

ZION'S LANDMARK

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY PRIMITIVE OR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST

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January - February 2007

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"ARE YOU HUMBLE?" (The Truth Plainly Told)

The surest evidence one is humble is not exhibited by mere words in what he says about himself. One may say he is less than nothing and baser than all others with these words coming from his mouth, and yet not truly feel that way.

For instance, if you are wrong in some matter, and another person sees that you are wrong and reproves you for it, or tells you of your wrong, and you become offended with him for it, that is good evidence that you are not humble. A man who is truly meek in spirit would be glad to be told of his faults.

Or suppose you are right in a matter, if one opposes you and then you get mad at him, that is proof you are not humble. It is so natural and easy to become offended with one who tells us of our faults, or opposes us, while on the other hand, we love those who flatter us and then wink at our faults. There is, yet, hardly a worse spirit in a man than this one, or one further from the kingdom of Heaven.

PREACHERS (when not kept) **SOMETIME BECOME**

DOGMATICAL, and wish **TO RULE** in the church. Whenever the preacher gets so smart that he cannot be told by the brethren of his faults, he is far wrong! Preachers, as well as deacons, are only servants of the churches, and when they do wrong, they should be entreated. If they are humble, they will accept the reproofs of the wise; but, if they are heady and high-minded, they will reject this advise as ill-timed, improper, unnecessary, and it will, many times, make them even more swollen and puffed up!

The humble man truly feels he is nothing of himself. He loves the truth, and he desires the will of God to be done. Grace is given him to receive the reproofs of life and to love them. "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head; for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities." (Psalms 141:5).

(Elder) P. D. Gold
Former Editor, Zion's Landmark

Taken From The January 15, 1881, Issue

(The above medication is still good tonic for our souls today. It is a good prescription that has been preserved for 126 years; also, it is good to know that the Great Physician, "who has the power to heal all manners and divers diseases", (See Matthew 4:24), also has the medical equipment and technology necessary to take the wind out, if the patient is truly a subject of His grace, who belongs to Him. He always knows how to take care of His beloved people. Editor.)

A CORRECTION OF
TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR
IN MY RECENT ARTICLE,
"THE BIBLICAL EQUATION
OF TERRORISM"
IN THE LAST (NOV. - DEC.,
2006) ISSUE OF Z.L. WITH
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

On page No. 2 of our last issue of Zion's Landmark,

column 4, line 37, reads: "The end result of the equation of terrorism one day will finally end when the seed of the woman (Christ) will permanently bruise the heel of the serpent (Satan)." This should read: "The end result of the equation of terrorism one day will finally end when the seed of the woman (CHRIST) will permanently bruise the HEAD of the serpent (Satan)", not heel of the serpent.

The scriptures mention two battles that will take place before the end of time concerning "the bruising of the HEAD of the serpent by the seed of the woman (Christ). One is found in Ezekiel 39:11-15, that will take place at "the valley of HAMON-GOG," in the land of Israel. A related scripture to this battle is found recorded in Revelation 11:7-8. The second battle is recorded in Revelation 16:16, "And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, **ARMAGEDDON**", also in the land of Israel.

At this time I am not able to distinguish between these two battles, whether they are one in the same, or if they are separate ones. I do definitely feel, regardless of which, both of them relate to what the Islamic world of religion today calls "The Mother Of All Battles." Saddam Hussein often referred to the taking place of this battle with Israel numbers of times during his lifetime, and even as late, just prior to his execution, in December 2006, last year.

We know that the scriptures measure or divide the history of this time world into three dispensations of 2,000 years each. At the end of each one, an event of dramatic proportion has always occurred, as follows:

1. The Old World that be-

gan in the beginning with the creation and Adam and ended with the flood (called the antediluvian period), with the sparing of Noah and the eight souls in the Ark, a period of approximately 2,000 years.

2. The Levitical, Jewish (or Legal) world from the time of the flood to the birth of Christ, a total of approximately 2,000 years.

3. The Gospel (Gentile) world from the coming of Christ to this date, 2007, a total of approximately 2,000 years. (The total, combined time of these three dispensations is 6,000 years.)

Scripturally, or Biblically speaking, to this time world there is nothing promised beyond the third dispensation of time, that I can find, except the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The promise of God of "the Seed of the Woman (Christ), bruising the HEAD of the serpent (Satan)" most definitely has to do (and relates) to these two battles, spoken of in Ezekiel and Revelation that I have mentioned above. The glorious, blessed promise of God is that at the end of these battles (individually or collectively) will be fulfilled the accomplishment "that He will destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Hebrews 3:14). "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Revelation 20:10). This lake of fire and brimstone has to be the eternal hell, when this vain world is no more.

Many of you have expressed your interest and appreciation to me by telephone calls and letters for my recent article on "The Biblical Equation of Terror-

ism" in the "November - December 2006," issue of Zion's Landmark.

J. M. Mewborn
February 24, 2007

A SACRED MEMORY RECALLED

Salem, Virginia
November 3, 2006

Dear Brother Mewborn,

It was good to see and also talk with you at the Eastern Kehukee Association last month on Saturday, September 30, 2006, held with the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, in Tarboro, Edgecombe County, NC. While there, I promised to send you a copy of my sister's, Bernice M. Shelor's experience. I copied it from the April 15, 1970, issue of Zion's Landmark, Vol. CIII, No. 11. Also, I have included a photograph, not very good quality, of her baptism. She joined the New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Vesta, Virginia, the fourth Sunday in November, 1969, and was baptized the fourth Sunday morning in January, 1970, by Elder Bennie W. Clifton. She was a faithful member until her death on March 25, 2000.

At least 6" (inches) of hard, frozen ice had to be cut from the pond to reach the water level below to allow her to be baptized, which was done by several fine, local men to make the ordinance possible.

May God continue to bless your efforts in the ministry of our blessed Lord and in the



Elder Bennie Clifton in this photograph is administering the ordinance of baptism to Sister Bernice Shelor on the 4th Sunday in January, 1970, after 7 inches of solid ice had been removed from inside baptismal pond, Vesta, Virginia. Notice the white, hard, frozen bank of ice in the background on the bank of the pond. Such striking scenes are far cries from the heated, inside Arminian pools used by them today.

publication of Zion's Landmark, which is enjoyed by many. From,

An unworthy brother,
James T. Shelor

THE EXPERIENCE OF GRACE OF SISTER BERNICE M. SHELOR (Republished from the April 15, 1970, issue of Zion's Landmark, By Request.)

Dear Aunt Edrie and Uncle Ben,

I have been desiring for sometime now to write to you, since it seems that we cannot find time enough to get together (with you) for a visit. But I do feel that you

need your time to visit the sick, and to talk to the people who are really deserving and worthy of your consideration. I thought maybe you would have time to read this, and I believe it will make me feel better to unload, if even on paper.

I have always loved to go to church, especially to the Old (Primitive) Baptist Church. All of the members look and act like they love each other dearly, and everyone else too. It was and is such a dear, friendly place to be.

They way I feel about Dan River Church, as compared to other churches of the same faith and order, is this: To me, it is my home. I feel that I have been away from home a long time and it is so satisfying to be back and be able to really relax and be myself.

For about two years I have longed to offer to the church, but I knew in my heart that I was unworthy of being a member of any church and mixing and mingling with the members, as such, but I have desired to be like them so very much — just to be able to sit near them, or even be off in a corner was all that I asked. I felt their belief was in accord with what I believed, that we were all sinners saved only by the grace of God. I could not understand why I could not be as they were, but there was a difference: they had their experiences, their hope of eternal life, and I had neither, or it seemed that way to me — at least I felt that mine was insufficient, for all I had was my dreams, which seemed to condemn me to the bottomless pit.

Time after time when at church I would try to pray to myself, "O Lord, just let some of the spiritual emotions or feelings of some of the members pass from them to me, as they are shaking my hand!" But no, never did I feel any differently. I think I knew in my heart all the time that it could not take place that way. I wondered why I was a black sheep, when I desired so much to be one of the true

flock. I would look around and it seemed that everyone was living a better life than I. No matter how hard I tried to do better, I did worse. I thought that I could not join the church unless I had some large experience to tell the church, or to tell them that I believed my sins had been forgiven. Neither did I have the experience to tell, or any thing that would make me appear better than I beheld myself to be. I knew I was a sinner in the worst way, and I did not have much hope of ever being different. So for two years, I went on, day after day, desiring a home in the church, but knowing all the time I was too unworthy and unfit.

I had a dream over two years ago that has disturbed me night and day and still keeps me awake at night. I dreamed that I was standing in the road outside of my parents' home, looking toward the northwest. A storm was rapidly approaching — the clouds being dark and with an angry appearance, were roaring, rolling and boiling up, and they came very close to me and very quickly. I thought, "We are going to have a terrible storm." I was turned facing south and all I could see was a black cloud reaching from the ground to the heavens, arising swiftly. It was coming faster that I have ever seen a jet fly. Just as it reached a fence in one of Daddy's meadows, I was turned to the east. Everything was covered in a fog with colors of green and yellow, all mingled together, and I was brought to my knees. It was slowly moving about as fog on the road. The thought came to me: "It is the end of time," I cried out: "Oh Lord, have mercy on me, for I know that I am a sinner!" That very instant it seemed as though the ground that I was standing on was not there any more, and I was falling straight down, standing up straight. I was falling (in this position) faster, it seemed, that it could be humanly possible. It seemed that my body fell, but my heart or some inner part of me did not fall. In other

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

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words, it seemed that my body was separated, a part of me did not fall, but the other or external part remained where I was standing in the road. It seemed that I was falling into the bottomless pit, and if so, then I must be lost forever. I was still in the process of falling when I awoke.

About three weeks later, I dreamed that Joe, my husband, and I, were in a building, standing by a window looking out into a terrible storm. It was dark outside and it was raining very hard — the black clouds were down on the ground. We had our arms about each other, looking out into the storm, and we thought it was the end of time. We were both crying and praying: "Oh Lord, have mercy on us, for we know that we are sinners." I immediately awoke.

You can now see I had nothing with which to offer to the church as a testimony that the Lord had dealt with me in any way, except to show me my lost, undone condition. For these two years, I have tried to pray, and also hoped to be led or shown in some way what to do and which way to go. This brings me to the day I was given the right hand of fellowship in Dan River Church.

On that Sunday morning, I awoke feeling a strong desire to be in the church, but Joe was sick and I thought I would not be able to go to church. I thought of calling my parents to see if I could go with them, but I did not. It seemed I was hungry for something, but not for natural food — for spiritual food, I hoped.

Mother and Daddy, as the Lord purposed, stopped by on their way to church (or it seemed to me at the time they just happened to stop) and they asked if I wanted to go. Joe said that he would be all right, for me to go on to church. I said, "Give me ten minutes and I will be ready."

When we entered the church building, I do not know why, but I did not sit with Mother and Daddy. For some reason unexplainable, I wanted to sit in another

seat closer to the front of the church. I enjoyed the singing. (I have always known I could not sing as well as most people). When we were singing the hymn before prayer, I remember thinking to myself: "Well, I can sing pretty. I did not know that I could sing like this."

The sermons by Elder Stone and you, Uncle Ben, were suited or just fitted me, just what I needed to hear! And Uncle Ben, when you began speaking, you said, "It is good to see all of you and especially the two young children who came forward to take their places on the front seats with the other members." I looked and beheld this little girl of nine or ten years of age sitting on the front seat by this young lady, whom I felt be her sister. I thought, "Why is it that children that young are already members of the church, and I am almost fifty years of age and cannot seem to find the way."

I forgot all about the children during the service, but while the congregation was singing the closing hymn, something was taking place with me. I was trembling and shaking so badly that I had to hold to the back of the seat in front of me in order to stand. My hands shook so that I could not hold the hymnbook still enough to sing from it. So I made my hand steady on the back of the seat in front of me and held on to the hymnbook. All the time the tears were streaming down my face and I could not stop them. I did not know what was wrong with me, nor what to do. I did not want anyone to see me like this. I looked and saw you, Uncle Ben, as usual, coming on down the aisle, shaking everyone's hand, and I thought, "I cannot let Uncle Ben see me in this condition." You were about three rows in front of me when the thought occurred to me: "Well, I can just keep looking down at the hymnbook and when he gets to where I am, I can see his feet and I will shake hands with him without even looking up. He will think I am just singing and then move on."

The next thing I saw was a small boy about the age of seven years, looking up at me and holding out his hand. He had the most humble face I had ever seen. I do not know what I did or said or if I even took the boy's hand or not. All I remember was looking into the little boy's upturned face and hearing a voice that sounded like yours, say, "Bernice, this little boy is a member of the church."

The next thing I remember, I was crying and holding on to someone. I guess it was you, Uncle Ben, and hearing you say, "Bernice, do you want to offer to the church?" I remember saying, "I am not worthy, I am not worthy." I was then standing out in the aisle. I do not know how I got out there or when. I did not see the little boy again until he came up to give me the right hand of fellowship.

If God was not showing me the way into the church that day in His mysterious way, then I do not have a hope of eternal life. I believe God was leading me to the door of the church. He was answering my prayers, but not in the way that I had thought He would, if He had answered them at all. He brought me before you good people, being a sinner with nothing to offer except my many tears, of which I was not ashamed at that time.

When my baptism had to be postponed because of the hard, cold weather, doubts arose before me to feel I had been deceived in the whole matter and had also deceived the church, which was worse. I do not want to ever do anything to cause trouble or harm to the church. You now know why I feel so unworthy to call any of you precious saints, "Brother", or "Sister."

I wanted to tell you all this before I was baptized, but I was not given the opportunity. I wanted Joe with me when I told you this. So you now see, I have never told this to anyone, except I have told the dreams mentioned above to my dear friend who works with me. She was at my baptizing. It is my desire

to tell you about my baptism some day.

From the least of the flock, if one at all,
Bernice

Dear Sister, we are sure Uncle Ben and Aunt Edrie have enjoyed this sweet experience, and we feel sure our readers will enjoy it too, especially those who have had similar experiences. It has been our pleasure to read, as well as publish it for we believe in essence, it is in line with that of every child of grace who has had an experience of grace. Write again when you feel do so. Ed.

(Editor's note: The above footnote of tender words that accompanied the April 15th, 1970, publishing of Sister Bernice Shelor's experience, was written by the late Sister Pauline W. Adams, wife of Elder T. Floyd Adams, who was blest to so ably assist him with the editing and publishing of Zion's Landmark at that time. She was blest with a deep understanding of the scriptures, and was a dear mother in Israel and sister in Christ to me for many years. She died December 5th, 1998, at age 105 years, 4 months & 21 days. She told me only a few days before she died, although her natural mind had failed, "I still have my hope and it is both sure and steadfast, living in it for the reality of that great day beyond." She never wavered through the end. Editor.)

(Note: I have kept the following letter I received from Sister Edrie T. Clifton in my safe for almost 12 years, awaiting the proper time to publish it. That time has now come. It is being published in this issue with the photograph she sent me of her niece's, Sister Bernice Shelor's, baptism, that she sent to me at the time, along with my article, "A Test of True Faith" to which she makes reference, that appeared in the "May - June, 1995" issue of Zion's Landmark. J. M. Mewborn.)

Vesta, Virginia
October 5, 1995

Elder J. M. Mewborn,
Dear Brother in Christ, I hope,

I was so glad to see and talk with you at the New River Association recently. I had hoped to hear you preach, but was disappointed. I have most pleasant memories of the time when you and Sister Mewborn spent the night in our home, here in Vesta, over 25 years ago.

I was much interested in the article, "A Test of True Faith", in the last issue of

Zion's Landmark. You mentioned that these things, such as baptism in ice-cold water, are never heard of anymore. I wish to tell you of one such baptism, which took place at my home Church, New Dan River, Vesta, Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in January 1970.

Sister Bernice Shelor, whom you met at the New River Association on Saturday, (Sept., 1995), was the one who was baptized on that cold day. (You also met her mother, Delphia Shelor, and her sister, Jane Puckett.) Sister Bernice asked for a home in the Church in November 1969. She was to be baptized at the December 1969, meeting, but the weather was so severe, we could not even get to the meeting house to hold the service. One month later, (January, 1970), we again had severely, cold weather. All the streams, ponds and lakes, everywhere, were frozen over.

At the conference meeting on Saturday of the fourth weekend in January, 1970, she was asked by the Church if she desired to postpone the ordinance of baptism again? She answered that she wanted to be baptized the next day, regardless. The local men took axes and cut a circle of ice away, and, while standing on it (all of them) with the full weight of their bodies, (and there were several of them), it never even cracked, or broke, beneath them. The blocks of ice were piled up on the bank of the pond. The depth of the ice accurately measured a total of seven (7) inches.

It was a most beautiful, solemn occasion to witness. The congregation, standing on the bank nearby, sang the hymn you mentioned,

"Christians, if your hearts
are warm,
Ice and snow
can do not harm;
If by Jesus you are prized,
Rise, believe,
and be baptized",
In it's entirety.

It was a lovely, yet awesome scene, and inspiring

sound! The people, standing on the bank, seemed to be colder than Sister Shelor, and Elder Clifton, as they came forth out of the water. I am enclosing a photograph of this baptizing, so that you can see what I have tried to describe here.

The ways of Almighty God are truly past finding out. John, the inspired writer, said in Revelation, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." (Revelation 3:3.) What He willed, purposed, predestinated and declared before the world was created, WILL come to pass! Every one of His little children is already known to Him, and not one single one of them will be removed or left out of His everlasting Covenant. I do hope I am included in that number, unworthy though I feel to be.

Sister Bernice Shelor's experience was published in the April 15, 1970, edition of Zion's Landmark. If you wish, look it up and read it. I have always regretted the error I made in that I did not tell her name when I sent it to Elder Adams. I am a very imperfect being, and make many mistakes. I believe, perhaps, if you should read her experience, it will give you more understanding of what I have tried to write.

If you desire to publish it in The Landmark and feel it worthy of space, you have both Sister Shelor's and my permission. If not, then cast it aside; it will be all right.

May God grant you grace and strength to continue to publish The Landmark. I feel all your readers enjoy it as much as I do.

Unworthy yours,
Mrs. Bennie (Edrie T.)
Clifton

A TEST OF TRUE FAITH
(HISTORICAL -
FROM THE RECORD)
An old Hymn somewhere reads,

"In all my Lord's
appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not,

ye much-loved saints,
For I must go with you.

"THROUGH FLOODS
AND FLAMES,
IF JESUS LEAD
I'LL FOLLOW
WHERE HE GOES:
HINDER ME NOT,
SHALL BE BY CRY,
THOUGH EARTH
AND HELL OPPOSE.

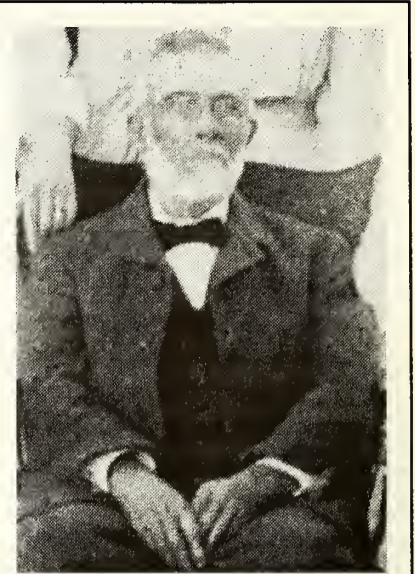
"Through duty,
and through trials, too
I'll go at His command;
Hinder me not,
for I am bound
To my Emmanuel's land.

"And when my Saviour
calls me home,
Still this my cry shall be:
Hinder me not;
come, welcome, death,
I'll gladly go with thee."

Verse No. Two of this hymn suggests that the journey of God's people, through this time world, leads them "through floods and flames," to-wit: floods in Noah's day when "the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered, and the mountains were covered." Genesis 7:19-20. And, flames in Daniel's day when "three men, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego, walked right in the midst of the fire with Another who had the form like the Son of God." Daniel 3:23,25.

Also, besides "floods and flames," we find that God brought Daniel safely through a Den of Lions on one occasion when the lions backed off and "God shut the lions' mouth," and they did not hurt. Daniel 6:22. Through jails and dungeons in the Apostle Paul's day when "all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosened." Acts 16:26; immuned the venom of a poisonous viper when "Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and it came out of the heat (fire) and fastened on his hand." Acts 28:3.

Now, we have recently discovered that one more trial (or affliction) is made manifest in behalf of God's elect, chosen church, and can be



L. J. H. Mewborn, who witnessed the baptism of three members at Nahunta Church, Wayne County, North Carolina, when 4 inches of ice were broken on the pond at the rear of meeting-house in January, 1893. He was clerk and deacon of Mewborn's Church from 1882 to 1926, clerk of Contentnea Union and Association for many years, and represented Greene County, North Carolina in N.C. General Assembly (Legislature) Raleigh, North Carolina, for two terms, beginning in 1913. A minnie ball struck him in the head during a battle in the Civil War. (See Article).

added to the list of those, who by His grace, are kept in this FAITH because of its indestructibility. We will list them from above, showing the most recent one in italics below.

1. WATER could not drown it in the days of Noah. (Gen. 7:19-20).

2. FIRE could not burn it up in a burning, fiery furnace. (Dan. 3:23-25).

3. LIONS could not eat it in a Den of Lions. (Dan. 6:22).

4. JAILS, DUNGEONS and PRISONS could not hold it. (Acts 16:26).

5. SNAKES (Vipers) could not poison it. (Acts 28:3).

AND

6. *ICE (Or Cold Water) could not freeze it.*

In the last (19th) century on the fifth Sunday in January, 1893, the following record is cited from an old record book of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Union, Book No. One, Page 145, as follows, to-wit: "The Contentnea Union met according to adjournment with the Church at Nahunta, Wayne County, North Carolina, on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in January, 1893.

"Item No. 7 - The door of the church was open for

reception of members into this church when three came forward and were received to baptism. They were baptized on Sunday morning after breaking the ice which was from three to four inches thick. Although two of them were young ladies, they did not shudder or shake, but took the water as nicely as any I ever saw in the month of July. They were baptized by Elder T. B. Lancaster."

L. J. H. Mewborn
Union Clerk

It is wonderful that such occasions and incidents have been left on record for us to read today of those days in the church of over one hundred years ago to prove to us that such things did actually take place for these things are never heard of anymore. In that ordinance of baptism, one hundred and two years ago, we find the omnipotent power of God made manifest and proven in ice (cold) water, well below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. That was bound to have been a very hard spell of cold weather, back in January, 1893, that created ice on a stream of water four inches thick. There were faithful brethren in those days! This incident calls to mind these words in closing this article of the grand old hymn,

Christians if your hearts
are warm,
Ice and snow
can do no harm;
If by Jesus you are prized,
Rise, believe,
and be baptized.

"Jesus drank the gall
for you,
Bore the curse
for sinners due;
Children, prove
your love to Him,
Never fear
the frozen stream.

"Never shun
the Saviour's Cross,
All on earth
is worthless dross;
If the Saviour's love
you feel
Let the world
behold your zeal.

"Fire is good
to warm the soul,
Water purifies the foul;
Fire and water both agree
Winter soldiers never flee.

"Ev'ry season of the year,
Let your worship
be sincere;
When the storm
prevents your roam,
Serve your gracious Lord
at home.

"Read His sacred word
by day,
Ever watching, always pray;
Meditate His law by night,
This will give you
great delight."

In those days, the true, unfeigned love of God reigned from heart to heart, and from breast to breast, abounded in the midst of God's chosen elect, afflicted and poor people and His Church, here in this time world, abounded in Gospel order and in His peace, and all was sincere. Emphasis in the militant church was placed on "warm hearts," and not on "warm bodies" for the truth's sake. Faithfulness of fervent origin abounded among the churches then, and the same is still true today among the scattered few that are kept in Gospel Order. Incidents, such as the one just cited, prove the point. How wonderful it would be if, according to God's will, we could see these things take place again, but for this to be, someone will have to be made to suffer in more ways than one. May we never overlook the fact that God is able.

L. J. H. (Levi Jesse Hardy) Mewborn (1842-1926) was my great, great uncle. He was next to the youngest child of ten children of Elder Parrott Mewborn, and his wife, Mary Aldridge Mewborn, who with others, constituted and organized Mewborn's Church in 1829. He was a deacon and clerk of Mewborn's Church (for 44 years) from 1882 to the time of his death in 1926. He was also a Clerk of the Contentnea Association and the Contentnea Union meeting, composed of churches in eastern North Carolina, for

many years during his lifetime. He was a soldier in the Civil War, being wounded when a minnie ball struck him in his cheek, leaving a scar or depression, completely visible, which he carried for the remaining days of his life.

He often said, "I was wounded at the battle of Cold Harbor, near Richmond, VA, on the 3rd day of June, 1864, which gave me a furlough for 90 days. I have felt that this minnie ball (or bullet) was God-sent since it kept me out of the most severe fighting of the war. After the close of the war, I came home and found all the team and everything we had taken away, but with God's help, health, and a will, we went to work with hoe and ax and cultivated a corn crop the following year, 1866."

We hope to cite, the Lord willing, more of these occurrences from the history of the church in later issues of Zion's Landmark since many of our readers have expressed an interest in reading about these things of the past.

J. M. Mewborn
August 9, 1995

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SOUL OF MAN

"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.)

"And it came to pass, as her SOUL was in departing, (for she died), that she called his name Ben-o-ni: but his father called him Benjamin." (Genesis 35:18). John Gill said, "By this account of Rachel's death it appears that death is the separation and dis-union of SOUL and body, that at death the SOUL departs from the body; that the SOUL does not die with it, but is carried elsewhere and continues to live in a separate state; that the SOUL (of man) never dies, but is carried into another world, a world of spirits, "even unto God who gave it." "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the

SPIRIT shall return unto God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

We again quote from Gill: "Now at death the SOUL, or spirit of man, returns to God, which if understood of the SOULS of men in general, it means that at death, they return to God, the Judge of all, who passes sentence on them, and orders those that "have done good" (John 5:29) to the mansions of bliss and eternal happiness, and those that "have done evil" (John 5:29) to hell, destruction and damnation.

"— Yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the SPIRIT of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" (Ecclesiastes 3:19-21). This scripture plainly shows man has a SOUL, and the "beast", meaning animals, do not have a SOUL.

Gill said, "There is, indeed, a difference between a man and a beast; though they have one breath, they have NOT ONE SPIRIT OR SOUL: man has a rational, immortal SOUL, which, when he dies, goes upwards to God who gave it, to be judged by Him, and to be disposed of by Him in the proper place, at the last day of the resurrection of the body."

David fasted, according to the scripture, while his son was very sick. But, when his son died, David said, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (II Samuel 12:20-23.) Gill Said, "I shall go to him, to the state of dead, to the grave, where his body was, or would be; to heaven and eternal happiness, WHERE HIS SOUL WAS, as he comfortably hoped and believed: from whence it appears that the Old Testament saints did not suppose a permanent

annihilation at death, but believed the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, a future state after death of eternal life and bliss — ". (Those saints of God, who lived before the birth of Christ, possessed the same, identical hope that those, who live today, hold by faith.)

In the days, life and time of Elijah he cried, when the widow's son had died, "O LORD, my GOD, I pray thee, let this child's SOUL come unto him again." (See 1st Kings 17:21.) Gill said, which proves beyond any shadow of doubt, "it shows that the widow's child was really dead, and a solid proof that the SOUL DIES NOT WITH THE BODY, but exists in a separate state without it."

Now, in connection with the subject of the SOUL of man, please consider Luke 16:22-23, and meditate about it here. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

There were two thieves crucified with Jesus. According to scripture, one was enlightened by the Lord, and the other was not. We quote from Luke 23:42-43: "And he said unto Jesus, LORD, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, TO-DAY shalt thou be with me in paradise." This is proof that the soul's of the departed saints of God are with Jesus.

The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:10, declares "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one ALL THINGS in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth, even in Him." Please notice the expressions "both which are in heaven." I am made to believe this means the ALL THINGS are the SOULS of the saints of God. Also, Paul said, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,

even so them also which SLEEP IN JESUS will God bring with Him." (1st Thessalonians 4:14). This shows that the bodies of the saints of God are now asleep in Him, and their SOULS are resting with Him in the paradise of God.

In connection with the above Paul said, "For I am in a strait betwixt two having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." (Phillipians 1:23). Notice the expression by Paul, "to depart and be with Christ." The meaning here is that his body would be buried (referred to as being asleep, and his SOUL would be resting with Christ in the paradise of God.)

John said in the Revelation, that God gave to him "in the isle that is called Patmos" (Revelation 6:9-11), "And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar THE SOULS of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they SHOULD REST YET FOR A LITTLE SEASON, until their fellow-servants, also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." This scripture shows that their SOULS were at rest with Jesus in that glory world.

And in conclusion, let us quote from Elder Gilbert Beebe, the September, 2002, issue of The Signs Of The Times, "We conclude there is not only a separation of SOUL and body, but that the SOUL immediately on its separation from the body enters a state of paradise, or sinks to a state of interminable woe and misery. There, the SPIRITS of just men are made perfect in glory, and the spirits of the souls of the wicked are cast into hell."

And lastly, at this point we quote from Gill; II Corinthians 12:2, "Such an one caught up to the third Hea-

ven." It is here, the seat of the Divine Majesty, also the residence of the Holy Angels of God, where the SOULS of the departed saints are carried upon the dissolution with their bodies in this time world. The bodies and SOULS of those who have already been translated (here, I refer to Enoch "who was translated that he should not see death" — Hebrews 11:5, and Elijah "There appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire" "and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven." (II Kings 2:11), caught up, and raised already, are now, and where the glorified body of Christ now is, and will be, until His second coming." This seat of Divine Majesty, The Throne Of God, is called the third heaven, in respect to the now visably seen, airy, starry heavens, as seen by us at night. (See 1st Corinthians 5:8.)

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." (II Corinthians 5:8.) This scripture also shows that at death the SOUL departs from the body and is returned to God who gave it.

We faithfully believe the Scriptures, as quoted, and instances, as mentioned above, prove altogether that the SOULS of the departed saints of God are now at rest with Jesus!

Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.,
Bastrop, Louisiana 71220
January 11, 2006

(Moses records in Deuteronomy 29:29, "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever," etc. We would thank God, if He would bless us, for the gift of His secret of revealed things to us concerning the immortality of the soul through His servant, Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr., Bastrop, Louisiana. Ed.)

AN ACCOUNT OF A TRUE INSTANCE OF THE MYSTERIOUS WORKING OF GOD'S POWER

The following recorded instance of true history has been left on record today in a little book that was compiled by Elder Sylvester Hassell and Elder R. H. Pittman a number of years ago.

The name of this little booklet is titled, Remarkable Providences, and the recorded incident is republished here:

"THE GOD

OF THE FATHERLESS"

"A gentlemen, walking along one of the streets of Philadelphia, (in the late 19th century), was accosted by a little boy who pleaded for a penny. The gentleman was at first inclined to send him away, but something in the boy's face forbade that, so he asked — 'What do you want to do with a penny?' 'Buy bread, sir.' 'Boy are you telling me the truth?', asked the gentleman, looking him steadily in the face. 'Indeed I am, sir', 'Have you a father?', questioned the gentleman, now thoroughly interested in the boy. 'No sir: father is dead.' 'Where is your mother?' 'She died last night.' 'Come with me and I will show you where my mother is.' Taking the hand of the boy, the gentleman followed his guide down a narrow alley, and stopped before a miserable place which the boy called home. Pushing open a door, he pointed to his dead mother, and said — 'There is my mother, sir.' 'Who was with your mother when she died?', asked the gentleman, deeply moved. 'Nobody but me, sir.' 'Did your mother say anything to you before she died?' 'Yes, sir; she said, 'God will take care of you, my son.'

"Sooner than his dying mother had dared hope, God had honored her faith by sending to her son one whose heart was touched with the tenderest pity for her condition. The gentleman was a believer, possessed with a heart of feeling and sympathy, a gift of Christ, to whom God had entrusted much of this world's goods, and this little orphaned boy was kindly cared for by him.

"God in His word is called the Father of the fatherless. He has said that none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate, and it is safe to trust His blessed promises. Quoting from the scripture this promise reads, 'Pure

religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.' ” (James 1:27.) (End of quote.)

(Note: In those days of the late 1800's and early 1900's it must be remembered that there were no social, welfare, relief organizations from local, state and Federal government sub-sistence programs that have abounded in the 20th century until now to accomodate situations of this kind. Yet, God lets us see His mighty Hand here in this unusual instance, when there was no public service of this kind.)

Edited for Zion's Landmark publication by
J. M. Mewborn,
February 15, 2007

A PLEA FOR HELP
Palestine, Texas 75803
3646 AN County Road 458
February 20, 2007

Elder J. M. Mewborn
Editor, Zion's Landmark
Coats, North Carolina 27521

Dear Brother Mewborn:

No doubt, by now you have heard of our adversity and misfortune at Holly Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Montalba, Texas. During the weekend of January 12th, 13th and 14th, we, here in East Texas, suffered massive rains, totaling over 7 inches that very thoroughly saturated and soaked the soil. This extent of groundwater loosened the soil around the roots of one of the large oak trees in our churchyard, when it gave way and fell on the north mid-section of our church building. That side of the roof was completely destroyed, also demolishing the ceiling inside, and doing heavy damage to the north wall.

The damage to our 100 year-old building, that the church had maintained in excellent condition over the years, has been estimated from \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 to repair. We had insurance coverage, as we thought, on the building, but the company has denied the claim.

We are all poor people here, and our membership is small, composed primarily of elderly people, who are retired and live on pensions.

You do not know how much we would appreciate it if you will inform (and tell) the kind people of our plight and circumstances. Any mite, regardless of amount or size, will be so much appreciated by us. We do hope to restore the extensive damage to our church building for our Church that was organized in the year 1860, with some of the early members coming from the family of Elder Daniel Parker.

Thank you for any consideration and help you might give us. Any funds that might be forwarded for this purpose may be sent to me. Our



EXTERIOR DAMAGE

Extreme, heavy damage, inflicted on Holly Spring Primitive Baptist Church (Meeting-house), by large, fallen, oak tree on January 15, 2007, Montalba, Texas.



INTERIOR DAMAGE

Extreme, heavy damage, inflicted to ceiling and wall of interior of Holly Spring Primitive Baptist Church (Meeting-house), by large, fallen, oak tree on January 15, 2007, Montalba, Texas.

Church will send the donor, or contributor, a receipt, duly acknowledged by our Church for their record. My correct mailing address is shown above.

A brother, I hope, in distress,
George A. Pinkerton, Deacon
Tele. 1-903-549-2532

(Editor's note: It is recorded in 1st John 3:17, these words: "Who so hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" I hope our brethren will remember these dear people in their time of need, remembering the language and Words of Jesus concerning the two mites of the poor, widow woman, after she had cast them in the treasury. He said, "she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." (Mark 12:44.) Love from God for brethren in distress is never forgotten by Him. Susie and I, the Lord willing, will be sending our two mites, soon. J. M. Mewborn)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUND FOR THOSE UNABLE TO PAY, AND FOR THE SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE OF ZION'S LANDMARK
(January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2006)

(May we, as we have done many times in the past, take this opportunity to thank our friends for their kindness and assistance in support-

ing the paper. Your assistance and help in this manner are of great importance in keeping the paper in circulation. Expenses, both in printing and postage, continue to rise. Many have expressed their pleasure in reading the ZION'S LANDMARK, and their desire that it be God's will that it continue to be published, as it has been for the past 140 years. We thank you, one and all, again for your help and interest in this cause. J. M. Mewborn, Editor.)

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"In Memory Of My Dear Aunt, Beulah B. Mewborn, Who Was A Lifetime Contributor Of Articles In Zion's Landmark For Support Of The Paper — By Her Niece, Nell D. Garner, Greenville, North Carolina - \$50.00"

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"Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Randolph County, North Carolina — By Bro. Hal Younts,

Clerk, 250th Anniversary (Nov. - Dec. 2005 Edition)" - \$200.00

MARY L. (CARROLL) MILLER

Sister Mary L. (Carroll) Miller, age 49 years, and wife of Ronald Doug Miller, died Sunday, October 1, 2006, at Conway Medical Center following an unexpected illness. She was born in Conway, Horry County, South Carolina, a daughter of James Linwood and Ethel Mishoe Carroll. She had been a career employee of the U. S. Postal Service, having retired with a tenure of faithful service to that organization several years ago.

She was predeceased by her paternal grandparents, Thurmond Carroll and Leta B. Carroll, and maternal grandparents, Elder L. G. (Louis Gardner) Mishoe and Armathey M. Mishoe. She is survived in addition to her parents, her husband, Ronald Doug Miller, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; two daughters, Stacey Broakey and husband, Frankie, Myrtle Beach, and Eva Renee Jones, Myrtle Beach; two step-sons, Christopher Miller and Justin Miller, both of Myrtle Beach; grand-daughter, Cara Mia Brosky, Myrtle Beach; a brother, James Carroll, Jr., and wife, Debbie, Myrtle Beach; a sister, Charlyn Strickland and husband, Howie, Myrtle Beach; a niece, Kayla Jones; and nephews, Casey E. Jones, Joshua and Daniel J. Carroll, all of Myrtle Beach.

Memorial services were held at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 4, 2006, at Goldfinch Funeral Home (Conway Chapel) with Elder Ernest Duncan and Elder Billy Gore officiating.

Sister Mary (Carroll) Miller joined the Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on the first Sunday in July 1990, right after our church building had been burned by arson. That Sunday, we held our service in the yard under a shade tree, where she offered to the Church at the close of the service. She was baptized by her grandfather, Elder L. G. Mishoe and Elder Leslie M. Davis, who was co-pastor of our Church at that time. The ordinance took place at Coleman's Pond in Tabor City, NC, prior to the services at Tabor City Church on the following fourth Sunday morning in July, 1990.

She served as Acting Clerk after her Grand-mama's, Armathey Mishoe's health would no longer permit. After the death of her Grand-mama, she was made our permanent Church Clerk. She served us faithful-



MARY L. (CARROLL) MILLER
1957 - 2006
Age 49 Years

ly for eight years, until her death. She truly loved her Church, her brothers and sisters in Christ in the sister Churches for as long as she lived. She was blest to stay on this earth long enough to see her natural brother, James Carroll, Jr., her father, James Linwood Carroll, Sr., her sister, Charlyn Strickland, and her nephew, Casey Jones, offer to Pleasant Hill Church, where they were received in fellowship and so remain until today.

Mary married Ronald Doug Miller the first Sunday in March, 2006, after services at our Church by Elder Ernest Duncan. She and her husband were blest with seven months together, as husband and wife, and they were some of her happiest days on earth.

She endured and suffered a lot of pain in her life, but she always said, "I want to be made strong and have the same faith that my Grand-mama had. Sister Mary was truly given that faith. It is our earnest hope that her soul is now resting with those of her Grand-mama, her Grand-daddy, her great-grandmother, and her Aunt Myrtle Lou, for whom she was named in the paradise of God.

She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and her brothers and sisters in Christ. We all loved her very much.

Her pastor, Elder Ernest Duncan, wrote the following poem for our family, while Sister Mary lay in the hospital so seriously sick. It greatly helped us at a time, when we were at our lowest.

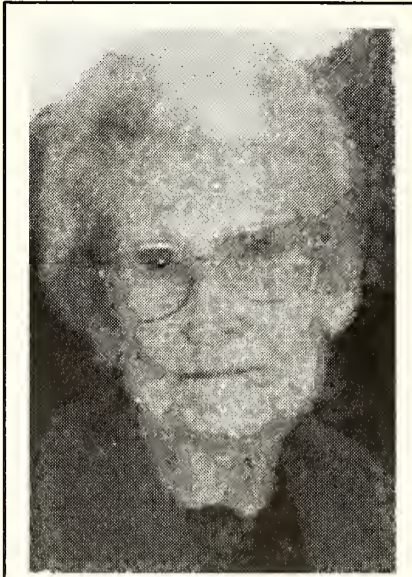
In this life I have lived down here,
There have been pain, and toil,
and fears;
I have endured life's daily trials
But now there is no fear
For His calling I can hear;
You wouldn't shed one tear for me,
If you could only see
what I now see.

A place of joy and lasting peace,
Where all my fears have ceased;
For I am now at total peace
Because Jesus walks with me.
You wouldn't shed one tear for me,
If you could see what I now see;
The face of Christ is clear,
And it is so pleasant to be near.
He has taken all my fears,
He's taken me by my hand;
He's leading me
to this Heavenly land;
So, please don't shed
one tear for me,
Your eyes will someday see
what I now see.

By request Elder Ernest Duncan read this poem at her service.
Ethel Mae (Mishoe) Carroll, her mother,
Conway, South Carolina

ERMA FREDA (RHEW) GODFREY
Rougemont Primitive Baptist Church, Rougemont, Durham County, North Carolina, has appointed me to write the obituary of a dear, precious sister, Erma Godfrey. I will have to acknowledge that I am not worthy for this undertaking, as I am a very poor writer.

Sister Erma Godfrey united with Rougemont Church on the third Sunday in November, November 17, 1940, and was baptized in nearby Eno River, by Elder A. L. (Andrew Lee) Holloway. She loved her church and attended as long as her health permitted. In the last few months before her death I was visiting with her, and she said she would like to go to Rougemont Church one more



**ERMA FREDA (RHEW)
GODFREY**
1909 - 2006
Age 97 Years

time. I told her anytime she felt like going to let me know and I would come and get her. She did not ever let me know that she felt like going.

Her husband, Yancey Godfrey, passed away on August 15, 1981, and sometime shortly after that, she entered into an assisted living home, where she lived for many years. I visited her often at the home and she would mention the scriptures. She read her Bible as long as her eye sight was permissible. Her belief was that God controlled all things and none could stay His hand.

Sister Erma did not want to be put upon a pedestal, but I must say she had a beautiful voice for singing. She was blest to sing so pretty. Also, I feel she was known by the Old Baptists from the mountains to the coast because of the corresponding associations she attended over the years when she was able to travel.

After the death of her son, Phillip, Sister Erma was favored to have her daughter-in-law, Claire, who lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. Even with the distance, Claire would attend to Sister Erma and the needs she would have at the nursing home. Sister Erma entered Roxboro Nursing Center about a year before her death. She told me it felt more like home than the other places she had stayed.

On Tuesday, November 21, 2006, the good Lord saw fit to remove Sister Erma from this sinful, troublesome world, and I believe she died peacefully.

Sister Erma Godfrey was born on March 5, 1909, in Person County, North Carolina, to parents Henry Rhew and Bessie Cothran Rhew. On March 16, 1926, she married Phillip Yancey Godfrey in the town of Henderson, Vance County, North Carolina. Predeceased by her death are her husband, Phillip Yancey Godfrey; sons, Phillip L. Godfrey and James L. Godfrey; and grandson, Mark Godfrey. Surviving are daughter-in-laws: Claire Godfrey Biggs, Argie Godfrey; four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Her funeral service was conducted at Brooks and White Chapel, Roxboro, North Carolina, by her pastor, Elder Bobby Daughtry. Her earthly body was laid to rest in the Flat River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, where it awaits the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Be it, therefore, resolved that three copies be made as follows: one for our church records, one for the fam-

ily, and a copy be sent to Zion's Landmark for publication.

This is done by order of Rougemont Primitive Baptist Church in conference December 17th, 2006.

Everett Hill
Elder Bobby Daughtry, Moderator
Everett Hill, Clerk

ESTELLE WAGNER GENTRY

It is with great sadness that we, the members of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who saw fit to call from our midst our dearly beloved sister in the Lord, Sister Estelle Wagner Gentry. She was a firm believer in her Primitive Baptist faith.

Sister Estelle Gentry was born October 12, 1912, in Person County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Willie Wagner and Hattie Ashley Wagner. She was married to Brother Rufus M. Gentry in Person County by Elder Lex Chandler. Sister Estelle joined Helena Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1935. She later moved her membership by letter to Surl Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1945. On March 22, 1997, she moved her membership by letter to Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, where she remained a faithful member until she passed away on Monday, November 24, 2006, at Cambridge Hill Assisted Living. (Her years of combined membership with the Old Baptist Church was about 71 years.)

Her funeral service was held on November 24, 2006, in Brooks and White Chapel, officiated by Elders Paul Clark and Pete Hendrix. Her body was laid to rest in Surl Primitive Baptist Church cemetery beside the resting place of her husband.

We, the members of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, extend our love and sincere sympathy to her family. We will miss her, but our loss will be her eternal gain. She leaves to mourn her death, one son, William Ervin Gentry and his wife, Mamie, of 167 Gregory Street, Roxboro, North Carolina, and many friends and loved ones.

Be it, therefore, resolved that three copies of this obituary be made, one for the family, one for Flat River Primitive Baptist Church record, and one for Zion's Landmark publication.

Written by ones who loved her,
Martha A. Rudder, and
Katie R. Bowes

REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION

Dear Elder Mewborn:
Please print the following notice in the Zion's Landmark.

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2007. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m., and preaching at 10:30 a.m., at Russell Creek Church.

The Meeting House is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia, near the Virginia-North Carolina border, on Moorefield Store Road #631.

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

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
Meadows of Dan, Virginia
Tele. 1-276-952-2098

ZION'S LANDMARK

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY PRIMITIVE OR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST

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Volume ~~139~~ ¹⁴⁰

March - April 2007

Number 2

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139 of the arduous, rough times he experienced in establishing his home in the early territory of Missouri and baptizing Dick (Greene) into the fellowship of the Church; also, how the great God of Heaven wonderfully delivered him, the experience that originated these words, "To obey is better than sacrifice", but "to take counsel of an enemy brings a snare."

EXCERPT FROM
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF ELDER WILSON
THOMPSON, HIS LIFE,
TRAVELS AND
MINISTERIAL LABORS
(Page Nos. 133-139)

"But to return to my narrative. I continued to preach from house to house, both day and night, so that I had very little time to work. I was poor, and had to work for my family's support. Of corn, I had raised a full supply, but I had to depend on day's work for all the other necessaries. I was now settling in the green woods, and all my chance of another crop was to clear my new ground in the wild forest, and, of course, I had to work hard. I would often work in my clearing by firelight, when all around me was hushed in repose. Often during these lonely hours, while my brushfires were throwing a brilliant light around me, and the sound of my ax echoed through the solitary forest, my busy mind was engaged in the contemplation and meditation of the Scriptures, the deep things of God revealed in them, also on the visible glories of the Creator stamped on the bespangled firmament above me, and the earth and its productions around me — the changing but regular succession of the seasons; the day and the night; the cold and the withering blasts of winter, when the chilled insects, beasts, and

birds were hidden each in its close retreat away from the pelting ice and snow storms that had stilled the songsters' cheerful songs and dulled their bright eyes and brilliant plumage; the warm sunshine and the lengthened days of spring, when they would again come forth with fresh animation from their winter's solitude, and with mellow notes and cheerful songs seek the budding pastures and opening flowers. Even the worms and reptiles would crawl to the warm surface, glad to leave their torpid holes in the cold earth. All these wonderful creations on the earth and the reflecting constellations in the heavens, whose light is the sun, I viewed as a type of the church, or kingdom of Christ, and the revolutions which its subjects were constantly going through. These meditations would so occupy my mind and entertain my thoughts that my labor seemed easy, and the time passed swiftly and pleasantly away. The midnight hour would often find me still at work. This was my place of study, not like those who have parsonages with private apartments, carpeted and furnished with all the necessaries of comfort, with books, maps, charts, etc., and a lounge for slumber. My study was either in my clearing, or by my little cabin hearth, with a light made from bark. I patiently read my Bible and had none but God to make me understand it. Or, if plowing, hoeing, walking, or riding, my study was always at hand; being portable, having not weight, and filling no space, it was always convenient when my mind was prepared to use it.

"A small Bible, Rippon's Hymn-Book, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress constituted my library, and, up to the

time I was thirty years old, I had never ready any other books, notes, or commentaries on the Scripture. My reading was always very slow. I had to stop frequently, and read it over and over again, so as to be sure I understood the writer's meaning. Then, I would carefully pursue his arguments and illustrations, always trying to study but one subject at a time. This has always been my way of reading. Whenever asked for my opinion on any text, and I could not at the time call up the connection where it stood, I have always refused to give an explanation, at least any further than a probable meaning. But when I had the whole connection and thread of the subject on my mind, I would give my explanations with confidence. On the general principles of doctrines professed and advocated by the Baptists, I have no doubts of their correctness and truth; nor have I doubted for over half a century. If I were as sure that I was savingly embraced in that system of grace, as I am that it is the only true system in which any sinner of Adam's fallen race can ever be saved, then I should never doubt at all.

"The good work before spoken of continued about eighteen months. I can only give some special sketches that occurred while I remained in that territory. During the period of this time, the Lord blest me to baptize four or five hundred subjects, some old and some young, and some white and some black, but all professed to be sinners, and to trust only in Christ as their Savior. They renounced all hope and confidence in any work of their own, or ability to fulfill any conditions by which they could ever be saved. When every other name, work, and plan had failed,

**"TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE",
but "TO TAKE COUNSEL OF AN ENEMY BRINGS A SNARE."**

(From the Wisdom of God)
(Editor's note: Zion's Landmark takes pleasure in publishing this "March - April 2007" issue the historical record of Dick (Greene), a black slave who joined the Old School (Primitive) Baptist Church in Missouri in the year 1812, when that area was only a territory of the USA. Missouri gained statehood in the year 1821. Dick was baptized by Elder Wilson Thompson, who Hassell's Church History records on page 628, "was regarded as the ablest Primitive Baptist minister that ever lived in the United States." The record states that Dick belonged to Judge Robert Greene, Esquire, Chief Advocate of the Federal Dist. Court of the territory, who was an avowed atheist, and, as a hobby, owned fine race horses and involved in horse-racing. He bore the reputation of being very stern, strict in his judicial (court) proceedings, but bore respect as a citizen of the country-side and area. Elder Wilson Thompson tells in his autobiography of pages 133-

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then they were made to put their trust in Christ, male and female, black and white, and all were joined together and animated by one spirit, having been called in "one hope of their calling," and having "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

"The country was new and but thinly settled, but the congregations were immense day and night. I will here relate one event: Judge Green, a wealthy man, who had a number of Negroes as his servants, and who was a very respectable citizen, but an avowed infidel, and who kept race-horses and was a great sportsman, had one black servant whose name was Dick. Dick's business was to attend to the stock and race-horses, and especially to wait upon his young mistresses (Judge Greene's daughters), when they rode out. The Judge's daughters had attended my singing school and appeared to be inclined in my favor, and would frequently attend my meetings. Dick was always with them, and was so attentive and polite that they thought very much of him. At one of our church meetings Dick came forward, and related an experience that no one could dispute, and he was received for baptism. The church proposed to send a committee to ask the judge's consent for Dick to be baptized. I told them I should not oppose the church, but it was a course of conferring with flesh and blood, that I could not find in my Book and I did not believe it was proper for us to ask an unbeliever whether a believer

might serve and obey his Lord or not. If Judge Green or any other master, father, guardian, or husband came forward and offered an objection, the church ought then to consider it, and act as duty should dictate under the circumstances. But for a church to go hunting for objections in the world, it would be rather strange if they did not find them. I, for one, did not feel willing to have anything to do in any such course. If objections were made, I was then willing in that event to give them all the consideration they merited, and would labor to remove them.

"However, a committee was appointed by the Church, and they went to see the Judge. They reported on their return, that he said Dick was his property, and he immediately made them his witnesses to tell me that if I laid my hands on his property to throw it into the water, he would push the law upon me to its utmost extent. When the report was made, I observed to the church: "So much for consulting the world and hunting for their objections. I should not have feared the laws of this free government, even here in a territory, where even ten years ago the liberty of conscience was not allowed. But, now, the Judge has full testimony that I was forbid to lay hands on his property, or put it in (or under) the water. Now, if I should trespass, I will be liable to the law.

"The next Sunday, when the others were baptized, poor Dick was not allowed by his master to attend the meeting, nor for two or three months

afterward. One Sunday, when I was about to dismiss the meeting, I heard a call behind me. Looking out the window, back of the pulpit, I saw Dick coming and holding up a bundle of clothes in his hand."

"Said he: 'I want to be baptized.' I told him to walk around and come in at the door. He did so, and I met him before the pulpit.

Said I: 'Dick, what do you want?'

Said he: 'I want to be baptized now, sir.'

'Has your master given you liberty?'

'No, sir.'

'Do you wish to disobey your master? The good Book says: 'Servants, obey your masters.'

'I got two masters sir; One is greater than the other. My great Master says to me, 'be baptized'; but my other master (Green) says, 'you shall not be baptized.' Now, sir, I cannot obey both; and I wish to obey my greatest Master, and also to obey Master Green in all things, when his commands do not forbid or conflict with the commands of my greater Master.'

'Dick, do you not expect that your Master Green will whip you, if you are baptized?'

'Yes, sir, but my great Master says, Fear not him that can kill the body, but fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell.'

'Have you concluded, Dick, to lay your back bare to your master's lash, rather than disobey your Master in heaven?'

'Yes, sir; Master Green will not even kill the body; and I love my Master in heaven, and I want to obey Him.'

'Well, Dick, the church has received you for baptism; so, if you are not afraid of your Master Green's whip, I am not afraid of his law, and I will baptize you.'

"All this was said aloud, so as to be distinctly heard by all that were in the house. Though the house was crowded, all were as still as death. Dick's two mistresses (Judge Green's two daughters) were present, and heard it all. I turned round and said; 'Can any one forbid water, that this man shall not be

baptized?' Some of the brethren whispered very low to me: 'We fear you are running a great risk.' I replied: 'I am not afraid, for I believe the Lord has ordered this matter, and I have nothing to fear.' 'The wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain.' I took up my hymn-book and said: 'We will now repair to the water for baptism.' The water was near the house, and I took Dick by the hand and started the old song:

'Am I a soldier
of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear
to own His cause,
Or blush to speak
His name?'

"All the congregation followed, and many voices joined in the song; and then, with the usual ceremonies I baptized him."

"As we came up out of the water, I gave Dick the right hand of fellowship, in behalf of the church, as a full member, and the brethren and sisters crowded in, and gave him their hands as a brother. His young mistresses (Judge Green's daughters) went to the water and saw it all. The scene was solemn and deeply affecting.

"The young Misses Green waited for Dick to change his clothes and to get their horses. On their way home, they began to seriously conjecture, as I afterward heard, how and what they should do in this matter. Said they: 'We respect Mr. Thompson, and do not want Father to trouble him; and Dick is so ready at all times to serve us, we do not want him whipped.' They finally concluded not to say anything about it, and thought perhaps no one else would, and so their father would not know of it, at least for sometime."

"All passed off quietly for several weeks, when one evening the Judge came home, apparently in a fine humor. He began speaking in very high terms of Dick, as a servant, saying: 'Dick has always been one of my best servants, but for some weeks past, he has been better than usual. The horses shine from his rubbing and attending

Zion's Landmark

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

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them late and early, and he keeps things in the very best of order.' The girls concluded that this was now the proper time to tell him about Dick.

'One of them said: 'Father, we can tell you what has made Dick so much better of late.'

'What has done it?' said he.

'Why, Father, a few weeks ago, we were at Bethel (Church) at meeting, and Mr. Thompson baptized Dick. They all had such a nice time, and Dick seemed so very happy when they all gave him their hand, and called him brother.'

'Did you see Mr. Thompson baptize him?'

'Yes, sir, we saw it all.'

'Well,' said the Judge, 'I wish to God he would baptize all my negroes, if it would make them all as good as Dick.'

"Here ended the law-suit, the whipping, and all complaints about the dipping. Dick was again allowed to go to meeting whenever he pleased. His master provided him with good clothes, and all that was necessary for his comfort. He also had a horse to ride, and was allowed to go and come when he chose, and to work when he pleased. When Dick's master (Judge Green) was about to die, he put him under the guardianship of his son, who was to provide amply for all his needs. Dick remained the same obedient servant, but never failed to attend his Church meeting. I saw him many years afterward, when on a visit in Missouri. He was then getting old, was well dressed, had his horse to ride to meetings and seemed to enjoy himself, well even better than if he had been set free, which had not actually occurred at that time, but he had all the liberties of a free man. (Just one year later, he really would have had it, 1865.)

"Dick lived long a beloved brother in the church, and an honored servant in his master's house, and was respected by all who knew him. Obedience is the path for the child of God, who will be made to leave all consequences with God, for then he will have nothing to fear.

"To obey is better than sacrifice;" but to take counsel of an enemy brings a snare. (From the Wisdom of God.) End of quote.

FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

"In 1812 a 51 year-old slave named Dick asked to join Bethel Regular Baptist Church near Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and to be baptized by my great-great-great-great uncle, Elder Wilson Thompson, a Primitive Baptist minister. Judge Robert Green, Esquire, his owner, threatened a beating for Dick, and court proceedings against Uncle Wilson. In response to Elder Thompson's inquiry, Dick insisted that he had two masters, God and Judge Green, and, if put to the test, he must obey his Heavenly Master, rather than the slave-owner. Elder Wilson baptized Dick without regard to the slave-master's demand. Dick was accepted as an equal and brother by the members of Bethel Church, a white congregation, including Uncle Wilson, my great-great-great-great Uncle, Benjamin Thompson, my great-great-great-great-grandfather, Closs Thompson, and by my great-great-great grandfather, Jeremiah Thompson. Dick remained a Primitive Baptist member of Bethel Church until his death at the age of 103, in the year, 1864, one year before the Civil War ended and freedom came. Dick's record of history, as chronicled in original documents found in the Cape Girardeau County Archives Office in Jackson, Missouri, tell Dick's life, here.

"In 1834 Judge Green died. His will specified that Dick was to be permitted to select the heir who would become his new master. Judge Green's widow insisted that Dick remain as her slave for the remainder of her life. Dick was hired from the estate of Robert Green by the widow for \$2.00, apparently for one year. Dick was included in the inventory of the estate and described as "Negro man named Dick about 67 years old. In an 1834 appraisal of the assets of the estate, Dick was described as sixty-five

years old and valued at \$50.00.

"In 1835 Dick was hired from the estate of Robert Green for to the widow for \$1.00, apparently for one year.

"In 1836 the estate agreed to give Dick to Robert Green's widow. Dick, Lucy and her two children were hired by the son, David Green, for twelve months for \$19.00.

"In 1840 the widow died and the heirs determined that "the old man, Dick, we wish to remain where he pleases, clear of any charge in any way or form".

"In 1841, Dick and Sarah were sold to David Green for \$5.16 and \$250.00, respectively.

"In 1842 David Green paid \$21.50 to one heir as that heir's share of the proceeds of the sale of slaves John, Sarah and Dick. He paid another heir \$151.00 as that heir's share of the proceeds of the sale of the same slaves.

"David Green's 1849 will specifies as follows: "It is my will and desire that all of my children shall care to render my old servant, Dick, as comfortable and convenient during his life and especially, as I impose on my son, Lafayette, to see that he is comfortably clad, fed, and nursed during sickness and decently buried when he may die." David Green died in 1850.

"In 1858 Dick was appraised as worth \$000.00." (End of quote.)

The foregoing information was gathered in part in reliance on "A Resource Guide to the Slaves, Slave owners and Free Blacks of Cape Girardeau County: 1797-1865," compiled by Margaret M. Mates, dated 1998.

(The above article, "From The Historical Record", is taken from The Old Path Contender, Winter, 2007, Edition, @ page No. 7. In this record are clearly seen the evils of the unjust, unfair discrimination of the evils of slavery when values of dollars and cents were put on the lives of human-beings and people. Editor.)

"A PIECE OF VERSES MADE BY A BLACK SLAVE, THAT DESCRIBES HER SUFFERING ABOUT THE YEAR, 1817."

Lord if thou dost with equal eyes

See all the sons of Adam rise
Why dost thou hide thy face from slaves
Confined by fate to serve such knaves
Stolen and sold in Africa
Transported to America
Like hogs and sheep in market sold
To stand the heat and bear the cold
To work all day and half the night
And rise before the morning light
Sustain the lash, endure the pain
Exposed to storms of snow and rain
Pinch'd both with hunger and the cold
If we complain we meet the scold
Then after all the tedious Round
At night like beasts lie on the ground
Hath heaven decreed the negroes must
By cruel men be ever cursed
Forever drag the gauling chain
And never enjoy themselves again
When will Jehovah hear our cries
When will the sons of freedom rise
When will a Moses for us stand
And free us all from Pharaoh's hand
What tho' our skins be black as jet
Our hair be curled, our noses flat
Must we for this no freedom have
Until we find it in the grave
Yet while I thus my fate condole
Jesus my Lord possess my soul
That when my slavery here shall end
I may ascend to thee my Friend
Tho' here is none to plead my cause
My soul appeals to thy just laws
Who will bring all things to light
I know thy judgements Lord are right
For all the Comfort

that I have
 While I am here
 confin'd a slave
 Is that strong hope
 that I am free
 By thy rich blood
 once shed for me
 My soul is free,
 it can't be sold
 For all the gold
 that can be told
 And when my body
 drops in dust
 My spirit in Thy
 hand I trust
 And tho' no coffin
 I shall have
 Nor yet be laid
 into a grave
 The Lord will watch
 it from the skies
 Till the great trumpet
 bid it rise
 Contentment Lord
 on me bestow
 While I remain
 a slave below
 And while I suffer
 grief and wrong
 May Thy salvation
 be my song

Copied the 13th day
 of May 1817

By Sarah ANDERSON
 for Jane McFETRIDGE

Mrs. Tom AGERTON, 1404 West 33rd Ave., Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71603 contributed these verses she found in her grandmother's trunk. She explains her having them: "My fourth great grandmother, who was the great grandmother of Mary Jane STEPHENS VICKREY, was Mary ? who married first Richard BEESON. After he died she married Samuel McFETRIDGE, (Randolph Co. N.C. Marriage bond, 30 Sept. 1788.) It apparently passed from Mary ? BEESON McFETRIDGE to her daughter Elizabeth, wife of Joseph ARMFIELD to their daughter Betsy, wife of Enoch STEPHENS, to their daughter Mary Jane, wife of William Madison VICKREY. The trunk belonged to Mary Jane and she took it with her as she traveled around the country trying to get medical help for the paralysis she suffered from. They made a couple of trips from Missouri to Iowa to a Faith Healer." Mrs. AGERTON does not know who Sarah ANDERSON was. (Note: This article was contributed for publication in Zion's Landmark by Bro. Hal Younts, Climax, NC)

**AN ACCURATE RECORD
 OF A WRITTEN DIALOGUE
 THAT TOOK PLACE
 RECENTLY BETWEEN
 A TRUE, PREDESTINARIAN
 BAPTIST AND
 AN ARMINIAN, FREE-WILL,
 SOUTHERN BAPTIST**

Dear Elder Mewborn:

I am herewith enclosing for your review, also use in Zion's Landmark, if you see fit, a dialogue (written conversation) I recently had last year, 2006,

with a friend, Rita Myers, now living in north-west Georgia.

My first acquaintance with Rita and her fiancé, Gene Heckl, was in Washington, DC, back in 1956. She was originally from Birmingham, Alabama, and he was fresh off the boat from Germany. They were dating at the time and soon married. I was employed with the U.S. (Federal) government at that time, and we all stayed at a boarding-house in Washington that was not a typical boarding-house. It was large and covered about two blocks at the intersection of 21st Street NW and P Street NW in the city. Most of the living units were built in the shape of row or town houses, and they had only rooms with bathes, but no dining facilities in the rooms. A central, dining facility was available with a kitchen and huge seating area for those who chose to have room (boarding) and meals for one price. In 1958 we all went our separate ways.

After my marriage, my wife, Mary, and I made a vacation trip in 1961 through the South, and we stopped in Birmingham, Alabama, to see Rita and Gene, as they had moved to Birmingham from Washington, DC, to live with her parents in order for Gene, her husband, to attend college there. After that trip in 1961 we lost contact with Rita and Gene.

About two years ago we again made contact with them through a mutual friend that I had remained in touch with over the years. By this time Rita and Gene had divorced, after having three children. Rita, as stated, is now living in Northwest Georgia, and Gene lives in Kentucky. In April of last year, 2006, Mary, my wife, and I made a trip to Mississippi to attend the annual meeting with Elder Stanley Phillips and his related churches.

On our way to Mississippi we stopped in NW Georgia to visit Rita. While visiting Rita, we caught up on the history and activities of both our families. It was during the course of our conversation that we talked on religious matters and beliefs. She is a Southern Baptist, and it appeared to me she had never talked in depth with someone who believed in the sovereignty of GOD (as it is believed by true Predestinarian Baptists). Of course, we disagreed, but politely without putting a strain on our friendship.

After my wife, Mary, and I, returned to North Carolina from the visit with Elder Phillips, we stayed in touch with Rita via telephone and letters, while we continued to discuss religious matters and beliefs. The copy of my letter to her, that I sent you (attached), is the latest exchange between Rita and me.

Rita is a highly intelligent person, very proficient in music, relating to (vocal) singing, also playing the piano (a pianist). From her conversation with me I presume she has a high profile in the congregation (or group) where she now attends, taking part (and very active) in various activities carried out and supported by them. And, without question, she is an adamant, vocal supporter of free-will, in complete harmony with the belief of this congregation.

May this introductory writing give you sufficient background on my friendship with Rita and her family. I send this writing to you, that shows in an outward manner, early on, the typical belief of all Arminian, Free-Will people, who have been around since the days of Cain, the oldest son of Adam and Eve, in the morning of time. The two offerings of these brothers, Cain and Abel, with their respective meaning(s), have never changed from

then until now.

May it be God's will to continue to bless you now, as He has in the past, with your efforts in publishing the Zion's Landmark, that is still appreciated and enjoyed by many people.

GOD'S blessing upon you,
 Elder Mewborn,
 HOYT D. F. SPARKS
 Sparta, Allegheny County,
 North Carolina 28675
 March 1, 2007

THE DIALOGUE

December 20, 2006

Dear Rita:

We enjoyed receiving your card and I took extra time to read your notes. Thank you. I will try to respond some to them, as close as I can in the order that you wrote them; but, before I get into an item by item response, please allow me to first write on the sequencing of things in the Spiritual life of a child of God.

As it is with all the free-will Arminians that I have come in contact with since, I trust, being brought in the understanding of the truth, as it is in Christ, you start in the middle of things, ignoring fundamental, elementary, and foundational truths. Primarily, but not exclusively, you treat that everyone has the ability to "accept Christ as their personal Saviour, make a decision for Christ, let Him into their lives, live for Him", as many say, etc. Such folly cannot be supported when thoroughly studying the King James version of the Bible. In order for a person to make the initiative, first step to naturally rationalize all facets within their being in which they put themselves in a position to promulgate a Spiritual life, necessarily dictates that they are, or have within their human psychic, a super-human factor that makes them godly, and, therefore, makes them a little god who does not need a higher Spiritual power. This flagrant flaw in the entire human or natural endeavor is an inherent psychology that there is, at least, some Spiritual good in all humans. "If" there is some Spiritual good, at least, in all humans, logically, we are forced to embrace the error that Adam did not completely fall in the Garden of Eden; that is, he was only "wounded", his injury (or casualty) was only a "partial disability", which did not cast him entire-

ly into a state of total depravity, (Spiritually speaking), and he did not fully die a Spiritual death or separation from the Thrice Holy GOD by his disobedience, and, therefore "limped" out of the Garden because he knew he would later be able to make himself "whole" again, recovering himself from this near fatal injury at his own, chosen, determined time; AND he knew all of his off-spring, all of them, would also come forth at natural birth with all the necessary Spiritual attributes needed to again make themselves whole, Spiritually, anytime they would choose. No more rottenness has ever been cast upon the world, as such as this. James Arminius, Andrew Fuller, William Carey, Billy Graham, and others, are some in recent history, who have massively explored and exploited the natural canyons and hollows of human minds, and promoted what is today recognized as "free-will humanism" with smoke and mirrors used to falsely try and hype such as being true Christianity in order to set up organizations and supposed "churches" in order to line the pockets of individuals with satanic, filthy lucre, thereby beguiling a great many lambs and sheep of the living God.

Adam was not just partially wounded, nor did he limp out of the Garden of Eden in the morning of time; he came out completely, a casualty, totally depraved and dead in trespasses and sin. God cast Adam (and his wife, Eve) from the Garden of Eden in order to prevent him from ever again reaching forth his hand on his own free-will to eat from the Tree of Life (Christ), which would make him whole again. That is if he ate from the Tree of Life by and of his own volition, there would have been no need for the Savior to come. Such would rob GOD of His glory, thus voiding and making of no effect His mighty promise that His blessed Son stood as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" for His chosen people. (See Revelation 13:8).

When GOD cast Adam and

Eve out of the Garden of Eden in order to prevent them from ever again reaching forth their hands and eating of the Tree of Life by their own free-will, this forever closed any hope, or possibility of any hope, for any human to Spiritually come up with or exercise any free-will. Their privilege of human, free-will died after they were cast out of the Garden and they had no more access to the Tree of Life. God, Himself, used the phrase, or expression, to Adam saying to him, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest FREELY EAT: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely DIE." (Genesis 2:16-17). And die, Adam did! Eve was deceived and believed the first militant lie ever told by the serpent in this world, when she believed it. GOD had told Adam "he would surely die"; the serpent, "being more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD GOD had made", (Genesis 3:1), told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die". (Genesis 3:4) What GOD told Eve stood firmly and fast! Since Eve was "bone of Adam's bone, and flesh of his flesh," God put the penalty of death on him, her, and all of their posterity of trillions and trillions with no single exception. GOD gave Adam and Eve a commandment and they failed to keep it. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Romans 5:12). "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:15). Rita, the world has been filled with sin and death since Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden in the morning of time, with mankind trying so hard to save themselves from them.

And, so it is today. Many think they can do what Adam was forbidden and prevented to do by GOD, and that is for them to reach forth their hand at their own volition and put themselves into a salvageable state by "making a decision for Christ", they say, etc. Adam fell totally and

completely (Spiritually speaking), when he willfully and knowingly ate of the forbidden fruit, the Tree of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil of which God had forbidden him. In this fall he died a Spiritual death. And as we have already said, passed this fallen and depraved state on to his offspring (no offspring without any exception is excluded who are born and have a natural father and a natural mother.) There is no exception to this rule, whatsoever.) At the time of the fall in the Garden, GOD put enmity between the serpent and the woman, as well as between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. This further demonstratively enforces the truth that all humans are totally depraved, completely and wholly, (Spiritually speaking).

The Apostle Paul wrote of this human depravity of all humans in more than one place in the New Testament. In Ephesians 2 he refers to this depravity as one being dead in trespasses and in sins: "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." A naturally, dead body cannot perform anything; and neither can a Spiritually "dead" per-

son think, say, or do anything Spiritually. Therefore, how is it possible for a Spiritually "dead" person to "make a decision for Christ", etc.? (NOW, go back and slowly study Ephesians 2:1-9), as we just quoted above.

Christ told Nicodemus in John 3 that except a man be born again, he cannot "see" the kingdom of God; and unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot "enter" into the kingdom of God. Christ went on to explain to Nicodemus that which is born of the flesh is flesh (in referring to the flesh, he is here referring to the natural man), and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Christ, in comparing or explaining the natural with the Spiritual, makes it manifestly clear that a person has as much to do with their Spiritual conception, Spiritual gestation, and Spiritual birth, as they have to do with their natural conception, natural gestation, and natural birth.

Now, with this background, would you please expound/expand/go into detail and explain to me how a Spiritually "dead" person has any ability to go about or aid in their Salvation? How is it possible for a person to bring themselves to Spiritual life, if they are already Spiritually "dead", plus they are afflicted by GOD wherein He placed enmity between the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent. DEAD is DEAD! In both "deaths" (natural and Spiritual), there is the inability to think, say, or do anything. Don't forget to write me and fully explain how a dead person can bring themselves to life, raise themselves from the dead, so to speak; and don't forget this total depravity (Spiritually speaking) all humans inherited from Adam and Eve, when reading the remainder of this reply to your notes.

NOW, I will try to respond to your notes. At each juncture of your notes I will endeavor to copy your hand-written notes, but I beg forgiveness early on, if I do not get each word or letter perfectly as you wrote them because I am not that familiar with your hand-writing.

1. Rita wrote:

Just as I am,
without one plea,
But that thy blood
was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me
come to thee,
O Lamb of God,
I come!

Hoyt replies: The hymn you reference is found in the Goble Hymnal, #269, and I embrace all of the hymn. All six verses speak volumes experimentally on goodness of God toward His children that He has seen fit to awaken them out of their Spiritually dead state, while they live upon the earth. There is nothing in this hymn that speaks of free-will or that the individual has the natural ability to present (or bring) themselves to God. The Children of God are in a totally, alien dead state when He calls them out of nature's darkness; they do not, of themselves, become good, and because of this He chooses them. God chose them, even though, as the prophet, Job, said, "Behold, I am vile" (Job 40:4), this choosing is His decision without consulting anyone or any thing prior to the choosing, nor does He wait for the person to get, or become, good beforehand.

2. Rita wrote: "Romans 10:9-13 Whosoever Praise God! I — from my heart — have called, in faith, on Jesus as Lord and Savior. I confessed with my mouth and believed (not forced) in my heart AND thus — SALVATION. Salvation is instantly. Just — if — I'd — never sinned. THEN — we show our faith and love by good works, not for salvation that we already have, but try to live for HIM a testimony before the lost." Romans 5:1-2.

Hoyt replies: Romans is one of my favorite books in the King James Version of the Bible. My other favorites are all the other books of the King James Version. Before we are able to agree or disagree on part of the whole of Romans we must, as previously said on another portion of my response, start at the start. When Paul started writing to the Romans, he addressed his letter restrictive-

ly. He confirmed his writing to those who had received Grace, as they were also called of Jesus Christ: To all that were in Rome which were the beloved of God, called Saints — (Romans 1:5-7). So, we see Paul set the stage by addressing his Roman letter to the saints at Rome. By being saints they had already been born Spiritually, called, set apart, and preached to by Paul concerning the unsearchable riches of Christ.

You emphasize various words in your note by underlining. The first word underlined is whosoever. Who are the whosoever? They are the ones Paul addressed his Roman letter: those already Spiritually born, called and set apart. Those already born Spiritually, called and set apart (this is not speaking of a physical setting apart in their daily lives) are able to Spiritually see and Spiritually hear the truth as it is in Christ. Their want to's have been changed, they no longer look or desire those things they were involved in while traipsing after worldly things. The Holy Ghost does not brutally "force" a child of God to follow the precepts of Christ: with loving-kindness He calls and draws them, even loved His own with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3; Psalm 110:3, Psalms 89:33, Ezekiel 36:26-28; Phillipians 1:6).

Those who think they have the ability and power to resist God or can cause God to be obligated to respond toward the human in accordance with natural, human desires or free-will have not been able to make even the smallest squeak toward reconciling their free-will with Scriptures such as Jeremiah 31:33; Deuteronomy 30:14; and Hebrews 8:10-12, where in GOD declares He would put His law (Grace) in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And here is the best part: And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the

LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Now go to Ezekiel 20:37; II Corinthians 5:10; and Hebrews 12:6-8, where GOD proclaims HE will cause you to pass under the rod, and HE will bring you into the bond of the covenant. In all the above there is nothing about GOD waiting for the individual to think, say, or do something before HE spiritually engulfs them with HIS loving-kindness and thusly draws them to HIS bosom where Christ dwells with HIS Christly love.

He found all His children in a totally polluted state, polluted in their own natural darkness; as it is written in Exekiel 16:3, He caused His own to know their abominations, (2); cast out in the open field at thy nativity without the naval being cut, without being washed nor salted, (4-5); God passed by and saw them polluted in their own blood and said "Live", and it was the time of love, and He spread His skirt over them, and He sware unto them and entered into a covenant with them, and they became His. (6-8) This part in Ezekiel typifies the condition of a child of God prior to intervention. They are polluted by nature, without the ability to help themselves Spiritually, and He elects to save them with His love and they do "Live". There is nothing to indicate that this baby, which was cast out in an open field, had the ability, or free-will, to call out for salvation or make a decision for Christ, etc.

Those of His, who He has born again, are made alive in Christ, whereas they are made able to respond, to know that faith comes by hearing, they are given the ability and desire to sing a new song, confessing Christ and believing HE was raised from the dead, which brings them into character of being saved away from their previous (legal-law) beliefs, which did not encompass Christ, as the Messiah. This embracement or conversion to the truth in Christ, as the Messiah is the same as the Eunuch in Acts 8:26-39, where Phillip preached Christ to him and he believed on

Christ as the Messiah. The Eunuch was a believer in GOD, had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was reading the part of Isaiah where the Savior was promised; and Phillip explained (preached) to him that Christ was the promised Messiah that Isaiah wrote about. Upon conversion to the truth that Christ is the promised Messiah, the Eunuch, a child of God, was converted and requested baptism. No where do you find that the Eunuch "made a decision for Christ", etc. He was saved from his previous beliefs to the true belief in Christ; and this is NOT speaking of his eternal salvation. I would venture to agree that, as in the case of the Eunuch, this salvation or conversion, that came (or was given) under the preaching of Phillip, was instantly; this was, of course, all in accord with the preeminence and workings of the Holy Ghost, and not caused by what puny man may naturally think, say, or do.

Faith and good works come as a result of the operation and blessing of the Holy Ghost first working by superadding within the person the Spirit of GOD: faith comes by hearing (hearing with the Spiritual ear already, freely given to the individual by Grace), and good works are a fruit of the Spirit, and these are produced by a healthy, living Tree; a dead tree cannot produce anything. And, so it is with humans: they evidence fruits of the Spirit of God because they have been made alive Spiritual in Christ.)

3. Rita wrote: At the moment we truly accept Christ as our Savior, the Holy Ghost (the promised Comforter — or Christian conscience) comes into our heart and lives to "ever intercede" for us to God. Read all of Hebrews — written to Christians on how to act on your faith — Crystal Clear!

Hoyt replies: Please point to me the scripture in the King James Version of the Bible where it is written that a person accepts Christ. A natural person does not have the slightest thought of "asking" Christ to come into his (or

their) heart(s). When a person has thoughts of Christ and HIS goodness, and has a desire to follow HIS precepts, this is an indication that Christ is already within them (Christ, their hope of glory). Here, you again have the cart before the horse.

4. Rita wrote: Why a Bible for "LOST" folks to try to live by? GOD FORBID!!

Hoyt replies: Where and how do you surmise that anyone has indicated or implicated that the Bible is for "LOST" folks? Your contention and/or invention, but not mine. (The Bible is for the edification of the Children of God, His people, who have been first made alive by the mighty workings of the Holy Ghost without any assistance or forethought by the individual.)

5. Rita wrote: Through Christ, we do have sovereign grace and we only have it if we choose to serve HIM. And any other way is to say God made a mess and we are His victims. — NOT MY GOD!

Hoyt replies: Where in the King James Version of the Bible do you find that a person has sovereign grace, if they choose to serve HIM? Did you write that in your Bible or do you have a version I am not aware of? Any thoughts and contentions of the slightest degree that points to God making a mess of anything is borderline blasphemy, and fairy-tale folly at their best (if there is a best concerning this contention). GOD saw the end from the beginning, and made it all for His glory, and declared it all good.

6. Rita wrote: He loves me — and you — and the scripture says, "It's not His desire that any should perish." If He says that, then there is the element of our salvation being conditional upon placing our faith in Him. THUS — His death and RESURRECTION!

Hoyt replies: Here, you misread, commit error, and add to the Word of God by saying there is an element of our salvation being conditional. Please, please point me to the scripture in the King James Version of the Bible that supports such muddled thought of natural man?

Here, you do what all work-mongers do, and that is to quote a portion of scripture, take it out of context, twist it, write in your own natural interpretation and translation. II Peter 3:9 = "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Let's break that down for a further look-see. II Peter 3:9 starts by saying the LORD (the thrice Holy GOD who created all things and is all-powerful, above all human comprehension) is not slack (rest assured He is not slack in anything) concerning His promise, (this promise He gave to the comfort of His children only and no where does He say there are conditions to be met by humans before the bestowing of this promise of Grace). It is error without excuse for anyone to say that GOD is slack, or in any other way, slack, as compared with humans. GOD is long-suffering (patient) toward His children and people. HE is not willing that any of His children should perish, (but that all His children should come to repentance) and how can any form of logic conclude that if GOD is not willing for any of His children to perish, but for them to come to repentance, that they will perish? And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath give Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (John 6:39). ANYTHING that GOD is willing to accomplish, or willing to come to pass, HE WILL ACCOMPLISH IT, and it will come to pass; and to entertain a notion that the all-powerful GOD is willing for something to come to pass and it will not come to pass is hallucinogenic prattlings. Where does the King James Version (Bible) state that the only way this will come to pass is totally or partially by the works of a human, and not solely by the power of GOD?

7. Rita wrote: Why a begotten, fleshly Man, with all the temptations we face to come here — live an example, be crucified — rise again? The

thief on one cross "came" to Jesus and asked Jesus to remember him. Christ said, "Today, you will be with (not earned) me in Paradise. Nothing is said about the other fellow. Obviously, he died and went to Hell. — He did not ask, nor did he show faith.

Hoyt replies: I'm not certain of the point you try to make here in your first sentence, so, with that uncertainty and unclarity in mind, I'll pass over it without comment, lest I misinterpret what you had in mind. You wrote that the one thief on the cross "came" to Jesus and asked Him to remember him. Here, I take it you mean this thief came to Jesus on his own, natural accord and asked Jesus to remember him. That is not in the King James Version (Bible), so I must not take such accord in truth. Both thieves asked Jesus to come down from the cross and to also take them down (Matthew 27:44). Such a reaction or request from the two thieves is one that originates from a natural instinct to survive here in natural life. Mark 15:32 indicates the two thieves spoke harshly (reviled) to Jesus in a frustrated, desperate way because they naturally realized they were about to die on the cross, even though Christ did have the power to get them down from the cross; But His was not to be so because the Scriptures must need to be fulfilled. The thief you wrote about displayed indications of a belief in God before he asked Christ to remember him when He comest into His Kingdom. (Luke 23:42). Prior to this, we find in Luke 23:40 where the thief rebuked the other for railing against Christ and told him, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou are in the same condemnation?" This thief went on to show that he saw his many sins and just condemnation. (Luke 23:41). "And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." And so it is with those having had the Spirit of God super-added to them. After they are made to see their lost condition and just

condemnation before this all-powerful, sin-avenging, omnipotent GOD, when it takes place with them, they understand.

(I will not comment as to the ultimate, final destiny of the other thief. My Book tells me not to judge in such cases!)

8. Rita wrote: When Jesus asked, "Who touched Me?" — He was showing that FAITH is necessary to salvation. He said to the woman who was instantly healed, that her faith made her whole — of course through Him. (Mark 5:34-36).

Hoyt replies: Not so! Jesus said, "Who touched my clothes?" Christ said to her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." Christ was not speaking to this woman's natural faith or a faith she had conjured up on her own volition. She heard of Jesus! Such hearing is with a Spiritual ear and not a natural ear: "faith comes by hearing." A true, genuinely-given faith by God to her was not of a natural origin, and this Spiritual faith had been bestowed in her prior to her touching His clothes.

9. Rita wrote: Genesis 15:6. "And he belived in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Hoyt replies: There is nothing here to support free-will. There is ample evidence prior to this to clearly show that GOD had already revealed Himself to Abram and Abram already believed GOD before your quotation from Gensis 15:6. In Genesis 12 the LORD told Abram to go to a land He would show him; and He would make a great nation of him; and so Abram departed. Does this not show that Abram already had faith in GOD, prior to Genesis 15:6, the faith that had been instilled in him by GOD?

10. Rita wrote: Matthew 15:28. "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole that very hour."

Hoyt replies: There is nothing here to support free-will. The only possibility of free-will incorrectly being thought of here is when something is

added to Scripture as assumptive postulation used to dogmatically have faith in a natural sense.

11. Rita wrote: John 16:24-25. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. (25) These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but I shew you plainly of the Father."

Hoyt replies: There is nothing here to support free-will. Christ was speaking to His disciples (a disciple is one who Christ revealed Himself to and they followed Him in His ministry, here on earth; most likely He was speaking to His apostles in this case), those who already loved Him, those to whom He would manifest Himself to and not to the world (John 14:22). The world being addressed here is the world of those that are not lambs and sheep of Christ, nor can they ever be.

12. Rita wrote: Evidence of free-will is continually found throughout the scripture. I have studied avidly and thoroughly for many years — in fact, since I was thirteen years of age. I have consulted many Bible scholars and the very best of Bible commentaries. I have pondered your views, and while I do understand that you steadfastly believe them, I still find it difficulty hard to understand HOW you can believe what you believe.

5,000 years of writing, teaching, martyrs, crucifixion, desert wanderings, disciples, John, the Revelator, is all for naught, if we are to wonder as we wander throughout the ages and not be able to SEE and KNOW — without doubts we are SAVED completely and to the uttermost! The Holy Spirit assures me that I AM SAVED — never, never to be lost. The scripture also tells us that too much study and useless, unmeaningful words can and do confuse. Now, I believe that.

Thanks for sharing, and, Hoyt, if you are truly saved, I pray for the peace that passes understanding for you, and that one day you can really know it, that you 100% know that you know it. before it is too late!

Hoyt replies: There is no

evidence of free-will in the King James Version of the Bible, showing anyone has the natural ability to accept Christ. If it depended on man's natural free-will to take necessary action in order to go to Heaven, then no one would end up in hell, because it goes against natural, human nature and instinct to decidedly and voluntarily go into pain, misery and woe, here upon this earth, or eternally in hell (the natural law of self-preservation is quick to kick-in). Therefore, your human logic dictates that everyone goes to Heaven (and there are some who erroneously believe such), but we know some will be eternally in hell. So, it is not of natural man to choose or take action in order to get in Heaven, but it is all of GOD, (Romans 9:16). When trying to prove/confirm a point one has already solidified in their mind as being true, it is only natural to seek out those who believe the same in order to confirm or bolster your belief. "Scholars" exist on all sides of any issue, and I am sure you believe already what you adjudge as "very good commentaries" that you have consulted; like-wise, these also show belief in what you had already naturally concluded. Naturally, you will never understand, nor believe, what I do, unless it pleases GOD to firstly burn all the free-will (man's sinful works) out of you. (No human, including yourself, can burn it out of you). Man does not have that power! You referred to the Apostle John, who was in the isle called Patmos, as "the Revelator". John was only a man. He never revealed anything. Revelation is the office-work of the Holy Ghost, the third person of the God-Head, the Holy Trinity.

As much as I have previously supplied you in written form on what I believe, it is somewhat puzzling to me how you can say that I wonder as I wander without knowing. I know that my Redeemer liveth (Job 19:25); and that Jonah was made to cry out from the belly of the whale: Salvation is of the LORD. (Jonah 4:9). What nat-

ural reasoning should I invoke to pompously presume that I am better than Job or Jonah? Job's three free-will friends could do him no good, and I find no consolation in any tenant of free-will, even though in my nature I at one time so believed as you do. I agree that too much study with and by the natural mind in trying to understand the King James Version Bible does confuse. Beware, lest any man spoil you through vain philosophy and deceit, after the tradition of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Colossians 2:8). Paul told Timothy to study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15 and I Timothy 4:11); and those at Berea were more noble than those at Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11).

A question: What caused you to start studying at the age of 13 years? Was it your natural free-will? If it was your natural free-will, why did you not start studying prior to the age of 13; or why did you not wait until after you were 13?

If you believe that your belief is of your own natural free-will and you will be blessed in complying, what then differs your belief and practice from that of the Roman Catholic, who also believe in free-will? Is it not naturally logical that it would be more effective for all the free-will denominations to join together in order to have a better bang for the buck(\$)?

CLOSING COMMENTS/SUMMATION: All descendants of Adam and Eve (Christ excluded) are totally depraved Spiritually; they are void of any Spiritual ability to worship the true and living, Triune, blessed GOD. GOD placed an enmity between the serpent and woman, and between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. No human has ever possessed the natural ability or desire to think, say, or act upon Spiritual things, of his own, so-called free-will, nor

will he ever do so. And in their natural state they will remain unless it please GOD by His Grace to "born them again" and bring them into the marvelous light of His beloved Son. Then, and only then, can they sing the resounding Song of Moses and the Lamb, the glorious Song to the LAMB OF GOD, who saved them "and hast redeemed them to GOD by HIS BLOOD out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" by His free-grace alone. (Revelation 5:9).

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(While the above writing of our friend, Hoyt Sparks, and Rita Myers, was intended only as an exchange of beliefs, it reminded me of the old saying, "Try convincing an Arminian of the truth against his free-will, and he will remain of the same opinion still." Ed.)

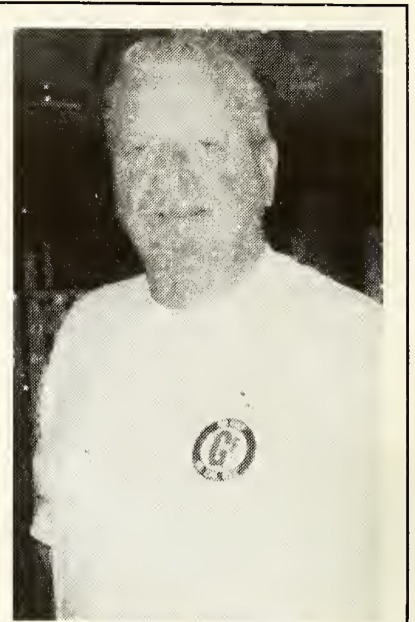
DAVID LEE COMER

"For to me to live is Christ, and die is gain. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you, for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ." (Philippians 1:21-24.) This inspired language of Paul causes us much sadness as we attempt to write in memory of a dear friend and brother in Christ, Brother David Lee Comer, of which the writer is unworthy and incapable; however, we feel it is expedient that some notice of his death be chronicled and left on record of his life.

Brother David Lee Comer, the son of Brother Lee Comer and Sister Elizabeth Goolsby Comer, was born in Lee County, North Carolina, March 16, 1930, and passed from this world March 3, 2006, at First Health Moore Regional Hospital, Pinehurst, North Carolina, at the age of 75 years.

On November 10, 1950, he was married to the former Billie Dove Burke, also of the same area, who survives him. To them were born four daughters, namely, Kathi Muse, Dallas, Texas, Shelia Culler, Easley, South Carolina, Brenda Smith, Robbins, North Carolina, and Tamanda Collins, Carthage, North Carolina. Five grandchildren and four great grandchildren also survive him. He was also pre-deceased by two sisters, Yvonne Comer Martin, the first wife of Brother G. Wilbur Martin, Mrs. Elizabeth McLeod (Comer) Lefler, two brothers, Robert Edward (Ed) Comer, and Wiley Gayle Comer.

Brother Comer was gifted as a man of fine business judgment, and, as such, was a successful farmer and businessman. He was an early member of the Moore County Farm Bureau, where he first served as Vice-President, and later the President of this organization. He was an organizer of the Carthage (NC) Co-operative Tobacco Warehouse. He greatly enjoyed his personal fishing from the nice pond on his farm and enjoyed the file-fries with his brothers, sisters and friends in the church during the seasonal times of the year. It was truly a



DAVID L. COMER
1930 - 2006
(Age 75 Years)

delight of both Brother David, and his wife, Billie, to serve them in this manner.

He was a life-time attendant and strong supporter of the Primitive Baptist churches in his area for many years, and he offered to Lamm's Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Carthage, Moore County, North Carolina, requesting membership July 5, 2003, was received for baptism that took place the next day, July 6, 2003, by his pastor, Elder Calvin Harward. Throughout his entire life, he will always be remembered for his gentle kindness, reliability, honesty, and being a good provider for his fine family.

During the latter two years of his life, his health failed rapidly. All was done for him that the best of physicians and nurses could administer, but could not prevent the Hand of God in calling him from this mortal sphere. Bro. Comer strongly believed in the doctrine of predestination of all things and that he would live exactly the number of days God had before the world allotted for him.

His funeral service was held at Lamm's Grove Church March 6, 2006, by his pastor, Elder Calvin Harward, assisted by Elder Ralph Gaines, after which his body was interred in the family plot with his parents in the church cemetery. May it be the will of God to be with his widow, Billie, and his fine daughters and their respective families, who loved him dearly.

J. M. Mewborn

REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Please place in the Zion's Landmark notice of our annual communion meeting to be held the third Sunday in May, this date being May 20, 2007

**ANNUAL COMMUNION MEETING
TO BE HELD AT
MAYODAN CHURCH, MAYDON, NC
MAY 20, 2007**

We invite all our brethren, sisters and friends, our correspondents and ministering brethren to come and be with us this year, Sunday, May 20, 2007.

Those coming north or south on US 220, turn south on US 220 Business to Mayodan, NC. Go approximately 2 miles to church location on your right. Coming by way of NC (Route) 770, turn south on Janet Road. Go 2 miles to US 220 Business. Turn right and go 1 1/2 miles to church location on your right.

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Pastor
Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk

ZION'S LANDMARK

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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Number 3

few days ago, and came upon an article titled, "A Little Leaven Leavens The Whole Lump." (Galatians 5:9). I have since re-read it several times because the principles contained in it are no longer upheld by many of our churches in this day and time. Man is surely a leaky vessel. We are unable within ourselves to hold on to and retain these correct things that are once delivered to the saints. So, it becomes necessary that we be shown and reminded again and again!

Brother Mewborn, if I may ask this of you, I make a special request that, at least, a portion of it, which I am enclosing, be re-published at this time. This article was written by Elder Lynwood Jacobs of Orange, Texas, who was at that time an associate editor of the paper. It was published in the August, 1975, issue. I did not ever personally meet Elder Jacobs, but I believe God gave him a knowledge and understanding of the truth that is hidden from this vain world. It is reading that is very timely and should be read again and again, I believe.

May it be God's will to keep us in these troublesome times in which we live today. May He keep us, as faithful Primitive Baptist, from following man and from turning away from the principles of true gospel order, as written in the Word of God and that firm foundation of brotherly love, humbleness, and that of esteeming our brothers and sisters higher than ourselves. May God keep us to be directed by Him in our daily walk and not by man. We know that this firm foundation of practice was upheld by our forefathers in the true church of both faith and doctrine, and

has been preached in our pulpits from the beginning, or early on.

In closing, should God give you that mind, we ask for your prayers in our behalf. May God keep His Hand upon you, your wife, and your family. With loving respect, I hope, a servant and, also, an unworthy brother. I am,

Yours in tribulation,
Ernest Duncan
Loris, South Carolina
29569
January 22, 2007

(Requested, republished portion of Elder Jacobs' editorial in August, 1975, Landmark)
"A TRUE ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD IS ONLY A SERVANT AND BROTHER AND NOTHING MORE —

"In the mind of some, calling a pastor is like a marriage between him and the church. This is a concept that I believe is in error and that can cause serious trouble. Every true church is married to Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords." "Wherefore, my brethern, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7:4) Why should any church commit adultery by marrying her servant? According to Elder Calvin Harward, the late Elder Sam Atkinson Sr. of High Point, North Carolina, expressed my belief in what might be called the true hierarchy of the church — the elder is at the bottom, the deacon next, the church is over both elders and deacons, and Christ is over all of it, the Head.

"Look at the results of turning this order around. If

the elder is at the top, Christ is at the bottom. This is not in keeping with my beliefs or understanding. Yet, I have seen, not only churches, but whole associations, that have drifted dangerously close to this latter order. "That's Elder _____'s church or association." Any church or association that follows some man as their head is not going to die. I believe it is already dead. The church belongs to Christ. He is the head and no other. "And hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the head over ALL things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22-23) "And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, BUT WILL FLEE FROM HIM: For they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:4-5)

"I believe each church owes their elder a two fold measure of love — as a brother and as a servant — nothing more. I have never known a true church that could not pay this debt. This double measure of love is my great need and desire in the church. May Almighty God keep me from mistaking it for anything but what it is — love and not obedience.

"By experience I have learned to trust in the collective judgement of the church, or the body as a whole. God has given me a deep trust in the Spiritual judgment He reveals unto those, I hope, are my brethren. Any elder, deacon, or member who believes he is smarter than the church, is exalted and shall be abased. I speak from experience. This belief does not stop me from expressing my feelings

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SPECIAL REQUEST
er Mewborn,

It is our hope this letter will find both you and your wife, Susie, doing well. We are blest and hope to be made thankful to almighty God for these abundant gifts to us. I have been shown that I am not deserving of His love and mercy. It is my lot to have to go daily begging for it (HIS MERCY), and not for justice.

I look forward to each new issue of the Landmark. I love this paper for the truth it contends, stands for, and upholds. It has been my blessing to have accumulated quite a number of the old, back issues that reach back into the early 1970's. Many of them belonged to my mother-in-law, Sister Dorothy Barnhill, who passed from this life December 13, 2005. She was a faithful member of Simpson Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Loris, South Carolina, for many years, as well as a strong believer of the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God. My wife, Dynesia, and I miss her each day that passes.

Brother Mewborn, I was recently reading one of these old Landmarks, just a

about matters, but it does make me respect the wishes of the church over my own wishes when they differ.

"I believe that God ordained elders and deacons to serve His church. They are servants only to the church, not God. He does not need to hear the truth declared, He is the Truth. God does not need to have the ordinances of the church administered to Himself. The church serves God, and elders serve the church. If elders are true servants to God alone, they are beholden to Him only. But, I believe that they are servants to the church, raised up by God's will for this purpose only, and they are beholden to the church. I believe this concept is of great importance to peace in Zion.

**"INDIVIDUAL
CHURCHES — THE ONLY
ECCLESIASTICAL
AUTHORITY ON EARTH."**

"I have heard it said that the individual churches are the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. The truth is that individual churches are the **ONLY** ecclesiastical authority on earth, established as such by the highest ecclesiastical authority in Heaven, Almighty God.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publican." (Matt. 18:17)

"The question arises then, how many does it take to constitute this ecclesiastical authority? The answer is two or more. "Again I say unto

you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18:17,19)

"Once a problem has been presented to a church of two or more members, the collective judgment of that church is the only pertinent, ecclesiastical authority to deal with that problem. This authority can not be delegated to another body. If it is usurped by some other group, it is done so contrary to the Holy order established by Almighty God. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Cor. 14:40) I believe this means to let all things be done in love following God's order and not in strife following man's notions. When wrath enters the door of a church and it is met head on by greater wrath, nothing but vain jangling can follow. When wrath walks in the door and it is met head on by the collective love of a true church, there is nothing for wrath to do but flee. "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (I Pet. 4:8) "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (Jam. 1:20) "Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (Jam. 4:7) The only power that can resist Satan is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given of God. (See Rom. 5:5)

"Go to an association in

which the ecclesiastical authority of the individual churches is being usurped and run over by the association. There is no peace and little joy in such a meeting for me. Then go to an association where no ecclesiastical authority is exercised over the churches. Joy abounds, love is without dissimulation, and a peace prevails that passes all understanding. Does this not tell us something? Or am I so correct in all my thoughts and ways that I dare reject the words of the precious One who bought me, I hope, with His blood, if I am His. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. May God bless us to recognize and follow His ways.

"This brings up the question, how do we deal with problems between sister churches? Follow Matt. 18:15-20, but do so outside the annual associational meeting. These were set up by our forefathers only as an ingathering of churches to rejoice together in song, prayer, preaching, and fellowship one with the other. One of the most despicable things to me is for my association to issue a general invitation to brethren abroad of like faith and order to meet with us and then present them with the spectacle of the association exercising ecclesiastical authority over the sovereign rights of the churches, which associations do not have, or carrying on some dogfight that should be omitted altogether, if possible, or at least held at some other time and place, if it must occur.

"If a problem arises between two churches, let them meet as outlined in Matt. 18:15. If their problem cannot be reconciled, let them follow Matt. 18:16 by bringing in a sister church or two. If reconciliation still is not made, let all the churches directly involved meet to consider the matter with the entire membership being present or by delegates. (see Matt. 18:17) **BUT LET THESE MEETINGS BE SPECIAL** and not be a part of the annual association."

(End of republication of

requested portion of Elder Jacobs' editorial from the August, 1975, issue of Zion's Landmark.)

**COMFORT
IN PERILOUS TIMES**

The following sermon, **THE FURNACE AND ITS FRUITS**, preached by Elder J. C. Philpot, London England, was first published in our May, 1974, issue of Zion's Landmark. Many subscribers at that time expressed much appreciation from reading it.

In these perilous times in which we are now living, I personally find great strength in the Spirit in which, I believe, our friend and brother was given to deliver it. With the expressed pleasure of our subscribers in the past publication considered, it is now at this time that we take the opportunity of republication for the benefit of those who have not had the privilege of reading it. To those who have read it, we believe that you, no doubt, will enjoy reading it again.

Elder J. C. Philpot was born in England in 1802 and died in 1869. Along with Elders William Gadsby, John Warburton, John Kershaw, John M'Kensie and others, he was a faithful minister of the Gospel Standard Strict Baptist Church of England in the 19th Century.

Editor

**THE FURNACE
AND ITS FRUITS**

Preached at Providence Chapel, Eden Street, London, on Lord's Day Evening, July 18, 1847.

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." I Pet. 1:6-7.

The Scriptures contain a deep, inexhaustible mine of vital truth. But how are we to penetrate into that mine, and turn up some of those inexhaustible riches? Two things are absolutely needful be-

Zion's Landmark

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

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fore we can dig into this mine, and lay bare its rich contents. First, we must be brought into those states and conditions of vital experience to which the Scriptures are related and suited. The word of God was written for the poor and needy, the tempted, the exercised, the distressed, the cast down, the tried and troubled, and the afflicted. If we, then, are not brought into those states for which the Scriptures were written, to us they are but a dead letter. And secondly, the fact remains of the requirement of the gift of the blessed Spirit, when He has brought us into that state of soul to which the Scriptures are adapted, and to meet the substance of that which they were written, should enlighten our understanding to see, apply the precious truth of God with power to our heart that we may believe, and seal heavenly instruction upon our conscience that we may feel what is thus divinely revealed.

What were the Scriptures written for? To make the people of God wise unto salvation with understanding, as an outward witness relates to an inward witness. They were not written to furnish empty professors with notions and opinions to battle one another with; not to provide us with a little Sunday, casual reading; nor to buoy us up with superstition and self righteousness. They were written for the instruction, consolation, and edification of God's poor and needy children. Unless, therefore, we are brought by divine teaching into those states of experience for which the Scriptures were written, we may have wondrous lights in our head, but our heart will be destitute of the power of vital goodness and the glory of God.

We gather, from the Scriptures of the New Testament, that the primitive believers to whom the Epistles were addressed, were enduring for the most part a great fight of afflictions; they were persecuted without, and deeply tried within. They doubtless at first, as we in times past, did not believe

that they must "through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven." They thought that to believe in Jesus must surely bring nothing but peace and happiness. The bright side of things they only saw; but the dark side was hidden from them. But after a time God saw fit that they should become acquainted with the dark side, as well as the bright. Persecutions, temptations, oppositions, conflicts, and a variety of trials that God's people are ever exercised with, befell them. Their minds now began to sink; their faith to stagger; their hope well nigh to give way; and, therefore, the Apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost to write the Epistles, not only to instruct, but also to comfort and encourage them in their path of tribulation and trying experiences.

Thus, we find Paul setting before the church of God: "Unto you," he says, "it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Phil. 1:29. So he tells Timothy, (II Tim.3:12) "If we suffer (with Christ), we shall also reign with Him." And again, writing to the Romans, he says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Chap. 8:18) James says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." (Chap. 1:2) Peter writes, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (I Peter 4:12) and especially, in the words before us, he addresses himself to comfort and encourage their often cast down spirits, by telling them that there was a "needs be" for all their afflictions wherewith they were exercised, and that all should end eventually in "praise and honour and glory."

We may observe, I think, two leading features in the words before us. First, their state of affliction and suffering through "manifold temptations"; with the reason

why the Lord saw fit thus to exercise them; and secondly, the blessed fruits that would one day spring out of them. The Lord enables us to look at these things in the light of the Spirit; and the Lord set before me a door of utterance, that I may speak out of the fullness of a believing, exercised heart, what I see and feel; we will take it up sentence by sentence, and clause by clause, and thus endeavor to trace out the mind and meaning of the Holy Spirit as revealed in it.

I. 1. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice." Carnal joy is killed to a child of God. I do not mean to say that the carnal mind is killed. We have too bitter and painful experience to the contrary. But the sources of carnal joy are killed. Why? Because those things which in time past did afford joy, are now discovered to be empty and destitute of the pleasure once found in them. Health, strength, wealth, honour, worldly amusements, sinful pleasures — all these things could once delight and gratify the carnal mind; but God in mercy has put bitterness into this cup. Our carnal mind may still be amused by them for a time. But O, what a gloomy retrospect!, and how it pierces the conscience, that we could take a moment's pleasure, or derive an instant's happiness from those things which are so hateful and abominable in the sight of God! But if there be any real joy, or happiness, or consolation, it is only in Christ, and what of God He is made to us, and what He is pleased to make known to our souls concerning Himself — His blood, His righteousness, His love, His preciousness, His suitability, His tender compassion, the riches of His grace, His glorious Person, all that He is, and all that He has for the living church of God. If ever, as we pass through this wilderness, we feel one drop of solid joy of true happiness, it must flow, it can flow only from only one source — the manifestations of Christ to our souls.

"Wherein ye greatly re-

joice." This joy may be very transient: we may have to look upon it through a vista of many years; and doubts and fears may becloud the mind whether we ever rejoiced truly in Christ, or whether our joy might have been "the joy of the hypocrite" that perisheth. And, yet, we are brought to this point — we can only find joy and peace in Him alone. Sin, the world, the things of time and sense, business, amusement, pleasure so called, afford now no joy; there is an aching void, a feeling of dreariness and misery connected with everything short of communications of mercy, favour, and love. So, with this thought, we may not be enabled to come up with this divine description, and be enabled to say, "we greatly rejoice at all times, in all places, at all seasons, in the Lord;" yet we can come to this point — we can rejoice in no other; yet we can take real pleasure in nothing else. One smile from the Lord, one Word from His lips, one gracious breaking in of the light of His countenance, does, while it lasts, communicate joy; and from no other quarter, from no other source can a moment's joy be drawn.

2. But the Apostle here does not suppose that the people of God are ever rejoicing in the Lord. His language is point blank against that. "Wherein we greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." They rejoiced in Christ; but they were not so enabled to rejoice as to have been forever done with sin, with sorrow, with doubts and fears, with heaviness of heart, and dejection of spirit. The word of God knows nothing of such a pain. We are "in heaviness for a season." It may be long or short, as God sees fit. This "season" in some cases may be very frequent; in others, almost continually: nay, in some persons it may be extended well-nigh through their whole lives. I know, and doubtless you know, children of God of whose reli-

gion we have not the shadow of a doubt; yet, if you go to them from time to time, what is the language of their lips? (And we are sure from the way in which they speak, it is the language of their heart) — “Ah! I am still in the same spot; still cast down, dejected, with little peace or comfort; sometimes almost drowned with melancholy, despondency, and well-nigh despair.” But, whether the “season” should be short, or whether it should be long, God has not defined, and we cannot. One thing, however, is clearly evident, according to the declaration of the Holy Ghost before us, that there is a “season” during which the Lord’s people are “in heaviness.”

And what is it to be “in heaviness?” Let us look at the contrary of heaviness. A contrast of the opposite often throws light upon a word. What is opposed to heaviness? Lightness, frivolity, carnal ease, dead assurance, a floating I know not where in the air without any solid foundation for spiritual joy and peace. To be “in heaviness” is, then, to be the opposite of all this, to have a burden tied round our spirits depressed, our minds dejected, our hearts labouring, and our souls groaning unto God on account of the difficulties and exercises that we meet within the way.

3. But the apostle tells us the cause of this heaviness, “Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.” What is the meaning of the expression, “manifold temptations”? The word “temptation,” not only means what is generally understood by the expression, such as the suggestion and fiery darts of Satan, or incitements to evil; but it includes also all that is conveyed by the phrase “trial.” And the word “manifold,” not merely signifies many in number, but various in kind. Look, then, at the state and case of the Lord’s people here described by the pen of inspiration. It is not one trial that they have to pass through, nor just one temptation to grapple with, but a

whole series or succession of many and various combinations of trials and temptations. And the effect of this is to produce heaviness. How many of the Lord’s people, for instance, have to wade through providential trials! And are not these a source of heaviness? When a man desires to be honest and upright, and yet things in providence go out against him, if his conscience be tender in God’s fear, must it not, and will it not, be a source of pain and trial to his mind sometimes lest he bring a reproach upon the godly cause wherewith he is connected? Sometimes the feeling arises from a desire to do what is right, and pay every man his own; and sometimes from a fear lest the enemy should point the finger of scorn at him, and say, “This is your religion; this is your profession; to get into debt, and pay no one.”

Again, many of the Lord’s people have to pass through what the church of old experienced — persecution and opposition. How the primitive believers were especially tried in this fire, and had to pass through this furnace, persecution and opposition continually staring them in the face, so that they had to carry, as it were, their very lives in their hand! In our days we are not made to suffer in this outward persecution what the true church underwent in time past. But we have persecution and opposition still to endure. And if we are faithful in God’s cause, we have “the scourge of the tongue,” and much opposition to pass through; so that we have need that our face be set as a flint, if we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

But again, afflictions in various shapes and forms will ever be the lot of God’s people; and each knows best what his soul is most deeply exercised with.

Most of the people of God have something that presses heavily upon them; and very often the thing that cuts most painfully, and lies upon their heart most weightily,

they cannot breathe forth into the ears of a single friend. And, sometimes, strange as it may seem to say, they cannot breathe it forth even into the ears of the Almighty. There is something peculiar in most of the children of God that seems to lie with the greatest weight and power upon the conscience. They can sigh under it, and groan beneath it to Him who reads the heart; and He who searches the heart, and tries the spirit, sees the painful trials, exercises, and afflictions under which His poor child is labouring; and yet he has no power, at least but rarely, to lay that very trial, in word, before the footstool of His mercy.

But besides these trials that the family of God are, more or less, deeply exercised with, there are temptations, that is, what we understand peculiarly by the word temptation, exercises of a spiritual nature, as opposed to trials in providence, or afflictions from God. The temptations, for instance, that spring from our own evil hearts, our own corrupt, deeply depraved corrupt nature; such as unbelief, infidelity, strange suggestions and attacks from the adversary of our soul, unbecoming thoughts of our God, and the workings of our carnal mind upon divine things, with a variety of exercises most painful to be felt, and yet, perhaps, scarce to be hinted at, are all included.

Now the effect of all these temptations is to cast the mind down, bring heaviness upon the spirit, deject and depress the soul, and lay it low, very low in the dust of self-abasement and self-loathing. Temptations to doubt our interest in the blood and obedience of the Son of God; temptations to question the reality of the work of grace upon our poor heart; temptations about the Trinity; temptations with respect to the inspiration of God’s word; temptations to turn our back upon the people of God altogether; temptations presenting themselves in the Church to distract our thoughts; and when

we come to the footstool of mercy, there to seek the Lord and pour out our heart, some temptation that carries our mind away to the very “end of the earth.”

Thus, through these numerous temptations the soul is “in heaviness.” It cannot move lightly or easily forward. Weights and burdens lie upon the shoulders, and difficulties, obstacles, hindrances are strewn thickly upon the path; and, thus, the soul through these “manifold temptations,” without and within, spiritual and providential, is “in heaviness” and cast down, dejected, depressed, and desponding. And is this your state and case day by day? Do you find that without, or that within, which makes you go groaning along, a poor, burdened pilgrim, sighing, mourning, lamenting after the Lord, and carrying a weight that lies upon your conscience, a weight you cannot shake off? Now, if this be your case, has not the pen of divine inspiration traced out the feelings of your soul? Lightness, frivolity, dead assurance, empty notion, a name to live, a Graceless profession ‘O! say you, “God keep me from these awful deceits; let me rather be in heaviness all my days, cast down, dejected, exercised, tried in providence, tempted by Satan, and having a daily conflict with the evils of my heart; O, let me rather be in heaviness all my life than be puffed up by the delusions of the devil as an angel of light, or drawn away by the world into an empty profession.”

4. But there is a “needs be” for being “in heaviness through manifold temptations.” These things do not come by chance. “Affliction springeth not out of the ground;” it is not a matter of uncertainty; all, all is under the divine disposal. There is a “needs be.” It is in the grace of God as in His providence that His child is chastised; but never without a “needs be.” He must be a cruel, hard-hearted parent, who will chastise his children without cause. He must be a very wretch to do that. To beat his child, and chas-

tise it cruelly to gratify his own malice! A man must be almost an incarnate fiend to act so. He cannot have the heart of a parent to treat his child harshly and chastise it, or even to lay the weight of his finger upon it unless there be some solid ground. Can we, then, ascribe to the Parent of all who fear His great Name — to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, what we dare not ascribe to man? If He chastise us, if He lay His Hand of affliction upon our loins, if He brings trouble into our soul, if He spreads difficulties and trials in our path, if the rod of His correction cut deep into our flesh — can we, dare we, ascribe for a single moment unto God that He brings these things without purpose and cause? It would be treason against the Majesty of Heaven to indulge the thought! Never; never. There is, then, a “needs be.” We may not see it: it may take us years ere we see the “needs be;” and for the most part it does. I doubt not you have been where I have almost sometimes been, and have almost said when a sharp trial came, “We never shall see the Hand of God in this; that we are sure of; it is so painful, so mysterious, so dark;” and in the unbelief of our mind, in our hasty spirit, we think, if we dare not say, The Hand of God cannot be in this; the time never can come when I shall see any good come out of this.” Yet, when we look back we can see that good has come, that solid profit has been communicated to our souls; and we would not have been without the trial on account of the solid profit that has come out of it. Thus, as to the afflictions, trials, exercises and temptations that your poor soul is now exercised with — you may not see the “needs be;” yet there is a blessed “need be.” Where would you be without them? I ask. If now you are carnal, worldly-minded, and frivolous with the trial, what would you be without the trial? If you are so worldly with a load upon your shoulders? God alone knows what evils we are kept from by

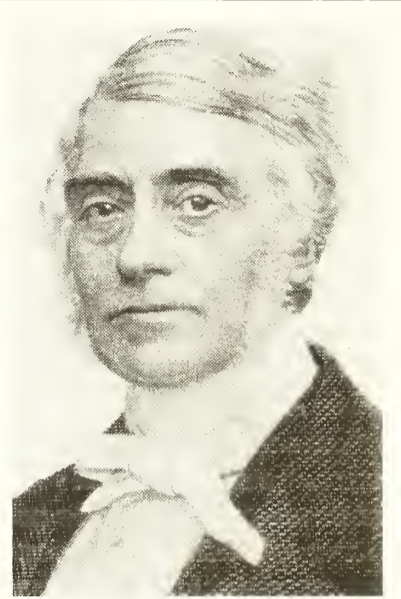
having loads and burdens to bear. God, alone, knows the snares from which He delivers our feet by laying afflictions upon us. O into what carnal ease should we not slip, if God did not keep our souls alive by exercises! O into what worldly-mindedness, pride, and covetousness should we not fall, if God by affliction and exercises did not whip us out of the path of worldly-mindedness into the path of tribulation and suffering! O what empty professors and graceless hypocrites we should be, if God were not pleased from time to time to exercise our souls upon the solemn things of eternity, and by various trials, temptations and exercises. It is this way we are made to see that His Spirit is working in them and draws the desires of our heart to His most blessed Majesty!

There is then a “need be.” But you cannot see it. No, if you could see it, you would be as wise as God. It is God's wisdom to conceal the matter; and your wisdom and mine is to truly be enabled to submit to God, who is able and willing to make all things work together for our spiritual good, though we know not when, and know not how.

II. But our text leads us to see more particularly the good which is to spring out of these manifold temptations, and which we said, if God enabled us, we would consider in our second place: “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise an honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” What! Is there faith in the heart under all these trials? Yes, there is, in every quickened child of God: and that is His mercy, as well as His distinguishing feature. Worldly men, carnal professors, wretched hypocrites, have all their trials, afflictions, and temptations; but they have not this living faith in their souls, to work in them and under them, and thus bring them safely and clearly out of them. There is the difference. But, if there

be this faith in our heart, if God has quickened your soul and mine and raised us up by His mighty power (for nothing short of God's power can do it) one spark of living faith within, it must and will be tried; for “God trieth the righteous” (Psa.11:5), and it is “the trial of your faith,” not the faith itself, which is “much more precious than of gold that perisheth.”

1. But what is it that tries faith? Reading the Bible on a pleasant summer evening? Having our family prayer with all due regularity? Coming to the chapel (or meeting-house) twice on the Lord's day, and attending all the meetings? Good things in their way; I would not say a single word against any of them. But, we may do all these things, and yet have no faith. What is it, then, that tries faith? Why, inward exercises, painful conflicts, powerful temptations, and all that work within which is carried on in the bosom of His elect. Now, if there be no faith, there will be no trial of faith; but if there be faith, there will necessarily (of necessity) be the trial. Nay more, just in proportion to the strength of your faith will be its trial. If you have little faith, you will have few and feeble trials; if you have great faith, you will have many and strong trials. And this thing shows to me, as much as anything, the emptiness — the emptiness, I say — of that dead assurance which we find so much of in the present day. There are no trials connected with it, no deep exercises, no powerful temptations, no severe afflictions, no inward conflicts. It is a sort or kind of faith that dances over conflicts, slips over trials, and flies about unweighted by temptations. And this very thing proves its rottenness; for if it were living faith in a living soul, there would be trials proving it, bringing it to light, and showing that it is of the operation of God in the soul. Nor has this dead assurance any fruits; no humility, no brokenness, no contrition, no tenderness of conscience, no Godly fear, no separation



Joseph Charles (J.C.) Philpot
1802 - 1869

He was born in England in 1802. He, along with Elders Wm. Gadsby, John Warburton and John McKensie, was a faithful minister of the (Gospel Standard) Strict Baptist church of England from 1835. He was editor of the Gospel Standard periodical from 1849 to 1869, when he died. His sermon here, 'The Furnace and Its Fruits', is an excellent example of his preaching and writing. Editor.

from the world, no living to God's glory. There is not a single fruit of the Spirit attending it. And by these two things — by its being a faith without trial, and a faith without fruit — it is proved to no one who has eyes to see, not to be the faith of God's elect: for the true faith that God Himself is pleased to raise up in the hearts of His poor and needy family, has both trials and fruits; and by these two things it is manifested to be genuine. But O, how painful it is to have faith tried! We would gladly have sweet views of Jesus, blessed glimpses and glances of His Person, tokens of His love, the gracious comings in of His favour, and the droppings in of His mercy and tender kindness. But no trials. O no! We would not have one — no afflictions, no powerful temptations, no painful conflicts, no suggestions of Satan, no horrible workings of a depraved nature. We should be glad to be free from all these things with much peace and comfort, as we may, but none of these painful things bring relief to such trouble and exercise to the tender conscience. But God has put them together; and no man can, as no honest man will try, to put them

asunder. If I have true faith, I must have trials with it. The Lord gives no other kind but tried faith. He says, "Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." Rev. 3:18. It is "the trial of your faith" which is "found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

2. But the Apostle here, speaking of the trial of faith, directs our thoughts to the way in which faith is specially tried. He compares it to "gold," and not merely to gold, but to "gold tried in the fire." Now, what is this figure? It is a very common one in the word of God, and very expressive — that of the furnace. But, what is the gold put into the furnace for? To make it gold? O no! Let the ore be put into the fire as long as you please — the dross does not become gold, the gold does not become dross. So it is spiritually. Afflictions do not create faith — afflictions do not turn nature into grace, nor grace into nature. Grace is grace, nature is nature, in the furnace as well as out of the furnace; just as gold is gold, and dross is dross, in the fire as well as out of the fire. But what is the effect? To separate, to bring to light, to purge away the scum and dross. Is it not so spiritually? If we have faith, we have a great deal of dross mixed with it; presumption, self-righteousness, unbelief, pride, lofty thoughts of self — all this dross and filth is apparently (not really, but apparently) mingled with the few grains of faith that God may have dropped into our soul; and nothing but the fire can separate them. Now, afflictions, tribulations, and temptations are the furnace which God makes use of to separate the dross from the gold. How? By bringing it to light. Suppose I am in a trial — say, a providential trial; I want God to appear for me in providence. God does not appear. What is made manifest? Unbelief, murmuring, rebellion, repining — questioning God's power, or God's wisdom, or God's goodness. How may unbelief and infidelity are brought to

light by these means! Or, say that I am labouring under some powerful temptation to doubt the being of God, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, the work of the Holy Ghost, or horrible thoughts that I may hint at, but no more. What is the effect? O what a turmoil takes place in the bosom! O how false faith flies away at the first touch! It cannot stand this. Infidelity drives all before it. But what do we learn by these temptations? Our own weakness, helplessness and miserable condition. The infidelity and scepticism that are mixed up with, and form part of, our carnal mind are brought to light and discovered; and thus the scum and dross are manifested in the process. But, after awhile, little faith begins to lift up her head. And how does she manifest herself? By crying to the Lord, by groaning out her desires into His ear. And the Lord is pleased, now and then, to drop in a word, to encourage drooping faith to lift up her head; and as faith becomes manifested as faith, and unbelief becomes manifested as unbelief.

Again, I am in some temptation that brings to light all the hidden evils of my heart. O how snugly does sin lie curled up in the carnal mind! O in what secret corners of the heart do our lusts lurk like sleeping vipers! But some temptation comes that stirs up, brings to light and makes manifest these sleeping vipers, these torpid toads, and they begin to hiss and discover themselves in us to our astonishment. "O! says the soul, "that ever I could be such a wretch. I have been told, and I thought I believed what a fallen creature I was; but that I should have such pride springing up in my heart, such covetousness, such enmity against God and His truth, such sensuality, such internal defilement — O I could not have believed it if I had been told it by an angel that I was such a wretch, such a monster of inward filth, sin, and evils." Is not this doing the soul good? Here is the furnace: out of it come the scum,

foam, and filth of our carnal mind. You thought, perhaps, you were making great advances in holiness, had nearly climbed to the top of the tree, and you were getting so spiritual and heavenly-minded, that sin was almost killed. But it was not dead; it was only sleeping; just torpid for awhile. But these temptations have brought to light some of the evil that always was in your heart. It slept there, though you knew it was not; it was covered up, concealed, perhaps smothered over with a huge cloak of profession, or plastered in with some untempered mortar. But temptation has brought it to light. Has faith nothing to do here? Yes. This is "the trial of faith." Faith begins to groan out its desires to the Lord to be kept from evil, and to walk in the strait and narrow path; it comes unto the Lord and, as He enables, pleads with Him; and, as He gives, lays hold of some promise suitable to its tried, tempted, exercised state.

And is not this proving that we have faith? It can be proved in no other way. We may think, vainly think, what a vast stock of faith and strength we have, when all the time our faith (as we might think) may be little else but mere presumption. There are hundreds of professors in this metropolis (London) who think themselves strong believers, but could you take the spiritually accurate scales of the sanctuary and weigh their faith in them, you would scarcely find a grain. Presumption, profession, notions in the head, and dead assurance, pass with thousands for the living faith of God's elect. And so it would pass with you and me, if God did not see fit to exercise our souls upon the solemn things of eternity. If we had no trials, temptations, afflictions, nor inward conflicts, and were destitute of the many things within and without that we are now exercised with, we should sit in our own arm chair of carnal ease, and be as puffed up with a few empty notions as they are. But we cannot; if we fear

God, we cannot. Our exercises, trials, and temptations keep us from this carnal ease. There is the conscience speaking in our bosom, and that will not let us rest in a name to live while dead. There are inward workings, sometimes night and day, and sometimes every hour, which make us dread to be deceived by the delusions of Satan, or to take up with an empty profession of godliness.

This, then is the effect of the furnace. The furnace does not change nature to grace, or grace to nature. Grace is still grace; nature is still nature. But the furnace brings nature to light; nay more, the furnace brings grace to light. And thus its known to be faith by the trial which it has to endure

3. And the Apostle says, this is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth." It will not do to sell this faith upon the Stock Exchange. That living faith in a poor broken-hearted creature, perhaps dying in the workhouse, is better and more precious than all the bullion in all the strong vaults of all the cellars of all the banks. But it is so in God's sight, and should be in ours, if we viewed it as God views it, and saw light in God's light. Yes, if there be one true spark of living faith in the soul, one grain of the grace of God in our heart, it is better, a thousand million times better, than if we had the total sum of all the possessions of all the wealth of all the men of this world put together. Doubtless, we cannot often think or feel so; yet, our feelings and unbelief do not alter the fact. The reality is the same, though our poor unbelieving mind is often denyng, or putting a false gloss upon the words of immutable truth.

4. But when will it be found so? "At the appearing of Jesus Christ." In that great, notable and solemn day which is fast hastening on, when the Lord Jesus Christ will "appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebs. 9:28), then "the trial of our faith," if we possess it (the heart-searching God

knows whether we do possess it or not), "will be found unto praise and honour and glory." Little "praise" belongs to it now. The world will neither have it, nor praise it — that we are well convinced of. Empty professors will not praise it — that we are sure of; because, if we are right, they are wrong; if our religion be of God, it cuts up their root and branch and leaves it not a foot to stand upon. Satan will not praise it — that is very certain; for he fights with bitter enmity against the grace of faith in the soul. And our carnal minds, we may be very sure, will not praise it, for "the carnal mind is enmity against God." (Rom. 8:7). We must not even expect the church of God, very often to praise it; because God is jealous of His glory, and knows what poor empty creatures we are, and cannot be pleased with the good opinions of men. Thus, if we are exercised children of God, our faith will not have praise from the world, from graceless professors, from the devil, from our own carnal minds, and very little praise even, from God's own dear children. But it will be our mercy if it "be found unto praise at the appearing of Jesus Christ." It will be our mercy in that final day, if He then salutes us with His own gracious lips, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34.

And to "honour." Worldly honour, we may not expect to have; God forbids us to desire it, though our carnal mind longs after and loves it. It is a bad mark if we seek it — a worse mark if we get it. But, if the Lord Jesus Christ in the day of His appearing is pleased to honour our faith with the smile of His approbation, and crown it with immortal bliss and glory, we shall not need the applause of creatures; we shall not need to pine after the honour of man that perisheth, or of the sons of men who are as grass. We shall have a crown of honour that surpassed all — an exceeding and eternal weight of "glory" in the pres-

ence of God and of the Lamb. Oh what can equal this! — to have the trial of our faith, thus eternal glory!

O ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the Most High! Raise up your thoughts as God may enable you — lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? YES! It is your mercy. God does not deal so with every one. It is because you are His children that He lays on you His chastening hand. He means to (eternally) conform you to the image of His Son in glory, and, therefore, He now conforms you (temporarily) to the image of His Son in suffering. "O but," you say, "I cannot believe it is so!" No, if you could it would not be much of a trial of your faith, to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on, believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature to dampen the hope and expectation of your waiting souls. Yet, all will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptations, of suffering, of pain, and trial; but Heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as "with fire," it will one day "be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In that day when the secrets of all men's hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with "praise and honour and glory;" and they shall see the Lamb as He is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

Elder Joseph Charles
(J. C.) Philpot,
Deceased

THE POWER AND STRENGTH OF THE DURABILITY OF GOLD

In Greene County, North Carolina, on NC Highway (Route) 903 at approximately mid-way distance between Snow Hill and LaGrange, on the eastside facing today's

Turnage Auto Sales (Tires and Service) is the site of the old Mewborn grade school, one of the first and oldest in the county.

In the year 1904 my uncle, George L. Mewborn, Sr., had given his fiancée (also my aunt), Eula Virginia Mewborn, a beautiful, wide gold wedding band at the time of their engagement. She was 17 years old, and her mother, Barbara Mewborn, insisted that they wait a year for marriage due to her age. My Aunt, Eula, continued in school, and, of course, wore her ring. An interesting account is given about this ring incident from the book, The Heritage of Lenior County, (NC) 1981, page 312, as follows: "Events Prove Truth Often Is The Best Record"

"It all begins to come to light when Alan Dale Mewborn, while handcropping, or priming sand lugs tobacco (the bottom-most leaves on the stalk—a most arduous labor) on a hot day in July 1969, spotted a beautiful, gold ring lying beneath a tobacco plant in the soil. The ring had the initials G. L. M. engraved inside the band. He said the ring was shining, sparkling, in the bright sun light that first caught his attention. The ring was in perfect condition, and was found in a cultivated field on the exact site of the old school building that once had large oak, shade-trees. They had long since been demolished and gone. The school site, that had become a farm-cultivated field, had been extensively plowed for many years.

"Subsequent investigations by Alan and his family discovered that sixty-five years earlier at one morning school recess period for the Mewborn School pupils, a student, while viewing and adoring the ring from Miss Mewborn's finger, as she was showing her brand-new ornament to a group of her girlfriend classmates on the school yard, inadvertently and unintentionally jerked it from her finger. A scuffling followed, and the ring disappeared (beneath) in the sandy soil of the play-ground or school yard.

"The group of girls, including Miss Mewborn, with other interested students and friends vainly searched for the ring to find it for ever so long, during many lunch and recess periods, as well as on following Saturdays and Sundays, but to no avail. No one knows how the bridegroom elect received the news that his engagement ring, so recently purchased, had been lost. He did buy his fiancée another ring. One of the favorite games on the school yard, that ensued the incident, was 'searching for the last ring.'

"Somewhere among the earth's soil, which spawned its gold in the first place, this ring nestled 2/3rd's of a century (from 1904 to 1969), when the grand-nephew of Mrs. George L. (Eula) Mewborn, Alan Mewborn, found it. The ring's ownership was soon determined and returned to the family of its owner, who was gravely sick and had passed away in 1966, 3 years prior, to its discovery. She never knew that her ring had been found." (End of quote.)

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Gold in the scriptures many times spiritually represents the enduring, changeless qualities of truth and faith. This 14 or 18 karat gold ring fell into the earth bright and shining, and it came out bright and shining, although it remained hidden in the soil for 65 years. Likewise, faith and truth, although they remain out of sight, never, never lose the power of their intrinsic qualities. Time has no affect on gold, wherever, nor do faith and truth, likewise, deteriorate with the passing of time. Gold's scarcity by reason of its existence creates its high value. Our forefathers, when founding our country over 200 years ago, recognized the strength and enduring quality of gold, when they established the gold standard or value for our money, coins and currency.

According to the scriptures, GOLD was in existence in the morning of time near the Pison River that watered the Garden of Eden.

"The name of the first (river) is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is GOLD." (See Genesis 2:11). It was near the manger that held Christ in Bethlehem at His birth: "And when they (the wise men) had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: GOLD, frankincense, and myrrh." (See Matthew 2:11). And according to Revelation Chapter 21, verses 10 and 21, it was in "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God." "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls." "And the street of the city was PURE GOLD, as it were transparent glass."

The Apostle Peter tells us that gold is capable of destruction and annihilation. "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold THAT PERISHETH", proves the point. You may ask the question, "HOW?" When gold is put into a mixture of hydrochloric and nitric acid, called aqua regis, it will disintegrate into nothing. It may also be dissolved in alkaline cyanide solution, a hot solution of ferric chloride, thiosulfate solutions, mercury of nature (free) chlorine. These are some of the most powerful chemicals (disolvements) known to man, but they have never been known to destroy truth and faith, which are indestructible.

The Apostle Paul categorized and separated the existence of two entities in II Corinthians 4:18, one of which he calls temporal, and the other which he calls eternal. He clarifies the difference here: "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Gold, as a temporal thing, is destructible and timely, while truth and faith are eternal and indestructible. Although gold has its excellent enduring qualities, the children of God look beyond by faith to those things which are eternal.

David and Peter here enu-

merate those seven precious qualities and aspects of God, not like unto gold, they said, would endure forever. Please remember that seven is a perfect number. They are as follows:

(1) HIS MERCY. David said, "His MERCY endureth for ever." (Psalms 106:1).

(2) HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. David said, "His RIGHTEOUSNESS endureth for ever." (Psalms 111:3).

(3) HIS PRAISE. David said, "His PRAISE endureth for ever." (Psalms 111:10).

(4) HIS TRUTH. David said, "The TRUTH of the Lord endureth for ever." (Psalms 117:2).

(5) HIS JUDGEMENTS. David said, "Thy righteous JUDGEMENTS endureth for ever." (Psalms 119:160).

(6) HIS NAME. David said, "Thy NAME, O LORD, endureth for ever." (Psalms 135:13).

(7) HIS WORD. The Apostle Peter said, "The WORD of the Lord endureth for ever." (1st Peter 1:25).

In the final glorification of the saints of God at the last day, the children of God, as natural gold was shining and glittering in this time world, Christ said "Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43). The Prophet Daniel early on reinforced the words of Christ, "And they that be wise shall SHINE as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel 12:3). A contemporary described the greatness of that day,

"When we've been there
ten thousand years,
Bright SHINING
AS THE SUN;
We've no less days
to sing GOD'S PRAISE
Than when we first begun."

J. M. Mewborn
May 28, 2007

AVA B. DAVIS

Sister Ava Brown Davis, beloved, faithful wife of Elder L. M. Davis, left this world so peacefully on Friday, February 2, 2007, at Kershaw Medical Center, Camden, South Carolina. They were blessed to live together in the true matrimony and companion-

ship of marriage for over 70 years. She was 86 years of age. It is with a saddened heart that we, your undersigned committee, attempt to write of her life and passing.

She was born in the Brown-Town community of Lee County, South Carolina, March 18, 1920, the daughter of the late Brother Riley M. Brown and his wife, Sister Ruth Brown. Her parents were members of the Old School (Primitive) Baptist Church, and served their generation both well and faithful in their lifetimes, a wonderful heritage for her family.

Left to mourn her passing beside her husband, Elder Leslie M. Davis, our beloved pastor, include her daughter, Mrs. Ellen B. Wilson, Camden, South Carolina, and one son, Leslie B. Davis, Easley, South Carolina. Four grandsons, a granddaughter, and five great grandchildren are also left behind to mourn her passing with a host of local, good friends and neighbors.

She had been a faithful member of Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, Bishopville, South Carolina, having united with the Church (with her husband, Elder L. M. Davis) on the second Sunday in March, 1959, and both were baptized one month later on the 2nd Sunday in April, by their pastor, Elder J. H. Carter, Manning South Carolina. (These 47 years of membership in the Church were some of the happiest ones of her life.)

Sister Davis was blest to stand by her husband, always faithfully going with him to the various meetings of sister churches and associations, far and near, in several states, never wavering from her post of duty. Always on every second and fourth Sundays of each month, our meeting days, she served many brothers, sisters and friends in the church to go home with them for over-night stay for meals and good fellowship, that included both our Mill Branch Union and Association meetings. Always up early in the mornings, many were the times when she prepared and carried delightful meals to these meetings, regardless of distance from her home. Our sister was truly made dedicated to the great Cause of her Lord and Master, as a true, God-called minister's wife. She filled her place in her home church, Mt. Pleasant, as well as abroad, for almost half a century. This dear sister and fine lady will surely be missed by her devoted son and daughter, their issues, as well as her church family. Our church feels that the glorious hope and faith that encompassed her journey of life here has now been fulfilled and realized.

(Sister Davis was, not only a Mother-in-Israel, in the Church, but was also like a natural mother to me, even though I was just a cousin by kinship. She treated me as one of her own family. -sic- Lucille Beasley.)

Proverbs 31:10 reads, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." Sister Davis truly loved her family, and helped them in any way she could. Her great love was manifested in the godly way she was blest to live every day of her life. God was merciful to her, even though she spent her last days in the nursing home, already mentioned, where she was always so humble and appreciated everything that was done for her there.

We at Mt. Pleasant Church have been made reconciled to God's will in her passing, and feel assured in our blessed hope that her suffering is over forever.

Her final rites were held on Sunday



AVA B. DAVIS
1920 - 2007
(Age 86 Years)

p.m. February 4th, 2007, with Elders George Paul, Eugene Gunter and Calvin Harward officiating. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery where, according to our hope, it will be raised in likeness of Jesus, carried home to suffer and die no more at the last day.

For Mt. Pleasant Church
(Sisters) Lucille Beasley,
Diane B. Tidwell
Committee

J. ELTON COX

Mr. J. Elton Cox, age 75, of the Goretown community, Loris, Horry County, South Carolina, passed away September 20, 2006, at the Medical University Hospital of South Carolina following an illness. Mr. Cox was born May 30, 1931, in Loris, a son of the late Elder H. Grady Cox, Sr. and the late Lena Prince Cox. He was formerly associated with Richmond Dry Goods Company and was currently associated with Ward Funeral Home in Loris.

Mr. Cox was born and came from a godly home, where Christian principles were strongly upheld and maintained. He not only lived these good tenets of faith in his daily walk, but died upholding them.

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Mrs. Fannie Hickman Cox of the home; a son, David Elton Cox and his wife, Gail of Loris, SC; two brothers, H. G. Cox, Jr. and his wife, Eloise, and Clarence H. Cox and his wife, Betha, all of Loris; a sister, Shirley Ann Cox of Loris; three grandchildren, Neal Rogers and his wife, Andrea, Shelli Cox James and her husband, Lee, and Steven Cox, all of Loris; four great-grandchildren, "his G. G. babies", Alexa Rogers, Isabelle James, Bryce Rogers, and Lily James, all of Loris; and his neighbor and good friend, Nottie Riggins of Loris.

His funeral service was held September 23, 2006, at Loris First Baptist Church with the Rev. Drew Jackson officiating. Burial followed in the Carter Cemetery. Ward Funeral Home, Loris, was in charge of his arrangements.

(Note: This obituary notice was submitted to Zion's Landmark with the request for publication by Miss Shirley Ann Cox, a sister of the deceased. Many of our readers of Z. L. will remember their parents, Elder H. G. Cox, Sr., and wife Sister Lena P. Cox, who were faithful servants to the Cause in the Mill Branch Association in the latter one-half of the 20th century in SC. Ed.)

ZION'S LANDMARK

Bapt

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY PRIMITIVE OR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST

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ZION'S LANDMARK PAUSES AND REMEMBERS WITH THIS ISSUE OF THE PAPER ONE HUNDRED FORTY (140) YEARS OF PUBLICATION

It was on August 20, 1867, 140 years ago, that the first issue of Zion's Landmark came off a printing press somewhere in High Point, North Carolina, that has been widely read throughout this period of time.

On the first masthead of the first issue reads: "ZION'S LANDMARK Vol. 1 — To The Law And To The Testimony — No.1, L. I. Bodenheimer, Editor, High Point, North Carolina — August 20, 1867." Then the paper begins in the first column with the heading: COMMUNICATIONS, that contains the first article, a personal letter, written to L. I. Bodenheimer, Editor, by Elder F. L. Oakley, Caswell County, North Carolina, under date of July 18, 1867.

In this letter to Elder Bodenheimer from Elder F. L. Oakley, he (Elder Oakley) is telling him he had procured 15 prospective, subscribers to help him start the publication of Zion's Landmark, but at that time had obtained no money (or

funds) for any of them. "That money was tight and scarce", he said, "but he believed the people to be true and would eventually pay the fee."

Such tells us only in part of the tough times that had already begun in the Reconstruction days for the south after the Civil War, and the great difficulty that Elder Bodenheimer was encountering and facing, as he was attempting to start the publication of this paper. By the grace and mercy of God it has survived and been kept through many trying times of many sorts for almost a century and one-half, that really began with Elder Oakley's 15 (unpaid) subscribers 140 years ago.

We are publishing here, as a memorial record to both the memories of Elder Bodenheimer and Elder Oakley, the first article, a personal letter, to ever appear in the paper, that was written by Elder Oakley to the former, that led to the beginning and founding of Zion's Landmark 140 years ago.

If the Lord will, we hope to publish brief, abstract biographical data at the end of this article about the lives and ministries of these two valiant servants of the most High God, Elder L. I. Bodenheimer and Elder F. L. Oakley.

J. M. Mewborn
August 6, 2007

Caswell County, North Carolina
July 18, 1867
L. I. Bodenheimer, Editor
Zion's Landmark
High Point, North Carolina

Dear Brother:

I have been using as much diligence, as I could under the circumstances, to enlist the feelings of the brethren, sisters and friends, in behalf

of your paper, Zion's Landmark. I have now procured fifteen subscribers to the same, which I send you with this communication. None of them have paid, but so far as I am acquainted with each one of these individuals, I believe they are all good for the subscription price. I believe that the probability is good for more subscribers, if you can get a sufficiency to begin the first issue, though it is a very pressing time now about money, as it is very scarce.

Now, I will proceed to write something about my views of Zion's condition at the present time. "The ways of Zion do mourn." (Read Lamentations 1:4). But, the Lord has promised to comfort her. — National Israel was a peculiar people to the Lord, for God made choice of Israel when few in number. He blessed Abraham, and promised him that his seed should increase and multiply. With His divine blessing they became as numerous as the sand of the seashore, and as the stars of heaven in number. Beyond the natural blessings that Abraham and his children received from the God of Heaven, there was another promise made to them which was altogether spiritual for says the Lord: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (See Genesis 22-18).

Now, it is here that I conceive was a blessed promise in hope of the Gospel and it's saving benefit to all the heirs of promise, chosen by God out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven before the foundation of the world. As God was perfect from the beginning, self-existent without the beginning of days, or end of life, He will forever

and ever so remain. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, making all things by the Word of His power. After He created the world by His Son and the fullness thereof, including Adam and Eve, the mother of all living, naturally, it was pronounced good, and very good. God, being the sovereign, as well as the Creator of all things, had a just, holy right to require obedience of those things which He created to glorify Himself. — Accordingly, He gave man a law which required his obedience, and it was holy, because it originated and proceeded from Himself.

But the serpent, also created by Him, (Read Genesis 3:1), being more subtle than any of the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had made, by preaching to or beguiling our mother, induced her to transgress His holy law; here, Adam, loving his helpmate that God gave him, because she was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, not willing to be separated from her, Eve, his helpmate and wife, partook also of the fruit from the tree in the midst of the garden of Eden. (Read Genesis 3:2). By this one act, he brought sin, death and mortality upon all of his unborn race. "For the transgression of the law is sin." "And sin, when finished, bringeth forth death." (See 1st John 3:4 & James 1:15).

So, from reading these scriptures, it is quite clear that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23). Man became a fallen, totally depraved creature! Notwithstanding, we in Adam sold ourselves for naught. But, God had given a wonderful promise here for His chosen, elect people by His prophecy, "And the ran-

somed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10). This wonderful promise was fulfilled when Christ came, established His Church in the earth, and gave them His new Covenant of sovereign Grace, two thousand years ago.

After God had made known to Abraham His blessing of reserve for him, He had the sovereign right to give him certain statutes by which they, Israel, should manifest that they were separate from the surrounding nations by which they were set apart. — They were forbidden to *intermarry* with any other people, that they should not bow down to idols. So long as they observed and kept the statutes of their great Law-giver, they were a blest and prosperous people. But, when they rebelled or transgressed His laws, at His fixed and appointed time, God sent His hard judgments upon them. His judgments and condemnation continued in place until they were made willing to turn again to Him, the Lord of mercy, and cry and beg for mercy, when He smiled on them again in blessings.

But, notwithstanding when Israel was not kept and transgressed His law, God did not leave Himself without a witness among them, what was required of that people. For He raised up His true prophets among them

that received instructions to cry aloud and spare not, which they did in all earnest against their sin and transgressions.

As I have already said, I consider national Israel to be typical of Gospel Zion. — And since the advent of the Son of God into this world, which took place in the fullness of time, He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem His bride, which was held under the curse and bondage of the law, having loved His own, which were in a dying world, He loved them to the end. It was for them, His chosen, elect people, that He was born, it was for them that He lived, and it was for them He shed His precious blood and died.

God called these, His true Apostles — twelve of them — qualified them, and sent them forth. He gave them the keys of the Kingdom, telling them "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." (Matthew 18:18). He also told them, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill, cannot be hid." (Matthew 4:14). He also said, "Let your light so shine before men" "and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." (Matthew 5:16).

These twelve Apostles obeyed His commandments, and, though they were compelled by persecution, sometimes severe, to flee from city to city, they did so according to His command. They loved Him,

their Lord and Master, they loved His laws of love, and they also loved one another. By this great love made manifest between them, they showed to all those around them that they were His disciples. It is recorded here His words: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35). He (the blessed Lord) was with them, delivering them from every danger and trial they were exposed to and had to confront, until they had finished the work He gave them to do. When they could say before their departure, as one of them did, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.", He took them from this present evil world to those mansions of glory where He went to prepare for them and is now seated at the right Hand of His Father. (See John 14:2).

And now for a short contrast between their day and ours, many I touch on our present time. Our country, America, has been highly favored and blest as a favored nation. God blest our forefathers to create and make constitutional laws for the provision and protection of every Christian denomination, including His true Church, the Lord's people, to worship here without fear of molestation. It is recorded, "And Judah and Israel DWELT SAFELY, every man under his own vine and under his own fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon." (1st Kings 4:25). What a blessing this has been to our beloved country, America, for the past 86 years!

Thereby, our nation has grown rapidly in population, religious denominations of sundry origins, also the arts and sciences in our higher learning institutions have been advanced and extended; and, withal, negatively, pride and arrogance and many false ways also have been encouraged, while only a few have been inquiring for the old pathes and trying (or endeavoring) to walk in the same.

But, beloved brethren, the Church has become so enamored with the cares of this present, evil world that in many instances the members of the Church have been mingling (flirting) with surrounding nations, spiritually, while speaking well of them. Also, indulging in gratifying the flesh, altogether contrary to the language of inspiration, "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men." (Colossians 2:21-22).

It is plain, dear brethren, we, as a body, have long neglected that divine obligation, enjoined upon us by our great Head of the Church, our Master, as we have been living after the flesh. Hence, the cause of our present distress the Apostle Paul tells us, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but, if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Romans 8:13). Again, it is written, "Be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2).

Now, review the past, brethren, and see if we have been conformed to the world? For contributing to the necessity of the poor saints has been neglected, "pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" has been given a very little light for years past! Members of churches in many instances neglect to meet their servant at church meetings to encourage him by their presence, and to pray for him while he is attempting to deliver the message and words God gives to him to speak to us.

And besides this, in some instances, very fine dwelling houses have been erected to live in, while the church (meeting-house) has gone immeasurably to naught. Members of the Church

Zion's Landmark

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

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have been so careless about attending their meetings, while the congregations are diminishing, and very few now attend. And when nominal professors and enemies of the cause attend our meetings, they can find a great deal to say about our present conditions, while, I fear, there are only a very few that truly discern the real cause.

In conclusion, brethren, may it be His will to create within us a desire to read His Word, the scriptures, bless us to live by example, as well as by true profession, and hope that our spiritual comforts will be greater. May the great God of Heaven incline our hearts to serve and obey Him more, which sincerely is the desire of

Your unworthy brother in tribulation,
F. L. OAKLEY

TWO DEATH NOTICES FROM THE HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE, SEPT. 21, 1900, AND OCT. 12, 1900. BOTH GIVE GOOD DESCRIPTIONS OF DR. L. I. BODENHEIMER AND HIS USEFUL LIFE.

DEATH NOTICE OF DR. L. I. BODENHEIMER (One of the Most Unique Characters in the State of North Carolina - A Man of Wide Acquaintance)

"It is with sincere regret that we chronicle the death of Dr. L. I. Bodenheimer, which occurred at his home in this City early Monday morning, September 17, 1900. He had been in feeble health for the past six months, but it was not until a few weeks ago that he had to remain in doors on account of his sickness. He suffered with dropsy.

"Dr. Bodenheimer was one of the most unique characters in Central North Carolina, and will be missed by a large circle of friends over the wide territory where he many times preached to large congregations. Nature had marked him well as belonging to the old school, and he would be singled out in any crowd as a man of extra-ordinary parts. He was both a minister and a physician, which brought him in contact with many people in all walks of life. He always made a strong impression on all by his marked individuality and wonderful resources of humor and narrative.

"He was born April 6, 1831, about six miles east of Salem (sic-now Winston Salem, NC), and was reared on a farm. He went to school in his boyhood days only 3 months. He was married in High Point by Elder Wm. Burns August 5, 1858, where he and his family lived until 1867, except at intervals when he was preaching in remote neighborhoods.

"He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Graham's Meeting House, Stokes County, North Carolina (Mayo Association) in the year 1854, in his 23rd year, and was baptized by Elder S. J. Lackey and Elder

George W. McNeely. In 1871 he with others organized Saint's Delight Primitive Baptist Church, near Salem, NC, where Dr. Bodenheimer served as the first pastor from 1876 to 1889.

"Dr. Bodenheimer established Zion's Landmark (which is now one of the leading, sound papers of the Primitive Baptist church) at Salem, and afterwards at High Point August 20, 1867. When he returned to High Point a few years ago, he published another paper, The Naked Truth, but was unable to give his time to the business, as it required; so, he discontinued the paper and devoted his time to the practice of medicine and the ministry, as long as he was strong enough.

"He was a minister for 50 years and a physician for 35 years, pursuing both with remarkable energy. He leaves behind a wife and six children, three sons and three daughters to mourn his death." (End.)

A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

"Four years ago, when we came to High Point, NC, 'strangers in a strange land', one among the first to offer us the hand of friendship, was Dr. L. I. Bodenheimer. From that day until he was called to his reward, we enjoyed and appreciated his friendship.

"Dr. Bodenheimer was a man of striking individuality, full of quaint humor, yet blessed with more than ordinary sense. He cared as little for the opinion of the world as anyone we ever knew. When fully convinced of the righteousness of any cause, whether civil or religious, he took a decided stand, and there to use his own words, 'he'd stay, though the Heavens fall.'

"Dr. Bodenheimer was a close student of the Bible, few being more so than he. In some of the talks we had with him, that came from his heart, we were enabled to see the depth of his feelings. He knew why he trusted, and verily he could say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' (Job 19:25.)

"Our hearts go out in sympathy to the loved ones who mourn his loss; our tears flow with theirs, for oh, we too know what it is —

'To long for the touch of a vanished hand,
The sound of a voice that is still.'

"He spoke with loving praise of the devotedness of his children during his long illness, and these words must come back to them now, and in some measure assuage their deep grief in their great affliction.

"This is by no means intended as a review of his life work — let some more worthy pen than mine do that; this is but a tribute of respect to his memory. With us there will ever hang on Memory's wall a picture of this rugged old man, who we knew and admired in the sunset of his life, and who honored us with his friendship.

Servant of God, well done!
Thy warfare now is over;
You fought the fight, you kept the faith,
You've gained the farther shore.

Cleo Cunningham Wofford
High Point, North Carolina
September 20, 1900"

(From its 140 years' period of existence and history, Zion's Landmark has had only six editors, averaging a little over 23 year's service for each. They are shown here with their

years' of service as follows:

1. Dr. L. I. Bodenheimer - 1867 to 1872 (5 years)
2. Elder P. D. Gold - 1872 to 1920 (48 years)
3. Elder P. G. Lester - 1920 to 1929 (9 years)
4. Elder O. J. Denny - 1929 to 1951 (22 years)
5. Elder T. F. Adams - 1951 to 1973 (22 years)
6. J. M. Mewborn - 1973 to present (34 years)

(Acknowledgement of appreciation is extended to Bro. D. O. Chandler, Jr., Yanceyville, North Carolina, and others for their assistance in compiling this issue of Z.L. Ed.)

INTERESTING FACTS CONCERNING THE LIFE OF ELDER F. L. OAKLEY,

A VALIANT SERVANT OF GOD

Elder Francis Lendon (F. L.) Oakley was born August 26, 1828, in the early 18th century Oakley family settlement about three miles north of Roxboro, Person County, North Carolina, just off Chub Lake Road, where he united with Stories Creek Primitive Baptist Church, sometime in the mid or late 1850's. Valid records show that Stories Creek Church licensed him to speak in public in the year 1861, followed by his ordination to the ministry in the year 1863.

The record shows that he became a widower early in life, losing his first wife. (I have been unable to learn her name, or her date of birth and death.)

It is recorded in the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church record, Caswell County, North Carolina, that this Church unanimously called him to serve as their pastor in the year 1863. It was only three years later at the February meeting in 1866, that he was blest to baptize a sister in the Church by the name of Miss Frances A. Rudd, daughter of Franklin and Mary Rudd. Sometime, shortly afterward during this same year, 1866, she became his bride and wife of 42 years until his death, January 5, 1908. To them were born nine children, some of whom passed away early in life.

Having settled with his new wife near her place of nativity in adjoining Caswell County, he moved his church membership by Letter of Dismission from the Stories Creek Church, Person County, to Bush Arbor Church in the year 1867, where God so wonderfully blest him to serve as pastor until January 5, 1908, when he passed away. He preached his last sermon there December 13, 1907. It is interesting to note and point out that Bush Arbor Church had a total membership of 117 members in 1863, when he took the pastoral care of the Church. It is very evident to see how God wonderfully blest his ministry there for within 12 years in the year 1875, the membership had increased to 163 members.

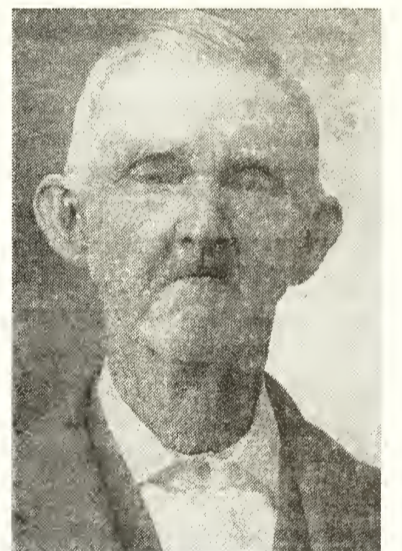
It was during this same year, 1867, when he transferred his membership to Bush Arbor Church, that Elder F. L. Oakley wrote the first article (or letter) to Elder Bodenheimer, sending the latter 15 new subscribers to help start Zion's Landmark. We see this as a God-sent coincidence of purpose, a divine blessing of benefit for His afflicted and poor people.

Many of Elder F. L. Oakley's children, grand-children and great grandchildren were blest to receive the same faith and hope and united with the same Church that had been

given to him. Among them, living today, are three great grand-daughters, Sisters Margaret Oakley Burton and Betty Lou Oakley Page, Elon College, North Carolina, and Sister Mary Oakley Reagan, Burlington, NC, members of Bush Arbor Church, and Sister Thelma D. Stephens, Reidsville, NC, a member of McCray Primitive Baptist Church. Another of his great grand-daughters, who is not a member but a strong believer, is Mrs. Doris Edwards, Reidsville,



Dr. L. I. Bodenheimer
1831 - 1900
(Age 69 Years)
He founded Zion's Landmark August 20, 1867, edited and published it for 5 years to 1873.



Elder Francis (F. L.) Oakley
1828 - 1908
(Age 79 Years)
He helped Elder L.I. Bodenheimer establish Zion's Landmark by sending him 15 subscribers on a credit basis on August 20, 1867. He also wrote the first letter (article), recommending the paper to the Primitive Baptist, that was published in the first issue on this date.

The epitath on his grave-marker in the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church cemetery, Caswell County, North Carolina, reads as follows:

? "F.L. Oakley
Born August 26, 1828
Died January 5, 1908
Pastored Bush Arbor Church
1863 - 1890
A Vile Sinner, Saved By Grace"

(Note: The title "Rev." appears on his grave-marker (? above) which this paper refuses to accept. Ed.)

NC. We see here the witnessing and invoking of God's almighty promise in Acts 2:39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

During Elder F. L. Oakley's period of 45 years, serving as an ordained elder in the church, he pastored many churches, besides his home Church, Bush Arbor, of the old Country Line Association. Among them were Sandy Creek (Abbott's Creek Association), and Wolf Island Church, Reidsville, NC, at the time of his death.

Throughout all the ages of time God has never failed in raising up His true, called servants, placing them on the watch-walls of Zion. It is our firm belief today that Elder F. L. Oakley was one of them. After reading many references in my research concerning this man's life, I have found nothing whatsoever of a negative nature. In his life, as well as in death, we see the bringing forth of Solomon's mighty words, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." (Proverbs 22:1.)

J. M. Mewborn
August 14, 2007

**A READER OF ZION'S
LANDMARK MAKES
SINCERE, CURRENT
INQUIRY FOR REASONS
WHY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
CHURCHES NON-
FELLOWSHIP MEMBERS
IN SECRET ORDERS
AND SOCIETIES**

Dear Elder Mewborn:

I have been a regular reader of Zion's Landmark since the time of early remembrance, seeing it in my grandparent's home, also from this same time as a humble observer, I hope, of the practice and order of those standards the true Old Baptists always (without exception) have so faithfully upheld and maintained.

My memory has been sustained through many years from an old piece of paper, given to me by my grandparents, from an old law, written in the Constitution of my great-grandfather's Church, that reads as follows:

"Any member who joins any other church or fraternity of religious or secret society should not be held in fellowship during such disorder, but should be admonished to return to their first love for there is but one Christian religion and but one true church. They that hold to two are in disorder during such time, and we cannot hold them in fellowship, nor those that hold fel-

lowship with them."

What has stirred my mind at this time is seeing Old Baptist churches, that were to my personal knowledge and memory hardly 20 years ago purely orthodox in true principle, as indicated by the above standard of order, are now receiving into their number people who hold membership in Masonic lodges which is a secret order.

I know from my personal childhood memory to the present, that true Old School (Primitive) Baptist churches would not allow these things to take place in the past. We see in this coming to pass now (in these days and times), truly, "The falling away", spoken of by Paul in II Thessalonians 2:3 in great unfaithfulness to the cause of truth.

Elder Mewborn, I know that in the past you have published only abstract information, giving the stand and position of the Old Baptist on this point of order. Do you have more in depth information on this subject? Should you have it available, would you please publish it in Zion's Landmark for our benefit?

From a concerned, non-member, who, I trust, has been given a great love for the true Church and her cause in this time-world. Also, I ask that you let my name remain anonymous with regard to personal identity. (End of request.)

(Note: We are publishing below in reply to our inquirer's question two editorial writings of Elder P. D. Gold in Zion's Landmark and Elder Gilbert Beebe in the *Signs Of The Times*, both of which the Zion's Landmark considers, as of this date, sound and correct on this subject. Editor.)

**WHY WE DO NOT
JOIN THE MASONS?**

The reason we, Primitive Baptists, do not unite with the Masons, if they would have us, is not because we have any special objections to them. They are, perhaps, one of the most honorable organizations of the world, and we think they do good

in their way. I make this statement only to show that it is not because of any objection to the Masons that we are not members of this body. But, our reasons are as follows:

1st. We, who have hope we are of the Kingdom that shall never be destroyed, (Daniel 2:44), are to be separated from the world, and the Masons are of the world. The children of God are the children of the Resurrection and light, and their affection is to be on things above, and not on things on the earth. Their conversation is to be in heaven. They are to "touch not, taste not, handle not, which are all to perish with the using after the commandments and doctrines of men," (Colossians 2:21-22), and the Masons' organization is of the world, which will perish with the using.

The people of God are children of the resurrection and of Holy enlightenment, and are married to Him who is risen from the dead — even to Jesus, who is their Husband, and being joined only unto Him, they are One in Spirit with Him, and all their fruit is unto Him. He is their Husband, and they are not to commit fornication by being joined to any other. It would be a reproach on Him and His Cause for them to go elsewhere.

2nd. Jesus belonged to no secret society, and did nothing in secret. He declared in those immortal words, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and IN SECRET have I said nothing." (John 18:20). He drew His disciples and people away from this vain and perishing world. He showed and revealed them something by far better, countless times, over and over again, than anything this vain world has, or could possibly offer. We are to follow Him and Him only.

He commanded His disciples, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that FORSAKETH NOT ALL THAT HE HATH, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:33). His

blessing is promised to those who are made to forsake the things of this world, as follows: "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." (Matt. 19:29).

P. D. Gold

SECRET SOCIETIES

The principle of secret societies is wrong, and the tendency is evil.

Jesus said He did nothing in secret, and that He spake openly to all. It is doing others wrong for us to hold sentiments we are not willing to avow publicly, or that we use secret means to accomplish. It carries on its brow the very suspicion of wrong, if one is not willing for his conduct to come to light. It is cowardly and sneaking! Jesus told them around Him, "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." He continued, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved, BUT HE THAT DOETH TRUTH COMETH TO THE LIGHT THAT HIS DEEDS MAY BE MADE MANIFEST, THAT THEY ARE WROUGHT OF GOD." (John 3:20-21).

Honest men seek to do openly, fairly and squarely, what they are engaged in. But, corrupt men seek the covert of secrecy for what they do.

God will bring everything to the light, make no mistake, however much men may seek to hide their corrupt works. The fact that God will bring every secret thing to light shows that it is wrong to attempt to hide wicked conduct in secret and darkness. It is wrong to act wickedly, and it aggravates its intention and manner when it is done in secret. It is considered the more wicked in the murderer to waylay and secretly kill his unsuspecting victim, than it is if he openly kills him after giving him an opportunity to defend him-

self. To betray one with a deceitful kiss with flattering words is worse than it is to tell him what you design to do.

The Primitive Baptists have always been opposed to the secret, underhanded works of plotters and hidden, deceitful dealing of impure men. Hence, they do not fellowship any that belong to corrupt, secret societies. By this, we mean societies that have evil intent, or mean (low) ambitions to damage others. We are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, that is, secret devils.

But, Satan and his emissaries are busy; now and then, they decoy and ensnare an unsuspecting Baptist, catching him off his guard, and they make him a prisoner. It is strange to see how this one will continue (or persist) to justify his course until he dies to the fellowship of his church and brethren, and even the world loses respect for him; his joys are gone, and like a starved, wretched, prodigal, he comes back to his Father's house, if he comes back at all.

There is only one example of an earth-bound society that is named, as far as I can call to mind, in all the Bible. That was when a clan of forty men banded themselves together with an oath to neither eat, nor sleep, until they had killed Paul. (Read Acts 23:22). That such a society or band is corrupt, and its purpose wicked, there is no doubt in the mind of any honest man. A conspiracy is a combination of two or more persons to do an unlawful thing, and when such men assume an oath, they are so embolden.

A combination of men to oppress others in business by exorbitant prices is corrupt. A Corporation, gathering great power by reason of its wealth, is hurtful to our country and is wrong.

The interest and good of all should be the purpose of all. Peace and good will, straightforward, honest dealings and helpful service toward others, will be the

aim of all true Baptists everywhere!

They should set an example of fair, square, open, honest dealing with everyone and cherish peace and kindly feelings toward all classes of men, for God made them all.

P. D. Gold

SECRET ORDERS

Shrobb, Illinois, May 7, 1859

Dear Brother Beebe — I earnestly desire you to answer, through the SIGNS, the following questions: 1. Why do the Old School Baptists object to their members joining secret and oath-bound orders, as the Free Masons and Odd Fellows? 2. What course should a gospel church take with members who join these orders and attend their lodges? For one, I feel deeply the importance that the Baptist should be well informed of these points, for a number of them are joining these orders. I mourn that it is so. Please answer early. Affectionately your unworthy brother,

D. Bartley

Reply — In replying to the inquiries of Brother Bartley, it is not necessary for us to attempt to show what are the merits or demerits of the societies or orders of which he speaks, and we frankly confess our utter inability to do so from our own knowledge. We have never been connected with any of them, either directly or indirectly. Like most of the modern self-styled religious societies of the present age, these orders claim to be benevolent, moral and philanthropic, and to possess some valuable secret, which their philanthropy does not lead them to divulge without money and without price. Our soul has never come, or sought to come, into their secrets with their assemblies we have had no inkling to be connected. As worldly, social or benevolent institutions, we shall not attempt to analyze them, nor to pronounce sentence of either approval or condemnation of them. But the question of our brother calls for the rea-

son of the course pursued by the Old School Baptists in regard to their own members, and we deem it proper that we should, so far as we are able, reply to his inquiries. Of course, he does not expect us to answer for all the Old School Baptists, or to pledge all Old School Baptists to endorse what we may say on this or any other subject, but merely to give such reasons as have weight on our own mind on the subject.

The first reason we have to give why we do not join those institutions, or feel willing that our brethren should join them is, that whatever may be their excellence, even admitting them to be as pure and benevolent as their advocates claim that they are, we find in the gospel of Christ and in the organized church of the living God, a fullness which leaves no room to hanker for any of the leeks or onions of Egypt. In Christ, it has pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell, and if as professed disciples of Jesus, we are found seeking for treasures or comforts which are not found in Zion, we imply by our conduct that there is not that fullness in our Father's house which has been represented. Why should we go abroad for joys if we have a feast at home?

Second. Whatever may be the secrets held by Free Masons or Odd Fellows, we have a secret which is far more profound, more useful and important; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and God will show to them His covenant. As heaven is higher than earth, so does the Lord's secret transcend all human mysteries. In Jesus our Lord are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this fact the apostle has declared to the saints, lest any man should beguile them with enticing words. (Col. ii. 3, 4.) This wisdom and knowledge comprise all that can be profitable to the saints; for in Him is given to them all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Peter i. 3.) This Heavenly

treasure, this divine secret of the Lord, which God has hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes, is far superior to any secret of the orders under consideration. First, because it is the free and sovereign gift of God; and cannot be bought with money. Secondly, it requires no oath, pledge or penalty to keep it, for none but God can reveal or show it, and none but those who are born of the Spirit of God can possibly learn it. Christians may talk freely about it before all men; ministers of the Word may proclaim it unreservedly to Jews and Gentiles alike, without the fear that any of Adam's race will ever know it unless it be to them revealed as it was to Simon Bar-jona, by our Father which is in Heaven. To seek for a secret or mystery in any other fraternity or brotherhood than that of the household of faith is to depart from the greater to seek a less.

Third. Old School Baptists object to their members uniting with those orders, because the obligations assumed in doing so conflict with the obligations assumed in their allegiance to Christ, to be subject to the watchcare of one another. In visiting the lodges, they cannot be under the watchcare of their brethren, who are not permitted to accompany them in their secret conclaves. That which makes void the laws of Christ is incompatible with the Christian profession.

Fourth. It is said an oath or affirmation, a solemn pledge, or profane imprecations, are exacted of those who become members of those orders. Presuming this to be the case, the Old School Baptists object to their members assuming such obligations, because the King of Zion has forbidden them to forswear themselves.

Fifth. To waive all other objections, it is certain that when members of the church unite with those institutions, it occasions grief and trouble to their brethren. This, of itself, is

sufficient to render it highly improper and disorderly for any member of the church to join such orders. They have professed to prefer Jerusalem (the True Church) above their chief joys; and if they do not, they certainly never ought to take on them the sacred name of Jesus, or profess before Heaven and earth to be disciples of the Son of God. Those, who name the Name of Jesus, should regard it as the business of their lives to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; they are enjoined to follow after the things which tend to peace, and things whereby one may edify another. What can there be in our joining the secret orders of Free Masons or Odd Fellows that tends to the peace or edification of the saints of God? Churches have been thrown into disorder, distress, and, in some instances, have lost their visibility from this very cause. But who that sincerely loves our Lord, who is willing to deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow the Lamb, will persist in breaking the peace of the church, wounding the hearts of dear brethren, and in bringing reproach upon the sacred cause of God for this gratification of his fleshly mind? Who would, like Esau, for one morsel of meat, sell his birthright among the saints in the house of God? We have Christ and His apostles as our example, and until we can find them running into these connections, and disregarding the peace and comfort of the church, we are solemnly bound to abstain from them.

These are, at least, some of the reasons, as we apprehend, why Old School Baptists object to their members joining any of these societies, and they are some of the reasons why we could not consent ourself to join them, or feel satisfied with brethren who do join them.

The second question of Brother Bartley is, "What course should a gospel church take with members who join those orders and

attend their lodges?"

According to our understanding of the laws of the kingdom of Christ, a gospel church should labor faithfully, affectionately and prayerfully, to reclaim such disorderly members. It should be pointed out to them the impropriety and wickedness of their course, and to restore them to the order of the church. But, if after a gospel course of labor they cannot reclaim them, if they really prefer the society of Free Masons and Odd Fellows to that of the church of the living God, then the course of the church is very plain. Let them go to their own company; but, let the church withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly, as Christ by His apostle has commanded. If they refuse to hear the church, let them be unto thee as heathen men and as publicans. (Read II Thess. 3:6 and Matt. 18:17).

Before we close this article, we wish to say, that on all subjects of discipline, a hard, overbearing or domineering spirit should be studiously avoided. You, that are spiritual, should attempt the work of restoration in the spirit of meekness. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glorying, but with singleness of heart to the glory of God. We have doubted the propriety of requiring (trying to force) a brother who has joined any of these orders to come out and denounce them, or to divulge any of their secrets, which he has promised or pledged himself to keep secret. To satisfy our own mind, it is enough that the brother discontinues his connection with such institutions, come out from them, and walk no more with them.

One word more. We hold the same objections to our brethren or sisters joining any of these professedly religious or benevolent societies of the age, except only the Church of God, whether it be for religious, moral, social or political purposes. Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever

things are honest, whatsoever things are of good report, may be pursued, without any unjustifiable confederacy or organization with any of these institutions. And we should never turn aside from the footsteps of the flock of Christ for any cause or pretext whatever (See S. of S. 1:7-9). If, for instance, Mission, Tract or Sunday School societies do not require the forswearing of their members, yet they make more extravagant pretensions to religion than the order of Free Masons or Odd Fellows do, and are perhaps more likely to decoy the unsuspecting. Other institutions for the ostensible purpose of temperance or politics, have used pledges, if not oaths, which are very far from being harmonious with either the spirit or letter of the gospel. Concerning all these things then, we would reiterate the admonition of inspiration, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." The man who attempted to go from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, who was stripped, and robbed, and wounded, and left him half dead. Let us take warning then, and remain in Jerusalem forever,

"Where our best friends and kindred are,
Where God our Savior reigns."

Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, New York
August 15, 1859

CARING CONCERN AND THOUGHTS FOR EDITOR

Dear Elder Mewborn,

We are sorry these days are spoiled by illness, but we know the Lord does all things well for those that love Him. Surely you do! You could not live the caring, unselfish life that you do, if you did not love the Lord and His little children!

We hope it can be His will to let us have you for a long time yet. We need you. Your wife and children need you. Your Church needs you. But, we want you to "selfish" enough for a while to take care of yourself and regain your strength.

We hope the Great

Physician will continue to be with you, your wife, and your family.

With our love,
Hal and Betty Younts
Climax, North Carolina
27233

June 27, 2007

(From the Editor: Such loving, kind thoughts and words from Brother Hal Younts, and his wife, Sister Betty Younts, along with the countless get-well cards, telephone calls, messages and visitations from you, my dear brethren and friends, but most of all the great help from that Great Physician, the good Lord, all of you, are helping me fight my battle at this time against my disease of "Diffuse, large B-Cell, Non-Hodgins Lymphoma" (Cancer) of my stomach (with bad staph infection) that was diagnosed June 1st, 2007.

There are no human words I can find to express my thankfulness and appreciation to my blessed Lord for the kind, loving friends He has given poor, unworthy me, as well as the faithful care, He, Himself, has given me through my natural physicians, my dear wife, Susie, and four loving children. Thank God for you, one and all, everybody, my loving brothers, sisters and friends in the Lord for me, your poor, unworthy brother, the very least, if one at all!

J. M. Mewborn
July 25, 2007)

NOT ASHAMED TO BE CALLED A
"HARD-SHELL BAPTIST"
Elder J. M. Mewborn,
Zion's Landmark
Coats, North Carolina

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Thank you very much for helping me to subscribe to Zion's Landmark and for the extra copies you sent for my reading. I surely hope that someday it is the good Lord's will that we may meet. I do enjoy reading about the dear old Primitive Baptist people, that a lot of individuals out there call us "Hard-Shells"; however, it sounds good to me, because if what we are blest

to believe is not the truth and right way, I cannot believe there is any other way.

Thank you again, and please keep me in your prayers.

Yours in the bond of truth,
Leona Stanley,
Tabor City, North Carolina
28463

(Sister Leona Stanley is a precious member of Pireway Primitive Baptist Church, Columbus County, North Carolina. We are re-publishing below an editorial, written by Elder P.D. Gold, that appeared in the February 15, 1877, issue of Zion's Landmark, 130 years ago, in which he gives a strong, meaningful description of our misnamed title by the world, "Hard-Shell" Baptist. Elder P. D. Gold edited and published Zion's Landmark from 1870 to 1920, a period of 50 years. Ed.)

DEFINITION OF THE "HARD-SHELL"

The Lord's people, His elect, have a hard shell surrounding them. What is it? In view of themselves, it consists in bad feelings, such as a sense and conviction of their vileness, unworthiness, and depravity. They cannot believe as the world, and they cannot be such as they think they ought to be. They are made to feel so unworthy and imperfect in their own view of themselves. Can you break this shell that encases them? If you tell one of them he is holy, that humbles him; yet he is afraid you are deceived in him. If you would try to remove or break this shell by telling him that God's people, His elect, never have any bad feelings or fears about themselves, and another one comes along and tells you that he knows he is saved, the one in the hard shell will have no confidence in him and will pull back into his retreat and hard covering. Should the Lord shine in his soul and manifest tokens of salvation to him, even sweet and precious tokens, he exclaims, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory!" (See Psalm 115:1) so that the crust or SHELL remains.

Is this a bad sign? Eggs that are good for food are thus protected, while the

eggs of serpents, spiders, reptiles, et al have soft shells very impressible to the touch, very elastic and pliant; but when hatched behold, what a spawn of vipers. Those people who are so full outwardly of soft feelings, who are so easily affected, and who are so actuated by what they call "Universal Charity", (love everybody) make war with the doctrine of sovereign, discriminating grace, and are not erect and upright in their worship of God. Their "tract" is on the earth, and their food of the dust. As frogs, they multiply rapidly and make great noise in convenient seasons, but in times of drought they disappear and endure not. Isaiah said, "they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed, breaketh out into a viper. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings; they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." Isa. 59:5-8.

But, on the contrary, those whose feelings and convictions of sin and unworthiness are such that they have the sentence of death in themselves, forbidding them to trust in man, are also secretly impelled and enabled to trust in the Lord; these will endure and walk by Faith. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the

Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds feet, and he will make me to walk upon the high places." Habakkuk 3:17-19.

For within this shell, so hard to crack, is concealed a sweet, tender, juicy, precious, good HOPE through the grace of the everlasting Life in Christ Jesus that the possessor would not part with for all the world. This shell is needful to separate him from the world and causes him to dwell alone. All the blows and cuffs, kicks and rebukes, which the world gives him, hit this shell, this unsightly outside appearance of the Lord's people, His elect. But, within, there is a new hidden Man of the heart who lives through all the storms of life, and feeds in quiet resting places. He is ornamented with all pearls and jewels of the immeasurable deep, and He is lighted by the Heavenly rays of glorious, illuminating grace. He is hid and it doth not yet appear what he shall be; but when Christ appears, he shall be like Him, for he shall see Him as He is. Then the shell will all be gone forever, he will need it no more, and he shall know even as he is known.

P. D. Gold

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN (A FEW OF THE EVIL PRINCIPLES THAT WERE INJECTED INTO THE BLOOD VEINS OF ADAM AND EVE, THAT FOLLOWED THEIR TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN IN THE MORNING OF TIME, AND HAS FOLLOWED THEIR POSTERITY UNTIL THIS PRESENT TIME.)

The poison from the serpent by reason of Adam's and Eve's transgression of God's Holy law in the Garden of Eden in the morning of time (Read Genesis 3:1-7) inseminated and implanted in them and all their posterity without exception the following evil principles that have forever been in the

bloodstream of all humanity since that day, as follows:

"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 have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are ALL UNDER SIN." "That every mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD may become guilty before God", according to the Apostle Paul's inspired language in Romans 3:9-19.

"Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of Life, eat, and live forever" — God sent Adam and Eve forth from the garden of Eden." "And He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." God made Satan tell the truth when He asked him, "Whence comest thou?" Satan replied, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Satan was also cast out of the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve and followed them into the world "seeking whom he may devour." (Job 1:7 and 1st Peter 5:8.) When God put all three of them, Adam, Eve and Satan out of the Garden, He hermetically sealed them under a unpenetrable barrier in this sin-cursed world called "the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." (Acts 8:23.) The only exit from this terrible state of mankind's existence is alone by the Power of the Holy Spirit of God, when He delivers the souls of His people from the curse of sin and the bondage of death,

by what Jesus calls "being born again," or the new birth.

J. M. Mewborn
April 18, 2007

BEULAH B. MEWBORN

At the request of Mewborn's Church in conference December 9, 2006, I shall attempt to leave on record some of the many fine traits that relate to the life of a precious member, Sister Beulah Barbara Mewborn. She was born near Snow Hill, Greene County, North Carolina, May 17, 1913, the third child of Brother George Lemuel Mewborn, Sr. and his wife, Sister Eula V. Mewborn. She died November 6, 2006, at the age of 93 years. She had been a resident of Britthaven Nursing Home, Snow Hill, NC, since July, 1989, a period of 16 1/2 years, where she received kind and generous care.

Sister Mewborn received a good hope in the Lord and was given a great love from Him for the members of Mewborn's Church, where she asked for a home and membership with them on the second Saturday in April, 1949. She was baptized by her pastor (and uncle), Elder Joshua E. Mewborn, on the following Sunday afternoon. She had been a member for 57 years, and at the time of her death was our oldest member in both years of membership and age.

The Apostle Paul left on record in 1st Corinthians 7:34, these words of inspired language: "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit." It was God's will and purpose that Sister Beulah never marry, and the Apostle's language, "the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord", truly describes the beautiful life of Sister Beulah. She was blest to devote countless hours to maintaining our church yard and grounds and meeting-house, offering hospitality to church members, friends and visitors, when they would visit our church for many years. During the year 1970, she with her cousin, Sister Nina Mewborn, built and gave our church the dining room facility that was attached to the rear of the building. It has been appreciated and enjoyed by our Church and congregation for these many years. It was in this sense that Sister Beulah was truly a "Martha" in our Church. (Read Luke 10:38).

Yet, in another important phase of her life, she was also a "Mary" to our Church. Jesus said to Martha, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:42). Sister Beulah was a devoted student of the Bible and made its study with complementary religious readings a life-long pursuit. Through the years she was an avid reader and writer for Zion's Landmark, also other periodicals, and enjoyed a wide-range of correspondence with sisters, brothers and elders in several states. God truly blest her with a deep understanding in the scriptures and she enjoyed discussing them with the brethren.

She graduated from Snow Hill High School as salutatorian in 1929, also graduated from East Carolina Teacher's College, (Now East Carolina University), Greenville, NC in 1933, where she studied Home Economics. In early years she taught in some of the schools in Greene County. She was an active



(Sister) Beulah B. Mewborn
1913 - 2006
(Age 93 Years)

member of the Home Demonstration Club and cultivated her interest in domestic arts through hobbies like flower arranging, ceramics and quilting, the fruits of which she so graciously shared with her family and friends. Her love of music encouraged her as an adult to take piano and organ lessons, and she nurtured the talents of many children and adults through generous gifts of musical instruments and lessons for them. She was truly a philanthropist.

Sister Beulah was pre-ceded in death by her parents and siblings: Dr. J. M. (John Moses) Mewborn (M.D.), Ima E. Mewborn, Nina Lee Mewborn Garner, Henry Drew Mewborn, Quentin Alexander Mewborn, Marvin Bruce Mewborn, and Manora Mewborn Nunn. She is survived by her devoted brother and sister-in-law, George Lemuel Mewborn, Jr. and Cornelia (Connie) Mattocks Mewborn of Snow Hill, NC, sister, Ailine Eloise Mewborn, Greenville, NC, with many cherished nieces, nephews and friends.

A graveside service was held November 8, 2006, at the Mewborn Church cemetery by the unworthy writer in the presence of her family and many neighbors, friends and loved ones. A nephew, George L. Mewborn, III, for whom she held in high esteem and was greatly attached, made appropriate remarks about her life with good reminiscences.

As Sister Mewborn was a great lover of the Church and the Lord's people, traveling many miles to many meetings in sundry places to be with them. I know of no more appropriate scripture to close this writing than the inspired language of Ruth 1:16: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." David said, "As for me, I will behold thy Face in righteousness: I shall be SATISFIED, when I awake with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:15).

J. M. Mewborn
May 28, 2007

HISTORICAL CHURCH
(MEETING) NOTICE —
(OLD SANDY CREEK
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,
RANDOLPH COUNTY,
NORTH CAROLINA, TO HOLD

SECOND SATURDAY MEETING ONLY, OCTOBER 13, 2007.)

Dear Elder Mewborn,

We will appreciate it very much if you will mention in Zion's Landmark that Old Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church purposes to hold an all-day meeting on Saturday only, October 13, 2007, with song service to begin at 10:00 a.m., followed by preaching service.

We hope to open the 205 year old, log (restored) meeting-house that was built about the year 1802 for the benefit of those Baptists who have never seen the interior with the old restored (slave) balcony and hand-carved pulpit. (The first log building, built in 1762, was burned about the years 1801-1802, with the current-standing log structure replacing it.)

The Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church was organized November 22, 1755, almost 252 years ago, and is 32 years older than the founding of our Federal Government in Washington, DC in 1787. A guide or member of the Church will be glad to point out the ancient grave-site and mis-nomered tombstone of Elder Shubal Stearns, who with 14 baptized members, constituted the Church on the above date, November 22, 1755, on this identical spot.

History has recorded that Elder Shubal Sterns' original (native) headrock, on which was carved "S. S. 1771", his initials and date of death, were removed from his grave about the year 1905 by a Missionary minister. (The present, more-recent, erected stone is altogether mis-leading since Old Baptist ministers have always been called or known by the term ELDER, and not Reverend, as a proper scriptural title. The term 'Rev.' now erroneously and mis-appropriately appears on it.

Also, you will be able to read the correction, as made by the Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, some years ago, on the nice bronze plaque, encased in the handsome (granite) rock monument that is placed at the front entrance of the old log meeting-house.

According to Morgan Edwards, a Welsh historian, who witnessed these events at Sandy Creek in 1772, this consecrated work from the Almighty God through Elder Shubal Stearns and these 14 souls from Tolland, Connecticut, "spread so rapidly from Sandy Creek that by 1775, the Church had her branches spread southward as far as Georgia, eastward to the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay, and northward to the waters of the Potomac. It in 17 years, became the mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, to 42 churches, from which sprang 125 ministers."



Old Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church (log meeting-house, built about the year 1802 and restored 2000 - 2005) will be opened October 13, 2007, for the benefit of visitors during all-day service.

(Should any of our visitors feel to bring along a covered dish, I am sure it would be appreciated by our sisters and ladies of Sandy Creek Church.)

Those desiring directions, coming either from the north or from the south on US 421 between Greensboro and Sanford, North Carolina, exit west on NC (Route) 49 towards Ramseur. Go for about two miles from this point to Sandy Creek Church Road, turn right and go for about 4 miles to church site on your right. An alternate route for those coming from eastern or westward points on U.S. 64, take NC (Route) 49 North in Ramseur to above point (Sandy Creek Church Road), turn left 4 miles to church site on your right. From a brother, I trust, in hope,

Hal L. Younts, Deacon & Clerk
P. O. Box 3
Climax, North Carolina 27233
Tele. 1-336-674-6118

A CARD OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND APPRECIATION

Elder J. M. Mewborn, Editor
Zion's Landmark
Coats, North Carolina 27521

Dear Elder Mewborn:

The Holly Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Montalba, Anderson County, Texas, wishes to thank you for your efforts, as well as all the Old Baptist churches and people everywhere, including the States of Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia and others, for the bountiful support you gave our Church after the almost total devastation from the large, oak tree that fell on our meeting-house January 15, 2007. (Please see page No. 7 of the "January-February, 2007" issue of Zion's Landmark.) This also includes our many friends here in our area of Texas.

We greatly appreciate everything each of you did, regardless of size or amount, to restore our 100 year-old meeting-house. May it be God's will to ever bless you and yours always, is our humble prayer, we hope, if we could pray, for Christ's sake.

An unworthy brother and sister with thankful hearts, we hope,
George A. Pinkerton, Deacon
Edith Pinkerton, Church Clerk

REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Please place in the Zion's Landmark notice of our Association as follows:

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 5th-7th, 2007. Mayodan Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House. The Meeting House is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia, near the VA-NC border.

Those coming north or south on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right. Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827. Then turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

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

Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
Tele. 1-276-952-2098

continued taking and reading the Zion's Landmark. At that time I began corresponding with Elder J. M. Mewborn, who took over the duties, as editor of the Landmark publication, when I began corresponding with him. It was some years later in 1997 that my wife, Ruby, and I had the blessing and pleasure of meeting you and Susie, in your home at Coats, North Carolina. The following year, 1998, you were able to visit us in our home here in Exeter, California.

Through this entire period of time (and phase of my life) of about fifty years, when I attended Primitive Baptist churches in eight different states, to-wit: North Carolina, Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and California, as well as attending conditionalist Primitive Baptist meetings in Lindsey and other cities in my home state, if not greatly deceived, God dealt with this poor sinner, showing him his utterly lost and ruined condition in sin by nature and just condemnation to a burning hell. It was then I experienced what, I hope, is the deliverance that David expressed, when he could not go to the Lord but the Lord came to him, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a ROCK, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even PRAISE unto our GOD." (Psalms 40:1-2).

I attempt to tell these things

to the household of faith to bring out the meaning of those words expressed by the prophet, Jeremiah, "Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23). I know these words are true in my experience, which go right along with my faith and hope in the absolute predestination of all things.

Brother Mewborn, if this were not so, and should my God not have kept me, I could have on my own volition asked for a home in these churches. This, I could not do. Jesus said, "My sheep follow me for they know my Voice, and a stranger will they not follow." (John 10:4-5). There is, as Soloman said, an appointed time for everything, and dearly beloved of the household of faith, it was on that day, Sunday, June 10, 2007, that the Lord blest me to ask for a home in Mewborn's Church in Greene County, near Snow Hill, North Carolina. I was baptized on the following fourth Saturday, June 23rd, by my pastor, Elder J. M. Mewborn, assisted by Brother Lester G. Gray, a deacon of this Church, due to Elder Mewborn's afflictions. I tried to tell the Church a portion of what I have written here, and the members voted unanimously to receive me in full fellowship with them. I had so much craved and desired a home in a true Old Baptist church. I have never felt worthy to be affiliated with God's humble, afflicted and poor people anywhere. However, I

have been given a blessed feeling of relief, when I came out of that water; that burden has not been with me since. Later, I was blessed in having the privilege of the sacred ordinance of communion with my brothers and sisters of Mewborn's Church.

Brother Mewborn, I know we are geographically separated over 3,000 miles, but in the great love of our blessed Lord, we are just as close as the Trinity of God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. According to the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:38-39, there is no power anywhere that can separate the elect-family of God in this eternal love bound in the existence of these three persons. It is my hope that I was embraced in that number.

Brother Mewborn, I cannot close my letter without mentioning our mutual, good friend, Mr. Billy Bryant, West End, North Carolina, who guided and led Ruby, my wife, Susie, your wife, you and me to the 200 year old cemetery and gravesite of my g.g.g. grandfather, William Barrett II (1754-1840), who was a Captain in the Continental Army of the American Revolution. He helped choose the site of the first Court House in Moore County, now Carthage, NC in the year 1784. He was high sheriff of Moore County, was one of the first Justices of the court in this county, and served in the North Carolina General Assembly for terms 1798 and 1806. This ancient cemetery stands atop the overlook from the high bank of the beautiful Occaneechee Boy Scout Lake about four miles west of Carthage, NC. We will never forget, the five of us, climbing that steep hill back in June, 2007. (We would never have found this very old cemetery without Mr. Bryant's help.)

It was his direct descendants who, as pioneers, came from North Carolina through the states of Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, and finally to California, from whom my grandfather, Wm. A. Barrett, a Old School Baptist and deacon of Seclusia Church, descend-

ed. William Barrett I came to America from Ireland, as an immigrant, to escape religious persecution in that country. The Barrett family has always been noted for strict adherence to the principles of the true Baptist faith.

Remember us in prayer, we humbly ask, and the Lord bless you all.

Bill G. Clinton
Exeter, California
July 30, 2007

AGREEABLE, AMICABLE
EXCHANGE
OF CORRESPONDENCE
BETWEEN ELDER
J. B. FARMER, GRAYSON,
KENTUCKY, AND
J. M. MEWBORN,
CONCERNING EDITORIAL
IN ZION'S LANDMARK,
(SEPT.-OCT., 2006 ISSUE),
TITLED, "WHAT
CONSTITUTES A CHURCH
IN GOSPEL ORDER?"

February 6, 2007
Elder J. M. Mewborn
P.O. Box 1358
Coats, NC 27504

Dear Elder Mewborn,
Our mutual friend, Bill Poindexter, raised the question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", which was published in the September-October, 2006, issue of the Zion's Landmark. It was good to read the answer you were given. May God receive all praise and honor.

You were blessed, I believe, to list in order and to explain from the scriptures nine things that were given to the church to establish her in this time world. I will endeavor to list them briefly according to your writing since it has been a while since they appeared in print; the calling of the twelve apostles; Christ's declaration to Peter that He would build His church; the minimum required number of members (two or three); the example of feet washing; communion; the ordination of deacons for the church by the apostles; the ordination of the first elders by the apostles; the ordination of succeeding elders and deacons for the church by the apostles and the first elders. To my mind,

Zion's Landmark

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

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these things are undeniable. It seems that you were blessed to bring forth these things in truth, not only from the scriptures, but also from the experience of sound and faithful churches.

There are many things that accompany what you have written that are known by the household of faith and are true, even though they are sometimes unspoken. I desire to mention a few of these things, if the Lord wills, which things I am made to believe are in harmony with your writing.

The first and underlying principle of all things to the true church in gospel order, according to my understanding, is love. God is love and His people are possessed of love. Every action of the pure and holy spiritual church of the living God springs from love. A church in gospel order, when under the power of the Holy Spirit, will necessarily, do all things in decency and in order out of love for God the Father, love for Jesus Christ, His Son, and love for the brethren and sisters who are members of the called out assembly, the church. According to my understanding, if an assembly, by whatever name, acts from any other principle than love, it is not the Spirit of the living God in action, it is the flesh. When disorder comes, the humble, loving children of God are not the ones that bring it. Rather, it comes by those who have fleshly minds, who do not obey the gospel, and who do not desire peace. Of course, the children of God, when they are blessed to stand for the true doctrine and the decency and order of the church, are condemned by the troublemakers. Jesus made this principle plain when He said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets, which were before you." (Matt. 5:11). Blessed are those who are given to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love, even though

they are misunderstood and hated of the world for the truth's sake.

In love, the church will by the Spirit hold out open arms to the spiritually poor and needy wayfarers of God's kingdom. In love, she will not respect anyone's person and excuse bad behavior because of family ties, wealth, learning or worldly position. In love, she will not mix and mingle with the false religions of the world. In love, she will do all things in the open light with the good of the church and the honor of God in view. In love, she will keep the ordinances pure and holy. In love, she shall be kept in the pure gospel of the grace of the sovereign God, without any fleshly or law works mixed in. In love, she will not be light and frivolous, but rather sober, being made to consider the suffering of the Lord in the Blood purchase of His bride, and the suffering of His people through the ages for His name's sake. In love, she will require that anyone ordained to be an elder or deacon of the church first meet the qualifications set forth by the inspired apostle, and she will require that their gift be first proven before their ordination. It seems that some in these last days, according to the prophesy of the apostles, out of desperation and in fleshly minds, have thrown aside the sound doctrine and the commandments of God. They have proven themselves, by their words and practices, to be contrary to the truth and to the decent and orderly churches of the living God.

The Holy Spirit, through the beloved apostle said, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall

he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1st Timothy 3:1-7).

The Spirit also said through the apostle, "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let those also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless, Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1st Timothy 3:8-13).

It seem appropriate to spend some time with these things since, to my mind, they are essential to a church in gospel order. The ordained elders and deacons stand before the church in a particular position as approved of God for His ministry. This approval is made known to all by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. The ones ordained are so established in order to be placed before the sheep as examples to the flock. It is essential that they have been qualified by God to meet all the requirements placed down by Him through His apostles. Good examples must have been placed before the members for them to follow, otherwise the gate would have been thrown wide open for confusion and disorder. And the elder alone is charged to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Only the one that God has chosen is enabled to fulfill this command. Any other will allow all manner of disorder. I am made to fear when considering Korah, Dathan and Abiram, trying to push into the place for which they were not ordained. (For

record of their banishment from true Israel, read Numbers 16:40 and Deut. 11:6). Their death and destruction stands as an example of what fearful judgment awaits anyone not qualified who presumes to stand before God's people. It is no wonder that God's chosen servants flee, as from death, from being ordained to His ministry. But love is strong as death, and even stronger. Love shall prevail over all.

It is by love that faith works. It is by love that the truth is spoken and believed. It is by love that the gospel is obeyed. It is by love that God's little ones are comforted and edified. It is by love that order is kept. It is by love that God is honored and glorified. And the apostle, by the Spirit, made it plain that love, which is called charity, is the most essential thing of all. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

One who is possessed of love has no desire to dominate or to rule and exalt over another. One whose heart has been broken and whose spirit has been crushed is one who has been humbled and has become as a little child. So are all of God's little ones, from the least to the greatest. The one who is first shall be last, and the one who is last shall be first. Only God's little children are taught to know the meaning of this truth. These things I cannot help believing, even though I am persuaded that I am not worthy of the least of His mercies. It is my hope and trust that we have been given to see eye to eye about all these things. All our days, may God be merciful unto us and lead us about and instruct us and keep us as

the apple of His eye and give us peace. And may He be praised and honored and glorified in all things, world without end.

I am not sending this to you thinking it should be published rather, as a note to you, from my heart to yours, about what I have been made to believe and what I am assured is believed among the faithful brethren with whom we walk. Your unworthy friend, I trust, in hope of eternal life,

J. B. FARMER

Grayson, Kentucky 41143

March 21, 2007

Elder J. B. Farmer

Grayson, Kentucky 41143

Dear Elder Farmer:

I would thank God, if He would bless me, for the kind letter He blest you to write to me recently under date of February 6, 2007. (The envelope was post-marked March 7, 2007.) It is recorded in II Peter 3:1, "I now write unto you which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." This stirring of minds took place, I believe, during the exchange of my article in Zion's Landmark with your reply to it in the "Sept-Oct 2006" issue.

If not deceived, when I read your letter, I saw a mystical picture of the Church of the living God, as reflected in the writing of the Apostle Peter in his first book Chapter 2:4-5. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, dis-allowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood", etc. In relationship to this scripture Paul said, "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ, Himself, being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:20-21-22.)

In the building of any house, the first phase of construction is for the builder to get it "roughed-in", as he would say. After this process

is completed, the finished workmen come in and complete the job. It was my endeavor in the "Sept-Oct 2006" issue of Zion's Landmark, while attempting to answer the good question of Mr. Bill Poindexter, "What constitutes a gospel church in order?", to lay the groundwork, or "roughing-in" the building. As to the scriptural record of establishing the Church of the living God, as set up by Christ at the beginning of the third dispensation of time, I knew, when I had finished that article, I had hardly, if that much, scratched the surface. I was, indeed, made to beg God for the wisdom and understanding to give me the starting point, which, I feel, He did, as I tried to record it. Then, you came along and so beautifully finished it up with your fine letter, showing the emphasis on that precious, tempered mortar that cements (bonds) this building (the Church) together, which is none other than the great Love of God.

The expressions, "living Stone", "chief corner stone", and "lively stones" envision a house made of stones and rocks (both stones and rocks are Biblical terms) with every one of them being exactly the same size. The existence of this house would not be, however, were it not for the mortar that holds them together. So, it is with the spiritual house, the Church of the living God, it is the tempered mortar, a type of the great love of God, (not the untempered mortar referred to in Ezekiel 13:10), that secures and holds this building together.

Peter refers to Christ as "a living Stone" and Paul refers to Him as the "chief corner Stone." It is through Him, as the living Stone and chief corner Stone, that His great Love flows to these "lively stones", the habitation of God, the Church. The lively stones, who were predestinated and afore — prepared for the building "were made ready before and brought thither, so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." (1st Kings 6:7.) When

brought, they will fit precisely and perfectly into the pre-determined place in the building that God purposed for them to fill before the foundation of the world. They are "fitly framed together", all of them being the same size, because every one of them "have been made less than the least." (Ephesians 3:8.) They have been stripped, "brought through the 'eye of the needle", their souls made paupers (beggars of mercy) in order to enter the Kingdom. (Matt. 19:24). It is here, at this point, they are made meet (use) for the Master's, the Chief Corner Stone's building. They are made to carry the inward, burdened, unworthy feeling, when brought home, "Make me as one of the hired servants, I am no more worthy to be called thy son." (Luke 15:19.)

These lively stones, indiscriminately and collectively, are the same ones Paul said "hath been tempered together" (God hath tempered the body together") by that great Love you mentioned in your letter. In this Love they "have the same care one for another. Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member honoured, all the members rejoice with it." (1st Corinthians 12:25-26.) John said, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. GOD IS LOVE; and he that dwelleth in LOVE dwelleth in GOD, and GOD in him." (1st John 4:16.)

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens." (1st Corinthians 4:18.) "Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is GOD." (Hebrews 11:10.) "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it." (Zechariah 4:9.)

The poet said concerning Abraham, as he was brought from the Ur of the Chaldees to the promised land, that his descendents, King David and King Solomon, would establish the old city, Jerusalem,

pointing to the Heavenly, the new Jerusalem.

"He sought a city
fair and high,

Built by th' eternal Hands;
And faith assures us,
though we die,
That Heavenly Building
stands."

From the very least, if one at all,

J. M. Mewborn

P. S.: Please extend to Sister Farmer our kindest regards and love in the Lord, we trust. JMM.

(Note: Permission has been granted from Elder J. B. Farmer for publication of his letter in this issue of Zion's Landmark, as indicated below. Editor.)

March 27, 2007

Elder J. M. Mewborn

P. O. Box 1358

Coats, NC 27521

Dear Elder Mewborn,

It was good to get your kind and edifying letter this morning, which was in reply to my recent letter to you. It was good news from a far country to me. I believe that you were wonderfully blessed to rightly divide the word of truth concerning those living stones which were built up into a spiritual house, with Christ being the chief corner stone. What a wonderful picture this is to my mind. It is also good to know that my letter was well received by you. May all praise and glory be unto God for his goodness and kindness toward us in giving us a hope in His mercy.

You requested my consent to publish my last letter to you concerning the gospel order of the true churches of the Lord, which I trust was in agreement with your article on the same subject. If you think it would be of any comfort to God's little ones, I would be glad for you to publish it in the Zion's Landmark.

May God be with you and make His countenance to shine upon you and give you peace. May you be given grace and strength for all the days of your journey here.

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

J. B. Farmer

(Elder J. B. Farmer, and his wife, Sister Sherry Farmer, reside near Grayson, Kentucky. Their memberships, respectively, are with the Lost Creek Church of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association of that area. He has served as an Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times for several years. They are gracious, lovely people. J. M. Mewborn).

SLEEP

"Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. And the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which SLEPT arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matthew 27:50-53). Not that any of the other scriptures are any less important, these four (4) verses to me are some of the most remarkable ones in all the Bible. They not only tell us of His terrible suffering on the cross, but they tell us of the moment when He died. They tell us also that after He arose from the grave that many bodies of His saints, which SLEPT, also arose from their graves, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. These scriptures show us, that just as the grave had no power over Him then, it also has no power now over the saints that are now ASLEEP in Jesus.

"But, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are ASLEEP, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which SLEEP in Jesus will God bring with Him." (1st Thessalonians 4:13,14). The true believers need not fear! Though they SLEEP in Jesus here in just a moment of time, or a thousand years of literal time, on that great morning of the resurrection of the just, they will awaken from that SLEEP and come forth in His image, and after His likeness. They will be caught up together with all of the children of God to meet the Lord in the air to dwell in

the house of the Lord forever. What a wonderful, glorious hope that we may be counted in that elect number!

"Our friend, Lazarus, SLEEPETH, but I go, that I may wake him out of SLEEP." (John 11:11). "Lazarus is dead." (John 11:14). "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO." (John 11:43-44). These Words from Jesus from the 11th chapter of John tells believers that Lazarus was ASLEEP in JESUS! At His command death had to release Lazarus, as it will loose every one of His brethren, when Christ comes again the second time without sin unto Salvation, when He comes again and says to them, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34).

"And many of them that SLEEP in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2). The prophet, Daniel, here, was one of the Holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Through the revelation of that Spirit, he looked to the end and that great awakening of those who were ASLEEP and those who are not. On that great morning, if we are judged out of the books according to our works, everlasting shame and contempt will be our lot. If we are judged out of the Book according to the work of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, the Gift of everlasting life, will sustain us forever. "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." (Psalms 92:4).

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all SLEEP, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1st Corin-

thians 15:51-52). We must be changed to gain the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Apostle Paul goes on to say that when this corruptible has put on incorruption and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory. (1st Corinthians 15:54). When we are born of God, we become manifested children of God and have passed from death unto life. (See John 5:24). When He awakes us from SLEEP and changes this vile body that it may be like unto His glorious body and fills it again with that eternal Spirit, then we will be perfected forever to come before the presence of God, the Father, to praise Him in a world without end.

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (1st Corinthians 15:24-28).

When death is no more and all of the embodied saints are awakened by Christ out of SLEEP and delivered up to their Father, then the redeemed family of God will be complete. If we are counted worthy in Christ to be found in that number, then we will fully understand what Christ was telling Mary when He told her to go unto His brethren and say unto them, "I go unto my Father and your Father, and unto my God and your God." (John 20:17). (That is where He is now, alive forevermore, as He said, "behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.") (Revelation 1:18). That is where the saints will be when He comes again and fulfills

His promise that where I am, there ye may be also at the right Hand of God. (See Mark 16:19)

For the children of God the word SLEEP describes that interval between their natural death and the resurrection of the just. (See Acts 24:25). The Apostle Paul said, "the dead in Christ", those whose mortal bodies are now sleeping in Him, "shall rise first." (1st Thessalonians 4:15). That which is ASLEEP in Jesus will wake up. The bodies of the elect-church of the living God are now only ASLEEP in their graves in the dust of the earth. Their souls are resting in the paradise of God. That which is ASLEEP in Jesus will one glorious day WAKE UP at Christ's second coming, who will take them home to that glory-world, where sin, death, hell, Satan and the grave will be no more. There, they will see His Face, dwell with Him for ever and ever and be satisfied forever more.

Lynwood Jacobs

Jasper, Texas 75951

July 30, 2007

A SPECIAL REQUEST

Dear Elder Mewborn:

I spoke earlier to you tonight by telephone concerning any scripture in the Bible that would relate to the subject of suicide, proving that the committing of this act is a sin unto eternal death, the common belief of the people at large today concerning it. One of whom, I feel, is of the children and family of God recently lost her son, who committed this act. This fine lady is one of my customers in my business Salon, where I do and color her hair on a regular basis, as her hairdresser.

She tells me that everyone around her, even her own church people, tell her that her son will never make it to Heaven, of which I strongly disagree.

I remember some years ago you published an excellent article in the Zion's Landmark that comforted and consoled many people who had experienced this human tragedy in their families. My special request is that you find and republish this article

now in the next issue of Zion's Landmark in the hope it will help this fine lady in the anguish and sorrow of her soul and trouble.

Our love in the Lord to you, Elder Mewborn, if not deceived,

Bill W. Gore
Conway, South Carolina
29527
April 2, 2007

(The article, that Elder Gore has herein requested, is being published below. Editor)

SUICIDE

Several of our readers after reading the first publication of this article, "Can A Subject Of Grace Commit Suicide?", expressed appreciation for the privilege of reading it, especially those who have lost loved ones in this manner. It seems that it was a source of strength to many along the pathway of life. It is for this reason that we are again having it republished at this time. It first appeared in the "March-April, 1988" issue of the Landmark.

J.M. Mewborn

CAN A SUBJECT OF GRACE COMMIT SUICIDE?

The above question was asked us not long since, with the request that we write something on the subject. The inquirer said that the minds of a number of people were exercised regarding the matter. We have long since learned that both in writing and preaching it is impossible to meet the thoughts and ideas of all the children of God, and we have no remembrance of ever trying to do so, but confess that we are glad whenever our views meet the approval of any of the brethren. It has always been our custom, both in writing and trying to preach, to present things as we understand them, yet knowing full well that all men are fallible and liable to err. The brethren have been very kind in their forbearance toward us, and though difference of opinion has sometimes been manifest, they have been gentle and kind in their opposition to our views, for which we feel glad.

We are aware there is a dif-

ference in the minds of some with regard to the subject of suicide under consideration, some believing that a subject of grace can take his own life, while others think it impossible. Hence, we know that what we write will not be received by all, but we can only give such thoughts upon the subject as we have been given in complying with the request.

Some have tried to excuse the deed by asserting that "no sane person would ever take his own life." It is true that there are many forms of insanity, and most everyone is a little weak on some subject or other, and likely would be pronounced by experts insane on that special subject. It may be that some will better understand our meaning here if we use the old saying: "Every man has a hobby." While we believe that the majority of those who commit suicide are insane, we also believe that those of strong, sound minds can and do often take their own lives. We shall not attempt to enumerate the different conditions and circumstances in the lives of men and women which might cause them to commit suicide, but there are hundreds of them. But the fact that men and women can and do take their own lives needs no corroboration; the question is, "Can a subject of grace commit suicide?" and we answer, Yes, and can do anything else that mortal man is capable of doing, if not restrained by the Spirit of God. By reading the fifth chapter of Galatians anyone can be acquainted with the works of the flesh, which Paul says are "manifest." These works are committed by men of the world, and we are sorry to say that some of those works are also committed by the children of God. But if such evil works were not in the flesh, how could anyone perform them? They are, however, there, and as much in the flesh of the Lord's children (His elect), as in the flesh of the non-elect. The flesh of man is the same flesh, regardless, in all nations, kindreds and people of the earth; hence, if it is natural for men to do the works

of the flesh, they surely will do them, unless restrained and kept by the Spirit of God. Those who have this Spirit know of the warfare constantly going on within, and sometimes frankly confess that the bounds to which they would go, except kept by the power of God, are not limited. Now if these things be true of the flesh, why cannot a subject of God's grace commit suicide, as well as perform any other ungodly act, when not kept?

As to the sin of suicide, we feel that many are and have been troubled, some thinking it an unpardonable sin because there can be no repentance for it. Our understanding is that life is life, whether in one's self or in another; hence, we cannot see how self-destruction, in the sight of God, is a greater sin than to take the life of another. Here, it might be asked, Can a subject of grace commit murder? The answer is, Yes. Moses was a servant of God and appeared on the mount of transfiguration with Christ, yet he killed an Egyptian and hid him in the sand (Exodus 2:12). David is called a man after God's own heart, yet he put Uriah at the head of the battle for the express purpose that he might be killed, so that he could have his wife (I Samuel 12:9). We think that according to the law of our country, both Moses and David were murderers. In the Mosaic law there was no provision of escape made for anyone who committed a sin unto death; repentance could not save him, and sorrow could not excuse him. It seems clear to us that here is shown that a man is not saved just by repentance, but alone by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin. Repentance is the gift of God and the evidence or hope of salvation, instead of its working salvation for men.

We have tried to show that it is possible for a subject of grace to commit suicide, and now we will try to prove that even that grave and unholy deed is atoned for by the blood of the Lamb of God. The declaration, "cleanseth us from all sin," does not



ELDER H. C. KER
1860 - 1918

Elder H. C. Ker was born in Quantico, Wicomico County, (eastern shore) Maryland, Dec. 1, 1860. He united with Little Creek O.S.B. Church (Salisbury Association), Sussex County, Delaware in May, 1894. He was pastor of Southampton Church (Pa.), also Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland, and Middletown and New Vernon Churches, New York; also associate editor of the Signs of the Times. As such, he was a gifted writer and minister, and much beloved by the churches in his day.

simply mean that sins past, present and future are embraced, but to be cleansed from ALL SINS means that not a blot, nor a spot is left; anything clean is not at all spoiled. The word "clean" means clean in the fullest sense. This truth caused Paul in Romans 8:38 to say, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, etc.," "shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." We think that could we ask Paul this question today, "do you mean to say that neither the life we live, nor the death we die, cannot separate us from the love of God," he would answer, "Yes." We have known of some brethren, one a deacon, who took their own lives. The deacon was a firm believer of God and in salvation alone through Jesus Christ, walked humbly, loved mercy, dealt justly, and was considered one of the best men; had been a member for years, and no one doubted his experience of grace, and those who were members of the church with him never doubted his hope of eternal salvation. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,

cleanseth us from all sin. How glad we are at this very moment that it is so. Men are not saved because of their good works, but alone by the grace of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Neither are men lost because of their evil deeds, but their evil works are simply because of their fallen, Adamic depraved condition by nature. Men are either saved or lost already; hence, on the one hand good works can never save a sinner, and on the other hand, if a child of God takes his own life, it cannot separate him from the love of God and that salvation which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

H.C. Ker

The above article was an editorial that appeared in the April 15, 1913, issue of the Signs Of The Times. Elder H.C. Ker was an associate editor of the paper at that time. We believe that it will be interesting to our readers.

For many readers the subject of this article bothered me, and I was made to beg for understanding and enlightenment concerning it. I was made reconciled concerning this subject when Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." Judges 16:30. Samson had begged the Lord saying, "O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left." Judges 16:29.

Samson was a son of Manoah and the scripture says that he judged Israel for twenty years. None of us will doubt that Samson was not a child of God, yet he took his own life. This scripture reconciled me concerning this subject. He destroyed his own life (committed suicide), when he killed the Philistines to avenge himself for their destruction of his eyesight.

There is serious danger in making a natural judgement on a person who commits suicide, saying he is gone to hell and eternal torment. Our good book says, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (The language of Christ in John 7:24.) "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more." (Paul's writing in Romans 14:13.) These things are known only to God, Himself.

J. M. Mewborn
April 9, 2007

JOHN'S BAPTISM VERSUS GOSPEL BAPTISM

By H. H. Lefferts, Leesburg,
Virginia (Deceased)

What was there about the baptism of John the Baptist wherewith he baptized those

who came unto him truly repenting, that made it incomplete so that Paul had to baptize anew those who came unto the latter, having previously been baptized by the former? John's baptism was not recognized by the apostle as having been gospel baptism. Why not?

Those baptized by Paul as cited in Acts xix. 6, and upon whom he afterward laid his hands, received gifts of tongues and of prophecy. No such gifts came upon John's disciples following his baptism of them. When Jesus was baptized by John, the Holy Ghost came manifestly upon Him. The Holy Ghost did not come upon any others whom John baptized. The Holy Ghost did not come upon those whom John baptized, as it afterward did upon the apostles at Pentecost and upon those whom the apostles baptized at that later time. The same measure of understanding and of ability for gospel service was not given to John's disciples, as was given to those who were baptized after the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. That the disciples of John had the Holy Spirit is evident. They could not have repented otherwise. It is equally evident, however, that they did not have the "gift of the Holy Ghost." Having both the Holy Ghost, and having the gift which the Holy Ghost only can give, is a distinction, though not a difference. The gift, which the Holy Ghost gives to those baptized by Him in this age of grace, is the ability to minister in the sanctuary of God, the ability to discern spiritual things, which ability carries with it the enabling power to rightly divide the word of truth. Those baptized by John, prior to the exit of the Old Testament order of things, did not have this ability.

John's baptism was anticipatory: looking toward redemption and the kingdom of heaven. Gospel baptism is retrospective: the result of redemption having been accomplished and everlasting righteousness brought in. Thus, John's disciples were looking for the Messiah

to come to inaugurate the kingdom. Their knowledge was incomplete, owing to the fact that they did not know that the Messiah for whom they were looking was the Jesus who had been crucified. Apollos was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, which means that he knew and could set forth the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The New Testament at that time had not then been committed to writing. John was fervent in the spirit and taught diligently the things of the Lord, all from the Old Testament standpoint; but he was short on knowledge. His deficiency in this direction was made up to him by Aquila and Priscilla, who were graciously enabled to open his eyes to the things he had not before seen. This, that he had not before understood, was that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ of whom he had been preaching, the Messiah for whom all Israel had been looking, but in whom all Israel did not believe. When he understood this, such understanding rounded out Apollos' ministry and made his service to the church more efficient than it had before been. And when others of John's disciples were given similar insight into this great truth: that the expected Messiah was none other than the Christ whom they had crucified, then they, too, received baptism in the name of this crucified and risen One, and afterwards received gifts by the laying on of the apostles' hands.

John baptized with water only. Christ baptizes His own with the Holy Ghost, and will eventually baptize the wicked with the fire of everlasting destruction from the presence of God.

John, himself, alone baptized, his disciples did not baptize.

Christ baptized nobody with water, but His disciples did.

John baptized unto repentance in that those who came to him did thereby separate themselves from the pollutions of that day and time. Gospel baptism is because



ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS
1879 - 1948 (?)

Elder Horace H. Lefferts, son of Geo. W. & Sarah P. Lefferts, was born April 23, 1879, in the Sexton's house, adjacent to the Southampton Old School Baptist Church (Meeting-house), Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where his parents were members. He united with Southampton Church in Dec. 1900, and was ordained to the ministry at this place June 5, 1903. In Sept. 1903, he was married to Miss Ella Adams, daughter of Elder Wm. Adams, Covington, Georgia, of Harris Springs Church, Yellow River Association. This photograph was made shortly afterwards when he was 24 yrs. of age.

of the remission of sins by the sacrifice of Christ and is the outward sign of the inward grace of regeneration.

John's baptism was a confession of sin and an acknowledgement of its just penalty, death. Gospel baptism is a confession of salvation from sin and from death, through the resurrection.

John's baptism was legal in its aspect, being under the law dispensation. Gospel baptism is gracious in its character, and belongs to the age and dispensation of grace.

John baptized in Jordan only, nowhere else. Gospel baptism can be administered by a proper administrator to a proper subject in any stream or pool of water anywhere.

Jordan means "descending", and appropriately pictured forth the truth that under God's holy law, which in itself knew no mercy and which could not of itself clear the guilty, we are all by nature going down to death and the grave in obedience to the edict that went forth in the beginning upon our first

parents, Adam and Eve, because of their disobedience.

John came by water only. Christ came not only by water, but by blood also.

Those who came to John to be baptized, evidencing their true repentance, went down into Jordan not confessing Christ, but confessing their sins and the just penalty which their sins entailed. Thus, the waters of the Jordan, not literally but confessionally, ran filthy with the unloaded sins of the people therein. Jesus came to Jordan not confessing any sin, He had none, but He came to fulfill (all) righteousness. John at first forbade Him baptism. John did this because he knew the baptism with which he was baptizing was a confession of sin only, and he knew this Lamb of God to be spotless and without sin. Hence, it seemed to John utterly inappropriate that Jesus should receive baptism at his hands. John knew further that he had need to be baptized himself, and thus confess his own sins. But, when Jesus told him it was appropriate that they (the two of them) should fulfill all righteousness, then John demurred no more. This fulfilling-righteousness meant that Jesus must go down into the stream and be baptized under the burden of guilt with which the people had confessedly loaded the water. He came up out of the water, having manifestly assumed His peoples' sins, which sins he bore in His

own body all through His ministry, inaugurated at His baptism, and which sins He purged away in His death on the cross by the shedding of His precious blood. Thus, when he began to be about thirty years of age, the age at which the Levites began their ministry, Jesus began His public ministry. His first act of that earthly service was to go down in Jordan, assume manifestly the confessed sins of His children, come up out of the water bearing those sins, and make an everlasting end of those sins in His cross and end His earthly service by dying; thereafter, arising from the dead (His bodily resurrection) to begin His Heavenly ministry upon which He fully entered at His ascension, and which ministry He is now accomplishing for His people at the right hand of God, as their eternal High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. He will perfect His ministry at His second coming.

(SISTER) LEMANTHA LOWE

To know Sister Lemantha Lowe was to love her. She was blessed to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22-23), because she was born of the Spirit of God. We miss her greatly, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Lemantha Lowe asked for a home with Fisher Gap Primitive Baptist Church on September 9, 1962. She was baptized the first Sunday in October, 1962, by Elder J. C. Dunbar, of Mount Airy, North Carolina. She later moved her membership to Coleman Primitive Baptist Church on June 7, 1970, where she remained a loving, faithful member until her death on Saturday, July 14th, 2007.

Her funeral service was held at

Moody Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Kenneth Hopkins on Monday, July 16, 2007, at 11:00 a.m. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband, Brother Spencer Lowe, in Fisher Gap Church cemetery.

Survivors are her loving nieces and nephews, who were her "special children", having no children of her own with a host of friends and her church family.

Sister Lemantha's passing made me realize the meaning of the wise man, Solomon's words, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Eccl. 3:1). This is a wonderful, great truth of God that there is an appointed time for everything. She believed God controlled all things both in Heaven and earth, and none could stay His Hand. I was blessed to spend several enjoyable months talking and rejoicing together with her in the good Lord's Word. It was in humbleness, love and hope in association with her brothers and sisters to sit in peace with all, which was her desire. She also loved to hear our Lord's doctrine preached in the predestination of all things. Now her body sleeps in glorious peace, and, according to our hope, her soul is resting in the paradise of God, awaiting that time when it will be brought forth at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was agreed in conference at Coleman Church that a copy of this notice be sent for publication in Zion's Landmark, and one kept in our church record. Written by one with loving memories of her, this 30th day of September, 2007, by

Carlton Brown
Elkin, North Carolina 28621

HISTORICAL CHURCH (MEETING NOTICE) FALLS OF TAR RIVER PARTICULAR (PRIMITIVE) BAPTIST CHURCH TO HOLD 250TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING NOVEMBER 24TH, 2007

Dear Elder Mewborn,

We will appreciate it very much if you will mention in Zion's Landmark that the Falls of Tar River Particular (Primitive) Baptist Church purposes to hold a 250th anniversary meeting from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., on November 24th, 2007, with refreshments to be served in our fellowship hall. A general invitation is extended to the public and descendants of past members.

(For information call: 1-919-426-8876, 1-919-426-3941 or 1-252-977-1747. Church location: Corner of Hunterhill & Benvenue Roads, Rocky Mount, North Carolina)
(Elder) Autry Pridgen, Pastor,
89 Dump Horton Road
Bunn, North Carolina 27508

According to records in my possession, this ancient Falls of Tar River Particular (Primitive) Baptist Church was organized December 3, 1757, and the first meeting house was built on land given by William Horn, a true Revolutionary War patriot. The Falls Church was one of five churches that constituted the Kehukee Association on November 6, 1769. An early member, Elisha Battle, was a prominent statesman and Revolutionary patriot, who helped establish our nation and state. A descendent, Dr. Kemp Plummer Battle (a family member) was president of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in 1876, and helped re-open the doors of this great institution after the Civil War. This historic church left its mark in earlier days on our state of North Carolina and nation.



FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH (MEETING-HOUSE), Rocky Mount, Nash County, North Carolina, was organized on this site Dec. 3, 1757. The first meeting-house was built in 1764 and was 30' by 20'. The present building was erected in 1928 and is the 3rd or 4th on this location, today at the corner of Hunterhill and Benvenue Roads. The first pastor was Elder John Moore, Sr. Other able ministers who served the Church through the years were Elder Robert D. Hart, Elder P. D. Gold and Elder A. B. Denson. This Church is the oldest one today in the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

As a young boy, growing up in the 1940's, we always looked forward to attending the annual Thanksgiving service there, when hundreds of Old Baptists turned out for the meeting to hear good preaching. They came from area, local, Primitive Baptist churches, when peace and harmony prevailed among them. I miss these times very much today!
J. M. Mewborn, Editor

MILL BRANCH (ASSOCIATION) UNION MEETING NOTICE

The Mill Branch (Association) Union Meeting, which consists of Pleasant Hill Church, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Pireway Church, (Pireway Community), Tabor City, North Carolina, and Tabor Church, Tabor City, North Carolina, will be held, the Lord willing, with Pireway Church December 29th-30th, 2007. Hymn singing will begin at 10:30 a.m., with service to begin at 11:00 a.m. Our friends in the truth, as well as members and friends from our sister churches, are welcome to come and be with us.

Pireway Church (Meeting House) is located at the intersection of Route Nos. (NC) 904 and 905, about 17 miles east of Tabor City, Columbus County, North Carolina.

James L. Carroll, Clerk
Conway, South Carolina 29527

MILL BRANCH ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Mill Branch Association will be held with Mill Branch Church, but held on the grounds of Simpson Creek Church, near Loris, Horry County, South Carolina, beginning on Friday, November 2nd, continuing through Saturday and Sunday, November 3rd-4th, 2007.

For directions to Simpson Creek Church, take Highway 701 to downtown Loris, South Carolina. Turn east on SC #9, go 4 miles to Goretown. Turn right on #348, go 2 1/2 miles, turn right on Daisy Road, 1/4 mile to Association.

We invite all brethren, sisters and friends to be with us.
Lucille Beasley, Clerk
Bishopville, South Carolina 29010

Zion's Landmark

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Bapt.

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY PRIMITIVE OR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST

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A HALLMARK RECORD

Zion's Landmark is publishing in this (November - December 2007) issue for the first time ever the very interesting historical account and record in which Mr. Josephus Daniels, late of Raleigh, North Carolina, in his book titled, TAR HEEL EDITOR, describes the godly blessing received from his teacher, Elder Sylvester Hassell, in Wilson, North Carolina, where he grew up; also the wonderful benefits he received and reaped from his friendships with Elder William (Billy) Woodard and Elder P. D. Gold, gifted Primitive Baptist elders. All three of them, Hassell, Woodard and Gold, he acknowledged, greatly influenced his life. The tribute of respect he paid to these three renowned Primitive Baptist ministers is well worth the time it will take in reading by every subscriber of our paper.

Mr. Josephus Daniels in 1880 founded the Raleigh News & Observer, a daily tabloid, that since that time has been widely read for over one hundred years throughout piedmont and

eastern North Carolina. Mr. Daniels was not only a successful newspaper founder and editor, but, as a statesman and diplomat of our state and nation, served as Secretary of the Navy for the whole eight years in the two administrations of President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1917 and 1917-1921, respectively). President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Mr. Daniels United States Ambassador to Mexico, where he served from 1933 to 1941. Mr. Daniels was a true friend to Elder P. D. Gold. He had the contract to print the Landmark when Elder Gold had no printing facilities in the 1870's.

The published portion below comes from Chapter XII, "Churches and Preachers," at pages 130-135.

J. M. Mewborn
November 19, 2007

SOME ACCURATE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST HISTORY AND LORE IN THE CITY OF WILSON AND WILSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, ABOUT THE YEARS 1880-1890.

BY JOSEPHUS DANIELS
"The people of Wilson, North Carolina, and Wilson County, North Carolina, owe a lasting debt of gratitude to the influential Primitive Baptists of the city and county for their large contribution to common, literary education for its many fine citizens. In those days of reconstruction in the south, there were few local schools open due to the ravages of the Civil War. Indeed, in my early school days they owed most to them, Elder William (Billy) Woodard, and his natural brother,

Warren Woodard, particularly. They provided in a most generous way a commodious building in the early 1870's to house the Wilson Collegiate Institute. It's faculty, headed by the learned Elder Sylvester Hassell, afterwards given the highest honorary degree by the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, was composed mainly of that faith.

"When I was going to school to Professor Hassell at the Wilson Collegiate Institute, I recall that, though a Primitive Baptist who rarely attended any other church service than his own, he was always present when Dr. Wm. Closs, preached. (Dr. Closs was a long, leading minister and presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church.) I heard Professor Hassell say that a series of sermons by Dr. Closs on "What is Man That Thou Art Mindful of Him, Or the Son of Man That Thou Visitest Him?", (Psalms 8:4), were worthy of John Wesley and John Knox. That was high praise from one capable of judging, for Professor Hassell was a profound scholar, and himself a preacher of distinction. I recall that he read a chapter in the Bible every day in both Greek and Latin, being a master in both languages, and he also read it in Hebrew. Besides English, he spoke these three languages, Greek, Latin and Hebrew, fluently.

"When Elder Sylvester Hassell died in August, 1928, the whole countryside, not only in Martin County, North Carolina, but adjoining counties, and large areas of the State of North Carolina, made a pil-



JOSEPHUS DANIELS, who established the Raleigh News & Observer September 12, 1880; also served our country, the USA, as Secretary of the Navy and Ambassador to Mexico. In his book, Tar Heel Editor, he referred to his teacher, Elder Hassell, at the Wilson Collegiate Institute, as a "noble gentleman and profound scholar." He wrote concerning his funeral service, page 131 of his book, Tar Heel Editor, a tribute of Elder Hassell, "out of a grateful heart for the stimulus to learning and right living he had given me, I paid this tribute, please see *asterisk below of this issue of Zion's Landmark. It speaks for itself.

grimage out of dire respect to attend his funeral, I among the number. His distinguished father, Elder C. B. (Cushing Biggs) Hassell, statesman and preacher, had been pastor of the Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church forty years, and, receiving his mantle, Sylvester Hassell succeeded him as minister of the same congregation and served fifty-seven years. Thus, father and son served one church a total of ninety-seven years, a record probably without parallel. Both served also as Moderator of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association. *Writing of the funeral service in my paper, out of a grateful heart for the stimulus to learning and right (correct) living he had given me, I

paid this tribute:

"As I looked for the last time in the face of my beloved teacher, I could not restrain the feeling in his face, as in my life, there was something of the looks, as well as the spirit of humility and grace which had descended upon him from the Man of Nazareth. It is said if a man lives long with a noble soul, something of the nobility is imparted. This good man had lived close to his Lord and a portion, a larger portion than falls to other mortals, of His Spirit had fallen upon the beloved disciple. I felt that we had almost

seen the Savior in the person of Sylvester Hassell, for holiness is nowhere apart from him.'

"The Primitive Baptist Church imposed no high educational standards as pre-requisites for entrance into the ministry, believing only God called men to preach and they could not say nay to the call. They thought and believed no man should preach for a stipulated salary and spoke against a paid ministry. They went out without purse or scrip. (Luke 10:4). Preachers who had private business or cultivated their farms never received com-

pensation. But, they believed the brethren should voluntarily give to their preachers. Generosity marked the supplies that filled the preacher's larder, but he never asked for pay or felt that he must live by means of the Gospel. This was never true in the Primitive Baptist church, wherever, in those days!

"The most influential Primitive Baptist preachers of my young days were Elder William (Billy) Woodard, his natural brother, Elder James S. Woodard, (able lawyer, and classmate and friend of Elihu Root¹ at Hamilton College, New York), Elders Sylvester Hassell and P. D. Gold. The first, Elder William (Billy) Woodard devoted himself to his law practice and to farming, preaching occasionally and with rare clarity and perfect diction, from a richly stored mind. He had a habit as he grew old of talking to himself, as he walked from his home to his office. Asked why he talked to himself, he laughingly answered, 'There are two reasons, first, I like to hear a wise man talk, and second I like to talk to a wise man.' I have often spoke of the scholarly sermons of Elder Hassell. In resemblance of both person and manner of life Elder William (Billy) Woodard reminded me of the prophets. He had great dignity, knew his Bible from cover to cover, and was blest with the understanding with his God-given gift how to dispense the Word to the small and great. My mother, a Methodist, said when she heard him, she felt as if one of the saints of the early day had come back to earth to open the way to the better land. Elder Wm. (Billy) Woodard was the father of Mrs. Charles B. Aycock, the Governor of North Carolina, having married first his oldest daughter, Varina, and, upon her death, the youngest daughter, Cora. He traveled far and near, in



ELDER SYLVESTER HASSELL
1842 - 1928

Profound scholar, educator, editor, author and servant of the most High God, (elder), was invited by the up-standing Woodard family, Wilson, North Carolina, in the early 1870's to come there and establish a high-grade school with buildings rent-free. He gathered a good faculty and opened the Wilson Collegiate Institute, which was for a long time the leading educational institution of eastern North Carolina, a fore-runner of today's area higher learning institutions. Elder Hassell would teach in the week and then on week-ends travel to eastern North Carolina churches where he pastored several churches and saved them.

his preaching appointments and was held in reverence by all who came within the sphere of his holy influence. Whenever he came to town, for he lived several miles in the country, he would always come to the post office for his mail. As a boy, I waited on the people while my mother and Elder Woodard conversed about the Bible and other religious topics. My mother, as previously stated, was a strict adherent and member of the Methodist Church and faith. Sometimes, they debated predestination, Elder Woodard believing in it, and, as I said, my mother being an orthodox Methodist. But she said after he left that in his presence she felt that an aura of godliness enshrined them both.

"Elder P. D. Gold, a native of Cleveland County, North Carolina, came to Wilson from Scotland Neck, North Carolina, about 1870 and was the preacher in charge of the Primitive Baptist (Toisnot) Church, located in



MEMORIAL (BRONZE) PLAQUE attached to anterior (frontal) part of pulpit in old Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church (Meeting-House), Williamston, Martin County, North Carolina, honoring the memories of Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell, as follows:

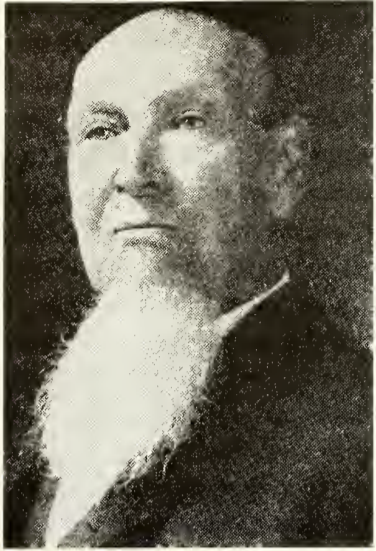
"IN MEMORIAM
ELDER CUSHING BIGGS HASSELL
Pastor 1842-1880
ELDER SYLVESTER HASSELL
Pastor 1880-1928
FAITHFUL SERVANTS
OF CHRIST"

Zion's Landmark

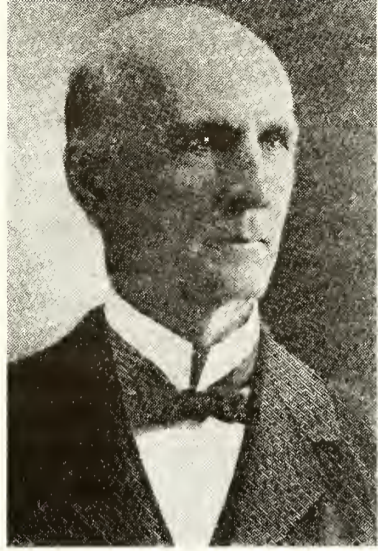
"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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Elder William (Billy) Woodard, born November 6, 1830, in Wilson County, North Carolina, was one of the establishers, financially and otherwise, of the Wilson Collegiate Institute, also excellent lawyer and minister of the gospel. In his later years he was once asked by a friend, why he talked to himself. He laughingly replied, "There are two reasons, first, I like to hear a wise man talk, and secondly, I like to talk to a wise man." He was a devout friend of Elder Sylvester Hassell and Elder P. D. Gold, who baptized and helped ordain him to the ministry in the early 1890's.



ELDER P. D. GOLD
1833 - 1920

Editor of *Zion's Landmark* for 50 years from 1870 to 1920. Also, was pastor of Toisnot (Wilson, North Carolina) Primitive Baptist Church for same period of time. Elder P. D. Gold was a close confidant and brother to Elders Sylvester Hassell and William (Billy) Woodard in their day and time, and God blest their churches to prosper spiritually in love and in their brotherhood and respective ministries. They stood faithfully on the watch-walls of Zion. (Read II Peter 2:7).

a large grove in the southern quarter of town. (The Toisnot — Wilson, N.C. — Meeting-House was situated at the corner of West Tarboro and Barnes streets, the exact spot where the Centre Brick Tobacco Warehouse now stands.) He was a master of logic, profoundly versed in the Scripture and had a well-rounded education. He had served as a Trustee of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C., being a graduate of that institution, Class of 1898, AB degree.

"In addition to preaching, Elder Gold edited the official paper of his church, *Zion's Landmark*, the motto of which was 'Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set.' I had the advantage of intimate association with Elder Gold, having the contract to print his paper, which appeared semi-monthly. He had no publication office, doing his writing at home, and bringing his copy to our *Advance* office and occupying a desk in my office, when he was proof-reading or superintending

the make-up of the paper. He wrote with convincing clearness and was widely regarded as the great expositor of Primitive Baptist doctrine. His paper had a large circulation, going to the elect in every State in the Union. He was in demand as a preacher and visited many states on preaching tours. He was not only an able preacher and gifted writer, but a man of fine business judgement and prospered financially, sending all his sons to college. One of his sons, John D. Gold, became associated with his father after Mr. Gold had his own printing establishment, and the son established the *Wilson Daily Times*, which won a high position as a daily publication as the city expanded. Two other sons, P. D. Gold, Jr., and Charles W. Gold, were leaders in the establishment of the Jefferson-Standard Life Insurance Company, which has become one of the strongest life insurance companies in the South. Elder Gold was blest with real wisdom and his counsel was sought in civic, as

well as religious matters both far and near. The high place attained by the Wilson Collegiate Institute and the influence of *Zion's Landmark* and the presence of the most influential preachers made Wilson, N.C. in those days the capital of Primitive Baptists, the Zion of the faithful, at that time.

"The one big day in the year to which young and old looked forward in Wilson was the 'Big August', the annual or Yearly Meeting where thousands of the faithful repaired for two days of preaching. There, the pious set for hours in the Primitive Baptist Church (meeting-house) and heard no less than three or four sermons in one day, while the young people sat in the buggies or strolled through the grove and ate their picnic dinners during the noon hours. There was always enough and to spare for the many who attended 'Big

August'. As a boy, I never missed a 'Big August' and enjoyed the dinners and meeting the fine people, always confining my hearing of sermons to only one. In addition to the religious and social features connected with the 'Big August', it attracted local politicians who had an eye to the windward in building up their fences by talking to the elders and brethren between sermons and the noon (lunch) hour.

"Since no educational tests were required for preachers in the Primitive Baptist Church, some of them lacked even high school education. I now recall such a one who spoke his mind freely, especially when the politicians attended one of the 'Big August' meetings. Among other visitors this preacher saw W. T. Dortch, the foremost lawyer of the Wayne bar sitting out in the crowd in the packed meeting-house. Hon. W. T. Dortch had been



TOISNOT (WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA) PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH (MEETING-HOUSE), located at the corner of West Tarboro and Barnes Streets, where the Centre Brick Tobacco Warehouse now stands, "was the oldest church in Wilson, established in 1756." This building was used from 1859 to 1920, when it was replaced and moved to another location. It was in this building, when filled to capacity, that the Elder told Col. Bill Dortch from the pulpit, "I see Col. Bill Dortch here today. He is the brainiest lawyer in North Carolina, but he hain't got no more religion than my old mule." Elder P. D. Gold served this church as pastor from 1870 to 1920, a period of 50 years. "Toisnot" was a word from the Tuscarora Indian language, a tribe that lived nearby, meaning "a stream of water."

a Senator in the Confederate Congress. As the preacher saw the great lawyer, he looked straight at him and paused to say: 'I see Colonel Bill Dortch here today. He is the brainiest lawyer in the state of North Carolina, but he hain't got no more religion than my old mule.' Many in the large congregation sat motionless, while others cackled out loud.

"Candor (unstained purity) was typical of preachers of that faith. I recall attending with my mother the funeral service in town of a wealthy citizen whose family was highly esteemed. Elder P. D. Gold did not speak him, a man, fair in death. The whole community knew of his philandering, and resented it, because his wife was beloved and highly esteemed among the citizenry. Instead, after alluding to the conduct of the dead man, Elder Gold said it was his obligation to preach to the living and warn them not to follow in the sins that had marked the life of the deceased. The sermon made a profound affect and impression on the audience. Some people who hold to the principle of 'Say nothing but good of the dead' severely criticized the preacher. If any members of this family resented the preacher's candor, no hint of it escaped them. It was a sort of 'Nathan said unto David, Thou are the man', sermon, markedly different from the other extreme where preachers 'squirt sweet wind' at the corpse for the pleasure and delectation of his family. (Read II Sam. 7:17).

"In after years I was to reap the benefits of friendship with Elder Gold, Elder Hassell and other Primitive Baptists who greatly influenced my life. In 1887, 1889, 1891, and 1903, when I was elected printer to the State of North Carolina General Assembly in Raleigh, every legislator, who was a member of the

Primitive Baptist Church or in principle was of that persuasion, supported me. Why? Those who did not know of my early association with the fine body of Christians, the Primitive or Old School Baptists, were informed of it by Elders Gold and Hassell, who wrote and expressed the wish and desire that I would receive their support. I recall that in one session of the Legislature the President of the senate asked me to suggest a Senator I would like for him to name on the Committee of Public Printing. I replied, 'Appoint George L. Morton.' He hesitated, and said, 'You are fighting for legislation that is opposed to the railroads. Morton is from Wilmington and is opposed to all legislation you are favoring. He is regarded as the spokesman of authority of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. I am afraid you cannot rely upon him.'

"I replied: 'I know we are as wide apart on these questions as two men can be, but we went to school together to Elder Hassell, and his people are Primitive Baptist. They are my best friends.'

"The appointment was made and Senator Morton was a staunch personal supporter, though the most vigorous opponent of most of the policies and principles my paper advocated.

"Not only were the Primitive Baptists the most numerous of all the churches (or denominations) in the city and county, but their teachings affected those who belonged to other churches. Some Methodists declared that the Primitive Baptists were right and declined to contribute to foreign missions. My mother had been brought up in Washington, North Carolina, where predestination did not have such weight, and she was active in the Women's Missionary Society of the church. She used to say to

her sister, Mrs. Griffin, a blue-stocking Presbyterian, and other Presbyterians, that they were Primitive Baptists, dressed up, who had moved to town, put organs in their churches, established Sunday Schools and believed in sending missionaries to the heathen. Belief in foreign missions and inability to accept the doctrine of predestination alone separated my mother from perfect communion with her Primitive Baptist friends." (End).

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¹Elihu Root (1845-1937), according to information at hand "was an American lawyer, statesman and Cabinet officer. His great contribution was his tireless effort to assure international peace. He won the 1912 Nobel Peace Prize. He was one of the ablest lawyers the United States ever produced. He was born in Clinton, New York. He studied law at New York (Hamilton College), and then started practicing in New York City. Root gained national prominence in 1899 when President William McKinley appointed him secretary of war. President Theodore Roosevelt later named him secretary of state. He served with distinction in this office until 1909, when the New York legislature elected him to the U. S. Senate. He served in the Senate until 1915." (This information was abstracted from The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 16, page no. 479.) (It is interesting to know, that Elihu Root was a close friend and classmate of Elder James S. (Jimmie) Woodard, a Primitive Baptist elder from Wilson, North Carolina. Ed.)

A FREAKISH, UNUSUAL SITUATION EXISTED IN THE HOME AND LIFE OF A PRIMITIVE BAPTIST MINISTER OVER FORTY YEARS AGO IN HARNETT COUNTY - JOHNSTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

All ordained ministers, Justices of the Peace, and other legal officers and personnel in all the counties and states of our nation are well aware of the General Statute (state Laws) that require all marriage ceremonies and celebrations, as such, without exception, take place within the county and state where the license was purchased and issued. Only ordained ministers and Justices of the Peace, as a rule, are allowed to perform these

rites on a local basis, according to state law.

The following is an excerpt from a newspaper article that appeared in the *Smithfield Herald*, Smithfield, Johnston County, North Carolina, back on November 16, 1965. We believe that it will be interesting to many of our readers and subscribers.

"IN HOME ON COUNTY LINE — MINISTER AND HIS WIFE SLEEP IN HARNETT COUNTY, EAT THEIR MEALS IN JOHNSTON COUNTY

"Elder Frank H. Nordan, 78 year old pastor of Bethel and Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Churches, has the distinction of being a resident of two counties. His home is situated in such a manner that he and his wife, Mrs. Florence Stevens Nordan, sleep in Harnett County and eat their daily meals in Johnston County.

"An inquirer once asked Elder Nordan this question, 'Why in the world would a dwelling house be built on a county line?' Elder Nordan explained it this way: 'Way back yonder about the turn of the 19th century (1900), one of the counties here, I do not know if it was Harnett or Johnston, had a law passed by the NC Legislature that would not let school children attend any school except within the county of their residency. So, Mr. Elmon Stewart, who built this old Victorian dwelling about that time, built the house on the county line so he could send his children to school in either county, as per his judgment, not the school board's.'

"Today, Elder Frank H. Nordan is frequently called upon to perform many marriages, sometime two per day. If they come with a marriage license purchased in Lillington, NC, county seat of Harnett, the wedding party moves into the western (Harnett) side

living room for the ceremony. If the license was purchased in Smithfield, county of Johnston, the wedding party moves into a tidy, neat, well-kept bed room for the ceremony. Elder Nordan marries the couples, as they come, either from Harnett or Johnston Counties, by moving from one room to another to be in strict compliance with the NC General Statutes or state law. Recently, he performed one ceremony in a field in Harnett County in front of his house. (End of excerpt quote).

(The house has a number of years in age, and was possibly built just prior to the Civil War. The dwelling was torn down several years ago. Ed.)

By Pete Hulth

Herald Staff Writer

**THE TRUE DOCTRINE
OF UNCONDITIONAL
ELECTION
AND FOREKNOWLEDGE
CONCISELY EXPLAINED
AND EXPOUNDED**

**“ELECT according to the
FOREKNOWLEDGE of
God, the Father, through
sanctification of the Spirit
unto OBEDIENCE
and sprinkling of the blood
of Jesus Christ.”
(1st Peter 1:2).**

This inspired language from 1st Peter 1:2 gives the principle we wish to notice in this passage of Holy Writ which is the use of the word “obedience.” Let us not overlook the fact that “election” and “foreknowledge” are the divine sources mentioned here, both from whence spring the “obedience” of saints and true believers. If, then, the “election” of the saints by the Father and Son was a prior, divine act which took place before any of the saints were ever in evidence, and, since “foreknowledge” also was before the saints were manifested, then it must surely follow that their “obedience” was divinely pre-

arranged before there were any of them visible, as yet.

Now, if it is granted that the “election” and the “foreknowledge” of God were unconditional upon the act (or acts) of the creature, then it must follow that their “obedience” also is not conditioned upon any act, or acts, of the individual. The Holy Spirit of God is the principle in the children of God which sanctifies them, or sets them apart from the world, the flesh and the devil, unto obedience of Christ, and unto the sprinkling of His precious blood which purges their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. (See Hebrews 9:14).

Jesus Christ is head over all things to His Church and people, not a human man. Among these “all things” to His Church and people “is their obedience.” The human nature of the saints of God is not obedient to the truth. Neither can it ever be. The natural man knows not the things of God, and is wholly incapable of ever knowing them. This means to include the human nature of the natural man of the believer. The carnal mind is enmity against God. (Read Romans 8:7). This also means the carnal mind of the believer. It is not with one’s human nature, nor yet is it with one’s carnal mind, that the believer assents to the principles of divine truth.

In the work of regeneration, both the natural man and the carnal mind are not born again. They remain, as they were, unchanged. The new or Heavenly birth brings the believer out into the spiritual world and into the manifestation of Heavenly or spiritual life. This work, having been effected in the believer by the Holy Spirit, he now has the mind of Christ and the nature of Christ in contradistinction to the human nature and to the carnal mind, which he also continues to have, as formerly.

Hence, here within every

believer, the spiritual warfare begins, to-wit: the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. (For proof read Galatians 5:16). Now, to keep the believer in this warfare and to preserve in keeping in subjection the human nature and carnal mind, he needs and must have the things which only grace furnishes him for the conflict (or contest). The Apostle Paul was granted through grace a sufficiency of strength to enable him to withstand the pricking of that thorn in the flesh, (sin), that messenger of Satan, which was sent to buffet him.

The preaching of the Gospel is one of those divinely, ordained things which God has purposed and fixed for the salvation of them that believe. Preaching the Gospel does not save the unbeliever, but under the unction of the Spirit of God, it does establish them that believe in the truth, and does save them from error, delusion and human traditions. But, it must have the unction of the Spirit of God in them who believe.

The mere, mechanical (or formal) act of preaching will accomplish nothing. Likewise, the word preached must be mixed with faith in the soul of the hearer, or else the hearer, or true witness, will not heed. Thus, this salvation of the Lord through preaching is not conditioned on the will of the creature or on the will of the believer himself, but is conditioned on the presence of the Holy Spirit, both in the one who preaches and also in the one who hears.

If there are any such things as conditions in the covenant of grace, one thing is for sure: they are not conditioned on the acts of sinners or believers, but every condition is met and fulfilled in the completeness and fullness of Jesus Christ for He alone is the obedience of His people

and they are every one complete in Him. The righteousness of God’s holy law is fulfilled, not by the believer, but IN the believer, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in him. This effectual indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in His people constitutes their obedience. Without this effectual indwelling, religion is nothing more than mere form, devotion languishes, and prayer becomes but parrot chatter.

That the blessings enjoyed by believers here in time are contingent upon their obedience cannot be proved by Scripture. All of our blessings are in Christ, and have ever been stored up in Him from before the foundation of the world. We are told that God has blessed His people with ALL (not some) spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.

Now just how many of these blessing will God’s people miss through their failure to be obedient? Will there be any excess blessings left over through their failure to obey? On the other hand, will there be any shortage of blessings not received through their being more obedient than God expected them to be? If, therefore, the “election” and the “foreknowledge” of God from which “obedience” is derived, are certain, there cannot be anything left uncertain or indefinite about the extent of their “obedience.”

God does not bribe His people to be obedient by offering them blessings, as we have seen some parents promise their children money or candy, if they will behave themselves. The mercy of God endures forever and His people have always been bountifully blessed in all ages, regardless whether they have been obedient or not.

There is not a true believer but what he must say, if

he tells the truth, that God has blessed him far above anything he has ever merited. And this is because of what one is made to feel that God already has done for him, because of his unworthiness. The child of God will be made to earnestly pray that he may be enabled through His grace to walk acceptably before the Lord, and not at all for blessings he expects to receive in the future for thus having been obedient. Obedience is the effect of grace and the fruit of obedience is the outcome of mercy graciously bestowed.

H. H. Lefferts

(Note: Elder H. H. Lefferts, (1879-1948?), was editor of the Signs of the Times during his lifetime, and also pastored the Old School Baptist Church, Warwick, New York; also Frying Pan, Mt. Zion and New Valley Churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, Northern VA, at the time of his death. He was greatly beloved among the Primitive or Old School Baptists in his day and lifetime. Editor.)

TWO RECORDS OF AMAZING JEWISH CONVERSIONS, ONE MORE RECENT, THE OTHER ABOUT 150 YEARS AGO, TO THE FAITH AND HOPE OF CHRISTIANITY

(The More Recent One)

I am a Jew and I know how you will observe the Passover. You will put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat matzoth and roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue, and carry out the Talmudic ritual. You will do everything but what Jehovah required first of all.

Jehovah did not say, "When I see the leaven put away, or when I see you eat the matzoth, or the lamb, or when I see you go to the synagogue ..." He said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13).

Brethren, you can substitute nothing for the blood. You must have the blood! Blood is an awful word for one who reveres the ancient writings, and yet has no sacrifice. Turn any-

where in the Book, and the blood meets you. But, you cannot find it in the Judaism of today.

As a child in Palestine, I read the Law, Psalms, and Prophets. I attended synagogue and learned Hebrew from the rabbi. I believed that ours was the true religion. But, as I studied the Law, I was struck by the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there. I was equally struck by its utter absence in the Jewish ritual.

The Day of Atonement and the importance of the blood burdened me as I read Exodus 12 and Leviticus 16-17. One verse kept echoing in my ears: "It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul!" (Leviticus 17:11). I knew I had broken the Law and needed to make atonement. Every year, on the Day of Atonement, I beat my breast as I confessed my need, but atonement required blood, and there was no blood!

A learned rabbi told me God was angry with His people. The old Jewish Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed and a Muslim mosque (the Dome of the Rock) now stands in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice according to Leviticus 17 has been desecrated. That is why there is no blood. God closed the way to the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now, we must rest on the instructions in the Talmud and the mercy of God.

I was not satisfied. I knew the Law remained unchanged, even though the temple was destroyed. Nothing but the blood could atone for sin. But, since we could not shed blood for atonement, we were left with no atonement at all!

This thought horrified me. I consulted other rabbis, asking only one question: "Where can I find the blood of atonement?" I searched

for many years in many places. One night in a narrow street in Constantinople (Turkey), a sign invited me to a meeting for Jews. As I entered, I heard a man saying, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God declared that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22), that God had given His Son — the Lamb of God — to die, and that all who were made to trust in His blood were forgiven all their sins. This was the Messiah of Isaiah 53 and the Sufferer of Psalm 22.

My Jewish brethren, I had finally found the blood of atonement! Now, I love to read the New Testament to see how all the shadows of the Law are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. His blood was shed for poor sinners. It satisfied God, and is the only means of salvation for both Jew and Gentile (John 1:29). May it be God's will to bless us to trust in the blood of His lamb!

From Grace & Truth
210 Chestnut Street
Danville, IL 61832

(The Incident of 150
Years Ago)

"When the Lord's people die, they are in Christ; therefore, they die in the Lord, and to Him, and are His. Their eternal life is in Him. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." So death shall not separate us from Him. Then truly, we fall asleep in Jesus, when we die in the flesh. The life of our flesh in our bodies has gone out, it is true, as a dying lamp; but Jesus is the life of our spirit; and while He lives, we cannot perish. This is the consolation of those who have hope in Christ, when death claims their loved ones; and it is a precious solace.

"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, and told him death was near. The dying man asked the young, Jewish Prussian physician 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 very 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 very calm and peaceful. The Jewish surgeon was amazed and awed, and deep conviction penetrated his soul. His very religious, proud, and wealthy mother had taught him to detest the name 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 and formal religion could have over the sorrow of death; and he felt that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth must, indeed, be promised Christ, and is alive, though his (Jewish) mother had taught him that His disciples stole His body away. From that time forward, 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 of the synagogue excommunicated him under a fearful curse of damnation; but, he was, yet, full of faith and love, hope and rejoicing in the precious Jesus, when I heard him relate this.

"No! Jesus is not dead; therefore, we sorrow not over them that sleep in Jesus, as others who have no hope; for they are not dead, or perished; but they sweetly rest from their labors, and shall awake unto righteousness, glory,

and bliss at the last day. When they die to the life that now is, and their bodies are borne away to the tomb, we deeply sorrow and mourn, because of the great loss we feel; but they are not lost to us, nor to the Lord, nor to the better life to come; for they live in the scared memories of our souls, and they sleep in Jesus. "And ye now, therefore, have sorrow, but I will see you again," He says, "and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." How all this sweet hope of the gospel of Jesus, the Son of God, soothes and softens the sorrow of the living for the dead who die in the Lord, and casts around their tomb a divine halo of Heavenly hope.

"This is the hope of the resurrection, "For we are saved by hope." "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec;" (Hebrews 6:17-20).

"A forerunner is one sent on before to prepare the way, and make all things ready for the reception of those who are to follow, and enter after him. And so Jesus says to His disciples who shall follow him, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Now

He is within the veil, having passed through it, and is now in the presence of God at his right hand in heaven.

"Let us notice the meaning of the veil, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The tabernacle of worship in Israel, and afterwards the temple in Jerusalem, were separated into two sanctuaries or places of worship; the first, called the tent, the holy place; the second, called the Most Holy Place, the Holy of Holies. Between the two hung a very peculiar, strong, and wonderful veil, made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen of cunning work, with cherubims. The common priests or ministers of Israel officiated and served daily in the holy sanctuary, while all the congregation of the Lord's people stood without, in the court of Israel; but into the Most Holy Place within the veil the ordained and consecrated high priest unto God for Israel only entered along with the blood of atonement once very year by passing through the veil. The Ark of the Covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubim over-shadowing the mercy-seat, and the presence of God, between the two cherubim, were within the Most Holy sanctuary, and made it such. If any other man, except the high priest, had presumptuously entered into this holy Presence, he would have died before the Lord. And the high priest himself could not enter within the veil, only in his consecrated robes and with the sacred blood of atonement, to atone for the sins of all the people." (End.)

(Note: The above most interesting excerpt titled, 'An Amazing Jewish Conversion That Took Place About 150 Years Ago', is taken from Elder David Bartley's book, *Man Redeemed From Sin And Death*, that was published in the year 1887. We are glad to say it has been recently republished. For those who currently desire a republished copy, please see advertisement at the end of this issue of *Zion's Landmark*. This is a wonderful book! J. M. Mewborn.)

THE FISH THAT SWALLOWED JONAH

Brother J. J. Hicks of Onslow County, NC, wishes me to write on the above subject for the *Landmark*.

The word "whale" occurs in the King James or The Authorized version of the Bible four times: Gen. 1:21, Job 7:12, Ezek. 32:2, and Matt. 12:40. The word "shark" does not occur in our English version of the Bible at all. We learn on the title page of all English Bibles that our English Scriptures were "translated out of the original tongues"; and as it is well known, the Hebrew was the original language of the Old Testament, and the Greek was that of the New Testament. And as the old London Baptist Confessions of Faith say: Although those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of the Scripture that not only the learned but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them, "yet" in all religious controversies the church is finally to appeal to the original tongues."

The Hebrew word rendered "fish" in the book of Jonah, is dag, and means any kind of fish; and the Greek word by which dag is translated in the Septuagint or Greek version of the Old Testament, and in Matt. 12:40, is Ketos, and means any large fish. The whale, shark, tunny, or any other. While the throat of some whale is too small to swallow a man, that of the Sperm and Rorqual whales and White Sharks are found in the Mediterranean Sea, where Jonah was sailing when thrown overboard. The White Shark has been known to swallow a man and a horse whole, and to vomit them after having thus swallowed them. The Hebrew word rendered

"belly" in Jonah is meim and the Greek word thus rendered in Matt. 12:40 is koilia. Both of these words mean any internal cavity of the body. If it were a Rorqual Whale that swallowed Jonah, the prophet may have been entombed in some of the many longitudinal and nearly parallel folds that commence under the lower lio and extend the whole length of the fish's body, and may not have gone far down into the digestive canal. Of course, his preservation alive was a miracle, and all circumstances were appointed of the Lord, and are a lively representation, not only of the burial and resurrection of Jesus, but also of the Judgment and mercy of God to poor sinners.

No genuine Primitive Baptist can doubt the literal, as well as the spiritual truth, of the book of Jonah, affirmed as it is by Christ (Matt. 12:40; 16:4, Luke 11:30.) All things are possible to Divine Omnipotence.

Sylvester Hassell

A REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION

"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

(Hebrews II 15)

It is no evidence against you, if you are subject to bondage; it is no mark against you, if you cannot look death in the face without doubt or fear. Is it not "the children of God" who feel this bondage? And did not the Lord come to deliver them from it? Are you then not a child of God, because you fear death? If you had no sense of sin, no tenderness of conscience, you would be as careless about death as most other people are. Thus, your very bondage, your very fears, if they make you sigh and cry for deliverance, are marks of Life. And the day will surely come when the Lord will remove these chilling fears and put an end to these killing doubts. As you draw near to the brink of Jordan, the Lord will be with you to deliver you, who, through fear of death, are now subject to bondage; He will extract its sting (sin), and rob the grave (death) of its victory, enabling you to shout Salvation through His blood, even at the moment when nature sinks lowest and the last enemy appears nearest in view. Oh, what a blessed Jesus we have; what a Heavenly Friend; what a divine Mediator between The Holy God and our guilty souls! What love He displayed in taking upon Himself our sinful flesh and blood; what kind condescension, what wondrous depths of unspeakable grace! He loved us sufficiently to lay down His life for us. Did He not for our sakes endure the agony of the cross,

the hidings of His Father's face, the burden of sin, the pangs of hell? And, if He has done all this for us on earth, will He leave His work unfinished and undone in Heaven? Has He quickened you into life, made you feel your sins, taught you to seek for mercy, raised up a good hope in your heart, applied the promise to your soul, given you a testimony? He may have done all this, and yet at times your conscience may be held down in bondage and imprisonment. But it is only to make further way for His grace; to open up more of His willingness and ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. It is only to make Himself in the end more precious to you; to show you more of His finished work, more of His dying love and rich, atoning blood, and to wean you more from the arm of the flesh, and this sinful world, and to make you know more experimentally what the Lord Jesus Christ is to those who seek His face and hang upon and trust Him and Him alone.

A man who believes that he may live and die here, and that safely, without an experimental knowledge of Christ, will never seek His face, never call upon His name, never long for the manifestations of His love. But, he who feels that he can neither live nor die without Him, who knows that he has a soul that only Christ can save, who has sins which only Christ's blood can pardon, iniquities that only Christ's righteousness can cover, will be often found crying to the Lord to visit his soul with His salvation, and he will find no rest till Christ appears; but when Christ appears to the joy of his soul, then will he bless and praise Him with joyful lips. And Oh! what a glorious trophy will that man be of Christ's eternal victory over sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave, when he will reign with Him and with His assembled saints in one glorious immortal day!

J. C. Philpott,
(England, date of writing unknown.)

(Note: the above writing was sent to us by our good friend, David Perez, Thomasville, North Carolina, with the request for publication in the Zion's Landmark. We appreciate his interest very much! Editor.)

THE GREAT DELIVERANCE OF GOD

Zion's Landmark
J. M. Mewborn, Editor
P.O. Box 1358
Coats, N.C. 27521
Dear Brother Mewborn:

I received the six copies of Zion's Landmark that you sent to me, and I have read the July-August, 2006 issue that contains Elder P. D. Gold's experience with God's grace and his call to the ministry.

It thrilled my poor soul, as I have struggled with my 3 1/2 years in Europe in World War II and the time it has taken for me to finally cry out to God and rest my "nightmares" and "flashbacks" to Him, and rejoice in His great love, grace and mercy.

I was born in Wabash County, Indiana, among the Predestinarian-German Baptist brethren. As I have said before, I have been brought by my God to rest in His love and mercy, and attempt to pray daily, "not my will, but thine be done."

Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 for a year's subscription to Zion's Landmark.

Take care for we do care,
Martin E. Holmes
Kenton, Ohio 43326
December 6, 2006

A GOOD LETTER ENCOURAGES EDITOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Dear Elder Mewborn,

I was saddened to learn of your illness from the last issue of Zion's Landmark. I pray, if it could be the Lord's will, that your discomfort be minimal and recovery swift. I continue to read each new issue and look forward to it's arrival.

Your work, through the blessing of God, has been an inspiration to me over the years, and I sincerely hope our Lord will bless you to serve His people for many more to come. (I am enclosing a small token of my appreciation and love — use it any way you see fit to make you more comfortable.)

Your friend in Christ, I hope,
C. B. King
Leesville, South Carolina 29070
September 16, 2007

GOOD COMMUNICATIONS FROM A SUBSCRIBER

My dear friend, Brother Mewborn,

How gracious it has been of you and your dear companion, that in spite of these present economic conditions, have continued to keep the subscription price of Zion's Landmark in circulation at such a minimal cost. Of course, the intrinsic profit that is received is not measured in monetary means. However, the recent financial report you have printed in the "May - June, 2006" edition, should certainly be an eye-opener to all of your subscribers. I know it certainly was for me. My life would certainly have a great void in it, if I did not receive the dear old Landmark.

Also, it is indeed, humbling to still be able to read the enlightening words of Elder Sylvester Hassell, that he penned down over 100 years ago. He was a mentor of many of my Martin County, North Carolina ancestors, especially those who were once precious members of Old Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church, located in Williamston, Martin County, North Carolina.

May I also make reference to the Gospel Appeal publication. I have only, as recently as this year, 2006, been introduced to the good writings in this excellent paper. The experience and call to the ministry of Elder J. J. Turnipseed, that you published in a recent issue of the Landmark, was a most excellent one. It is also good to see the Gospel Appeal is republishing articles from past year's issues of the Landmark.

Brother Mewborn, would you please renew my subscription to the Landmark for an additional two years, and please consider the remainder of the funds as a gift to be used in the continuation of the paper, as you see fit.

In humble submission and love, I hope,

For Christ's sake, I hope to remain,
Always,
Your friend
Steve A. Everett
Forest, Virginia 24551
July 9, 2006

SUBSCRIBER'S ROOTS OF READING ZION'S LANDMARK GO BACK FOR A LONG TIME

Dear Elder Mewborn,

May these few lines find you and your family in good health. I enjoy reading the Zion's Landmark, especially the January - February, 2005, issue that contained the good writing of Elder O. J. Denny.

As a small boy, I can remember going with my father, Elder Claude Brown, to hear Elder O. J. Denny,

when he was a pastor of the old Broad Street Primitive Baptist Church, located in down-town Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Later, when I became aware, that the doctrine, as preached by the Primitive Baptist was for me, came when the church at Winston-Salem was moved to Acadia Avenue, and served by Elder Jesse C. Dunbar. Elder Dunbar came from Mount Airy, North Carolina, to serve the church. He was an able gift to the church and was much loved by the people. The church on Acadia Avenue has since closed.

The enclosed small contribution is for you to help keep the paper in circulation. It would be a great loss should this take place.

From,
A lover of the truth, if not deceived
Robert A. Brown
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
27103

A GOOD LETTER ENCOURAGES EDITOR FROM VIRGINIA

Dear Elder Mewborn,

I hope this short note finds you doing as well as can be expected. I cannot tell you what a joy it was when I went to my mailbox recently and found the "July-August 2007" issue of the Zion's Landmark. I immediately sat down and read the entire paper. I really enjoyed the articles.

You and this sound paper have often been in our thoughts with your health situation that you might not be publishing it for a while. We have not had the opportunity to speak with you lately, but you have always been in our thoughts. We wish only the best for you in your battle with your illness.

I cannot tell you how refreshing it is in this day of a famine in Israel that there is still someone out there who stands for the truth and gospel order. These two qualities of God, given to His church, will be here to the end, some-where. I believe that when a novice (See 1st Timothy 3:6) appears on the scene and is raised up, he will soon fail. The scriptures tell us that no weapon formed against a God-called minister will prosper.

We are,
Your friends,
Bill and Judy Poindexter
Martinsville, Virginia 24112
September 23, 2007

EDITOR IMPROVING

I would like for all of our subscribers, readers of Zion's Landmark, as well as our many dear friends and love ones, to know that I am improving with my health problem. My main physicians at UNC Hospital, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, were pleased last Wednesday, January 16, 2008, when they reviewed my progress and informed me they are satisfied with it. I ask that each of you keep me in mind and in your prayers that it be the good Lord's will that this may continue. May God bless you, one and all. Also, that He would bless us to thank Him for His mercy upon us!

Please know that I am aware that we are behind with getting our paper published; however, I have to do as my strength will allow in my health condition, and beg for your understanding, please!

J. M. Mewborn
January 21, 2008

MILL BRANCH (ASSOCIATION) UNION MEETING NOTICE

The Mill Branch (Association) Union Meeting, which consists of Pleasant Hill Church, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Pireway Church, (Pireway Community), Tabor City, North Carolina, and Tabor Church in Tabor City, North Carolina, will be held, if the Lord willing, with Tabor Church, March 29th & 30th, 2008. Hymn-singing will begin at 10:30 a.m., with service to begin at 11:00 a.m. Our friends in the truth, as well as members and friends from our sister churches, are welcome to come and be with us.

Tabor Church (Meeting-House) is located on US Highway 701 (Business) just inside the corporate town limit on the north side of town at 110 Williams Street.

James L. Carroll, Clerk
Conway, South Carolina 29527
Tele. 1-843-602-2065

TWO RECENT, NEW BOOK RELEASES FROM ELDER STANLEY C. PHILLIPS, QUITMAN, MISSISSIPPI

Man Redeemed from Sin and Death on the subject of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead by the Holy Son of Man by Elder David Bartley, an Old School Baptist minister, who was a native of Crawfordsville, Indiana. This is a reprint of the 1887 edition. He ties the offense of sin to the Adamic man, the substitutionary mediation of Christ for the man, and the natural consequence of the resurrection necessitated by His redemptive and completed work.

As far as is presently known, this is the only reprint ever done of this excellent book. It is nicely bound, hardback, with large, easy to read print with a total of 241 pages on good quality paper. Price: \$25.00 Postpaid.

ALSO

Select Writings of Elder Thomas P. Dudley from 1844 to 1861, originally printed as Circular Letters of Correspondences of the Licking Association of Particular Old School Baptists of Kentucky. (Elder Thomas P. Dudley, 1792-1886, was an early frontier minister of the Particular Old School Baptists in Kentucky.) (Note: This is not the same selections in Marc Jacobson's publication on the same topic.) Book is hard-cover, 458 pages, heavy print. An addendum included of the original Constitution of the Modern Missionary Denomination on Thursday, May 19th, 1814. Price: \$30.00 Postpaid.

All orders must be sent by mail directly to Elder Phillips. His e-mail address is stanp420@xfoneusa.net. (No e-mail orders or telephone orders, please!)

Please mail all orders to:
Elder Stanley C. Phillips
1159 County Road 420
Quitman, Mississippi 39355-9572

(From the editor: These two books contain savory, rich writings of two 19th century standard-bearers of the faith, Elders David Bartley and Thomas P. Dudley. Elder Phillips has made possible possession of these valuable books again. I suggest all interested people to obtain copies now for when these Issues have been exhausted, they may never be available again. I have read them, and I do not believe you can go wrong by owning a copy of each of these excellent books. The prices, respectively, are reasonable.)

J. M. Mewborn