF DECORUM REQUIREMENT FOR CHURCH FELLOWSHIP IS TRACED FARTHER BACK TO THE FIRST EUROPEAN, ENGLISH, BAPTIST (CHURCH) SETTLEMENTS IN AMERICA OVER THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association was the first ever to be formed in the United States of America. It originated with Baptist churches planted here by members from Wales, one of them being the Welsh Tract Church, constituted in Pembrokeshire and

Caermarthen Counties, South Wales in Great Britain. Their number of members, sixteen in all, sailed from Milford-haven (Wales) in the month of June, 1701, in a ship named James and Mary, and landed in Philadelphia, two months later, on the eighth of September following. Today, historically speaking, the Welsh Tract Church is the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in America, and is the only Baptist Church in America that was regularly organized in Europe before emigrating to this country.

It is correctly recorded in history that five churches, including Welsh Tract being one of their number, formed the Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association in 1707. It created and maintained a standard of church discipline,

WELSH TRACT PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCH (MEETING HOUSE)
Newark, New Castle County, Delaware



"In the year 1701, some of us, who were members of the churches of Jesus Christ in the counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen, South Wales, in Great Britain, (professing believers in baptism, laying on of hands, election, and final perseverance in grace), were moved and encouraged in our minds to come to these parts, namely, Pennsylvania. And after obtaining leave of the churches, it seemed good to the Lord, and to us, that we should be formed into church order, as we were a sufficient number, and as one was a minister, that was accomplished, and with all letters commendatory were given us, that if we should meet with any congregation or christian people, who held the same faith with us, we might be received with them, as brethren in Christ. Our number was 16, and after bidding farewell to our brethren in Wales we sailed from Milford Haven in June, 1701, in the ship James and Mary, and landed in Philadelphia on September 8th following." "The present meeting house is of brick, brought from Wales, across the Atlantic, and were conveyed from the boat at New Castle to this place on pack mules, led by sisters who were members of the church." (Taken from Bi-Centennial Celebration of Welsh Tract Church, (History, October, 1903.)

strongly bearing the mark of the soundest form of scripture-doctrine, practice and order at anytime previously in recorded church history, since the first ones established by Christ and His apostles. These early churches of Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association would not admit or receive any new member which denied or concealed any of the pure, true doctrine of Salvation by grace and grace alone, and admission of such members into fellowship of their respective bodies was always by unanimous vote only. Every candidate for church membership was required to relate his or her experience of grace to the church, and it was always closely examined to detect any self-works and righteousness of the creature-man. This was strict, gospel order. The New Testament was, precisely speaking, their only rule of faith and practice. If there was any detection of unsoundness, their application for membership was denied and rejected.

Another outstanding mark of these early Welsh Baptists in America from Europe was that they regarded clerical pride a mark of Anti-Christ. What would they think if they could come back today and look around, even among those called "Old Baptists"?

Quoting verbatim from the minutes of the 48th Annual Session of the Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association of 1755, it reads as follows:

"The elders and messengers of the several congregations of Christians baptized upon profession of their faith in Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys, met at Philadelphia, October 7th, 1755."

In the course of their deliberations on the above date we find this transaction and order of business as follows:

"Appointed that one ministering brother from the Jerseys, and one from Pennsylvania visit North Carolina, the several churches to contribute to bear their expense."

Hassell's Church History on page No. 663 confirms the above valuable historical information of the two Elders, sent from the Philadelphia

Particular Baptist Association to North Carolina, and identifies their names as follows, to-wit:

"Elder Peter Peterson Vanhorn from the Pennepek Church (north of Philadelphia) and Elder Benjamin Miller from the Scotch Plains Church in New Jersey, belonging to the Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association, were sent into the Southern Colonies and were received by the churches in North Carolina. Through their ministry the churches became better established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and some were reorganized completely (or anew) upon that principle, until the greater number of them were gathered (in North Carolina both ministers and private members) into the regular Predestinarian Baptist order."

A small book titled A Concise History Of The Kehukee Baptist Association From Its Original Rise Down To 1803 reveals on page 244 that these two Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association ministers, Elders Vanhorn and Miller, first arrived in the Kehukee Church area (today about 3 miles east from Scotland Neck, Halifax County, North Carolina) just a little over two months after leaving Pennsylvania, and on December 11, 1755, reorganized the Kehukee Church from its Arminian, conditional tenets of belief of the works of man and the creature to save himself and others to the Sovereign Grace Doctrine of Election and Predestination. It further continues,

"The Church at Kehukee, Halifax County, North Carolina: This Church at first was gathered and constituted out of some members who had been received and baptized on the Free-will plan. On the visit of Elders Vanhorn and Miller, they were established on the regular (predestinarian) order, and joined in covenant December 11, 1755."

Morgan Edwards, a Welsh Baptist historian of the Philadelphia Baptist

Association, left on record his Materials Towards A History Of The Baptists In The Province Of North Carolina In 1772, which records that Vanhorn and Miller left the newly constituted Kehukee Church going to the Bear Creek Church (then Dobbs) now Lenoir County, North Carolina (Note: This is the same Bear Creek that became the mother-church of Mewborn's Church in 1832-1840. Edwards' record further reveals that Bear Creek Church "originated by transformation of General Baptists into the Particular Baptist order by means of (Elders) Mssrs. Miller and Vanhorn." From the Bear Creek Church in early 1776, they moved on to the Toisnot Church, Edgecombe (now Wilson) County, North Carolina, "where on September 7, 1756, in the home of Elder John Thomas, the same two ministers reconstituted the church to the Particular order." Sometime during that same year, 1756, Elders Vanhorn and Miller visited a church called Swift Creek, near Ernul, Craven County, N. C., and reconstituted this church, and others in eastern North Carolina in the same doctrine and order. In all of these instances Elder Vanhorn and Elder Miller implanted the same, identical Rules of Decorum from their home churches back in the Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association that contained the requirement for the unanimous vote for fellowship in the church. Please go back and re-read the two copies of Church Decorum, as printed early on, in this article, especially those articles printed in bold type. These Rules of Decorum are traced directly back to those early Welsh Baptist churches that founded the early Philadelphia Baptist Association in the year 1707.

Having established that the Rule of Decorum of the true Church of the Living God required a unanimous vote for fellowship in the early Baptist churches from the above documentation, it follows today that it continues to apply in the three following instances as outlined below, to-wit:

1. When a candidate is received by experience and baptism to fellowship in the church.

2. When a member is dismissed by letter to join or unite with another church for convenience of the same faith and order. The lettered member must unanimously be dismissed, as well as received into the accepting church by unanimous vote, and the letter holder remains in fellowship with the dismissing church until notified by the receiving church that same has been accomplished. This person is dismissed by letter always unanimously and is likewise received unanimously.

3. When an excluded member in a given church has had fellowship withdrawn from him or her, and he later returns to his church to acknowledge his transgression and error, begging forgiveness, also to return to his first love, a unanimous vote is most critical in this instance, when this person must be unanimously forgiven in order to be restored unanimously.

My observation through the past fifty years has been when a member is excluded by a local church and fellowship is being withdrawn, the presiding moderator calls for a standing, unanimous vote for this action, saying, "all who do not vote to stand to withdraw fellowship, likewise will follow the excluded member, and they, themselves, are also excluded by the same action." This cuts painfully and hard when there is a close, human, fleshly tie, such as a father having to stand to exclude his wife, or the parent(s) to exclude a son or daughter, a brother against a sister, and vice versa. This has been and still is the order of those churches that I have been blessed to know a lifetime.

4. In Item Nos. 1, 2 & 3, above, (1) when receiving members by experience and baptism into the church, (2) receiving a member by letter from another (or sister) church, and (3) when restoring a member back into fellowship, who in time past had been excluded from his church, there is one more, a fourth area where the churches have

upheld the unanimous consent involving the work of associations when restoring fellowship with a former church where in time past fellowship had been withdrawn.

In a lifetime of over 72 years I have seen numerous times when an association restored fellowship with a church or churches where fellowship had been withdrawn from it (or them) and the church(es) had been set aside. Always, without exception, this was not done or accomplished until all the churches with the given association were able to receive them (all of them back) unanimously. Strictly speaking, this means 100% agreement. Always without exception the returning church had set its house in order with orthodox principles of religion. However, to date I have never seen one, complete correspondence of associations reunite with a former set of correspondents where a separation had existed between them over a period of years. In this instance I am not saying that such could not be accomplished. I am only saying I have never seen it take place. But, if it be God's Will, we adopt the language of the Lord Jesus Christ here, "With man this is impossible; but with GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE." (Matthew 19:26.) Unanimous consent of all related churches involved is required since it touches fellowship.

Elder C. B. Hassell in his Church History on page No. 702 warns, cautions and admonishes associations everywhere against the misuse of power over the local church. I quote him, "Should the churches ever allow the Association, or any body of men formed by their combination, to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants. A church of Christ has ever been considered, by genuine Baptists, the highest ecclesiastical power on earth.

"Associations are not considered absolutely necessary for the existence of a church or churches, but only as a convenient method of correspondence and intercourse among the churches, so that acquaint-

tance and personal contact might be promoted among a larger circle of brethren than could be done in a single church or neighborhood. Much satisfaction also is found in obtaining the views and advice from each of the churches on questions of importance to the Kingdom of Christ. "In the multitude of counselors there is safety," (Proverbs 11:14.), has been long held as a wise adage among the people of God, wherever."

THE UNANIMOUS STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH AND HER PEACE ARE CLOSELY RELATED AND NEEDED FOR THE CHURCH'S SURVIVAL

I have been asked the question recently, "Why does fellowship in the church have to be unanimous?" Before I attempt to answer this question, let us look briefly at the meaning of the word, fellowship. It means true companionship with a unity of accord and agreement; a company of equals bound together with love and friendship, etc.

1st Corinthians 10:21 helps to answer this question. The Apostle Paul told the church, "I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and the table of the devils."

I ask that you go back and read Article No. 5 of the Rules of Decorum of the early Bear Creek Church. It says, "The state of the church shall be inquired into and proceed to business." The peace (and unanimous fellowship) is vital to any gospel (local) church, and it cannot survive without it. This is why most of our churches today in the order of their conferences take care of this item first. "Ask for the peace of the church," "inquire into the welfare of the church," etc., they will say. Anytime a church cannot report in peace means that the membership of the church, as a whole, is not unanimous in feeling. Any true gospel church, we all know, cannot commune when it does not report in peace. It

must always be unanimous to commune and wash feet, the latter where churches practice it.

When a church is blessed to report in peace, it means that the members are 100% militantly unanimous in feeling. They are all together in one mind, (that is "the mind of Christ", Philippians 2:5). None has any ought against the other, when the love of Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings abound. This peace of Christ in the church is in the Lord's Cup, and it comes from His Table, not from the table of the world. When the church does not report in peace, there is always an element of the world close by. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what FELLOWSHIP hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what COMMUNION hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14.) The peace of the church is vital to its existence and survival and the unanimity (or unity) in the Spirit of God within the membership is its peace. Therefore, the church is always preserved by safeguarding its peace in Christ and this can only be accomplished for it to require unanimous consent of the body when it comes to its internal fellowship in communion, feet-washing, receiving new members to fellowship, choosing a pastor, deacon, clerk, treasurer and trustee. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," always "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Psalms 133:1 & Ephesians 4:3.)

THE FAITH AND PRACTICE OF THE WELSH BAPTIST CHURCHES ARE TRACED BACK TO THE TIMES OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, WHEN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED

These early Welsh Baptists of over 300 years ago, who stood for the Rule of Decorum of unanimous vote in the church for fellowship, traced their spiritual roots and origin of faith back to the

year A.D. 41, when it is recorded in the scripture how the Lord removed the oracles of God from the Jews and gave them to the Gentiles. The scripture reads, "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." (John 1:11.) These were the Gentiles who God blessed to establish His church for the past 2,000 years. And again the Apostle Paul said to the unbelieving Jews, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord." (Acts 13:46 & 48). "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God." (Acts 10:48.)

Elder C. B. Hassell in his Church History records the historical antiquity of these early Gentile (Welsh) Baptists to the days of the beginning of the Apostolic Church, as was set up by Christ and His Apostles. I quote him here, "The old British (Welsh) Christians, who traced their origin through the mercantile relations of Cornwall, England and Marseilles, France, to those churches planted in Asia Minor by the Apostle Paul and watered by the Apostle John, who had in the fifth century, fled from the heathen Saxon invaders into the mountains of Wales (as it prophesied in the scripture, "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." Matt. 24:16.), and as others afterwards fled into the Pyrenees (Mountains along the Spanish-French border) and to the mountains of northern Italy and Bohemia, refused to acknowledge the authority of the pope, causing great persecution, or to have any alliance with Rome. Some of these old Welsh believers and faithful children of God (Gentiles) preached the true gospel and doctrine in Ireland, Scotland and England." (See Hassell's



ELDER T. FLOYD ADAMS
1891 - 1973

Church History, page 410.)

From reading the above statement from Hassell's Church History, it appears that the Rule of Decorum requirement for unanimous consent in the Church for fellowship reaches back to the time of Christ and His Apostles, when His Church was first established here on the face of the earth.

J. M. Mewborn
October 28, 2004

(Sources: Hassell's Church History, Elders C.B. & Sylvester Hassell; A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association, Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, (1803); North Carolina Historical Review, July 1930, issue; History of Wilson, (NC) (Toisnot) Primitive Baptist Church, Wilson, NC; Bi-Centennial Celebration of the Welsh Tract Church (1903); Church Record Book No. One, Mewborn Primitive Baptist Church, Greene County, NC), Minutes of the Philadelphia Particular Baptist Association, from AD 1707 to Ad 1807.

THE ORDER OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

(Note: The following inquiry of the late Elder Sanford A. Bradshaw, who lived in Florence, Mississippi, with the accompanying reply of Elder T. Floyd Adams, Willow Spring, North Carolina, concerning Church Order, was published in the February 1, 1963, and February 15, 1963, issues of Zion's Landmark. They are being republished at this time by special request.

Elder Sanford A. Bradshaw was the gifted, able moderator of the Little Zion Primitive Baptist Association of (Primitive Baptist) churches in the State of Mississippi for a number of years. He passed away in the mid-1960's, as I recall. These churches are now served by Elder Stanley C. Phillips of Quitman, Mississippi. Elder Bradshaw also was the faithful pastor of Antioch Church in Arkansas. Elder T. Floyd Adams was the editor of Zion's Landmark at that time. His writings and editorials in the paper

were always regarded as sound in the faith and truth. Editor.)

Dear Elder Adams,

Should you have that mind, I would that you write an article concerning the order of the church.

My reason is that some good brethren seem to think that the order of the church was gotten up by men, and should not be adhered to as a rule in the church. This idea never has appealed to me, since I believe the true order (of the true church) is spiritual and only manifests the spiritual guidance in maintaining good order. Without good order, how can you or anyone else tell where the church is?

Yours in hope,

(Elder) Sanford A. Bradshaw
Florence, Mississippi
(January 8, 1964)

REPLY

I agree with Brother Bradshaw that the true church of Jesus Christ is recognized by the doctrine (and order, contained in the doctrine) as set forth by the Apostles and Prophets. Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, said to the Gentile Brethren that they were "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." Eph. 2:20 - 22.

The visible church is composed of baptized believers, those who have evidence of pardon, peace and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ for their sins and transgressions. "Him (Jesus) hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, (spiritual Israel) and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.

Baptism by immersion was the mode which was practiced by the Apostles. John baptized those who brought forth the fruits meet for repentance in the river of Jordan. John baptized Jesus. It is recorded, "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Matt. 3:16. Philip baptized the

eunuch. "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the spirit caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more." Acts 8:38, 39. The above scriptures are sufficient proof that baptism by complete immersion was the example laid down by Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper (that is, the bread and wine) is an ordinance to be observed by all baptized believers from the crucifixion on Christ until He comes again, the second time. Paul said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, (symbol of the body of Christ) and drink this cup, (symbol of the blood of Christ), ye do shew the Lord's death til he come." 1st Cor. 11:26. Paul said, "But now once in the end of the world, (the end of the legal dispensation) hath he appeared to put sin away by the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. 9:26. "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

The Elders of the first churches were ordained by the Apostles. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Acts 14:23. A presbytery of two or more performed this service. Paul said to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." I Tim. 4:14.

The Apostle Paul penned down the qualifications of those whom the churches should recognize as true servants of God. See I Tim. 3:1-7. Much care and precaution was to be taken before ordaining a man to the work of the ministry. He said to Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." I Tim. 5:22. It was sometime after the organization of the earliest churches before any deacons were appointed. Perhaps it would be better to say, "And in those days", collecting for the poor of the flock and distributing to the needy, serving

tables and preaching the gospel became too strenuous for those who administered the word. For this reason it seemed necessary that they should have some relief.

It is said, "And in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:1-4. The seven deacons were chosen whose names are recorded in verse 5; "And when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."

In I Tim. 3rd chapter, beginning with the eighth verse, the Apostle was more specific in giving the qualifications of deacons than ministers. After setting forth the qualifications of bishops, or elders, he began by saying "Likewise must the deacons be grave, (which means men who are serious minded, solemn, not having men's persons in admiration, that is the natural man). See Jude 16; but rather those who believe in upholding the true principles that govern the church of the true and living God and know no man (after the flesh), not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." I Tim. 3:8, 9. In verse ten, the Apostle said, "Let these also first be proved." In verse 14 and 15 he continued, by saying, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Deacons who possess the above qualifica-

tions purchase to themselves, as Paul said, "A good degree and great boldness in the faith." They render an invaluable service in holding the unity of the church, in the bond of peace, advising brethren (in the spirit of love) should there be any discord or divided opinions in local matters. By so doing, they relieve their pastors of many burdens.

Paul did not overlook the importance of making mention of the deacons' wives, and their qualifications. He said: "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, (meaning subdued, humble, sedate or modest and careful of what she says), faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well." Tim. 3:11, 12. The Apostle drew out at length on the qualifications of Elders and Deacons in I Timothy, knowing that good counsel is of utmost importance to the well being of the churches in maintaining good order and keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. In urging further precaution in ordaining ministers, the Apostle wrote to Timothy saying: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." His reason for this is that "Some men's sins are open beforehand going before to judgment; (not before the judgment of God, who knows the thoughts and intents of the hearts of all men), but going before the judgment of the church. Of course, Timothy nor the church would approve of ordaining a man whose sins are open beforehand; but there is danger in this: "some men they follow after." That is, some profess to have a call to the ministry, but they may have secret sins which do not appear on the surface, but are made manifest after they are ordained, and give the church great trouble, like Hymenaeus, and Philetus, as well as Alexander, men of corrupt minds, whose words the Apostle said, "Will eat as doth a canker - who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already; and overthrow the faith of some." II

Tim. 2:17, 18, also I Tim. 1:20. Where the evidence is clear, there is no reason for delay, but "They that are otherwise cannot be hid." I Tim. 5:25. Their secret sins will, sooner or later, be made manifest and brought to light.

The above is good order to be observed in churches, all of which is based on scriptural records. The true church of Jesus Christ is seen or recognized by following the precepts which were taught by Him and His Apostles. Those who are blessed to follow the pattern and adhere to the true principles are compared to A CITY that is set on a hill that cannot be hid. See Matt. 5:14.

Quantity is not preferred at the expense and sacrifice of quality. Those who are gathered together in the name of Jesus, are the manifest children of God. There may be many or few. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20. A tree is known by the fruit it bears. Jesus said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Matthew 7:18). The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. See Gal. 5:22. The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and revelings. The Apostle said, "And such likes of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Gal. 5:19, 20, 21.

Paul separates the meek and humble followers of Jesus Christ who endeavor to live a Godly life in honoring the profession which they have made by an orderly walk and a pure conversation, from those who bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ and His church by engaging in evil things to satisfy the lust of their flesh. With reference to the above, the Apostle said, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if

any man that is called a brother, (Paul did not say that he is a brother, but if he is called a brother), be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." I Cor. 5:11. That is: Have no dealings with such an one.

Again, we are not to overlook the gospel rule when one brother trespasses against another. Jesus said, "Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: (to pursue any other way would be dishonoring to the teachings of Jesus.). If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Matt. 18:15. If he will not hear thee, then follow the procedure in verses 16, 17, known and called "Gospel Order".

Accusations against an elder must be proven by two or three witnesses. Paul said, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." I Tim. 5:19. For he that biddeth him God-speed is a partaker of his evil deeds." 2nd John 9, 10, 11.

Dispensing with disorder is good order. If a church persists in holding to disorderly members whose conduct ceases to be a virtue, I agree with our inquirer, Elder Bradshaw, and I quote him, "Without good order, how can you or anyone else tell where the church is?" Unquote.

Much care and precaution should be exercised in dealing with offending members. Correct an erring brother and you manifest love and interest for his welfare. James said, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, (not a corporal nor eternal death, but a spiritual death relative to his church. That is, he is saved to the fellowship of his brethren,) and shall hide a multitude of sins." James 5:19, 20.

Our inquirer said, "Some good brethren seem to think that the order (or Decorum) of the church was gotten up by men and should not be adhered to as a rule of the church." The order of the

church and rules by which she is to be governed were written by men of God who were inspired by the Holy Ghost. It is true that we have Rules of Decorum in which no specific scriptures are made mention of and this may be what the brethren which he referred to, had in mind. Yet, these Rules of Decorum are essentially in accord with the laws governing the church and are necessary for the church while in the transaction of business, while in conference. We must maintain and pursue an orderly course to be in keeping with what Paul said, "Let all things be done decently and IN ORDER." 1st Cor. 14:40.

T. F. Adams

(AN OPEN LETTER)

TO: ALL SO-CALLED
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST, and
TO: ALL TRUE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST, Everywhere

"Thus Saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." (Jeremiah 6:16.)

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.)

Here in the beginning, I will say that I am sure there will be some who will ask this question now, as was asked of Moses of old, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?", because I am an "outsider," and what some refer to as a "Dry Primitive Baptist." They will say that this is not your concern. To try to answer this, I will say that I have been blessed to visit your churches for about twenty (20) years now. I have read many articles on the history of your churches, the Old School or Primitive Baptist, including the doctrine, faith, practice and order. If not deceived, I have been given a true love in my heart from God, I hope, for the old paths and good ways in which the true Primitive Baptists have ever walked since the

days of Christ and His Apostles in this sin-cursed and troubled world.

In the last year of two, I have read articles in several publications and heard by word of mouth of "new" things being introduced into Primitive Baptist churches. (These things are not really new.) As Solomon wrote, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9.)

It disturbs me that these "new" things continue to crop up again and again through the years, disturbing the peace of the churches, and marring the comfort and solace of her members. It very much disturbs me that the same people who now introduce these "new" things that were "discarded" by the Kehukee Association in the years 1826-1828, and the Black Rock (Maryland) Convention of 1832, want to continue to use the name "Primitive Baptist." It is to these people that I address the following sections of this letter, viz:

(1) If your church body (and association, if you belong to one), no longer believes the Bible, the Articles of Faith as adopted by them at the time of their formal organization, respectively, if they no longer uphold your Covenant and Rules of Decorum, also adopted at the time of formal organization, nor do you resource the London and Philadelphia Particular Baptist Associations' Confessions of Faith, you are not a true Primitive Baptist. Change the name of your church to something else.

I have been informed and told that one of the very oldest Primitive Baptist churches here in eastern North Carolina, (organized in Edgecombe County on December 3, 1757) has recently changed its name. They were right and correct to do so when they introduced instrumental music (an organ and piano) with a choir in their church services. They were no longer true Primitive Baptist.

(2) If you want to collect sums of money to send missionaries hither and yon, you are not a

true Primitive Baptist. The Missionary Baptist are already well established, and will be happy to receive you and your money. They have a vast organization today for such purposes. Don't continue to call yourself Primitive Baptist if you are collecting money to support a missionary organization. Christ commanded His Apostles to "go", and He did not require His Church to "send" missionaries.

(3) If you believe you should select a man and educate him for the ministry, there are many denominations of the world which already have theological seminaries that for a large sum of money purport to teach men (and now in more recent years, women) how to preach. True Primitive Baptist are not against education as some have said; however, they are against man attempting to educate someone for the ministry, and to attempt to teach him how to preach. If you advocate sending a man to school to attempt to try to educate him for the ministry, stop calling yourself Primitive Baptist.

(4) If you want your church to have a Sunday School with all sorts of instrumental music, (pianos, organs, and in more recent years, guitars, drums and tambourines, etc.), you are not a true Primitive Baptist. Stop calling yourself one. There are a number of denominations of the world out there that will be happy to receive you into their Sunday Schools and musical "entertainment programs" and "centers."

(5) If you believe that orders to the local church members should come down from an archbishop, bishop, a ruling elder, ruling elders, superintendents, supervisors and ordained authority (so-called) from headquarters, there are several denominations out there that will gladly receive you and your church. They will take a fee-simple title deed to your local church property and will tell you how much money your local church will need to send to the "headquarters" every month. If you believe in this type church organization, you are not a true Primitive Baptist. Don't call yourself or your church by that name.

(6) If you believe your minister

should be paid a regular, stipulated salary on a contract basis for preaching just as a corporation pays its president and CEO's (corporate, executive officers), as in a business contract for managing the business, you are not a true Primitive Baptist. Stop calling yourself one.

(7) If you believe your church should go on a "pledge system" with every member agreeing in advance how much they will pay and "pledge" toward the "annual budget and other funds", and then passing the plate at every meeting or setting up collection boxes as permanent fixtures in the anterooms, foyers and front entrances of your meeting houses to receive money, tithes and offerings, you are not a true Primitive Baptist. Today, there are hundreds of churches that use this system, and many will be happy to tell you how much to contribute each month based on your income. If you advocate such a system, you are no longer a true Primitive Baptist. Stop using the name. I could go on and on to list other "new" things (more than one) that have been

introduced in recent days in Primitive Baptist Churches, but I have given enough examples of some of them that are now disturbing the peace of individual churches and marring the peace and comfort of their members. It disturbs me, an outsider, an "Old, Dry Primitive Baptist," that there are those who wish to change the doctrine, faith, practice and order that have been in place and have worked so well for the churches for centuries, and still want to call themselves Primitive Baptist. It is not right.

I would suggest that everyone read the book entitled TEETH TO TEETH - TOM THUMB TUGGING WITH THE WOLVES FOR THE SHEEP-SKIN by Elder Joshua Lawrence who lived 1778-1842. Although this book was written in 1837, what he stood for then still applies to this year of 2004. (This book has been recently republished and is now available from local Primitive Baptist Library sources.)

It has been said and written that the Missionary Baptist usurped the "Baptist" name in the 1830's, and this denomination of the world has now grown to millions of members. Today, whenever the name

"Baptist" is mentioned, most people think of the Southern Baptist Convention, a household phrase. At this present time, there are those (now) usurping the Primitive Baptist name. According to scripture, numbers have never identified or comprised the true Church of the Living God in this present evil world; however, it is the quality of faith, not quantity, that always identifies the true church. That number was reduced one time in Biblical history to only eight (8) souls. (See 1st Peter 8:29.)

In closing, may I say to the true, Old "Hardshell", Absolute, Predestinarian Primitive Baptist: HOLD FAST, STAND FAST, continue, as God may enable you, to ask for and walk in the old paths, and earnestly contend for that faith which was once delivered unto His saints. May it be the Will of God, as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren, "be ye STEADFAST, UNMOVABLE, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain the Lord." 1st Corinthians 15:58.

Written in Love, I hope, for my true Primitive Baptist Friends.

A believer, I hope, in much fear and love,

Charlie Dunn Alston
217 West 10th Street
Scotland Neck, NC 27874
(My Home Telephone Number is 1-252-826-4326. I do not have the customary E-mail facility at this time, (November 8, 2004). CDA.)

POSITIONS OF THREE DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS TODAY ON CHURCH ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, BRIEFLY DESCRIBED

It has been my observation for the past twenty years to observe three different, distinct groups' positions of Primitive Baptists on church order in the United States of America. These descriptions are current, as of today, November 11, 2004. They are as follows briefly described as follows:

The first group will tell you immediately, early on, that they do not have any, neither do they believe in any order in the church, whatsoever. If you believe in order, and stand for

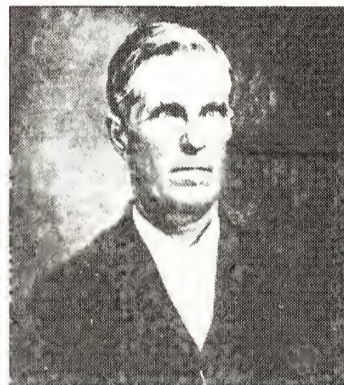
it, 'love goes out the window,' they say. It seems that these churches do what they want to do, and that is it.

A second group will tell you they believe in order, so long as it goes their (man's) way. They legislate their own laws on sight to cover any current problem, and anything that is unsolvable to them, they say, "sweep it under the rug and forget it."

A third group endeavors to uphold it (order in the church), as declared by the prophet, Jeremiah, as follows: "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.) Those in this group are getting to be very few and far between. In fact, it appears they are almost extinct.

Editor

(November 11, 2004).



ELDER JOSEPH E. (J.E.)
ADAMS
1834 - 1924

IS THE PROPHECY OF ELDER J. E. (JOSEPH ELDRIDGE) ADAMS, MADE OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, NOW BEING FULFILLED?

Elder Joseph Eldridge (J. E.) Adams was born January 11, 1834, and died in Angier, Harnett County, North Carolina, March 17, 1924. I am told today that he was a faithful soldier, a true defender of the faith in his generation in the Army of the Lord, the Church of the true and living God. He was a school teacher by natural profession, and the excellent record God blessed him to leave behind states "he was a circumspect man in character and behaved himself well in the House of God."

Elder T. Floyd Adams once told me over 35 years ago of a vision that Elder Joseph E. Adams experienced about the year 1900 and had related (it) to him sometimes prior to Elder (Joseph E.) Adams' death in the year 1924. I will quote the words of Elder T. Floyd Adams as told to him by Elder J. E. Adams.

"In my vision," Elder J. E. Adams said, "I saw a weasel attack an eagle, catching the eagle's body

by the throat, and it sucked the blood from it (the eagle's) body until it died." Elder J. E. Adams continued by saying, "I feel the interpretation of this vision has to do with the future of our country, the United States of America, in the latter dispensation of time." (End of quote.)

I have wondered and meditated many times for the past several months, especially since 9/11, if the weasel in Elder J. E. Adams' vision represents the Islamic world with their War of Terrorism on our country, the USA? Islam is the religious faith of Muslims, including the belief in Allah as the sole deity, and in Muhammad as His (Allah's) prophet. The Muslim world of countries consists of a gigantic civilization erected upon the Islamic faith. Islam is their dominant belief. The eagle here could represent our country, and, if so, it would appear that we are headed for great trouble since we are already (now) over 430 billion dollars in debt because of the war against Terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan. If so, the future outlook of our country is not very optimistic.

Weasels have keen smell and sharp vision. The animal is a sharp-shooter in his skill in mastering his kill. They are amazingly strong for their size and prey on birds, mice and squirrels. They usually grab and bite their victims viciously on the neck or at the base of the skull. In winter weasels in cold climates have a change in color of their furs from brownish to white, except for a small, black-tipped tail. The white fur provides camouflage in the snow, when it makes its deadly attack. The moving, small, black-tipped tail will catch the eye of the attacking predator, such as an eagle, hawk or owl, and cause the attacker to miss the weasel. Such characteristics and traits are indicative of the sly, shrewd maneuvering of Ishmael and his nephew, Esau, the former, "a wild man," (Genesis 16:12), and the latter, "a cunning hunter." (Genesis 25:27.) The terrorists today are the descendents of these two Biblical characters. Their manner of operation is "cunning" and "wild", inherited traits from their forbears almost 6,000 years ago. Today, their world-wide population by numerical count is infinitude. The USA is at war with them with no end in sight. Our God only knows the outcome. Will the cost of this war become insurmountable? The United States of America is paying dearly with the shedding of blood of our soldiers and the cost of multi-billions of dollars of money at this time because of this deadly conflict! it appears that Elder Joseph E. Adams' vision of one hundred years ago has divine merit to it.

J. M. Mewborn
November 9, 2004

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Editor

CORRECTION REQUEST FROM CHARLIE D. ALSTON FOR HIS ARTICLE, (AN OPEN LETTER TO PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS), THAT APPEARED ON PAGE #8, IN SEPT.-OCT., 2004, ZION'S LANDMARK.

Elder J. M. Mewborn, Editor,
ZION'S LANDMARK
P. O. Box 1358
Coats, N. C. 27521

Dear Elder Mewborn:

In my letter that was published in the September-October 2004 edition of ZION'S LANDMARK, I made an error in reference to the scripture concerning the church being reduced to only eight souls.

The error is in next to the last paragraph of my letter on page 8. There is no 8th chapter and 29th verse of the book of I Peter. The correct reference should be I Peter 3:20, which (in part) reads as follows: "...when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

Please publish this correction in the next ZION'S LANDMARK.

Charlie Dunn Alston
Scotland Neck, N.C. 27874

THE EVERLASTING HOPE OF A CHILD OF GOD

("And Moses said," "We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel." Numbers 10:29. "I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne, and before THE LAMB, clothed with white robes, AND PALMS IN THEIR HANDS." Rev. 7:9.)

PALMS OF VICTORY (Our Experience)

I saw a way-worn traveler in tattered garments clad,
And struggling up the mountain, it seemed that he was sad.

His back was laden heavy, his strength was almost gone.

Yet, shouted as he journeyed, Deliverance will come.

The summer sun was shining, the sweat was on his brow.

His garments worn and dusty, his steps seemed very slow. But, he kept pressing onward, for he was wending home,
Still shouting as he journeyed, Deliverance will come.

The songsters in the arbor, that stood beside the way,

Attracted his attention, inviting his delay. His watchword being "Onward!", he stopped his ears and ran,
Still shouting as he journeyed, Deliverance will come.

I saw him in the evening, the sun was bending low.

He'd over-topped the mountain, and reached the vale below. He saw that golden city, his everlasting home,
And shouted loud, Hosanna, Deliverance will come!

While gazing on that City, just o'er the narrow flood,

A band of Holy Angels, came from the Throne of God. They bore him on their pinions, safe o'er the dashing foam,
And joined him in his triumph, Deliverance HAD come.

I heard that Song of Triumph, they sang upon that shore,

"Our Jesus has redeemed us, to suffer never-more."
Then looking once more backward, he viewed the race he'd run,
And shouted loud Hosanna! DELIVERANCE HAS COME.

Chorus

Then palms of victory, crowns of glory,
Palms of Victory I shall wear.

JOHN NEWTON (1725-1807) OF ENGLAND,
THE AUTHOR OR COMPOSER OF THE HYMN,
"AMAZING GRACE."

In the "November-December, 1986," issue of Zion's Landmark, we published an article that was taken from the October, 1986,

issue of the Reader's Digest concerning the life of John Newton, which many of the subscribers and readers at the time expressed appreciation in reading it. Since it has been 18 years, when it was first published, knowing that many of our current subscribers and readers have never read it, we feel that republication is timely.

When I grew up as a child over 65 years ago, we had radios, but no television. "Amazing Grace" was never heard on any radio programs in those days. The Old School Baptist people were the only ones I ever heard sing it in their church meetings or to themselves. I remember well in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's they sang it then just like they do now. Since that time in more recent years it has been popularized by the world. When our USA government today holds memorial services or funeral rites for our deceased presidents, dignitaries, and members of our Armed Services who have died in service and combat, their military bands, always without exception, will play this hymn. Attend any funeral today of a loved one and you will hear it "Amazing Grace", somewhere in the medley of hymns that are rendered during the service. This hymn has become well loved by humankind and touches the hearts everywhere of many people. We take pleasure in reprinting it in the pages of the Zions' Landmark again.

J. M. Mewborn
October 17, 2004

THE ARTICLE

UNKNOWN FACTS ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE LATE JOHN NEWTON AND (GOD'S) "AMAZING GRACE" REVEALED

In the October, 1986, issue of the Reader's Digest (page 138) appeared an article under the heading, "The Amazing Grace of John Newton." In reading this article, I learned of things pertaining to the life

TYPOGRAPHICAL CORRECTIONS MADE IN THE SEPT.-OCT., 2004 ISSUE OF ZION'S LANDMARK

TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS AND READERS, please note:

The correct reading of Article XII of the Rules of Decorum of the early Bear Creek Predestinarian Baptist Church, organized in the year 1756, should have read, (CORRECTED)

"Art. XII. The minority shall SUBMIT to the majority in all cases EXCEPT IN RECEIVING MEMBERS TO FELLOWSHIP AND APPOINTING TO OFFICE IN THE CHURCH WHICH SHALL BE UNANIMOUS."

It incorrectly read in the Sept.-Oct., 2004 issue as follows,

Art. XII. The minority shall subject to the majority in all cases EXCEPT IN RECEIVING MEMBER TO FELLOWSHIP AND APPOINTING TO OFFICE IN THE CHURCH WHICH SHALL BE UNANIMOUS.

(The corrections are highlighted above, showing the word "submit" in lieu of subject, and "members" in lieu of member. In my final proof-reading I failed to catch these errors, while in haste to get the paper out. Editor.)

On page No. 4, counting down (from top towards bottom of page) to 22nd line, should read "From the Bear Creek Church in early 1756," in lieu of 1776, the latter which is incorrect. Elders Vanhorn and Miller from the time of their arrival at Kehukee Church on December 11, 1755, were in North Carolina one year, when they were back in Philadelphia in October, 1756. They had completed their work in North Carolina at the request of the

and experience of John Newton that I had not previously known or been aware. I had never read or seen these facts concerning his life in reference books. Only a very brief, abstract sketch of him is given in the *Memoirs of the Principal Hymn-Writers and Compilers of the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries* by John Gadsby. Other reference works of a principal nature contain no more data.

It was for this reason that I wrote the "Editorial Rights and Permissions Manager", Katherine Burns, of the *Reader's Digest* on November 30, 1986, asking for permission from her to have this article published in the *Zion's Landmark* for the benefit of our people who have adopted through the years this hymn as one of the most favorites, if not the most favorite, used in our church services today. She was kind enough to grant me this permission.

Please understand that I am well aware of the fact that the *Reader's Digest* is a magazine of the world, but it is not for that reason that I am republishing this article whatsoever. My reason, of course, is for the interesting facts that have been brought out very recently by Alex Haley, who when tracing his African ancestry to a slave, Kunta Kinte, who lived in 1767, also unintentionally uncovered this information about John Newton who at one time was an African slave trader.

When one reads this article, he can more easily understand how one of the most beloved hymns, in the history of time, sung by the children of God many, many times, came into existence. I am now well past 50 years of age (1986) and I have heard it sung since I was 5 years of age by the most loving people in all the world. Vocalists today out of Hollywood, as well as other popular and classical singers, have sung it, but something is clearly missing when compared to a group of Old Baptists, when they sing it. There is a sound, feeling and meaning, when they sing it, like none other in the whole wide world.

J. M. Mewborn
November 15, 1986

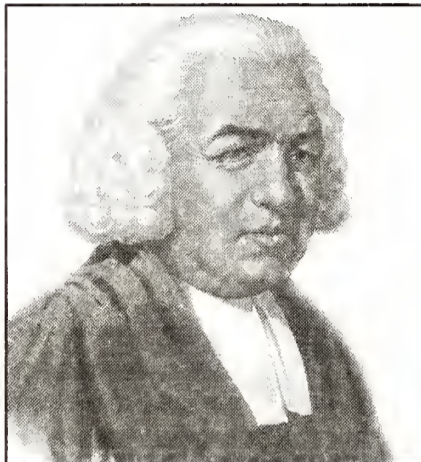
THE AMAZING GRACE OF JOHN NEWTON

By Alex Haley

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(Editor's Note - *Reader's Digest*)

(When "Roots" burst upon the literary world in September, 1986, it was an immediate phenomenon. Ten years later millions of copies have been sold



JOHN NEWTON
1725 - 1807

Author of "Amazing Grace" and over 50 more beautiful, sound hymns that are used in today's church meetings and services.

in more than 40 languages; the television mini series has been seen by over 500 million people; and the story of Alex Haley's African ancestor, Kunta Kinte, who was taken in chains from Gambia to board a British slave ship in 1767, has become part of history.

The *Digest* was privileged to publish the first words from *Roots*, and during a recent visit to Pleasantville, New York, roving Editor Haley told, inadvertently, how his research for the book had led him to the historical account of John Newton, a minister who preached and wrote sound, wonderful hymns in England even as Kunta Kinte entered slavery in America.

"Ever since," Haley says, "I have wanted to tell this unknown history, perhaps unrevealed in the world of religion and liturgy. Newton was once a slave-ship captain. But before he died, he helped inspire the first great step toward the abolition of slavery, and he wrote the world's most beloved hymn, *Amazing Grace*, a hymn that remains a moving personal testament to salvation."

John Newton was born in London, England, on July 24, 1725, to a pious and shy mother and an authoritarian father. To the boy's relief, his shipmas-

ter father would spend only a few weeks at home between year-long voyages.

When John was seven, his mother died of tuberculosis. The shipmaster, practical man that he was, remarried before his next voyage; for John, however, the loss of his mother was devastating. He became stubborn, disrespectful and difficult, and soon was packed off to a boarding school.

There he was confronted with a headmaster who wielded a cane and a birch rod. The experience "almost broke my spirit," he later confided in a letter. But more torment was in store.

At age 11, John was put to sea as an apprentice sailor on his father's ship. During this time he strayed further and further from his mother's religious teachings.

By his teens, he was an expert sailor, but his father apprenticed him to a merchant at Alicante, Spain. The 15-year-old disobeyed orders, fought viciously with anyone who crossed him, and was sent back to his home in London, because of his unsettled behavior. As he later confessed, "I believe for some years I never was an hour in any company of anyone, anywhere, without attempting to corrupt them."

Next his father arranged for John to learn the plantation business in Jamaica. Before leaving, the youth went to visit his mother's relatives in Chatham, England, and, in one of the twists of circumstance that filled Newton's life, he met and fell in love with Mary Catlett, not quite 14. Mary reminded him of his mother. So smitten was John that he prolonged the visit and missed his ship.

Months later he was

impressed into the British navy. In 1745, midshipman Newton set sail for the East Indies on the H.M.S. *Harwich*. The voyage was to last five years, but a storm hit and the *Harwich* had to anchor off Plymouth, England. Newton was put in charge of a boat going ashore, with instructions to see that none of the crew deserted. Lovesick and headstrong, John himself escaped. Afraid to ask for directions to Chatham, he walked for two days before he was arrested by a military patrol and returned to the *Harwich*. There he was put into irons, stripped and flogged as a deserter, then transferred to a ship that ranked lowest of all in the maritime world - a ship engaged in the slave trade. "From this time I was exceedingly vile," he later confessed.

The female slaves on board were at the crew's disposal. John Newton, not quite 20 and now a militant atheist, indulged his sexual appetites as often as he wished. He was a far cry from the studious child who had sung hymns at his mother's knee.

In Sierra Leone, Africa, he left the ship to work for a slave dealer, a white man named Clow. Clow's common-law African wife hated John; when he fell desperately ill, she denied him food and water, and had her own black slaves torment him. Miraculously, Newton survived, but only to live in virtual bondage for more than a year on Clow's plantation. His life had reached its nadir, his lowest point.

Newton's father had urged a ship-owning friend in Liverpool to ask all captains of his slave ships working along the African coast to search for John and to bring him home. In February 1747, the ship *Greyhound* put in

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"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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at a port in Sierra Leone, (Africa) and Newton – through a series of divine interventions, he would later say – was found.

The Greyhound was on a long trade cruise, returning to England via Brazil. Seeking something to do, Newton began reading *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas A. Kempis, a classic study of spiritual life that included warnings of God's judgment. Disturbed by the book's message, he flung it aside. It was on March 9, 1748, the turning point of Newton's life, when he was made to see as the eminent Apostle Paul, who declared, "at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from Heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me." (Acts 26:13.)

In the dark, early-morning hours of the next day, the Greyhound was struck by a sea so heavy that part of her side was stove-in. "Pumping's useless! Nothing can save this ship, or us!" a veteran sailor exclaimed. But Newton and others with exhaustion did pump from 5 a.m. until noon. "If this will not do, the Lord have mercy upon us!", Newton cried out, startled by his own words.

The Greyhound did survive, and when she finally limped into Liverpool, England, she carried a different John Newton from "the blasphemer" who had been plucked from the African coast. As he later explained, "I began to know there is a God who hears and answers prayer...though I can see no reason why the Lord singled me out for mercy." (For the rest of Newton's life, he prayed and fasted on each anniversary of that fateful March morning.)

Troubled Conscience. Newton rushed to Chatham to see Mary, and after a voyage as first mate on a slave ship, John Newton, 24, married Mary Catlett, 20.

For the next four years, John captained slave ships. At first he had no scruples about slave trading, which was considered respectable and essential to Britain's prosperity. But as his new faith steadily grew, he wrestled with his conscience. Twice each Sunday he began conducting his white crew in prayers as the chained Africans lay closely packed, one on top of the other, some of them dying, on the opposite side of the ship.

During his next two voyages to Guinea, (Africa), buying and selling blacks, he tried to act

mercifully toward them. Then in 1754, while Newton was sitting at home drinking tea with Mary, he suffered a minor stroke. He recovered, but it was clear that his days at sea were over. God would now open a new world to him.

A Growing Flock. Newton was appointed the official Liverpool tide surveyor in 1755. With time on his hands, he studied Latin, mathematics and the Scriptures. He also wrote hymns and began to preach occasionally as a lay gift. Increasingly, he felt the call to enter the ministry.

In 1764, the new John Newton, 39, was appointed the curate of Olney, a little village on the bank of the River Ouse in Buckinghamshire, England. Newton loved his Olney parishioners. "Brothers and sisters" he called them. Many were poor, uneducated lacemakers. Not only did he wear his old sea coat on his rounds to see the sick and needy, but he also told incidents from the pulpit of his rough, seafaring life, his great sins and his own unworthiness to preach the Gospel.

Moreover, Newton dared to replace the conventional psalm-singing with the singing of hymns that were simple enough to be understood and felt by the plain people. When Newton published *An Authentic Narrative* in 1764, a graphic first-person record of his past debauchery and rescue, so many people flocked to his church that a new, inside galley (or balcony) had to be added.

After 15 years, Newton of Olney was reassigned to St. Mary Woolnoth, a distinguished church in the City of London. Though his new position brought him great influence and social status, he never lost the image of himself, broken and wretched on the coast of Africa, hating God and his own soul. His constant message, even to London's elite and powerful, was that he himself was living proof that God is able and could reach to the uttermost and save the very worst, and that there was nothing impossible with Him!

In 1785, in yet another twist of fate, Newton crossed paths with a popular young political figure named William Wilberforce. Only 26 and already a member of Parliament, Wilberforce had recently experienced a religious awakening. Though his friends predicted a great political career, Wilberforce was con-

vinced that his privileged life had no purpose.

A Trump Card. Years before, Newton had been a friend and neighbor of Wilberforce's aunt, and as a youngster, William had come under Newton's spell. Now "reborn," Wilberforce sought out the 60-year-old Newton for spiritual counsel. Should he resign from Parliament and enter the ministry? No, advised Newton. God can make you "a blessing both as His servant and a statesman."

Wilberforce, who was looking for a cause, found it in Newton's sermons against slavery. This was an issue that no political party would dare touch, but no true child of God could evade.

Newton joined the battle as he could, though his health was failing. He alone in the political arena spoke from personal experience, a trump card the opposing forces were unable to counter. He addressed England's Privy Council (including Prime Minister William Pitt): "The slaves lie in two rows, one above the other, on each side of the ship, like books upon a shelf. The poor creatures are in irons both hands and feet...And every morning more instances than one are found of the living and the dead fastened and tied together."

In March 1807, Parliament passed Wilberforce's bill abolishing the slave trade on British ships. That same year, on December 21, John Newton, age 82, spoke his last words: "I am a great sinner...and Christ is a great Saviour."

Newton's body was buried beneath his church building of St. Mary Woolnoth, England, and a tablet was placed on the church building wall.

Before his death, Newton wrote a letter for the direction of his executors:

"I propose writing an epitaph for myself, if it may be put on a plain, marble tablet near the meeting-house door, to the following purport." He composed it himself as follows:

John Newton, Clerk
Born 1725 Died (1807)
Once an infidei and libertine
A servant of slaves in Africa
Was, by the rich mercy of our
Lord and Savior *Jesus Christ*
Preserved, restored, pardoned
And appointed to preach the
faith he had long labored to
destroy.
Near sixteen years at Olney
in Bucks and (twenty-seven)

years in St. Mary's of Woolnoth. On February 1, 1750, he married *Mary*. Daughter of the late George Catlett of Chatham, Kent. He resigned her to the Lord who gave her on the 15th day of December, 1790.

And I earnestly desire that no other monument and no inscription but to this purport may be attempted for me."

My research brought me to St. Mary Woolnoth. I stood on the very rostrum where John Newton had held his congregation spellbound with accounts of his experiences of the sea, his great sins and God's great mercy. As I looked out over the empty pews, inwardly I was hearing the melodies of Newton's hymns. One glorious tune swelled up all around me. The verses were written at Olney – a minor autobiographical lyric that critics say is a poor example of Newton's work. But that hymn has traveled the world, bringing a message of hope and forgiveness to all people of faith.

I sang to myself the simple words I had learned as a child in a black church in the American South. You know them too:

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

ADDITIONAL COMMENT ABOUT JOHN NEWTON

John Newton realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th Chapter of 1st Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the grace of God I am what I am," Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be,

nor what I hope to be, I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge with him, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'" (1st Cor. 15:10.)

After reading the above account of his life, we can see why John Newton could say those words with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught, stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with the African slave traders. He went from bad to worse, even to the cohabiting with the black (slave) women on board the slave ships from Africa until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a black woman who bought him and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed to him under her table. John Newton had fallen to the very bottom of human degradation. And the Grace of God found him, saved him, and made him one of the most renowned ministers of Christ and also a writer of many sound, true hymns that have stirred the hearts of men and women until now, the world over. Truly, he could say, "By the Grace of God I am what I am."

When we read and comprehend in some measure of the above account and facts relating to his life, we can understand why he wrote the six missing verses (along with the regularly sung verses) of "Amazing Grace" which are not used today.

Now read carefully the six "missing" verses:

"Amazing Grace"

"In evil long I took delight
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new Object met my sight,
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In Agonies and blood;
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.
Sure, never till my latest

breath,

Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me
with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,
But all my tears were vain;
Where could my trembling soul be hid,
For I the Lord had slain!

A second look He gave that said,
I freely all forgive!
My blood is for thy ransom paid,
I died that thou mayest live.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Shall be forever mine."

I have recently gone through our Hymn and Tune Book, an Old School or Primitive Baptist Hymnal, used in Primitive Baptist Churches today in America, which was compiled by Elder Silas H. Durand and Elder P. G. Lester in 1886, and find that it contains approximately 550 hymns. Out of that number 50 of them were composed by John Newton.

Some of the most well-known and used regularly in our worship services today are,

Poor, Weak, and Worthless
Though I am,
Let Worldly Minds The World Pursue,
Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken,
How Tedious and Tasteless The Hours,
Joy Is A Fruit That Will Not

Grow In Nature's Barren Soil,
Hungry, and Faint and Poor,
Approach My Soul The Mercy Seat,
Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation,
Tis A Point I Long To Know,
How Sweet the Name Of Jesus Sounds, In A Believer's Ear,
and last, but not least,
Amazing Grace, How Sweet The Sound, That Saved A Wretch Like Me.

"John Newton, a common sailor at the age of eleven and press-ganged onto an English man-of-war ocean going ship at age nineteen, he experienced the thrill of action against French warships, the cruel lash of navy discipline for desertion, the loose and blasphemous life of an entirely, completely free-thinker, and the pain of an overwhelming love for a girl beyond his reach!

"Rejecting God and morality, Newton entered the slave-trade, then became a slave himself, and by the age of twenty-three was little removed from the state (and existence) of a wild animal.

"A violent Atlantic (Ocean on the high seas) storm brought John Newton to his knees and to his God that brought into existence that wonderful hymn, "Amazing Grace." With a changing life and growing faith there followed years as a slave captain and customs man, in the big heyday of smuggling and illegal trade before he was with a Divine call brought into the Gospel ministry which was a Heavenly miracle of the Almighty God!

"This Godly-inspired author and writer could write and leave hymns and letters that for over two-hundred years have inspired true believers in the blessed faith. This account of his life illustrates what the true and Living God is able to do with just one man preserved AND KEPT THROUGH MANY DANGERS."

J. M. Mewborn
October 18, 2004

A MASTERPIECE

Notwithstanding the Holy scriptures of the Bible, which is the one, greatest Book of all books in this natural world, we are publishing in this issue of Zion's Landmark, what, we feel,

is one of the soundest most solid articles (or writings) of all time on the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. this last editorial writing of that eminent servant of the most High God, Elder Gilbert Beebe, who resided in New Vernon, New York in the 19th century, is in our humble judgment 100% sound in the Apostolic doctrine and truth. He founded the Signs Of The Times November 28, 1832. It was first published in Zion's Landmark some 30 years ago. I have never seen it published in any (other) Primitive Baptist periodical anywhere, except in its initial publication 124 years ago in the paper of its origin, and, also, in Hassell's Church History at pages (Nos.) 943-950. The doctrine contained in this writing will stand the test of time forever. It is with much pleasure that we republish it again for the benefit of all true Predestinarian Baptists.

J.M. Mewborn,
January 2, 2005

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

(LAST EDITORIAL ON THE SUBJECT BY THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE, IN THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES", OCTOBER 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preaching and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve. While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make

God the *author of sin*. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation He must not extend His government, without subjecting Himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

"The vain race of flesh and blood

Contend with their Creator, God;

When mortal man presumes to be

More holy, wise or just than He."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred Scriptures, from inability to comprehend, the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity*, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on His adorable perfections, or withhold from Him that which He has ordained for the manifestation of His glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of Him and of His government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and His name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out. He keepeth back the face of His throne, the place and power of His government, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of His own will and pleasure does He Himself conform. "He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." - Ephesians i. 11.

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." - Isaiah xli. 10. In this connection He says, "I am God, and there is none like me." And in the revelation of

the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, "The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for Thou has created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." - Revelation iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." - Romans xi. 33-36.

When God created the Heavens and the earth no other power than His own was employed, no wisdom but His own was consulted, nor was there any other than His own will to dictate what, how, or for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay; then, "What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." - Romans ix. 21-23. Dare any of us poor, finite, weak worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all His pleasure in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? "Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why has Thou made me thus?" How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, "Hell is naked before Him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of Heaven tremble and are aston-

ished at His reproof. He divideth the sea with His power, and by His understanding He smiteth through the proud. By His Spirit He hath garnished the Heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him? but the thunder of His power who can understand?" - Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that He has condescended to let us know of His great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide Heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of His predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before Him, and destruction uncovered to His all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by His power and wisdom? Has He stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in His thick cloud, and "given to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment" (Proverbs viii. 29), and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When He set His throne above the Heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in Heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years now, the sun, moon and stars have with precise exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their complete revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The Heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork?"

But say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure, We admit that God has predestinated some things, or just a few things, but do not admit that He has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the Divine

record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the Heavens we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will, power and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning speed and velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those (other) heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with Him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass His bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if He has left murderers and bloodthirsty men or devils unrestricted by His predestinating decree? To our mind, either *everything* or *nothing* must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain." (See Psalms 76:10).

"Pains and deaths around us fly—

Till He bids we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit

Till the God of Love sees fit."

For death and hell can do no more than His hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make Him a sinner, or charge on Him and imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is He amenable to any law above Himself? If so, by what law can He be indicted, in what court can He be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is His eternal right to do all His pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, or of His actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that He is the self-existent, independent, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God who has created all things for His own sovereign will and

pleasure. And if it be admitted that He had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that He had a right to create them according to His own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge Him with error because He did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge Him for not creating them angels, nor angels because He did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made. Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but good because they were precisely what He intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended and purposed, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of His own design or purpose in anything He has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and (that) death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no happen-chance, unprovided-for event with Him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in Himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or He would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." - Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny His determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by His determinate

counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, "The living know that they must die;" but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of Himself, for He has challenged the universe to tell with whom He has taken counsel, or who has instructed Him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of His people, "Whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans viii. 29); but that the well-beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by His murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God, Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life. "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled." - Acts iii. 17, 18. "For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done." - Acts iv. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which He was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born. (Read Zechariah 11:12). The dividing of His garments, and the lot cast for His seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. (Read Psalms 22:18). The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his

brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, "but God mean't it unto good." (Genesis 50:20.)

It has been said by some that these great events which God has over-ruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated. Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in His all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, (See Matt. 10:30); and that one single sparrow cannot fall to the ground without Him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by His determinate counsel. (See Job 38:41 & Psalms 149:9) And Paul assures us that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to chance and the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is His absolute government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." - Rom. iiii. 10-12. We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend His designs, dare to say He has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,

Performs His work, the cause conceals;

But, though His methods are unknown,

Judgment and truth sustain His throne.

"In Heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,

He executes His firm decrees;

And by His saints it stands confess'd

That what He does is ever best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no

more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (Read 1st Cor. 2:8). But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore, that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know Him. Yet, such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that He can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond (that) which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of His people and for His own glory. And thus also, "God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and His own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews from their oppressors, and in overwhelming Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why has Thou made me thus?" - Romans ix. 17-22.

The Apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal minds of men to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of His pleasure, did not attempt to

apologize for God, or so to modify or weaken the doctrine of God our Saviour, as to render it less objectionable to their carnal minds; but he called attention to the infinite disparity between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of His own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by His own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in Himself before the world began, without subjecting Himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of His own will and pleasure, and, therefore, He doeth His pleasure in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As He is in one mind, and none can turn Him, His purposes are eternal, like Himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If He had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before He created the world, we ask what right has He acquired subsequently to execute the orders of His throne? If it had been His pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt His power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to His will, or because He had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of His being and attributes to believe that God had a purpose worthy of Himself, however

inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, and know that He is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls *all things* or *nothing*.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if He has today the full control, had He not the same control yesterday and forever? If He has not the full control today, is there any certainty that He will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His own will, and that He is immutable, then we must admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny His universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that He is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny His eternal power and Godhead. If He has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can He cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him?

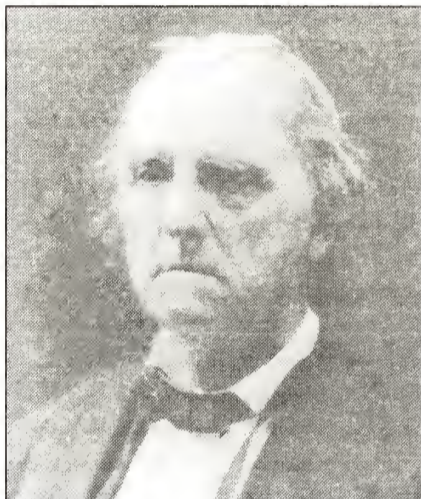
But while we hold that He is supreme in power, and that He works all things after the counsel of His own will, we are certain that He reigns in righteousness, and there is no unrighteousness with Him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and Apostles to fore-

tell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the Apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the Scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and Spirit of our God.

"For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" (Isa. 14:27).

Gilbert Beebe
New Vernon, N.Y.
October 1, 1880



ELDER GILBERT BEEBE
1800 - 1881

(Founding Editor of *The Signs of the Times* November 28, 1832. During his long ministry of 63 years he preached about 10,000 sermons and traveled about 200,000 miles.)

Elder Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., has had few equals, since the days of the apostles, in both natural and spiritual abilities, in bold and faithful defense, both by tongue and pen, of great fundamental truths of the Scriptures, and in the extensiveness of his ministerial labors. During his long ministry of sixty-three years he is believed to have preached about 10,000 sermons and traveled about 200,000 miles - sent forth, not in the manner of the nineteenth century, by "Missionary Funds," but in the manner of the first century, by the God of grace and providence, who supplied all his necessities; thus exhibiting to this materialistic, unbelieving age, a life of divine faith and

support.

—Statement by Sylvester Hassell in his Church History, p. 822.

At ten minutes before four o'clock p.m. on Monday, May 2, 1881, Elder Gilbert Beebe received his discharge and was called home to receive the crown laid up for those who have fought the good fight.

Elder Gilbert Beebe, at the time of his death, was the only surviving minister who was present at the notable convention at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when the separation took place between the Missionary or New School and the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches. He opposed the innovations of the Missionary element at the gathering, and has ever since been the leading defender of the Old School Baptist cause. It was to further this cause that in the fall of 1832 he established at New Vernon, New York, the *Signs of the Times*, which was for many years the only organ (or periodical) of that faith.

Editor

MANY FAVORABLE COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED FROM SUBSCRIBERS AND READERS FOR THE LAST ISSUE, (SEPT.-OCT., 2004), OF ZION'S LANDMARK CONCERNING CHURCH ORDER WITH THE ANCIENT RULE OF DECORUM AND REQUIREMENT ALWAYS FOR UNANIMOUS VOTE AND CONSENT FOR FELLOWSHIP IN THE TRUE CHURCHES OF THE LIVING GOD, AND ALSO TO UNANIMOUSLY SELECT AND FURNISH OFFICERS TO SERVE THEM.

We feel to report in this issue of Zion's Landmark, since the publication of the last issue of the paper, that we have received a number of verbal and written endorsements from church members, elders, deacons and friends from several states in support of the ancient Rule of Decorum, requiring unanimous vote (and consent) both for Gospel fellowship in the church, and also appointing officers for the church. As of this date, December 26, 2004, we have received no adverse comment on this subject, whatsoever. Some of the written ones follow:

One elder from Kentucky wrote, "the articles in the Sept.-

Oct. 2004, issue of Zion's Landmark are sound, timely, and edifying. I am specifically referring to the articles about the necessity of the church requiring unanimous consent in matters of fellowship and about the true order of the true Churches of Jesus Christ. I am made to believe that these writings stir up the pure minds of the Lord's people for good." (End of quote.)

Another elder from Mississippi wrote, "my thanks and appreciation to you for the last, Sept.-Oct. 2004, issue of Zion's Landmark. I enjoyed reading the articles, all of them, especially the one by Charlie Dunn Alston, from Scotland Neck, North Carolina. He is right on target. His article is very much to the point of the incorrect usage of the name "Primitive Baptist" by conditional churches in this day and time." This same elder continued, "Elder T. F. Adams used the word order correctly in his editorial in Zion's Landmark, back in the year 1963." He continued, "Elder Adams cleared up the real identity of the True Church, when he said, 'dispensing with disorder is good order.' Brother T. F. Adams's editorial in that 1963 issue of Zion's Landmark was very clear and correct." (End of quote.)

A non-member from Tennessee, who is strong in faith, wrote, "It was good to receive the last (Sept.-Oct., 2004) issue of Zion's Landmark to read the excellent articles on the subject of Church Order. Although this subject has been written about before, it is always good to reread such, as this good issue, to 'stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: know this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.' (II Peter 3:1-4.) He continued, "AND, if there are any who have not deeply studied the issues written about in the Sept.-Oct., 2004, issue of Zion's Landmark, may they start immediately. May God bless you, Editor."

One brother from Texas wrote, "the open letter in the Zion's Landmark by Charlie

Dunn Alston, Scotland Neck, North Carolina, is very timely and well written. Also, I believe the vision that was given to Elder Joseph E. Adams (deceased) over one hundred years ago is today being fulfilled and that the Islamic world at this time is very much involved. This article is found on the back page of the Sept.-Oct. 2004 issue, the very last one. The real roots of this current conflict really run much deeper."

A sister from one of the churches in the State of Virginia wrote, "thank you again for publishing a new issue of Zion's Landmark, the Sept.-Oct., 2004, number. I received my copy late yesterday afternoon and by early bedtime I had read all of it. The articles held my attention. There had been three break-periods. As usual, it was very good reading, and it kept my interest from cover to cover. About the subject of Church Order, yes, it is very needful with the Heavenly Light of our Saviour's loving mercy. Elder Mewborn, you, with the other writers were blessed to point it out so well in this issue of Zion's Landmark."

Editor
December 31, 2004



JANE "PESH"
HERRINGTON HAM
1927 - 2004

JANE "PESH"
HERRINGTON HAM

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." If it be His will, I desire to leave on record this short notice of the passing of my beloved companion and wife, Jane "Pesh" Herrington Ham, whom it pleased our Almighty Heavenly Father to remove from this life March 10, 2004, at the Tyler Medical Center, Tyler, Texas, at age 76 years.

She was born August 4, 1927, in Anderson County, Texas, the daughter of Robert Franklin Herrington and Oma Lee (Pinkerton) Herrington.

We were married August 2, 1946, and have been blessed with two wonderful children, one

daughter, Caroline Ham Hicks, Palestine, Texas, and one son, Charles Woodson Ham II, Montalba, Texas, with 3 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

She attended Holly Springs Church from a child, and later, as an adult, frequently. She was a strong believer in the complete, absolute sovereignty and power of God in Heaven. It was on August 24, 1986, when we asked for a church home with Holly Springs, and were received, though feeling unworthy to have membership. Holly Springs Church had gotten down to one member, and there were seven (7) others who were baptized, all of us together, on this date by Elder Neel M. Luce. This was a joyful occasion, a time of rejoicing, indeed, for all of us, an occasion that nine people will never forget.

"Pesh", as she was called and known by many loved ones and friends, was a graduate of Texas A&M at Commerce, Texas, where she earned a Bachelor Science Degree with three years' additional study in the field of Education. Also, she was for many years Reading Director in the Palestine Independent School District, where she taught several different grades. She enjoyed her teaching career and had the high regard of her supervisors and peers.

The peace that was with her for the 58 years of our earthly union was still with her when she took her last breath. She had no regrets or attempts to hang on to this earthly life. If ever there was a woman touched by the Hand of God, it was she. What a wonderful blessing to have had her these many years, and to be of the same celestial belief. She was a woman of beauty inside, as well as out. She could have only been God's handiwork. I anticipate in faith that our spirits shall reign again together one day, as we hope, that we were known in Christ, our blessed Lord.

Theo Johnson, a childhood neighbor and minister with Elder Ben Lord, of Atlanta, Georgia, conducted her funeral service on March 12, 2004, at Holly Spring Church meeting-house with Judge Bascom Bentley making very appropriate remarks. Jim Lord and his father, Elder Ben Lord, sang "All In All" and the "Mercy Seat", beautiful renditions.

Soloman said, "The memory of the just is blessed." (Proverbs 10:7.) Hers will live forever in the hearts of all who knew her.

Charles H. Ham
Montalba, Texas 75853
November 2, 2004

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING TO BE HELD WITH RUSSELL CREEK CHURCH, PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA JANUARY 30TH, 2005

Dear Brother Mewborn,

Will you publish in the Zion's Landmark that our fifth Sunday meeting will be held at Russell Creek Church, Patrick County, Virginia, the fifth Sunday only, January 30, 2005. We hope to assemble at 9:30 a.m., with preaching to start at 10:00 a.m.

Traveling directions to Russell Creek Church location are as follows: Those who will be coming either north or south on Route #8, turn east on the Ayers Orchard Road at the Va.-N.C. State Line (Route #653) and go about 2 1/2 miles to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn right at this point and go 1/2 mile to church location on your right. Those coming west on N.C. Route 704, turn right on Va. Line Road (#1730) and go one mile; then turn left on Moorefield Store Rd., #631 and go 2 1/2 miles to church location on your left.

We extend our heartfelt invitation to all our precious brethren, sisters and friends to come and be with us on this date, January 30, 2005.

Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk
Mayodan, N. C. 27027

MILL BRANCH UNION MEETING TO BE HELD WITH SIMPSON CREEK CHURCH, HORRY COUNTY, S.C. THE FIFTH SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH & 30TH, 2005

Dear Elder Mewborn,

It will be appreciated if you will state in Zion's Landmark that the Mill Branch Union is appointed to be held with Simpson Creek Church, Horry County, South Carolina, beginning on the fifth Saturday in January, January 29th, 2005, and will continue through Sunday following.

To get to Simpson Creek Church site follow U.S. 701 to downtown Loris, S.C., and turn east on S.C. (Business) #9 for 4 miles to Goretown. Turn right on #348 and go 2 1/2 miles; turn right on Daisy Road and go 1/2 mile to church site on your right.

We extend an invitation to all lovers of the truth to come and meet with us. We hope to gather around 10:00 A.M. and begin services at 10:30 A.M. each day.

Billy Boyd, Union Clerk
Loris, South Carolina 29560