

The Gospel messenger  
Williamston, N.C. [s.n.]

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Vol. 5.

No. 1.

*complete old*  
**THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,**

**BUTLER, GEORGIA.**

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY.**

**Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.**

**J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.**

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELD. MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

**JANUARY, 1883.**

*All Letters, Remittances and Communications, should be addressed to J. R. RESPESS, Butler, Ga.*

*Money should be sent by Money Order or Registered Letter.*

*Be certain to write names and post-offices plainly.*

*Subscribers not receiving the Messenger should notify us.*

*Any one sending us Five Dollars for five new subscribers, shall have one copy of the Messenger for one year free.*

# THE LATE OLD C. B. FARRELL'S FAVORITE.

1 { Thou dear Re-deem - - er, dy - ing Lamb, We love to  
No mu - sic's like thy charm - ing name, Nor half so

hear of thee; O let us ev - er hear thy  
sweet can be.

voice In mer - cy to us speak; And in our

priests we will re - joice, Thou great Mel - chiz - e - dec.

2

Our Jesus shall be still our theme  
While in this world we stay;  
We'll sing our Jesus' lovely name,  
When all things else decay.  
When we appear in yonder cloud,  
With all thy favored throng,  
Then we will sing more sweet, more loud,  
And Christ shall be our song.

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1883

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

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Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

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No. 1. BUTLER, GA., JANUARY, 1883. Vol. 5.

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## THE CHURCH.

BY ELDER D. BARTLEY.

[Continued from December No.]

Jesus said: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Mat. 15; 24.

"To the poor the gospel is preached."—Luke 7; 22.

And now I am led to speak of the design and use of gospel preaching. What is the gospel to be preached for? and what good end does it accomplish? Leaving the opinions of men, and turning to the oracles of God, we are instructed that the gospel is to be preached as a testimony or witness to those who believe and obey it, but against all who do not believe.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations; and then shall the end come."—Mat. 24; 14. Thus spake the heavenly Author of the gospel. Therefore to his ministers he said: "And ye are *witnesses* of these things."

"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Therefore the preaching of the gospel separates believers from unbelievers; and it is a witness of salvation to the first, but of condemnation to the last.

And so Paul said: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 Cor. 4; 3, 4.

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“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life.”—2 Cor. 2; 14–16.

Now, these are the opposite effects of the preaching of the gospel; and, like a faithful witness, whose testimony is for the just, but against the unjust, so the faithful testimony of the gospel makes manifest both the children of light and the children of darkness. To the one it ministers the knowledge and joy of salvation, with the sweet assurance that “he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;” but to the other it declares that “he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”—John 3; 36.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are *saved*, it is the power of God. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are *called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power and wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. 1; 18–24.

So clearly does the apostle show, that while the *saved*, and the *called*, are blessed by the preaching of the gospel, yet to others it is either a stumbling-block or foolishness, and they neither believe nor rejoice in it. And this is the design and use of gospel preaching, as the Lord said, “for a *witness* unto all nations.” And it accomplishes this purpose wherever it is preached.

Therefore Paul, and every gospel minister, would joyfully say: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth*; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from *faith to faith*.”—Rom. 1; 16, 17.

But of those on the other hand he says: “But the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”—Heb. 4; 2.

The gospel, then, is to and for believers in Christ; and it testifies, that they shall be saved. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in him* should not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil *hateth the light*, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth *cometh to the light*, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John 3; 16-21.

Thus Christ himself taught. And how plainly his word shows, that the light of the glorious gospel reveals and makes known those who hate the light and are condemned, as well as those who have everlasting life and come to the light!

So, then, by the preaching of the gospel, the Lord makes manifest his children, and gives them knowledge of salvation; and thus are they fed with knowledge and understanding, and are comforted through preaching.

The Lord Jesus said: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."—Mat. 25; 31-33.

Now, this separation has been going on ever since the church was built; and through preaching the Lord has been gathering his people into the visible kingdom—the church. And so the ministers of the gospel of the Son of God are called to a great and sacred work, and their labor is not in vain in the Lord; for through preaching the Lord saves them that believe, and gathers his saints together. How greatly is his Great Name glorified in this proclamation of salvation!

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and in bringing home his dear children! A good work, truly, is the work of gospel ministers! and blessed, indeed, are those that know the joyful sound of the gospel! "For they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice." Theirs is the everlasting joy of salvation.

And let the ministers remember the words of Jesus, who said: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honor."—John 12; 26.

"And," finally, "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Pet. 5; 4.

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STATE ROAD, NEWCASTLE COUNTY, DEL.,

November 8, 1882.

*Editors Gospel Messenger*:—It will probably be as acceptable and profitable as any thing I can send to you, to give you a sort of sermon or discourse on a portion of Scripture. It might depend very much on the particular portion which I should select whether my communication was edifying or not, but perhaps more on whether I succeeded to any extent in getting at the substance of the text. It is a very short sentence that I will cite, and it may be found in Revelation, 5th chapter, and first clause of the last verse: "The four beasts said, Amen." Who and what are intended by this wonderful vision of wonderful creatures, will come up as an important point to be examined. I should not examine it as I propose to do—that is, somewhat as a critic—were it not that the fact of their speaking and the thing that they said depends so much upon an understanding of who and what they are. In the first place, I feel bound to criticise the word itself. The word "beast" is not the best word here to express what was intended. I am not in favor of a new version, or an improved or revised translation of the Scriptures; but by some means we have been furnished here by our translators with a

very unsuitable and inappropriate word. It is a word not found in the original Greek at all,—neither is there a corresponding word that will at all admit of such a translation. The term *beast* belongs to the other side of the line, where brute force, persecution and cruelty prevail, and where a form of religion is maintained by the sword of civil government. There it is appropriate, and there we find the term uniformly and exclusively applied in the Scriptures. On the side of the Church we find not brute force,—nor yet any need of it,—but life, and spiritual illumination, and heavenly inspiration; and hence we are called upon to behold a mighty, wonder-working organization,—a kingdom that has the vital power, light and life, all within itself. The prophet Ezekiel, in the visions of God by the river of Chebar, saw, somewhat varied in description, the same wonder-working power, and by him it is denominated a *Living creature*. It is viewed as a unit, although having four faces,—while John sees *four living things*, each with one face, but nevertheless the same four faces that Ezekiel saw. The adjective, *living*, is in the original Greek, while the substantive is wanting. It is not there at all. And *living things*, or *living creatures*, fail to express the full force of the sentence. It was something full of life,—all life,—and full of vision, having eyes before and behind, within and without. This wonderful, wonder-working power, that moved under the direction and prompting of the Spirit, and the appearance of which was like a flash of lightning, has degenerated in our version of the Testament to a gang of beasts. I have been somewhat particular in getting away from those beasts, and getting at and up to that embodiment of life and illumination in whom is fulfilled, and by whom is uttered, this word that I have chosen as a text.

By this same Revelation to this same evangelist we find it declared of Christ that he is the *Amen*. This form of expression implies that there is but one *Amen*, and that all that ever was embraced in the term is fulfilled in him. All the prophecies and all the promises in him are yea, and in him amen. He is the answer to them, and the fulfillment of them.

All that ever Heaven decreed, and all that ancient prophets said, are verified and answered in him. Those four beasts, or rather this four-fold wonder of life, light and power, sets this forth: 'They say, *Amen*. I understand the gospel ministry represented by them. Not exactly the persons who are endowed with the gift, but rather the gift or gifts endowed. We may distinguish between the gifts and the recipients of them, as between the treasure and the vessels. They are presented to our view as in connection with the throne, and ever before it. What Christ is, they declare and shew forth. The *amen* that he is, constitutes the burden and theme of their testimony. Moreover, although they are somewhat varied and multiform in appearance, they are united in this testimony. It is one theme, uttered with one voice. Methinks that it takes them all to fully say it. A great variety and diversity of gifts are suggested in the diversity of faces presented—among them that of the apostles. Their boldness, their unblenching courage, their strength, &c., being set forth in the face of the Lion. There is also the idea of a succession presented—one face after another succeeding to the face of the lion; and these several faces running down through many generations; it requires not only all of them, *but all the time*, to get the saying fully said. The half has not yet been told. The prophecy is not yet all fulfilled. Many things are shut up and sealed, and will remain so until the time of their accomplishment. It may well be doubted whether Christ ever was, or could be, preached, any further than he is revealed in the fulfillment of the word preached. And this seems to bring me to contemplate him as the *amen* to all gospel preaching, in the experience of the believer. The word preached is fulfilled in the subject of Grace. He is the answer and *amen* to it. He is the living illustration and confirmation of it. We can not preach a salvation beyond what anybody has ever experienced,—and if we could, it would be useless. It would profit nobody. While a different face may characterize different periods as more prominent in the ministry of that particular time, yet they every one have four faces. All four of the

characteristics belong, in a greater or less degree, to the ministry of every age. We have said that it required all of them to say amen, and that it requires all the time. There is enough in it to keep them all occupied till the Son of Man come. They do not say any thing else,—and, indeed, there is no need that they should,—there is nothing else for them to say.

Christ, as the salvation that is wrought by the Spirit in the hearts of believers, is not only the amen to all that was prophesied, and all that was taught in the ceremonial law, but he is the amen to the desires and longings of the renewed heart. He is the living bread that feeds the hungry; the thirsty come to him and drink. The weary and heavy laden in him find rest. He is the opening of the prison to them that are bound. So, all the wants and longings of one passed from death unto life are met and answered in him. All the promises become yea and amen in him. The amen to the word is not alone in the wants of the believer being supplied and his distress removed,—the word being fulfilled in giving him comfort, joy and rest,—but it is a *living word*, and from henceforth it lives in him. He is an amen to it. When the ministry preach the amen, the subjects of grace attending are living epistles, and illustrations of it. It is a truth in them. They, in their experience, are witnesses to its truth. They are not only obedient to the word, but the spirit of the word is in them. What the word requires and enjoins is what they love and enjoy. They obey from the heart and in the spirit. The four living wonders (I don't like to call them beasts), not only say amen in the word they minister, but amen is said in them. They in their calling, and the gifts which they are called to minister, are an illustration and exhibition of the salvation they set forth. In their goings forth, in their ministrations, *the Spirit of the living Creature is in the wheels*. The form and manner in which the ministry is here presented as saying amen, is in response to what has already been said in the Church. A voice is heard, a united and earnest voice from all the hosts of the Redeemed, saying: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne,

and unto the Lamb forever and ever." This is already said in the salvation of the Ransomed: their redemption says it: *and the four beasts say, Amen.* We need not mistake their character, or their testimony. It is very plain to him that hath understanding, and right to them that know and love the truth.

I submit these things to your consideration in love, for the truth's sake.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

REISTERSTOWN, BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD.,

October 24, 1882.

*Dear Brethren:*—Sister L. P. McDaniel, of Acworth, Ga., some time since wrote me an excellent letter, asking me to say something about the place which the woman should occupy in the churches; and especially, as this subject is connected with Paul's language in 1 Cor. xi. 3-15, and in 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. As our sister has made the request, I feel like making one or two suggestions for our brethren, the readers of the MESSENGER, to consider, and hope that Sister McDaniel will accept what I may say, as a reply to her excellent letter.

1st. That which, in this and some other matters, may seem contradictory in the teachings of Paul, will appear so no longer if we remember that Paul's letters were written under many varied and diverse circumstances, and to various churches, whose manners and customs, in a natural point of view, were exceedingly diverse. In that conformity to custom and manner of living concerning which Paul said that he became all things to all men, we shall find the key to unlock some seeming inconsistencies in the teaching of Paul, at various times. Paul once said: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." In the light of gospel liberty, which was so clear to him, he saw how little, forms and customs amounted to, and that vital truth was EVERY THING; and yet, he often conformed to the prejudices of others, simply because they were matters in themselves of no consequence, though so many thought them important.

2nd. Let it also be remembered that the position of women differed in various countries and cities to whom he wrote. What a woman might do with credit and applause in one place, would create a scandal and a shame in another place. Now, Paul would have the Church avoid scandal in such indifferent things as these. They were to seek the advancement of the truth. They were to commend it in every possible way. They were to abide by the law everywhere, unless the law said, "deny your Lord." They were also to adhere to the unwritten law of custom, unless it led them to deny their king and Saviour. Take, for instance, our own land as an illustration of the above. It is the common custom of the people of the North, for ladies to take part in public assemblies and to speak from the public platform. In the South the contrary is the custom. So, in our Northern churches the sisters speak and pray in public with the brethren in the conference or social meeting, while among the churches of the South the contrary is the custom. In both cases the churches act in harmony with the general custom of their several sections, and act rightly also. If I were to write to a church in the North giving advice upon this subject, and to another church in the South giving advice upon the same subject, I should write differently; and I might, by one who did not know the different circumstances, be charged with inconsistency, while, all the time, I should be acting in a consistent effort to advance the welfare of Zion. In the churches to which Paul wrote there were various ideas as to the place of the woman in society, and in the affairs of life, and Paul would not have the churches shock the prejudices of men in these matters. In the North, the speaking of the women in our meetings is often of great benefit; but in the South, it would shock the feeling of the people, and so produce no benefit. I think these remarks will explain any seeming inconsistency in Paul's advice at various times, and upon other matters also as well as this, of the place of women in the churches.

3rd. Therefore there is no contradiction in the two scriptures at the head of this article. In the first he speaks of

women praying or prophesying in the churches, and gives directions concerning it as though he expected it to continue; and in the second text named he says, "Let the woman learn in silence," &c. See also 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. In both these last named texts the one idea is that women shall not be usurpers of authority, or set themselves up as teachers. But here is no denial of their right to engage in acts of devotion, as in praying or prophesying. The idea is that they are to keep silence in the house of God just as they are to keep silence in their homes, or in the world. And they are not to usurp authority in the church, just as they are not to do so in any other place. But this no more forbids them to testify to the grace and salvation of God than they are forbidden to praise their husbands naturally. Our churches all over the country practically acknowledge the right of women to speak in the churches; for when a candidate comes forward for baptism, women as well as men, are expected and required to speak publicly of the reason of the hope that is in them. And it may well be asked, if this be their right and duty once, why is it not again and again? for surely christian travail and christian testimony do not cease when one has been baptized.

4th. Our sister wished especially to know the force of the expression: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head; but every woman praying or prophesying, with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head." In answer I would say that I suppose the apostle to allude to the common feeling or sentiment among those to whom he was writing. In the same connection the apostle says that nature itself teaches that it is a shame for a man to have long hair, while her long hair is the glory of the woman. And he also says that if a woman will pray to God with her head uncovered, let her also be shorn. But no one would allow of this. It would be a shame for a woman to be shorn. Even so it is a shame for her to pray with her head uncovered. On the other hand it is an equal shame, the apostle says, for a man to pray with his head covered or shorn. This was the common feeling among people generally, and the reverse

would be esteemed indecent by every one. Paul would have his brethren observe in their walk and worship the decencies of life. If the congregation should, to-day, see a man pray or preach with his hat on his head, it would be regarded as irreverent, or out of place. So, if a woman is seen in public with her head uncovered, she would be thought out of place. Christians should not disregard the common customs of life. Paul found that there was danger that his brethren at Corinth should be so carried away by their love and zeal in speaking in their assemblies, as to forget and neglect what was seemly and becoming. There was danger that the women should think themselves loosed from the rules of propriety and from the respect due to their husbands,—and so, like a faithful watchman, he warns them of the danger. They should in every way show themselves prudent, and in all their worship nothing should be done to cause irreverence among the people. But if a man prayed, with his head covered, it would look irreverent; and if a woman prayed, with uncovered head, it would look forward and bold, and so all good effect would be prevented.

5th. I wish to add to what precedes, a few general remarks. There should always be a due regard to propriety in our public worship. All unbecoming behavior should be avoided. Every thing that is calculated to annoy or disturb others, should be laid aside. The minister in the pulpit, and the people in the pew, are alike waiting before the King of kings, and their behavior should be reverent and solemn. The reverse is dishonoring to God and brings a reproach upon his cause. If God is worshiped in spirit, he also commands us to present our bodies a living sacrifice. And if there be a proper reverence of spirit, there will be a decent devoutness in our manner of worship.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

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Would you pray more than others? then resolve more than others.

## ELDER HOLCOMBE'S EXPERIENCE.

*Elders Respass and Mitchell:—Dear Brethren in the Lord:—*  
 By request, I take my pen to give a sketch of my experience of Grace and Call to the ministry, if so be I have any. I have no recollection of my first serious impressions of death and judgment, but like the rest of the Adam family, my pleasures were in sin, vice and immorality. Time after time I promised God I would do better when I had accomplished certain things, and so many times were my promises broken,—not having the love of God in my heart, to overcome my natural inclinations. I was the youngest of three sons, the only children of my parents; consequently I was so petted and spoiled that I concluded I was better than a great many other people, many professors even doing little things that I would not be guilty of for any thing. I intended to be a Christian some day, but not such as I was then acquainted with; for they all lacked something of coming up to the standard I had set; some going beyond, and others falling far short. My dear old mother was a Primitive Baptist, and frequently her preachers and brethren would call and converse at our house; and it did seem to me that they all tried to excel in telling the most dismal and heart-rending troubles, of their doubts and fears. I did not intend being this kind (although I professed to believe their doctrine), when I became a Christian. I intended knowing all about it, and have no doubts marring my peace. In this way I arrived to the breaking out of our horrible war. In 1862, together with many of my comrades, I enlisted and went into service; and when in immediate danger, I would be powerful good, and, as I thought, prayed incessantly to God to protect me; but as soon as that apparent danger was over, I would relapse into sin again. In this way I passed through many conflicts, amongst which were the Kentucky campaign and siege of Vicksburg, Miss. In the campaign from Chattanooga through Georgia, on Sunday evening, at the battle of Resaca, I was twice slightly wounded; and whilst on the train leaving the dismal din of carnage and strife, I began seriously

reflecting on my condition,—the many dangers I had passed through, and the narrow risks of my life,—on that day twice pierced, either of which, save for an unseen power, would have sent me into an awful eternity; and then how should I have appeared before God in my condition! I shall never forget the horror that seized my mind! Instead of relapsing into my former condition of gayety, my sins began to arise in my presence as mountains; and with a renewed resolution to abandon them, I in sincerity breathed, “Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner!” A strange, lonesome feeling came over me that I have never been able to describe. I now thought, if I could only be by myself in some secluded spot, I could pour out my soul, as it were, in prayer to God, and he would hear my petition; but there was no chance now for that, on a train loaded with my wounded fellow soldiers; and seemingly to augment my trouble, some were cursing the most horrible oaths, seemingly to me, I ever heard, whilst others were piteously moaning, and others praying and begging for relief. Language fails me to describe that night, for the torments of hell were seemingly upon me. Oh! how I longed for day! for I thought with it would come relief; but to my surprise, when the sun arose it did not seem to shine as of yore. I thought, though, it was because I had lost so much sleep, and tried to persuade myself that those bad feelings were because I had just witnessed so much human misery. But this would not relieve me; there was an inward desire for mercy. I desired to be alone, to try and think over my past life, which was opening up to me vividly, and to think what I should do,—for something must be done, or I was gone! I stopped in Atlanta a day or two; from there I was sent to Covington, Ga., and hoped with that change to find relief, but was again disappointed. When night came, I slipped out and sought a secluded place, and there kneeling, tried to pray, but to my astonishment my prayers did not have the sound or the form I expected them to have, and seemingly, instead of rising to heaven, they fell to the earth, and I knew not what to do; my bunk now became my retreat,

when I could refrain from prayer no longer. I still thought over my past life, and concluded that I had trampled the goodness of God under my feet so often, and had promised so many times to do better and did it not, that I was given over to hardness of heart, and the day of grace was past for me. Oh! how wretched! In the midst of strangers, none seemingly wishing to notice me; not a friend on earth to commune with, or ask counsel of; and I now saw God as of too pure eyes to behold me in my sinful condition. When it was day, I would wish it was night, that I might again plead with God for mercy; when night would come, I would wish it was day—that surely I would feel better. I had access to a Sunday School library, and any thing that professedly taught godliness was eagerly devoured. I tried their advice to heal my malady, but like all my efforts, they were abortive, but caused me, if possible, to feel worse than I should if I had never seen them; for, thought I, now I know I am doomed to destruction, for that which did others good, makes me worse. I was now sure some bad disease was preying on me which would soon end this mortal life, and I could only acknowledge the justice of God in slaying me, for I had promised him so often to do better and serve him, and then turned again to sin and folly. But for all this the very breathings of my soul were, “Lord, have mercy!” Oh! now how I wished for some of those people, of whom I used to think I was so much better than they, to pray one time for me, but was denied that privilege.

I had all through the war cherished a hope of getting home again until now, but this hope now failed me, and I gave up all for lost. One night I was required to sit up with the nurse and assist him in waiting on a very sick man, who died in the fore-part of the night. After carrying him to the dead-room, it appeared to me that I was the next one that would die in the ward. I had no thought of seeing the pale sun rise any more (for to me it never shone with brilliancy.) I told the ward-master I was sick, and should have to retire. I wanted once more to ask God for mercy before I died. He,

not knowing what was the matter, administered a small potion of spirits, but it had no effect on my sin-sick soul. I again repeated my request, and he gave me permission. I went and fell on my bunk, but instead of praying to God for mercy, his solemn praises were flowing from my tongue; the joy that took the place of the horror, I never will be able to describe; that load of guilt was gone, that sorrowing mind was rejoicing; and it was all the work of God,—not for any thing I had done, or any other mortal man. In this sweet mood I fell asleep, and nothing disturbed my peaceful mind until morning; every thing appeared different; the sun shone as brightly as I ever saw it. I again thought of those old people that used to come to our house, and to my mind they were the loveliest folks I ever saw. Having no one to talk to, that understood my language, I sat down and wrote my wife a letter and some of my travail, requesting her to keep it to herself; but she had just been similarly wrought upon, and, of course, the news was more than she and my mother could contain. So, when I got home, it was noised abroad.

[Continued.]

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WEST GREEN, N. C., November 15, 1882.

*Dear Elder Respass* :—I send you the yearly subscription for the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I have been so unsettled and led about, or I would have sent it before. The Lord has, of late, led me through deep waters of affliction. My home is broken up. The Lord has seen it good to take from me my partner in life. She fell asleep in Jesus last April, the 10th. She was taken sick with the pneumonia, and in three weeks was a corpse, although she seemed to get better, and free of the fever; and the doctor left off coming to see her, and said all she wanted was nourishments, to gain her strength and rally. All was done for her we could do, but she suddenly began to grow weaker, and in a few days she breathed her last. The doctor was surprised at the news, and I did not think her end was so near until she attempted to speak, but could not. When she was first taken, she told me she thought she would get over it; but she said the Lord had been good to her all her days,—not one thing had failed in all he had promised,—and

He who has helped me hitherto,  
Will help me all my journey through.

She said but little the day she died, but appeared better and with a cheer-

ful countenance. I spoke to her, a few hours before she died (which I was not expecting.) She attempted to speak, but could not. I saw then she was near her end, and I spoke again,—but she took no notice,—but lay as one asleep, and breathed her last without the least motion of body, and her breathing grew shorter and shorter, and left a faint smile on her countenance.

She was brought to know and believe in the Lord when about sixteen years of age, and joined a particular Baptist church in London, England, and maintained the same faith ever since, and was a lover of sovereign grace; and her whole experience was, as she would often repeat,

I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my all in all.

Her age was 77 years, and we had been married forty-nine years last July. I feel it to be a great loss, but to her it is great gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." I hope I do not murmur, for I have been highly favored above many to be spared to live so long together, and to feel the longer we lived our company was a pleasure to each other. She loved peace, and would often say that temper was every thing. "But we are not our own: we are bought with a price." A good wife is a blessing from the Lord, but only lent to answer his own purpose. Still nature's tie, cut, must cause pain and sorrow; but not like those that have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly! May we look for that blessed hope, and be found in him!

I do not know where I shall be living the coming year, if spared; but you can send to the same address for the present—West Green, Greensboro, Guilford county, N. C. I have sold my farm, and my home is broken up. My children are all married, and live a long ways from me: one in Minnesota, one in Iowa, and three in Canada. But my mind is yet to stay in North Carolina. I have one son in Raleigh, N. C.

O, for a strong and lasting faith,  
To credit what the Almighty saith,—  
To embrace the message of his Son,  
And call the joys of heaven our own!

Yours, affectionately, in gospel bonds,

JAMES JOYCE.

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## APOLOGY.

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*Dear Brother Respass*:—So imperfect am I, that I can not preach a sermon, or write an article on a religious subject, that does not give me more or less shame when I review it. Not that I am ashamed of the gospel, I hope, but of *self*. So much is this the case with me, that I have frequently felt constrained to confess, that of all the enemies I have ever

had to contend with, *self* is the worst. James says: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." But *self* does not flee away; he is ever with us; our "vile bodies" being his dwelling place. The best we can do with *self* is to keep him in subjection, by the grace of God. As the poet says:

"But of all the foes we meet,  
None so oft mislead our feet,—  
None betray us into sin,  
Like the foes that dwell within."

In reading my communication in the MESSENGER of November, I see a couple of sentences that seem to savor so much of *self*, that I feel ashamed of them; though I can in all good conscience say, not intentionally so; and I hope you will accept this apology. First: "The preaching at the stand was generally pronounced able, and quite harmonious." Second: "The sermons were mostly short, and all of them appropriate, I think." I felt a sense of shame when I first read my communication, seeing that as it appeared, it savored of egotism, which thing I abhor. And when I read your editorial note about the Pulaski Association, in which the following sentence appears, "The congregation on Sunday was quite large, and the preaching, *to say nothing of that of the writer*, was interesting and comforting," I was the more ashamed. So I now ask the pardon of both yourself and your readers.

I know it is the duty of every minister of the gospel to study to show himself approved unto God; and by a good conscience and faith unfeigned, commend himself to every man in the sight of God. And this we can not do but by the grace of God. None of us can be so well informed and experienced as to be exempt from the obligation to "study" and "watch and pray," for these are duties of lifetime duration. And no doubt but our aged ministers now standing upon the verge of the grave, after all they have suffered for the cause of Christ and the good of their brethren, feel to express themselves in the words of Paul: "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Your brother in humble hope,

Bryan, Texas.

J. C. DENTON.

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AUGUST 27, 1882.

*Dear Brother and Sister in Christ*:—I will once more attempt to write to you. This is the third time I have made the attempt. I have felt so unworthy, I thought I could not write an acceptable letter to you; but ever since the day I was baptized, something has seemed to say to me, "Write," and I thought I could write to you as well as any one. I have tried, time and again, to banish it from my mind, but in vain; the more I try to banish the thought, the worse it bothers me. Although I feel my inability very much, I will try, the Lord helping me, to write a few words to see if it will relieve my mind.

In reading the letters in the MESSENGER, and in the *Signs*, I would

think, Oh! if I could write like them! what a comfort it would be to me! For I do love to read those communications. Their experiences are so good, that it makes me feel and think that I have no experience at all. I am made to think that I am not a child of God; that I have deceived the church and myself. Oh! what anguish of soul when I think how little I told the church that day! It almost breaks my heart when I think of it, and that is almost every day. Oh! wretched one that I am! But when the Lord shuts none can open, and my tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of my mouth. And, oh! my voice! none can tell how it sounded to me. I can not tell myself. Why did they receive me on so little? Surely they did not see as I saw, or they would not have received such a poor, wretched, and undone sinner as I am. Dear brother and sister, pray for me. I am so unworthy a name and place where they are. I am so little that I fear that I am not one at all. Oh! the doubts and fears that I have had since I was baptized! They are without number to me. But I have had seasons of joy inexpressible and full of glory; yea, I have been away on the mountain top, and I would think my trials over and I should suffer no more. But, alas! I would sink again away down into that valley! Oh! so low that I thought I never would get up again; that the mountains would come together round about me, and that I would be gone—yes, gone to everlasting condemnation. Then the anguish that would fill my mind! Yet in my extremity I could say—

“And if my soul were sent to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well.”

It would be no more than I deserve. I am so full of sin that I can do nothing good,—neither can I think a good thought. I can do nothing of myself. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” O Lord, how excellent is thy name! Yes, indeed; for he says: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Oh! what comfort in these words! And I feel to say that I have been with him and learned of him; that his yoke is easy, and his burden light. But am I fit to say this? I am so unclean.

Like one alone I seem to be,—  
O, is there any one like me!

I beg your pardon for troubling you with this letter, for it is written in such a poor, blundering manner that I suppose you will not get any sense to it. Your sister in much tribulation,

LIZZIE BARNUM.

P. S.—Sister Lydia received your letter to-day, in which you said you were anxious to hear from me since the Association. I have not been so well since, but I can not think it is because I went to the Association. I don't know whether I think right or not. Perhaps I may be wrong, for

these words would come into my mind whenever we would speak about it: "Mother was not willing for me to go." God is too wise to err,—too good to be unkind. I thought if I did not get to go, I would not get to another Association,—for my time seems short in this world. To me, this world is not a home. I have a good appetite, but don't seem to gain much strength. My cough troubles me a great deal, but I am willing to bear any affliction that He sees fit to put upon me. I am willing to go at His calling, or to wait my appointed time. I am waiting and watching for the time to come when I shall behold Him in His glory and be forever at rest. Oh! that rest that remaineth for the people of God!

I will close by asking you to come to our Association. We are still talking of coming to your yearly meeting in October, if the Lord is willing. I remain as ever your unworthy sister, if one at all,

L. B.

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MORRISTOWN, INDIANA, November 6, 1882.

*Elder J. R. Respass* :—*Much Esteemed Brother* :—According to promise, I will try to give you a short sketch of my visit in Missouri and Kansas. I left my home in Hancock county, Indiana, October 4th, for the purpose of visiting my relatives and to attend the Western Corresponding Association of Missouri. I reached Miami Station early Thursday morning, the 5th, and crossed the Missouri River to Miami Town, where the Association was held. I found Bro. T. A. Eastin living in town, with whom I took breakfast. I met Elder R. M. Thomas here, and he is the only person that I met at the Association whom I had ever met before. After breakfast I went to Bro. Mark Whittaker's house, where I made further acquaintance and had a good rest after my long journey from Indiana.

The Association met at 11 o'clock Friday. The attendance was small, but I found a body of precious brethren, sound in the faith, and walking in the order of the gospel. I made many acquaintances that I shall not soon forget. They have five churches, with a total membership of 163. The ministers that I met at this Association are as follows: Elders R. M. Simmons, W. S. Wells, R. M. Thomas, W. F. Jones, and J. B. Copeland.

When the Association closed, I went to visit my friends in Johnson county, Missouri; and on the following Friday, Saturday and Sunday, my father (S. H. Tharp), mother and myself, attended the Pilgrim's Rest Association, in Johnson county, Kansas, where we had a very pleasant meeting. We found this Association composed of only three churches, with a total membership of thirty-nine. At this Association I formed the acquaintance of Elders R. Flewnoy, J. J. Evens, S. P. Ramey, J. A. Peters, S. Grimsley, and J. Wellborn, a licensed preacher, and other precious brethren and sisters. The preaching at both these Associations was Christ and him crucified—the only way of life and salvation.

We took an early train Monday morning for Kansas City, and spent the day very pleasantly at the house of Brother and Sister Skelton, in Wyandotte (a suburban town of Kansas City.)

From there we returned to father's house. He lives in a place where the gospel is seldom preached. He has lived there for ten years, and in that time only four Baptist sermons have been preached near them, until I was there on this trip. The prejudice against the Baptists is severe in that place. I tried to preach seven discourses in the neighborhood. At the first appointment the congregation was small, but it continued to increase at each succeeding appointment until we had a good, attentive audience. There are now six Baptists in the vicinity, and I think that if they could be constituted into a church, with a faithful pastor, there would be some ingathering and the church would prosper. And I will say while on this subject, that father requests brethren to call on him when traveling through the West. He lives nine miles south of Holden, in Johnson county, Missouri. Any Baptist desiring a home in the West will do well to see that part of the country. He will meet you at the train, and take pleasure in assisting you. He may be addressed by letter at the above named place.

After a very pleasant stay with my parents, two brothers, an afflicted sister, and their families, I reached home on the first day of this month, and found my family well. I was from home just four weeks, tried to preach thirteen discourses, and made many pleasant acquaintances.

Your brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. N. THARP.

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GAP STORE, VIRGINIA.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I take this opportunity to drop a few lines to the MESSENGER, though it is with a feeling of solemnity that I do so. I feel so weak and barren; nevertheless God in his mercy has spared me to see the dawn of another year, and still I find myself a sinner, and if saved at all, it will be by the grace of a living Redeemer, one who holds the key that unlocks the gate of the kingdom of eternal glory and bliss, that heaven-born souls may enter in, with palms of victory in their hands, singing, Not unto us be the glory, but unto Thy name be all the glory! for there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved—only the name of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who suffered upon the cross for our sins. It was there that he paid the debt for us, to remove our feet from the burning mount, which is the law. As no man can be justified by the law, then justification must be obtained from some other source. Notwithstanding the law is good, it can not give life. Now, if the law can not clothe a man, then it must be done by Jesus Christ, as He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. How, then, are we to believe? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Then I understand that faith is a gift of God, and produces hope; hope makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. Every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. According to the word of Jesus, it is a plant that is placed in the heart, and will grow and flourish. Oh! my brother, what a sublime subject is the flow of salvation by grace! It is so sweet and cheering to the

people of God. It enables them to look to the source and fountain from whence cometh all blessings. Yes, to that dear Name which is sweeter to the traveler than honey. Why is it so sweet to the way-worn pilgrims who are seeking that bright land of peace and happiness? Because it is the foundation of his hope, and the lamp that shines upon his pathway, which he delights to walk in. He loves the footprints of Jesus; he loves to commune with Him in the field, in the workshop, in society, and in the dark valley of trouble and distress. It is then he will approach the holy Majesty of heaven in prayer and deep meditation. He will cry, "O Lord! if it is thy will, pray give me light and knowledge to follow on, and keep me near the bloody cross of Calvary, for it is that blood that cleanseth me from all sin." Such are the desires of a child of God. He loves the cause of his Master, and takes a great interest in the welfare of his brethren and sisters. We would not offend nor abuse their feelings in any way, but would condescend to share a part of their burdens, and thus move on in an humble manner, and strive to adorn our profession by an orderly walk and godly conversation. Much more could be said; but as the gem of light has ceased to brighten, and the hours of darkness prevail in one cloud over the universe, the all-seeing eye of Jehovah is, I hope, teaching me that there is a place where the eyes will not get heavy, nor the body be weary.

I will close by saying that you must, with all the brethren and sisters, bear me upon your petitions to a throne of grace, if my request meets your approbation; for I am nothing but a youth in age, and a child in the cause of my Master. I have been trying for some time to discharge that duty which I feel I owe to Jesus, my blessed Saviour, who, I trust, has bid me go tell of his riches and glory,—though it is, at times, a cross to me,—but if I am a called minister of God, which I sometimes feel that I am, the day will come when we will meet and be together forever.

Now I commit this scribble to your consideration. You can give it a place in your worthy MESSENGER, or lay it aside.

J. R. SPARKS.

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.—We feel grateful for the prompt manner in which many of our subscribers have paid up their dues and renewed their subscription to the GOSPEL MESSENGER. But still there are several yet in arrears from whom we have not heard in a long while. If they still wish our paper continued to them, we hope they will remit their dues and order its continuance; and if they are unwilling or unable to pay, or from any cause do not wish to take the MESSENGER, they will please let us know. From necessity we may have to prune our list of non-paying subscribers considerably. If any should be stricken off who wish the MESSENGER continued, they will please remit and renew at once.—EDS.

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors.

### THE FIFTH VOLUME OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

In presenting a few remarks as introductory to the Fifth Volume of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, we wish first to extend to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ a hearty greeting of friendship and love in the truth. Dearly beloved, we salute you as beloved of God, called to be saints; called with a holy and heavenly call out of darkness into the marvelous and glorious light of gospel truth. Unto you, dearly beloved, kindred in Christ, the blessed promises of the gospel apply; and we may well say to you, "Grace, mercy and peace, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, be unto you." God has so applied these gracious promises, and they stand secured to all the heirs of promise as firmly as the throne of heaven. And in order that they may have "strong consolation" in the faithfulness and certainty of God's promises, he has shown that he is willing to give them the most undoubted testimony of the immutability of his counsel in that of confirming it by an oath, "that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, they might have 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 entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 18–20.

In taking even a brief retrospective view of the past year, we have abundant reason to thank God and take courage. Notwithstanding the wickedness of man continues to be "great upon the earth, and the earth is filled with violence," yet the long-suffering and tender mercy of God is still extended, and even in temporal things he has, during the past year, seemed to open his bountiful hand widely in "giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness" at the pros-

pect of plenty of food for man and beast. At no time for many years have the toiling millions of earth been more bountifully rewarded. And should we not all feel, whether saint or sinner, very grateful to the God of heaven for these blessings and tokens of his mercy? Do not these mercies place us under renewed obligations and responsibilities not to misuse these temporal blessings, nor abuse the sacred trust committed to our hand, by oppressing the poor and needy by fraud, nor exalting ourselves with pride or vanity, lest a curse fall upon us? We may be sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that do such things.—Rom. ii. 2.

But, beloved, we have no hope that the ungodly world of mankind are, or will be, any more disposed to worship and serve God in spirit than they have ever been. The love of the world and the things of the world is in their heart. Nothing but the sovereign grace of God, freely bestowed through our Lord Jesus Christ, will ever cause them to hate sin and self, or love God and truth. But we are persuaded better things of the children of light,—even things that accompany salvation. Yet we know that they also are in the world, and have to do with the world and its affairs. They are, therefore, to be continually reminded to “take heed lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” They are liable to distrust the promises of God, and through unbelief distrust his mercies, or his judgments, and throw themselves on their own resources. Sometimes, under temptation, for the sake of supposed earthly gain or pleasure, they sin against Christ, and violate his command to “not forsake the assembling of themselves together” for the worship of God in their church capacity for mutual edification and instruction, which they so solemnly and sacredly covenanted to do when they united with the church. We have declared, dear brethren and sisters, by our burial with Christ by baptism, that we are dead with him from the rudiments of the world, and that we are risen with him “to walk in newness of life.” Have we so walked? or have we not rather

faltered at the promises of God, at times, through an evil heart of unbelief? Do we not need to carefully consider the solemn warnings our heavenly Father hath given in his word to "*exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin?*"—Heb. iii. 13.

Dear brethren, we should pause and solemnly consider what a dreadful condition it is for a Christian and church member to be in, when he is "*hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*" Sin is a very deceptive thing. It has a tendency to harden the hearts of Christians, one towards another, to such an extent, at times, that they do not enjoy each other's company, and thus they yield to the deceptive influence of sin that it is better for them to forsake the assembling of themselves with the household of faith altogether, and take up their portion in the world with hypocrites and unbelievers. Is not this a dreadful condition for a believer in Christ to get into? It surely is; and yet it is sad to think that so many are falling into this awful sin.

But some will say, "How is this sin to be avoided?" Dear brother, did you notice the text quoted from Heb. iii. 13: "*Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin?*" Can we not see, brethren, that in order to avoid this awful condition of being hardened and becoming cold and indifferent with regard to the cause of God, that it is necessary to "exhort one another" to love and good works? The Lord God himself has ordained this good work and made it the duty of his children to walk in it, *lest* they be hardened by the neglecting of it.

It is a day of much religious deception. Many have only a form of godliness,—a mere outward form,—but deny the power or inward principle to be sufficient to regulate a man's practical life, or form his general character. They call for coercive and prohibitory laws of men to make them sober, just and good; but as all such laws fail to give any active principle of obedience, the evil remains the same, or is increased. "Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes

cold." Many will not endure sound doctrine. They turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. Under this state of things, it is the more important that the faithful servants should be vigilant; cry aloud and spare not, showing Israel his sins, and Jacob his transgressions.

Anciently, when there was a general corruption and declension in religious worship, "*Then* they that feared the Lord spake *often* one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Mal. iii. 16. The very corruption in worship with which the world now abounds puts a stronger obligation upon the true disciple of Christ to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." They should often speak one to another in admonition, exhortation, comfort and encouragement, as well as in reproof and rebuke, if necessary.

But those who are the "salt of the earth" in a doctrinal and practical sense, are like those who were rebuilding the broken down walls of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah. The men are *few*,—the work is great,—and they are scattered far distant from each other; they can not speak often face to face. If, therefore, we can not thus speak,—which is generally preferable,—still we should highly appreciate the privilege the Lord hath given us, of speaking by epistolary correspondence to each other. We should be very careful to avail ourselves of the privilege in a proper manner, and use it for the mutual good and instruction of all lovers of gospel truth. In this way it is a great blessing given us in this day to have so many facilities of cheap and convenient correspondence, by which we may hear from the household of faith in every part of the country.

But while we believe that speaking one to another in the pages of the GOSPEL MESSENGER has been greatly blessed of the Lord to the spiritual growth and comfort of many, yet, like any other blessing or privilege which the Lord confers upon us, it may be turned into a curse to us by perverting it to an unholy and improper use. There is nothing that God

has created or given to man that is wrong, of itself. Every thing, of itself, is good, and fills a place in the scale of being, and in the providence of God. Nothing is wrong, only when it is perverted or improperly and sinfully used by man. And there is nothing, however good of itself, but what the polluted hand of man is liable to defile it, if he is allowed to touch it, or if it is in any way under his control. While we do not, therefore, feel any scruples as to the lawfulness of our publishing the GOSPEL MESSENGER for the edification, comfort and instruction of the Lord's people, we do feel much weakness, fear and trembling lest we might abuse, pervert or misuse this sacred privilege to the hurt of the Zion of our God. God forbid that either editors or correspondents of the MESSENGER should do such a thing! Not one unkind sentence or word of one brother against another has appeared in our pages, that we remember, since our editorial connection with the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Brethren, sisters and friends, will you aid us, and pray for us, that we may fill our place which the Lord hath given us?—M.

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### IT MUST COST SOMETHING.—2 SAM. xxiv. 24.

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#### THE CENSUS.

God moved David to number Israel because His anger was kindled against them for their sins. He gave Israel her first king, Saul, in the same spirit—that is, in wrath. But if God moved David to do a thing, how was it a sin? We think it was a punishment for their sins. And as for merely numbering the people, there seems to be no particular sin in that; it had been done before, and by the order of God, and more than once. It had reference mainly to military service,—all the males, from twenty years upwards, being enrolled in the service. Then, again, as to its being wrong to do a thing moved by the Lord, God may be said to move us by every command he has given us; that is, it is God's order; but we may be impressed to do it by Satan,—thus doing it in a wrong spirit,—which is disobedience. See how Saul sinned in slaying the Amalekites; and that was according to God's order. He spared a few of the best of them to sacrifice to the Lord, and Agag the king; and he vainly thought he had obeyed the Lord! The trouble was that he undertook a right thing in a wrong spirit; or rather with him it was, that he under-

took to do a thing for which he did not have the capacity only officially, and not in spirit. Officially he could order it executed, but did not know when it was executed. In another account of this same census it is said David ordered it, being provoked by Satan,—thus teaching us what spirit it was ordered in,—a spirit of anger from Satan against Israel. That was a bad spirit. We may rebuke and reprove a brother or brethren, and they may need it; but we may do it, provoked by Satan. We may be burdened by a brother's faults, but never tell him of them until by some chance we are provoked by anger to do it, when we reprove him sharply; our reproof then is abuse, from the spirit in which it is given, and will do harm rather than good to both of us. It ought to have been given in love and meekness, which would have been the prompting of God's Spirit, and not given at all if not in that spirit. Because we thus make ourselves transgressors; and may delude ourselves that reproof in such a spirit is faithfulness to God,—when it is to self, and self only. Pastors of churches are as fathers in a family; and if fathers neglect their children, they need not abuse them for vice and ignorance, but should take shame to themselves, and cover their own heads with sackcloth and ashes. And so of rulers of people; they need not expect more virtue in their people than in themselves, because that would be reversing God's order. The corrupt stream is to be traced to a corrupt fountain. If the church is disorderly, the charge is not to be laid at the door of the weakest members, so that the minister may pour the vials of wrath upon their heads only, but their disorder identifies him with them. So David was in this case identified with the people of whom he was head, in their disorder. All Israel was under a bad spirit,—and nothing right could be done in that spirit,—not even to confess sins and make sacrifices. O my Lord! how helpless and dependent we are! God required them to do right, and yet short of his amazing grace they must all have been cut off, root and branch, by the pestilence. David was strongly impressed that the Census was the proper thing to be done, so that he would not be dissuaded from it; but it was ordered in a bad spirit,—the prevailing spirit of Israel at that time. We may confidently say, that had Israel been orderly, God's anger would not have been kindled against her, and therefore no census would have been taken; or if it had, it would have brought no pestilence upon them. The Census, therefore, may be considered the outcropping of Israel's disordered condition, as a foul tongue is of a disordered stomach. If the body is in health, the tongue will be clean; the disease is not in the foul tongue, only so far as it partakes of the disorder of the body. And so it was with David; his sin was an index of what was in Israel.

#### THE PESTILENCE.

Should we consider the census separately and alone, it would seem a very slight cause for the violent pestilence that followed it; but it was like cases of persons in a very debilitated condition being killed by eating a very little bit of ripe fruit, the eating of which in ordinary health would

not have been harmful, but refreshing; so the pestilence resulting from the census showed the very debilitated state to which Israel had been reduced by long continued filth and uncleanness. It was an appalling pestilence. That seventy thousand should die of it in three days certainly indicated the sickness of hundreds of thousands that recovered, many of whom no doubt carried the marks to their graves. Should a wide-spread trouble arise in the Church now, as it did some fifty years ago (and one can not arise if Israel is clean),—a kind of spiritual epidemic, if we may so speak,—an infectious and contagious plague, of which many die or are cut off from the church,—many that escape will be more or less weakly long after the plague has passed away; many will be in mourning for lost dear ones; some will bear the deep scars of prejudice and personal resentment engendered in the fever; some will be dim of sight and dull of hearing save to prescriptions necessary only in a pestilence. Or if it be a time of war and bloodshed, many will continue to throw up earthworks and sound the charge and brandish the sword in time of peace, rather than pursue the fruitful works of peace in repairing the wastes of war. A strict observance of the religious economy given the Jews from heaven, was designed to prevent, and would have prevented, the outbreak of a pestilence amongst them, because there could have been no uncleanness to breed a pestilence. So of Christians now; they are taught and required to live cleanly—that is, obediently—both as churches and as individuals; and to do that, God's commands must be obeyed, not only in the letter, but in the spirit also. Sacrifices must be made to God. It is easy to sacrifice to self, but to sacrifice self to God can only be done in the Spirit of Christ. The more we sacrifice to self, the more unhealthy we become; it is sowing to the flesh, and from each handful sown we shall reap an hundred-fold in corruption. Thus we lay up great piles of filth, poisoning the atmosphere with malaria; and lo! the anger of the Lord is kindled against us, and none are prepared to sacrifice to the Lord in the right spirit. All breathe the same pestilential atmosphere, and become weak and sickly, or worldly. And though the pastor is not guilty as others, in the same things, yet the fact that his flock is guilty, condemns him with them. He has not given his life, as the Great Shepherd set him the example, for the flock. He has, perhaps, made his ministry a secondary thing. Therefore he will probably scold, threaten and abuse his own spiritual family, rather than entreat, beseech and persuade with all long suffering and doctrine. There is no patience, meekness, gentleness and bowels of mercy; these fruits of the Spirit have withered away, and the rank weeds of envy, jealousy, evil surmising, back-biting and malice have sprung up in their place; and there is, therefore, very *strict* tithing of mint, anise and cummin, to the neglect of weightier matters. There will be factions here and there in the Kingdom—some for one man, and some for another, and a few for Christ. So, many will become sickly—destitute of love and long suffering. Reproof will not be borne with, even when given in the right spirit, which will be rarely the case. Thus the

outbreak of the Pestilence is upon them, in which the most debilitated ones (the most disorderly and worldly) will die or be cut off. They can't stand it, and are ready to succumb at once. Nor will they feel that they have lost much in being cut off from the Church; nor will the Church lose any thing in losing them. They were already destitute of love to the brotherhood, and cared nothing for their unity, but were ready to go to themselves upon the slightest cause. O children of God! let the unworthy writer commend you to God and His word, and to unceasing supplication at His throne in this day of peril! O, that we might all "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God."—2 Cor. vii.

It was a time of awful affliction—such as no people experience save the people of God. The whole kingdom seemed doomed, and the sword of vengeance, as if suspended by a thread, was ready to descend upon them and sever the national existence of Israel. But

#### GOD REPENTED.

Not that God changed, but that his law was satisfied; and when that was done there could be no wrath, and the plague was stayed. This he designed at first, and when his design was effected his work to that end ceased. So God dealt with Hezekiah; he healed him of a sickness that was mortal or fatal, but for repentance and supplication. These were administered by the Spirit to restore him—but only when he realized the absolute necessity of a supernatural work in his behalf. Not only did God restore him, but he added to his years; and so he does to all his people; he gives more in Christ than they lost by sin. The sickness of sin will certainly terminate in death without the gift of grace in Christ; and the quickened sinner is made to feel and confess it; nor is it a fiction, but he is made to feel and acknowledge by the Spirit, the truth. God gives conviction, and God gives pardon; with conviction is death, and with pardon is life; but God does not change in this opposite work; it is according to his eternal purpose in Christ. It is as much God's law that the soul that repents shall live, as it is that the soul that sins shall die. Not that God repented as if he had done something wrong, of which he should repent and confess as a sin; such a thing would be impossible,—or that He changed. With Israel it was as day succeeding night, but God made both day and night,—both come and go according to His decree. God may be said in the same sense to repent every time he has compassion on us; because it is in Christ, and Christ is God. There is unity in God both in law and gospel. The plague is stayed, and it is his law that it ever shall be under such circumstances, when he is honored and Israel humbled. Then the fruits of the Spirit spring forth, and against such things there is no law nor plague. Though the pestilence stalk at noonday, it does them no harm. Thus David and his people were brought to

#### THE THRESHING FLOOR.

Here, or in this condition, he was prepared to make an acceptable sacrifice

to God,—to obey God in the Spirit. We would not try to make something of nothing; but to us, the threshing floor is significant of the condition of a penitent and humbled sinner. The threshing floor is the place to which the wheat and barley were brought in the sheaf to be threshed and winnowed from the chaff. With the sinner, it is the condition of tribulation; of heartfelt sorrow and genuine repentance, in which the pure word or grain is separated from the straw and chaff, or all fleshly works and dependence. Thus in a measure it represents Christ. It is the condition of sincerity in which all affectation and pretense is put away—and to which when the sinner is brought by the Spirit, he will make the sacrifice that God accepts. In this spirit we will reprove and admonish in love and humility, and here we will receive it in love and humility. Here we will confess our faults with penitence, making no attempt at self-justification. Here there will be no disposition to spare Agag and the best works of the flesh, as Saul did; but like Samuel, we will hew Agag to pieces with the sword of the Spirit; and to confess as Paul did, that God's grace does it all, and that we are the chief of sinners; and as David did, to take the sin of his people upon himself. Thus he is shown to be chief by the Spirit's qualification. To this place of humiliation the king was brought to make

#### THE ATONEMENT

for his people. He was head and chief, representing his whole kingdom, with whom he was identified in all their affliction, as Christ was with his people in all their affliction. Araunah the Jebusite offered the oxen and instruments to David as a gift, with which to make a sacrifice to God; but David was too wise, too much in earnest, to come before God with another man's sacrifice. He knew that such a sacrifice as that would profit neither himself nor his people; that the plague would still remain, though it be offered. Had David accepted his gift, the sacrifice would really have been Araunah's to David and David's to himself, the transgressor; there would have been no sacrifice to God at all. David was head of his people, as Abraham and the patriarchs were heads of their families; and none could take their position nor offer for their families but them, and they only for their own families. David was the fountain head from which purity and pardon must flow to the least member of the kingdom. To Araunah the sacrifice would have been an honor, but to David a humiliation; there could have been no fitness in the offering made by Araunah, because he was not head, nor under obligation as head to suffer for Israel, nor identified with them in suffering and humiliation, without which relationship the sacrifice would have been destitute of efficacy. With David, therefore, it was a sacrifice,—one in which there was humiliation,—as one bearing the shame of sin upon him. This is the spirit in which Christ offered for the Church,—and the spirit, also, in which the penitent sinner comes to Christ. Moses sacrificed the throne of Egypt to descend to be the leader of his despised brethren; to him it was a humiliation; but to one of them it would have been an honor, that would have

lifted him up in pride, thus showing his lack of qualification to do that which could only be done in humility. Christ humbled himself with his people,—became identified with them in all their sins and sorrows,—and suffered the death of the cross for them, and them only, as David offered for Israel, and Israel only.

Thus the sacrifice was made, and reconciliation to God ensued, and the plague was stayed—and David and Israel were one with God. The atonement was made; and as it was with Christ's sacrifice, so it must be in a measure with all

#### OUR SACRIFICES.

They must be made in the right spirit,—in the spirit in which Christ made his. As we are in the flesh, and that is contrary to God, so our service to God is, more or less, a sacrifice. Were we holy, there would be no opposition to God, and therefore no sacrifice in obeying him; but as we are sinners, we are commanded to offer our bodies a living sacrifice to God. Now, a living sacrifice implies resistance and opposition, and therefore we may expect in serving God, opposition from the flesh, the world and the devil. Therefore it is a struggle and a hot warfare to which we are called by the Spirit, as the children of God to make in this world. Some of them have fought until the sword clave to their hands; nor will we put this armor off until the struggle is ended by death. We are to walk as children of the light,—to live to the glory of Christ. As Garibaldi, or some famous Italian patriot, said on his death-bed to his son, "Son, live for Italy!" so the word and Spirit say to the children of God, Children, live for Christ; live for good; do good! do good to all men, especially to the household of faith, Ye are the light of the world, and it is not therefore your privilege to live as the world does. You belong to Christ; ye are not your own; ye have been bought with a price, with the precious blood of Christ. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."—Rom. xiv.

We are taught by the word and Spirit to count up the cost of our profession. If it costs us nothing, it is worth nothing to us. The more opposition there is in us to God—that is, the greater our pride, vanity, love of the world, honor and riches—the more it will cost us to live christian lives; and the more it ought to cost us, because we have got that much to keep under by sacrifices.

But we will here stop, hoping, the Lord willing, to conclude in another issue.

#### GREETING.

Beloved Readers of the MESSENGER, we wish you, each and all, a Happy New Year! Though with us, it seems always to be a time of trial, yet we would return thanks to our great Father that he has not utterly withdrawn his Spirit from us, nor his word and counsels. Many of our dear

circle have been called home to glory since our last New Year's greeting; and before the present year, upon which we are now entering, shall have run its round, some of us whose eyes are now upon these lines, shall have closed them in death, and we shall be gone to our long homes. We shall know the great mystery then; and it will all be plain,—so plain, that I reckon we shall wonder why we couldn't see it before. O, beloved of God! may you be blessed with the Spirit in great measure; that our supplications may go up day and night to the throne of God; and though we have trials, yet may we have Jesus, and in him double consolation; and in him the victory over even our last enemy—which is death! Pray for us. With unfeigned hearts, we say, The Lord bless you!—R.

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### MUST WOMEN BE SILENT IN CHURCHES?

[This was written in May last, but overlooked till now.—R.]

A question has recently been agitated in some of our churches as to whether women have any scriptural right to speak in the church in any sense or not. Those who would restrict and debar them from speaking on any matter pertaining to the discipline and fellowship of the church, predicate their views upon 1 Cor. xiv. 34: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Again in 1 Tim. ii. 11: "Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to *usurp* authority over the man."

Early impressions made upon the mind as to the application of any text, however erroneous those impressions may be, if long continued on the mind without being called in question, will be deeply-seated and hard to be eradicated. We know this to be true by our own personal observation and experience; and we can, therefore, the more readily sympathize and bear with those of our brethren whose early impressions and traditional training have led them into erroneous extremes on some points. But inasmuch as all the household of faith in the Church of Christ have one common and joint interest in all matters pertaining to her peace and welfare, let us calmly examine into this subject a little, and if in either faith or prac-

tice any of us are wrong in our views according to the divine standard, we shall all be greatly benefited by getting rid of our errors, and thereby be enabled to walk in the right way.

If women are to be silent in the church in the most unlimited and unqualified sense, then they could never be received into fellowship at all, according to a long established and well authenticated custom among the Old Order of Baptists, who require all who are received among them to relate the dealings of the Lord with them, and "give a reason of the hope that is in them." Now, if a woman is not "permitted to speak" in any sense in the church, then it would be wrong to require her to tell her experience, because she must necessarily speak *to* the church, if not as one *in* the church. There are many particulars in which there is no distinction of rank, age, nor sex in the Church of Christ. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ."—Gal. iii. 28. All have one life, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and are entitled alike to the Lord's Supper, as well as to have a voice in all matters of discipline touching membership or fellowship in the church. How dreadful would be the confusion and disorder of any church which would debar any of its members, male or female, rich or poor, young or old, from having a voice in the discipline of the church!

If women in the church are not to speak in any sense, and under all circumstances are to be silent, then they are surely in a most pitiable and degraded position, subject to be insulted, imposed upon, offended or trespassed against by any member in the church, without any remedy or redress whatever. Some brethren have, undesignedly, so misconstrued the apostle's meaning with regard to a woman's being silent in the church, that they say it is not her right nor duty, when trespassed against by another member, to take those disciplinary steps laid down in the 18th chapter of Matthew to heal the breach or save the erring member from his wrong. Is not this horrid discipline? Is it not well calculated to bring the greatest

shame, reproach, and the worst of disorders upon the church that allows such loose discipline?

If a woman is not allowed to speak, nor have a voice in any sense in the church, she could never be a competent witness of any disorder that she might see in any member of the church. Suppose half a dozen sisters were to see a brother drunk repeatedly, and were to hear him use profane, indecent or unbecoming language, are they not entitled to speak in the church, and have an equal voice with male members to testify to what they have both seen and heard? Are they not under the same law of Christ with the brethren? And are they not "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God?" Are not the sisters entitled to a voice in the church in choosing a pastoral supply? or in receiving, retaining or expelling members? Surely they are. Women have, in some instances, had much committed to them of the Lord, and as a consequence much has been required of them. They first proclaimed the Resurrection of Christ, even to his apostles, as they had been specially commanded to do. Some are said to have "labored in the gospel," and others to be servants of the church and helpers.

But after all, it is freely admitted that those texts forbidding a woman to speak in the church, have an appropriate meaning and application in perfect harmony with every other text.

God has not committed to women in the church the gift of preaching the gospel, nor the pastoral care of churches to feed the flock of God, nor to baptize. In all these things they are to be silent, under obedience to the law of Christ, which has given them their position in the church. "The Head of every man (in the church) is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man."—1 Cor. xi. 3. The term *Head* is here used in the sense of directing, ruling and governing. Christ is the "Head of all principality and power." Whatever power or right any may have in the church to teach, to rule, or to govern, they have received it from Christ, who is the Head of all power that can be lawfully exercised. To go beyond this power, is

to usurp authority, and thereby become a transgressor. If the husband exercise authority over the wife beyond that which is given him in the law of Christ, he becomes a usurper; and if the wife assume the rightful authority of the husband, she also is a usurper. Hence the apostle says: "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor *usurp* authority over the man." The man being the head in point of authority, the woman or wife is to be in subjection to that authority as unto Christ who has given it. As a woman is to be subject to the rightful authority of her husband, so also is the Church to be unto the authority of Christ. Where the authority of the husband comes in, there the wife should be silent. So, also, with regard to the exercise of those gifts of preaching and expounding the word which the Lord hath given to men in the church, women should learn in silence,—be submissive to the order that the Lord has established,—and not assume a power, authority or gift that has never been committed to them. So, also, with men; and they are commanded to "keep silence in the church" when they can not speak in a way to edify, instruct, or comfort others.—1 Cor. xiv. 28. In this sense, there is no doubt but that a few brethren, as well as sisters, would do well not to "speak in the church."

But a woman may lawfully insist upon the law of her husband being observed. She should not keep silence when that law is defied or set at naught. In worshiping assemblies, she is required to pray or prophesy with her head covered; and on all occasions to study the utmost modesty and sobriety, shunning all vanity of apparel as a useless and sinful adorning.

Whether men or women in the church, let us all be silent before the Lord; not assuming that authority which belongs to Him. "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord! for he is raised up out of his holy habitation."—Zech. ii. 13. M.

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We are requested to say Bro. J. C. Carter's address, and his son Stephen's, have been changed from Daviston, Ala., to Goshen Hill, Pike county, Ala.

## NEW YEAR'S GIFT TO CHILDREN.

*Beloved Children*:—Before this reaches you, the cheerful and merry Christmas, which children generally so much enjoy, will probably be past, and you will again be required to return to your usual business of life, or to your studies in the school room. If you have not imprudently exposed yourselves during the merry days of Christmas, and thereby taken cold, or made yourselves sick by eating, drinking, or some such thing, you will doubtless now feel refreshed to engage in your studies in school, or your work at home, with renewed energy and cheerfulness. Children will always be much happier, and enjoy life much better, to do what their parents and teachers require them to do, cheerfully. Your work may be hard, but if you will keep cheerful, that will make it much easier for you to get along with it, than for you to fret and cry about it. When children are cheerful, and show a delight in helping their father or mother, or in doing what they give them to do, they are not only happy themselves, but they make others happy also. But if they are ill disposed, lazy, crabbed, or quarrelsome, they are miserable themselves, and cause their *papa* and *mama* to see much trouble, as well as make everybody feel miserable who have any thing to do with them, or even to be thrown in company where they are. Did you ever see such children? If you have, we suppose you thought they behaved very ugly; and so they did, and we hope you will always avoid such a practice and set a better example.

In childhood and youth you are laying the foundation for future life in this world. Be honest, be truthful, be industrious and careful; avoid bad company, and speak no bad, filthy words; and above all, be obedient to your parents; and remember that the great God who created you and all things else, sees and knows you at all times and in all places, whether at home or abroad, by day or by night.

We hope, dear children, that the year you now begin may be one of blessings and mercies to many of you; and as we have so many things to do now, we will close this briefly written article to you by wishing you all a pleasant and "Happy New Year!"—M.

## AT HOME AGAIN.

Elders James Wagner and F. E. Lacy, of Middle Tennessee, after a three weeks tour of preaching in Georgia and East Alabama, left Opelika a little after 10 o'clock A. M., November 23rd, and arrived at Deckard, Tennessee, a little past 11 o'clock P. M., being something over twelve hours travel, and changing cars in Atlanta, Dalton and Chattanooga—a distance of about three hundred miles.

By a brief note just received from Elder Wagner, we learn that he reached home about 12 o'clock the same night, finding his family in good health; and the next day, accompanied by Elder Lacy, he and his wife attended meeting, at which both Elder Lacy and himself spoke to the people present, and had a very pleasant meeting.

It was our happy privilege to be with those beloved ministers from Saturday before the third Sunday in November nearly all the time till they were seated on the cars for home Thursday, November 23rd. Truly our interviews with them were of the most pleasant character. Being kept within doors by bad weather for two nights and one day at Dr. W. G. Taylor's, we had good opportunity for conversation on several important points of gospel truth, in which each one engaged in the most free, familiar and social manner, without the least jar or conflict of sentiment manifesting itself, on any point whatever. Truly we felt that we were brethren,—children of the same family, and of the same household.

The closing services of the preaching tour were held with the church at Mount Olive, Lee county, Ala. After Elders Wagner and Lacy had both preached short, but interesting discourses, Elder William Lively endeavored to speak a few words, but was so melted down as to render it difficult for him to speak. We also endeavored, in all the calmness we could command, to offer a few words of gospel comfort and encouragement to our brethren; after which prayer was offered by Elder Lacy, and we finally dismissed, feeling that it was good that we had met together for worship in the name of Jesus. The brethren tarried with us for the night, and "on the morrow" departed for their homes as above stated.

Our dear Brother Wagner, in his brief note, says: "Now, my dear brother, in reviewing the incidents occurring, and considering the pleasant interviews had with so many loving brethren, and comforting meetings in Georgia and Alabama, I feel to thank God and take courage, and with the psalmist say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name.' Since I returned home it seems that I appreciate the pleasantness I had with the brethren really more fully than when I was with them. Their God is my God, and we are really one people in the faith and fellowship of the gospel of the Son of God. I trust, Brother Mitchell, that I shall never be capable of such low ingratitude as not to hold in grateful remembrance the many acts of kindness to Brother Lacy and myself, and the great solicitude our brethren manifested for the peace and welfare of the Lord's people everywhere. May the sweet token of

God's love attend them all their journey through life, and comfort them in death."

In concluding this brief article, we express the hope and belief that the preaching trip of these beloved ministers was ordered of the Lord for good. We have not at this writing (November 30th) heard any thing more from Elder Lacy than what we give in the extract from Elder Wagner's letter. We hope soon to receive a compact and interesting account from him, of their entire travels among the churches on their late tour.—M.

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We return our thanks to our dear brother, John F. Burshaw, Wildwood, Sumter county, Fla., for a box of several dozen very fine oranges, and also several dozen lemons. They were the finest we have seen this season. If Brother Burshaw could have seen our family enjoying them, he would have felt good. Thank you, dear brother; and we wish we had something to send you besides the thanks of the whole family.—R.

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## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

### ORDINATIONS.

FORNEY, KAUFMAN COUNTY, TEXAS, November 9, 1882.

*Elder J. R. Respass*:—*Dear Brother in Christ*:—By an order of the Salem Church, I send you for publication a notice of the ordination of Bros. C. W. Harris and F. P. Chandler to the work of the ministry, and Bro. William M. Denton as deacon. The presbytery was composed of the following named brethren: Elders S. Croy, John M. Balch, J. W. Humphrey, and J. M. Humphrey. Prayer by Elder S. Croy. Charge delivered by Elder John M. Balch; followed by Elder S. Croy.

As ever, yours unworthily,

T. J. CHANDLER, C. C.

OPELIKA, ALABAMA, November 24, 1882.

*Beloved Brother Respass*:—I met the brethren, Elders Wagner and Lacy, of Tennessee, at Union Grove, and also at Mount Olive; and can say that I truly appreciated their visit, and was glad it was the order of the Lord's providence to send them among us with, as we trust, messages of love. I only regretted their short stay, and would have been glad for them to have remained longer. We had a good meeting at Mount Olive, and truly we can say it was good for us to be there.

Now, let me say that I do enjoy "*Rabshakeh*" greatly, and I do think you ought to bring it out in pamphlet form; for I believe it is one of the manifestations of the well instructed scribe bringing out of his treasure things new and old; and oftentimes such pamphlets do good when ordered of the

Lord. I would like to have one myself, and think that such communications scattered abroad will teach some people doctrine that will enable them to see their way out of error towards the temple of truth.

I have been greatly exercised lately on the magnitude of the work of the gospel minister. Your words at Bethel went with me, and have at last taken deep hold on me; and I never felt the responsibility of the gospel ministry as I have felt it lately. You said, "It was not a light thing, but it was grave and serious," which words I appreciate; and you may have thought they were lost, but not so. Now, I have been thinking lately of Paul's words to Timothy, "Give thyself wholly to these things; be not entangled in the affairs of this life." Now, what am I to do? a family to support, and little means; business failing to pay me any thing; all my time lost in business, and besides the worry working for other men and getting nothing for the same; and even then not making any thing by the failure of men to pay their obligations. Now, these are some of the trials of ministerial life; and the question is, Did I give myself wholly to these things, or did I give the largest portion to some other things? and have I done my whole duty? and can I ask God to sustain me in it? Or, is he cutting me off, that I may have these reflections for the good of the household of faith?

I was sensibly impressed a day or two since. I saw a vision, which I will relate to you, and give you my thoughts in connection. I saw in my vision, God's people carried away by the world, seeking its treasures and goods; heaping up, and worrying themselves because they could not heap it up fast enough; and neglecting their duty, living below their high privileges, and dying; death and sorrow; misery, poverty and ruin was upon them. I could hear their deep groans of sorrow therefor, and Ezekiel's dry bones was no sadder spectacle than the one I saw, of the Church in its present condition. I saw the hands of the gospel ministry tied. I heard their sad groans, and their worldly conformity, in a greater or less degree. I thought to myself, "Can there be a change? will there be a change? and how will it be brought about?" And oh! delightful sight! I saw it—it was sudden and it was grand—the most beautiful sight I ever saw. I thought of Milton's *Paradise Regained*. I thought of John's description of the New Jerusalem here on earth. God's children were moved, and then came to Zion—brought in the tithes and offerings; and the blind eyes were opened; the deaf ears were unstopped; the tongue of the dumb could sing; the lame man leaped as a hart; streams broke forth in the desert, and the parched ground brought forth water; yea, the wilderness and the solitary place was made glad for them; they lost sight of earthly things—realized they were vain—and trusted in the Lord—and he, even our God, blessed them. And I was in such ecstasy that I feel it yet. And it has produced a hope in me that the day will soon come when the God of Elijah will send down fire that will dry up the water around the altar and consume the sacrifice, and then the sound of rain, and then the display of His grace in the salvation of His redeemed will come, and He will save us from our present troubles, which seem almost to swallow us up. Is there an Elijah among us who will call upon God to send down that true and pure fire from above and bring about these mighty results?

I do hope, dear brother, the vision was of the Lord, and that it is a token for good to his dear children. Oh! how much we need a revival! Can we not pray, if we love Jerusalem above our chief joy, that God in the midst of the years will revive his work, when many of his children now may be able to realize that his people shall be a willing people in the day of his power? Oh! that he would grant it unto us! Although we are sinners and do not deserve it, may he not of his goodness and mercy grant it unto us! A true revival of his work of Grace! Then will the old and young, the great and small, the rich and poor, bless his holy and righteous name.

I feel this, dear brother, and I write it to you. If it strikes you with any force, notice it; if not, let it go along. I have nothing that I can look to below the skies but Jesus—he that is chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Oh! for the time of the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle to be heard in our land! When the fig tree shall put forth her green figs! I turned to read this quotation in Solomon's Song. I feel almost carried away. How expressive was Solomon on these precious points of doctrine! Farewell! I am now doubting the whole thing. Lord, help us and bless us, is my humble desire.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

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## OBITUARIES.

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### MRS. NANNIE D. PAYNE.

Died, October 11th, 1882, Sister NANNIE D. PAYNE, wife of Mr. Howard A. Payne, of Auburn, Ala., in the 22nd year of her age. She was the daughter of P. O. and Lizzie Whitaker, and died at their residence in Hogansville, Ga.

She was truly a lovely daughter, with a good native intellect, which had been well and carefully cultivated, coupled with a social disposition, refined manners, chaste and modest conversation, and best of all, while she was plain and neat in her apparel, her chief adorning was the "hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."—1 Pet. iii. 4.

This dear daughter very early in life became seriously concerned about her soul's salvation, and united with the Missionary Baptists before she had ever obtained any real conversion to God, or any evidence of the forgiveness of sins through the atoning blood of Jesus. But the good Lord was not pleased to leave her in that condition, but brought her savingly to a knowledge of the truth, and Christ was revealed to her as "the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely;" after which she felt that she was not among her own kindred in Christ, and on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1880, she related the dealings of the Lord with her to the Primitive Baptist Church at Emmaus, Troup county, Ga., and was heartily received into fellowship and baptized the next day by the pastor, Elder A. B. Whatley. Up to the time of her death she continued steadfastly in the faith of Christ, choosing rather to bear reproach and suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. But this tender flower must soon be cut down

and wither away upon earth that it might bloom and live forever in eternal day. She was married to a kinsman of the writer, Mr. Howard A. Payne, of Auburn, Ala., November 16th, 1881—a very nice and clever young gentleman indeed—and they lived in all the enjoyment of connubial happiness up to the time of her death. She became the mother of a still-born infant a few weeks before her death, and was thought to be doing well until a few days before she was called to bid adieu to earth for better joys on high. And never perhaps in our day did any one, old or young, meet death more consciously, nor more joyfully, as will be seen by some of her last sayings, which were taken down by Elder Whatley soon after she uttered them.

October 10th, her father said: "Daughter, will it excite you to tell you your true condition?" She replied: "No, pa." He then said to her: "You are very sick." She said: "I know it, pa. But death would not excite me any more than taking a cool drink of water when thirsty. Jesus Christ has prepared me for that hour, and will not forsake me." After resting a little she then said: "*Pa!* I am going to a better home than this." And, October 11th, with divine radiance beaming on her countenance, she smilingly said: "I see the Good Shepherd. He leadeth his sheep. Jesus is my life and my home. My life is in Jesus. Oh! I have a throne of grace to go to. Do not grieve for me. When I leave here I have a better home than this—where grandma is." And then addressing her dear, heart-stricken husband, she said: "Howard, you will be happy in that final day if you live right; and you, Mrs. Northern, have a Father of mercies; and you, Mollie," and then addressing a colored woman, she said, "And you, Caroline, also, if you live right." And then turning most affectionately to her grown sister, Mattie, she earnestly requested her to pray for herself. "Jesus," said she, "will give me grace in the dying hour, and not forsake me in the hour of need; that will be sufficient. We must all die. I could say thousands of things, but am too feeble now. Oh! I am so happy—I am so happy!" Speaking of a hope in Christ, she said: "Some say, 'I reckon I have a hope;' but *I know* I have a hope in Jesus." After resting a short time, with the same heavenly smile upon her face, she said: "I have been greatly blessed of God. He has given me a kind father and mother, a kind and loving husband, and best of all, a good hope through grace in Jesus; and He has always blessed me in life with the privilege of going to meeting to hear the gospel preached, and I am reconciled to His holy will to take me in His own time."

Sister Matthews, who had lost a precious son in his 22nd year, but a short time before, came into the room, and she said to her: "You, Sister Matthews, have had grief at your house; we all must have grief sometimes. Some people say a death-bed conversion is all a bosh; but it is not; you can't make me believe that a person will tell a lie on his death-bed. Jesus is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him. His grace is sufficient—

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

These cheering words were spoken for the special comfort of Sister Matthews, whose lovely son had been converted during his death-bed sickness, and he

was enabled to testify to the riches of God's grace extended to him in his last and trying hour of need.

Her earthly remains were followed to the cemetery in Hogansville by a large concourse of relatives and friends, where the burial services were conducted by Elder A. B. Whatley, who spoke to the comfort of surviving friends from Psalms cxvi. 15. The entire audience seemed very solemn and much affected. After these services the earthly remains of the dear daughter, loving wife, youthful mother, and devoted Christian and church member, was deposited in the grave, there to remain till God shall bid it rise in immortal bloom.

We extend to the son of our dear nephew, the bereaved husband, our heartfelt sympathies in the loss of such a worthy and amiable companion, and pray God that he, too, may know Jesus in the pardon of his sins, and be enabled through the grace of God to live the life of the righteous, that he may die their death, and his last days be days of peace and joy in the Lord.—M.

#### JOHN F. MARKETT.

DEACON JOHN F. MARKETT, of Providence Church, Sumter county, Georgia, departed this life September 3rd, 1882. He was born in Jones county, N. C., and moved with his father, Joseph Markett, at the age of twelve years, to Jones county, Ga.; from whence he moved, when grown up, to Upson county, Ga.; where he was married, in 1832, to Sarah H. Bozeman, when he moved to Crawford county. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church, 9th September, 1843, and was baptized by Elder Jack Barker, and was ordained deacon of Ebenezer Church, 10th April, 1847. In 1848 he moved to Sumter county, Ga., and joined the church at Providence, of which he continued an honored and useful member and deacon until his death.

We knew Brother Markett from our childhood, whilst he was a member of Ebenezer Church, Upson county, Ga., into the fellowship of which we ourselves was baptized. He was a man and a Christian of whom it may be truthfully said that he had but few equals. He was faithful in all his obligations, as a husband, father, citizen, neighbor, friend and Christian deacon. Such men are a blessing to the human family, and when they are removed from time, devout men can not refrain lamentation. His children are useful members of society; some of them members of the Church of Christ. He leaves a beloved wife desolate in her old age; but who, though she mourns his departure, yet mourns not as those who have no hope; because she is a Christian, and trusts after a short separation to meet him again. May the Lord comfort her and reconcile her to her sad bereavement.—R.

#### JOSIAH F. MATTHEWS.

MR. JOSIAH F. MATTHEWS, son of our beloved Sister Martha Matthews, died of a severe attack of cellular erysipelas at his mother's residence in this town, October 1st, 1882; in his nineteenth year.

"Joe" was a good, moral young man; industrious, studious, and much devoted to his widowed mother, and brothers and sisters. He never united with any church, but realized a clear deliverance from sin and condemnation

the morning before his death. The day before his demise he said to his relatives, "I am afraid I am going to die." His sister-in-law, Mrs. William Matthews, being present, and deeply interested in his future interest, said to him, "Joe, are you prepared for death?" He answered, "No!" His Brother William then said to him, "O, Joe! we can't give you up in this way; pray to Jesus; he is merciful, and will save you." He then became deeply interested in his future welfare, praying earnestly to the Lord for the forgiveness of his sins, and to be spared to see the rising of another sun. And from the confession he made the next morning, we are all fully convinced that the blessed Lord heard and answered his prayer. Being surrounded by his relatives and friends, he said, "I am better satisfied to die than I was; the Lord has been good to me; I want to pray." Thus saying, he got up out of bed, requesting the family to kneel in prayer with him, which they accordingly did, when he prayed very fervently for himself and relatives—praying that the whole of his mother's family might serve the Lord—praying especially that his brothers and sisters might serve God in their youth. After ending his prayer, he repeated the song:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!  
That saved a wretch like me"—

Being asked by his mother if he had a hope in Jesus, he said, "Yes; I have a hope in Jesus; he can take care of me." Thus "Joe" ended his mortal life in the full triumph of a living faith in the blessed Redeemer. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." May God abundantly bless his bereaved mother, and answer his prayer in behalf of the whole family, is my prayer, for Christ's sake.

A. B. WHATLEY.

*Hogansville, Ga., October 31, 1882.*

#### MRS. ELIZA JONES.

Sister ELIZA JONES, wife of Mr. W. R. Jones, died in Macon, Ga., Nov. 5th, 1882; aged 49 years, 9 months, and 8 days.

She was most of her life inclined to the Methodist persuasion, but of late years to the Primitive Baptist. She united with Bethlehem Church, of Macon, Ga., on the first Sunday in October last, and was baptized the same day by the pastor, Elder A. W. Patterson. She had a premonition of her death before she was taken sick. The writer had known her for twelve years, and can say that she was all that constitutes a good and noble woman. She was of a mild and gentle disposition, and beloved by all that knew her. She was a good wife, mother, sister and neighbor. Her sickness was very short—only five days; and she was a member of the church but five weeks when the Lord called her home. Whilst her death is a great loss to our church, yet we know the Lord's will must be done, and believe that our loss is her eternal gain. May her death be the means of bringing her bereaved husband and relatives into the fold of Christ, and thus the great bereavement to the family be sanctified to their good.

The funeral sermon was preached by Elder Patterson, followed by Elder T. K. Pursley; and though it was a very sad meeting, yet we were all made to rejoice; because the brethren both seemed to be greatly in the Spirit, preaching the truth so clearly that there was hardly a dry eye in the house.

May the Lord in his infinite goodness and mercy prepare the bereaved family to join the deceased in the realms of eternal bliss, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

F. L. BROWN.

## ELIZABETH CRYER.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—Suffer me to lay aside the usual editorial style of writing, and in my individual capacity prepare a notice for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, of the death of my beloved sister, ELIZABETH CRYER, who died of paralysis at her home in Elmore county, Alabama, November 13th, 1882, and was buried in the cemetery at Good Hope by the side of her husband, G. W. Cryer, who died with the same affliction several years ago.

Sister Cryer was a beloved and worthy member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Chaney Creek,—truly a sister in Christ, as well as a beloved sister to me in the flesh. She was received into the fellowship of the church at Providence, Russell county, Ala., near twenty-five years ago, and subsequently moved to Chambers, and then to Elmore county, forming many pleasant acquaintances and attachments to brethren, sisters, neighbors and friends wherever she lived, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her for her gentle manners, chaste conversation, and general christian-like deportment. She was the mother of seven children—one of whom was killed by lightning while the family resided in Chambers county, Ala., and another son (the oldest) died, as supposed, near Richmond, Va., about the first year of the war, and a lovely little daughter died at home. Two sons and two daughters, all married, yet survive their departed father and mother.

It will be seen from the above brief synopsis that notwithstanding our dear sister was blessed with the comforts of christianity, the fellowship and love of the saints of God, and the best wishes and kind deeds of neighbors and friends, yet she had at times to drink deeply of the cup of sorrow and affliction. None but a bereaved father or mother can fully feel and know the anguish of heart which one feels when a beloved and promising son—the oldest son—is called suddenly from home to endure the hardships and dangers of a cruel and bloody war, and finally to die unknown *where, when, or how*. And then again soon after to have another young and promising son, while in the field at work, taken in a moment by a vivid stroke of lightning, was indeed a trying and heavy shock to a feeble and nervous frame. It was a trial, too, of faith; and, blessed be God! her faith in Jesus triumphed over her sorrows, and she “endured as seeing Him who is invisible.”

It is often the pleasure of God to put the faith and patience of his children to the test of a most rigid and fiery trial. And for this reason they are specially reminded by a chosen man of God not to think strange of the fiery trial which is to try them, as though some strange or unusual thing had merely happened or fallen to them by some unappointed chance. “The Lord trieth the righteous.” The trial of their faith is exceedingly precious in the sight of the Lord. It manifests his image and glory in his chosen vessels of mercy. It brings those who are thus tried of the Lord to feel their dependence on his mercy and grace to enable them to walk worthy of God who hath called them to his eternal kingdom and glory. It brings them into the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings, and they follow those who through faith and patience inherit the blessed promises of the gospel.

On the morning of November 13th our sister rose early, as her usual custom was; spoke of the future, and gave some instructions as to how and where she wished to be buried; and about 1 o’clock p. m. she was struck with paralysis, and died at 9 o’clock the same evening! Thus of a large family I am the only one now living. How lonely I feel! having neither earthly father, mother, sisters nor brothers left me. May the Lord give grace to help in time of need!

W. M. MITCHELL.

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Vol. 5.

No. 2.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELD. MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

FEBRUARY, 1883.

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# The Late ELD. C. B. HASSELL'S FAVORITE.

1 { Thou dear Re-deem - - er, dy - ing Lamb, We love to  
No mu - sic's like thy charm - ing name, Nor half so

hear of thee; } O let us ev - er hear thy  
sweet can be.

voice In mer - cy to us speak; And in our

priest we will re-joyce, Thou great Mel - chiz - e - dec.

2

Our Jesus shall be still our theme  
While in this world we stay;  
We'll sing our Jesus' lovely name,  
When all things else decay.  
When we appear in yonder cloud,  
With all thy favored throng,  
Then we will sing more sweet, more loud,  
And Christ shall be our song.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 2. BUTLER, GA., FEBRUARY, 1883. Vol. 5.

HERRICK, BRADFORD COUNTY, PENN.,  
December 20, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—It is quite a long time since I have written to you, or heard from you, except through the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I have sometimes enjoyed very much reading your editorials there, and those of Brother Mitchell; and sometimes I have not been able to enjoy any thing of a spiritual kind. Such winter weather as we have here at times, is right hard to endure; but winter in the soul, is much more afflictive and trying. However cold and dreary the natural winter may be, we know it will come to an end at last, and be succeeded by the warm and pleasant spring. So I think after long experience we get to feel some quiet confidence, when afflicted with coldness and darkness of soul, that the Sun of righteousness will again break forth from the clouds and bring to us light, and warmth, and comfort.

“Rest in the Lord,” says the psalmist.—Psalm xxxvii. 7. But I find this the most difficult thing to do. Indeed, so far I have never been able to do it at all, except when I was just lifted up like a babe in the arms of infinite love and carried into that rest. My first experience of a hope of salvation was to find myself in perfect peace and rest without knowing how I got there. Since then I have tried many times to get into that rest, but could not find the way. But the apostle tells us what it is, when we have experienced it, explains its nature and blessedness, and also tells how we come into it. “We,” he says, “which have believed do enter into rest.” And then again, “He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased

from his own works, as God did from his.”—Heb. iv. 3–10. He also calls attention to David’s description of “the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works.” What a rest was this to our laboring and heavy-laden souls, when the righteousness which the law demanded of us, and for want of which we were under its condemnation, was freely bestowed upon us and made to be felt as our own, through Jesus Christ! Then, indeed, we ceased from our own vain works, and rested more perfectly from them all than any Jew ever rested on the Seventh day.

Since then we have been learning more and more about this rest. The whole gospel is in it. All scripture, and prophecy, and preaching have it for their theme. Satan has many times tempted us to believe that we had no right to it; that it would soon end with us; that we had much work to do in order to be accepted of God, and that we were really in disobedience and under God’s displeasure when at rest. At such times we have stirred ourselves up, and tried our best to do something that would please the Lord and cause him to restore to us the joys of his salvation. But we have always failed most miserably in every such attempt. Nothing but greater darkness and sorrow have we received for all such works. Then the old cry for mercy has awakened in our souls again, and we have again been surprised to find ourselves at rest,—a rest that comes in a moment, unexpectedly, and we can not tell why, only that “so it seemeth good in His sight.” A “peace that passeth all understanding.” It is a rest that has foundations too deep for Satan ever to disturb.

“Let us labor,” says the apostle, “to enter into that rest.” What is this? Labor to enter into rest? Yes, we know that rest. We have been in that field which the Lord hath blessed. But there are many foes who are trying to keep us out of that field,—away from that rest. So the apostle exhorts that we labor, or try to enter in. That is, keep away from the system of salvation by works. Turn away the ear from false doctrine. Remember the promise God has made to us. Remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. Consider

his unchangeable character. Look back over the way in which he has brought us. Recall the wonderful evidences of his love that he has given us, of which we have never been worthy in the least possible degree. When we are under the control of our unbelieving carnal nature, we fall because of that unbelief and come short of rest, as the Israelites were not allowed to enter the promised land because they disbelieved God's word of promise. When it is cold and dark with us, we have harder work to keep from trying to work than any possible labor would be. But that is what we must do. Labor to keep from depending in any degree upon any labor of our own. Even prayer,—formal prayer,—can not be used as a means of bringing us out of darkness. When the soul feels its need and realizes the Eternal Source of all help, we shall ask of him. When he gives the spirit of grace and of supplication, we shall pray. Every effort to bring any desired frame or feeling in the mind will be utterly vain, and is wrong. And yet I am often making such efforts. The only effect is to make me see more clearly my absolute helplessness.

Prayer, thanksgiving, praise, love, peace, humility, faith; all these are exclusively the fruit of the Spirit, and as such we shall be made to know them in our experience. No effort of the flesh will ever bring them about. We can not exercise any of them. They must exercise us. When the Lord quickens us, then we can walk,—run in the way of his commandments,—speak of his goodness and talk of his power. At any other time our words seem like the empty wind. "While I was musing the fire burned," said the psalmist; "then spake I with my tongue."

Well, if I keep on writing out of my own heart, I can only keep on telling—with a little variety of manner, perhaps—of the utter helplessness of poor, fallen man, even in his best estate. He is like a clod of earth for helplessness; only differing from the clod of earth in that he feels and mourns this helplessness and vileness. But my soul does rejoice to-day, even while I am held back in great measure from the joys of God's salvation, that I can tell of something besides that

helplessness and vileness. I can tell of redeeming grace and dying love felt in my soul; of rich mercy for all my unrighteousness; of the most wonderful compassion. I can tell of sweet peace and rest given to that same vile sinner; of a hope that is like a star for brightness forever set in the heavens that overarch the soul, and like an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. I can tell of the sunshine from the Sun of righteousness that falls upon that clod of earth, and glorifies it. I can tell of no good in myself—that is, in my flesh. But, "O, how great is the goodness which the Lord has laid up for them that fear him; which he has wrought for them that trust in him before the sons of men!"—Psalm xxxi. 19.

My desire is that the Lord may sustain you by his grace under all the afflictions you have had, and continue to direct and uphold you and Brother Mitchell in your work and labor of love. With love to you and Sister Respass, and to all the dear kindred in Christ, I remain your unworthy brother and fellow laborer in the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

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### ELDER HOLCOMBE'S EXPERIENCE.

[Concluded.]

There is but little more during the war of interest (if any is); but after I returned home, there were fishermen and hunters after me from every direction. I had grown so lukewarm or something, I almost denied any change at all, and did my best to throw it away; but it was stamped on my memory in indelible letters; but because I saw no image and heard no voice, as I concluded others did, I could not think it worth having. But many of the scenes during the three months of my low estate are just as plain to-day as then. But I now could see a beauty in the plan of redemption; primitive preaching was plain; and all which would have been hidden with me, if I had not written home my condition. I had a longing desire to be with them, but I found now that I was the poorest of the poor, and a perfect doubting Thomas,

after all of my youthful boasts that I would never be this kind. Texts of scripture would apply to the mind, and the mind would exercise upon them, and I would think if I was just fit to be with the Old Baptists and just such a preacher as some of them, what a joy it would be! But I visited one conference, and when the opportunity was offered for reception of members, my feelings were indescribable; so I resolved to go on conference days no more; but Baptism was on my mind by day and by night, and my unworthiness also.

Finally I resolved to stand still and join no church until I had brighter evidences of my acceptance in the beloved. This was on Thursday. On Sunday evening following there was to be meeting in my neighborhood, and of course I could with propriety go there. When preaching closed old father Speight said, "they were going to give an opportunity to any that wished to become identified with the church at Piney-woods, as there was a majority of the church present." Oh, thought I, what would I give to be out of the house! but, as there was no chance to get out, I would give him my back, for I was determined on my course. When the brethren began to sing, I heard some one behind me begin to talk, which caused me to look in that direction, and I saw my wife going up. I knew no more until I was there; then this thought occurred to the mind, "Here you are; what have you got to tell?" When my wife was through talking, I would have given all I possessed in this world if I could have talked just like her. I told the brethren my feelings, and to my astonishment they received me without one question. I thought, perhaps, they received me on account of my family. When I was baptized another circumstance occurred that helped this belief: old Elder Speight baptized me, and from some cause he laid me under the water with my head down stream,—a thing I had never seen done in my life,—which caused me to think, assuredly I am a hypocrite, and he knows it, and has baptized me contrary to custom, that all may know there is something wrong. Truly I was led up out of the water into the wilderness and tempted of the devil forty days! If there

ever was a miserable wretch it was me! I finally concluded I would go next meeting and tell the church I was deceived, and had deceived them, and ask them to erase my name from the book, when, in a moment, in thunder tones in my mind, this sentence sounded: "Was not the meek and lowly Saviour tempted in the wilderness? are you better than he?" I would not for all the world have my name erased, and, like one of old, cried, "It is enough; I will doubt no more."

My mind now began to exercise more forcibly on the Scriptures, and occasionally a brother would drop a hint that he thought I would have something to do in that direction. At first all this did not give me much trouble, for I loved to meditate on the sweet promises to the Zion of our God; and as for my impressions, others have the same, I suppose; and I know I am every way incapacitated to exercise in public. Finally it was about all I could think about, by day or by night, and frequently when I was asleep I would have to rise before an audience and address them; sometimes I would have the greatest liberty. Finally my wife told me I had just as well tell it out publicly as to preach so in my sleep; which, together with the weight upon my mind, almost killed me. How could I, so ignorant, so unlearned, so timid or bashful, attempt such an important work! Finally our pastor nearly every meeting would say in the course of his remarks that he was getting old; and it seemed to grieve him that he could not see where his mantle would fall; which would crush me in feelings beyond description. I finally concluded I had rather die than make the attempt, and it looked like I could not live without it; what shall I do? Death was presented to me, and I shrank from it! In this awful extremity I made the venture and found relief, but after looking over my weak effort it was so imperfect I thought I would try no more. My brethren, as soon as I would submit, licensed me, and I moved forward from necessity; frequently hearing an able minister preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, I will think there is no use for me to try any more to comfort the little lambs, but I am again found trying to defend the cause of Christ, console

his children, and exhort his delinquent little ones to a discharge of their duties, just working out what he works in them to perform. Three churches sent requests on the same day for my ordination, which accordingly took place a short time after. Sometimes I think God has blessed my labors; then I have other thoughts to the reverse. And now in conclusion I will say with the eminent apostle Paul: "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" for when I would do good, evil is present with me.

Now, dear brethren Editors, I submit this entirely to your judgment. As ever, yours in hope of eternal life,

GEORGE M. HOLCOMBE.

Carrollton, Ga., Nov. 5, 1882.

MANY, SABINE COUNTY, LA., Oct. 21, 1882.

*Elder G. W. Harrell:—Dear Brother:—*Since your remark at the Association at Middle Creek, and since our last meeting, when you stated to us that thirty-six millions of heathen were sinking annually into eternal woe because we Baptists failed in our duty, I have had many thoughts; and as you cited us to no scripture to prove your statement, I would ask you to do so. If God has placed the salvation of souls in our care, he has certainly so stated in his word; and if you can, please tell us where to find it. The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." Also the angel said to the shepherds, "Unto you is born a Saviour." And Christ himself said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do;" which he repeated on the cross, saying, "It is finished." The apostle also teaches us, saying, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." And now the question arises, did he know those thirty-six millions of heathen that are annually lost by our neglect? And further, my brother, if our neglect is the cause of the eternal destruction of so vast a number of souls, how can we escape and their blood, like Abel's, crying out against us?

But the old proverb is that "charity begins at home," and if we have the power to save souls we should certainly begin the work here at home in Sabine county, for it is to be feared that many here are in great need of salvation. But I know that I can not save them, for I have been trying to preach and teach over twenty years, and must therefore leave them in the hand of God. The new covenant says: "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest."

Now, my understanding is that Jesus saved all his people, because that was his mission; and of it he says, "I have finished the work;" of which work the apostle says that by "one offering He hath forever perfected them that are sanctified"—chosen, set apart, made holy by the grace of God—for the Christ of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Then what is there of it that is of man? But the wise man said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it;" but often we see that parents, after training their children most morally, have to mourn their bad conduct; but the child of grace, trained by the Spirit, is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. But I believe it is the duty of parents to set good examples before their children, and teach them to be virtuous and honest, and to pray for them and restrain them as far as possible; but I am far from believing that, when they have done all they can, that they make christians of them; for Christ teaches, both in word and spirit, that "Ye must be born again." I know that Paul says that the "gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and not to the unbeliever; and it takes the power of the Spirit to apply it. The sinner must be quickened by the Holy Spirit; previous to which they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hearts and do not understand. They are but natural men, and the "natural man

receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again, the children of God are born of God; not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God.

So, I am far from believing that all the money and means devised by man will ever save a soul and prepare him for heaven; yet I believe it is our duty to preach to all who come to hear us, and that God will apply it to whomsoever he will. The commission, I have thought, was definite, and restricted in a sense to the apostles, which they fulfilled; and I cite you to the following scriptures—Rom. x. 18; xvi. 26; Col. i. 6–23.

Then we should preach the gospel; feed the flock of God; and why should we go to men's reports rather than to the word of God? But it we should study, praying God for the light of the Spirit to teach us. Oh! may we be guided by his word, sustained by his Spirit, and led into duty's ways, and finally received into glory, for Christ's sake, is my prayer.

Yours to serve,

E. DUGGAN.

*Elder Respass:—Dear Brother:—*At the request of Alex. Harris and others, I send you the above letter, written to Elder Harrell, a Missionary preacher, with which denomination I am also identified; and I wished him to fully understand that I did not believe in his monied and man-made institutions.

E. D.

Dear Brother, your people are the Primitive Baptists; and why stand ye without? Come and go with us.—R.

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## PRAYER.

BY ELDER J. H. PURIFOY.

[Concluded.]

*Editors Gospel Messenger:—*I wish in this article, in continuing the subject of Prayer, to show what acceptable prayer in the sight of God is; for it is evident that all the prayers of God's people are not acceptable in his sight, and do not find favor with him. An apostle says, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." Such are all formal and carnal prayers.

Prayer to God is a petition. Every petition, therefore, which is sent up to a throne of grace, by his own people, in order to receive favor and acceptance of God, must be offered—

1st. *In the Name of Jesus.*

2nd. *Without enmity or malice against any.*

3rd. *In faith, without wavering or doubting.*

4th. *In accordance with the will of God.*

It is no trivial matter to approach God in prayer. It is a great honor and privilege that God has conferred upon his people through Christ. And, as they are saved upon his merits and not upon their own, they can not find favor nor receive an answer to their petitions if they are presented in their own name instead of the name of Jesus. Nothing we can do,—no matter how good it may appear to us,—can give us favor in God's sight so as to induce him to hear and answer our prayers on account of good works performed by us. The merit of being heard and answered does not rest upon good works, nor the faithful discharge of christian duty, but in Christ; for when we do all that we can, we have only done that which was our reasonable duty, and are still unprofitable servants, looking from a human standpoint. There is nothing in all this meritorious, because our eternal salvation is not based upon such an uncertain foundation, but upon the all-worthy merits of the Son of God, our Mediator. As our salvation is by him and through him, we must, in order to be heard and answered, pray to God alone in the name of Jesus, and look for an answer through him, and on account of what he has done for us, and not on account of what we have done for him. "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."—John xiv. 14; also verse 13; and chap. xv. 16; and xvi. 23, 24. The people of God are created new creatures in Christ unto good works, that they should walk in them, and thus show their faith by their works. If they fail to do this, then they have no assurance that God will hear their prayers when offered in the name of Jesus even. For the apostle John says: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that

are pleasing in his sight.”—1 John iii. 22. How, then, can we expect to receive an answer to our prayers when we do not those things that please our heavenly Father? The blessings of God come down upon the obedient child of God; but the *rod* of correction upon the disobedient.

In the next place, let us look not for an answer to prayer, even in the name of Jesus, and when seemingly faithful in duty, when we have aught against any—especially against the household of faith. If we can not approach God in the spirit of forgiving one another, it is needless to approach him at all, for he will not regard our petition. The Saviour himself was explicit and emphatic on this point, as recorded by Mark. Thus: “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark xi. 25, 26. What is it to forgive? Why, says one, “I can forgive, but I can not *forget*.” That is no forgiveness at all; it is only a delusion; for way down in the heart there is a lingering grudge, the sting of malice and ill will, as well as an ill feeling towards the offender. We must forgive in the sense of forgetting or enduring wrong. God forgave his people in the sense of forgetting their iniquities, and he said that he would remember them no more. For Jesus’ sake, God has forgiven all the trespasses of his people in this way, and ever looks upon them through their Mediator, as pure and as spotless as if they had never sinned. So we are required to forgive one another in the same way. To the unregenerate professor of religion, and the disobedient, fleshly-minded child of God, this seems impossible; but to the faithful, obedient and tried children of God, it is not only possible to forgive in such manner, but it becomes a pleasant privilege with them, and they freely forgive injuries and endure wrong, whether the offender asks forgiveness or not. Those who have not the spirit of Christ, *can not* do this; and the disobedient, fleshly, self-willed child of God, *will not*, until he is whipped into subjection by the severe strokes of the rod of correction that God

lays heavily upon him. When we approach a throne of grace, then, let us freely forgive, if we have aught against any, if we expect an answer to our prayer.

In the next place, if we expect our prayers to be answered, we must ask in faith, without wavering or doubting. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark xi. 24; James i. 5-7.

In the last place, God will not hear any prayer that is not in accordance with his will. What we ask, therefore, in the name of Jesus, and in a forgiving spirit, and in the discharge of every duty, without wavering or doubting, must also be in accordance with God's will. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."—1 John v. 14; see 15th verse also. But how are we to know what will be according to His will? We can not know; neither is it required of us to know. How, then? Why, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."—Rom. viii. 26, 27. Having, then, the Spirit to help our infirmities, and Jesus our Mediator and High Priest, in whose name we can make our requests known to God, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. iv. 16. Is not this a time of great need throughout the borders of Zion? Is it not a time of need with every child of God? We need more humility, more faith, more zeal according to knowledge, more forbearance, more gentleness, more abounding in the works of the Lord. We need the full exercise of a forgiving spirit, and the exhibition of more *love* for one another. With these wants supplied, there would be less coldness in our churches; strife and discord would disappear, and joy and gladness would fill

our hearts in the place of gloom, and sadness, and disappointments. Forget not, and neglect not the throne of grace. For, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."—Psalm xxxiv. 15.

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### DID GOD MAKE SOME TO BE DAMNED?

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Having been for many years an advocate of God's election of his people to salvation, as taught in the Scriptures, I have frequently been asked by persons of a good natural judgment, if I believed that God made a certain part of mankind to be saved, and another part to be damned. Such a question signifies that men understand our teaching thus, and shows that they are in need of instruction respecting the simplest matters connected with our state as men, and with our recovery from the bondage of sin. Hence for us, as ministers, to soar high, endeavoring to explain points inexplicable, does but develop the vanity of our fleshly minds, and leaves the world and many of the saints without that they mostly need—viz., instruction in the simple and plainly revealed truths of the gospel. It is not the incomprehensible, hidden mysteries of God and godliness that the enemies of truth are endeavoring to deface and defame, but plainly revealed truth—election, for instance, and other points in harmony therewith. Satan and his ministers are never better pleased than when they can prejudice the mind of a saint against God's election by making the impression that the principle supposes that God made a certain few to be saved, and all others to be absolutely damned. A blind clergy and people seem not to have considered (I do not say they are qualified to consider,) that man, considered simply as a creature of God, was not a subject, or capacitated for either heaven or hell. I understand, and venture to affirm, that he was, originally, just such a creature as God designed him to be—viz., an innocent and rational man—and hence a subject of government, but not a subject of wrath and judgment, originally. Nor was he, being of the earth and

earthly, a subject, or qualified for the spiritual heavens—the final home of all the redeemed. It may be supposed that there was in the law given to Adam an implied promise of life had he obeyed the law; but that being admitted, he could only have lived as he was, a man of earth, adapted to the earth, but in nowise qualified for the high heavens, nor subject to the lower regions of darkness. Then, if it were asked a thousand times over whether God made men to be damned, we should give a negative answer, and still glory in God's election, which appoints its subjects to a much higher bliss than earth could afford.

It would seem that a rational judgment would qualify men to distinguish between the act of God in making man, and the act of man in transgressing the law, whereby he made himself a subject of wrath. Not only some, but had it pleased the Lord, his justice would as well have approved the condemnation of all the children of Adam as any part of his race; and that the Sovereign Creator chose, redeemed, and regenerates a given number of those apostates, thus securing, entitling and preparing them for a heavenly and eternal home with him in glory—this, I say, furnishes no just ground of complaint of such as receive but a just recompense of wrath for their wickedness, which all must have shared apart from the election of the Father, the redemption of the Son, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Thus, I would impress the idea that the condemnation of men is not a result of their original make, but of their own wickedness after. If I should be asked a thousand times over why the prophet was sent to but one widow, when there were many others in like condition; or why there was but one leper cleansed in the days of Naaman, there being many others beside; or why Christ would not pray for the world, but only for some the Father has given him out of the world; or why the Father has hidden the mysteries of his kingdom and his grace from “the wise and prudent,” who imagine themselves wise enough to comprehend, and holy enough to receive them—I say I have no answer for such questions except that given by our Saviour: “Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.”

JOHN ROWE.

SPRINGDALE, WASHINGTON COUNTY, ARK.,

December 5, 1882.

*Elder Respass*:—*Dear Brother*:—By request of Stony Point Church, I send you, for publication in the GOSPEL MESSENGER, the ordination of Bro. R. D. Boydston to the gospel ministry, who was set apart by the church at her November meeting, to be ordained at her December meeting, which was held first Saturday and Sunday before. The church sent to her sister churches for official aid.

Providence Church responded by sending Elders B. Mahurin and J. Goad, and Deacons T. Williams and W. M. Ford. Big Sugar Creek Church, Elder M. M. Casebier and Deacon T. Johnson. Little Flock Church, Elder Z. Stephens and Deacon S. Garrett. Her own church, Elder Asa Boydston and Deacons G. Dodson and A. Stephens.

Elder M. M. Casebier preached on the occasion; after which the church presented Bro. R. D. Boydston to the presbytery. The presbytery then organized by electing A. Boydston, Moderator; and S. Garrett, Clerk; and Z. Stephens, foreman of examination. Whereupon Bro. R. D. Boydston was called upon to give a statement of his call to the ministry, and doctrinal views. The presbytery being fully satisfied, proceeded to the ordination by J. Goad announcing the hymn—

“If on fair Zion’s walls”—

Prayer by A. Boydston, and the laying on of hands by the presbytery; after which the right hand of fellowship was extended by the presbytery and the church. The presbytery then adjourned. Benediction by M. M. Casebier.

ASA BOYDSTON, *Moderator*.

S. GARRETT, *Clerk*.

From your unworthy brother, ASA BOYDSTON.

We learn that Elder D. W. Simmons, of Crawford county, Ga., is dead.

Elder Jehu Clark, of Virginia, is dead. He was for many years editor of *Zion’s Advocate*.

EQUALITY, ALA., October 5, 1882.

*Elder Wm. M. Mitchell*:—*Dear Brother*:—If I correctly understand a request in the last GOSPEL MESSENGER, you wish to know the health and condition of the churches. I am serving three churches: Fish Pond, Bethel and Chaney Creek, the first of which is in a healthy and prosperous condition. Five have been received by experience and baptism since July last, and the prospect is good for others yet to come soon. But, my dear brother, such are my infirmities of age, blindness, affliction of body and general debility, that I have given up the pastoral charge of the church at Fish Pond, but I hope the good Lord will continue his blessing and add to her such as he would have to be saved. I have had the pastoral care of Fish Pond for *twenty-three* successive years, but can not serve any church much longer, as I am now in my 77th year. Bethel Church is in peace, but no accessions of late. Chaney Creek is revived and in a healthy condition, and has had six accessions to her number since last August,—all by experience and baptism,—and there is a good prospect for more to be brought into the fold soon. And, notwithstanding all my infirmities and afflictions, I have agreed to continue my pastoral services with Chaney Creek another year.

I would be truly glad if you could visit us again at this church. I desire to say many things to you, but for the present must close.

Very affectionately, your brother in gospel bonds,

BENJAMIN JOWERS.

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Whilst we do not issue the MESSENGER semi-monthly, not being able to do so from our present list, it will be observed that we have considerably enlarged it, having had in the January issue forty-eight pages including cover, making it thus the cheapest publication probably in the United States.

Elder Hudson Temple's address is changed from Commissioner, Ga., to Bay Branch, Emanuel county, Ga.

REIDSVILLE, GEORGIA, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Having before written of my Experience from boyhood until I joined the church, I now desire, the Lord helping, to write something of the trials I have had since uniting with the church. In the first place, after uniting with the church, I enjoyed for awhile a happy season; but at length doubts and fears rose before me as mountains, so that I was troubled lest I had deceived the church, and was made in great anxiety to carry the matter before the Lord, praying that if I was deceived that he would undeceive me; then at other times I was made to praise the Lord by the assurance of the Spirit in my soul, banishing all my doubts and fears. But trouble would come again, and great trouble, for some cause unknown to me; in which time I dreamed a dream. I thought I was to go forth to meet the Saviour at a certain place, but do not remember starting or going, but was there and met him and shook hands with him; and we sitting down, I found myself as soon as seated, in possession of a gift, received, as I thought, from the Saviour. Previous to this, the gift was in a small wooden box, which picking up from the place where it was near me, I handed to him; but he would not take it, saying, "That which I give to my children I will never take from them." I then laid the box down to ask him some questions about the gift, when he presented me with another gift like the first one, save that it was finer, which for a length of time I refused to receive, making every excuse I could think of to keep from taking it, until he spoke, saying, "My son, be of good cheer!" when I reached and took the gift off of his hand, and laying it down, I awoke. I studied about the dream and its meaning, and this was offered to my mind instantly: the first gift was my Hope, and the second, something the Lord yet required at my hands, which had been causing me so much trouble. And I will confess that I had had serious thoughts about publicly exercising religiously, whilst in that deep trouble. I had no inclination to take the dream as an evidence that I should preach, though it was presented in that way for about three years, and I tried to get

rid of the trouble without trying to preach, undergoing great affliction of mind during the time. Sometimes I would think that I would venture forward and do the best I could, and then after self-examination decide that it would never do in the world; that I would probably reproach myself, and the church, which I never wanted to do. I sought the Lord in prayer to show me his will concerning me; and in this trouble I dreamed again. I thought a man walking up to me, said, "I dreamed the other night that you were called to preach;" and I thought I told him, I was sorry he had dreamed such a falsehood; and whilst making little of his dream, another man stepped up, dressed in white, and whose countenance was fearful to look upon, and handed me a board about fifteen inches long and three wide, saying, "Here it is in the Lord's own handwriting, which is plainer than a dream." I took the board, and looking on it, read these words, "You have had the call, and now obey; for obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken better than the fat of rams." When I awoke I was in a great trouble, thinking of the dreams and the angry countenance of the man presenting me the board, and this solution was offered to my mind: the dream was an answer to my prayer, to show me the Lord's will concerning me. I then decided to go forward, but upon solemn self-examination I decided it would never do. I sometimes thought I would try to express my feelings to the church, and ask them to aid me in deciding the matter, but when the opportunity was afforded I would be far from it. In this condition I have passed about three years, without any satisfaction to myself or any one else that I can discover. Sometimes I fly into a passion and speak things about others that I ought not, which gave me great trouble of mind to realize that I had no better control of myself than to talk so; though I believe that the Lord will work all things after the counsel of his will, and sanctify every dispensation of his providence to our good and his own glory.

Brother Respass, do you believe that the Lord would suffer

a man to lie out of his duty six years? And do you believe a man should try to preach who can possibly avoid it?

J. R. CALLAWAY.

Dear Brother, many have lain out of their duty six years, and some longer; and I believe that we should not quench the Spirit, and beware lest you are trying to do that.—R.

MANNINGHAM, ALABAMA, October, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—As my husband is writing to you on business, I thought I would give the readers of our magazine (the GOSPEL MESSENGER) some of the outlines of my experience of God's grace. I was awakened to my lost condition when about sixteen years old. Previous to this, I had thought I could "get religion" at any time, by leaving off every thing wrong and saying a few good prayers; and I set about it in good earnest, but to my astonishment, instead of accomplishing what I expected, I grew worse. My sins seemed to rise up like mountains between me and my God. Going to the secret grove, I would get down in the humblest attitude I could, and cry unto the Lord, and all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy upon me, a condemned sinner!" and it seemed that He would not hear so wicked a sinner pray. At such times the devil would suggest, "that it was too late now; the time had been when possibly God would have heard your prayer, but not now." Oh, the burden that sin was! it pressed me down into despair, so that I saw, without the sovereign grace of God, that I was forever lost! I sought for some good work in my past life to offer to God, but could not find one single one that would avail me in that hour, but every thing was blackness and darkness. It was in the spring of the year 1861 that I was in this condition, and whilst employed in my domestic affairs, I tried to pray my last prayer (as I thought), when suddenly my burden was gone, and I felt a great change. I was light; and oh! I was happy,—so happy that I could hardly restrain shouting aloud. My prayer had indeed been turned into praise, and I longed to see some christian to tell

my feelings to. I supposed that my troubles were over; but soon doubts and fears arose against me, making me believe that I was deceived, and that it was but a delusion. I tried to get my old troubles back,—to regain my burden, so that I could see better how it was removed,—but I have never been able to get it back to this day. I soon had impressions to follow Christ in baptism; and the Primitive Baptists were the only people to whom I could tell my feelings, though none of my relatives belonged to them; but I felt to be so unworthy, and looked upon them as so good a people, that I could not bear to deceive them. But in the fall of 1861, I went to the Primitive Baptist church at Philippi, Schley county, Ga., and when the door of the church was opened, and they were singing that sweet song—

“Children of the heavenly King”—

with a prayer in my heart to God for the guidance of the Spirit, I found myself giving my hand to Elder James Murray, the pastor, and telling the church my feelings as above written, in substance. I was received and baptized the next day into the fellowship of the church; since which time I have passed through many trials, but the Lord has been good to me, and enabled me to live to this day upon his gracious promises. I love to read the experiences of the dear saints in the GOSPEL MESSENGER, for they comfort me.

Your unworthy sister in Christ,

MOLLIE A. SIMMONS.

We remember Sister Simmons, being ourself a member of Philippi Church at the time she joined. We are glad to renew our acquaintance with you, Sister Simmons, and trust the Lord will ever bless you with his Spirit.—R.

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We regret very much that our last Music plate, made for us in Philadelphia, had such a great typographical error in it, which we hope to remedy. It should have been, “The Late Elder C. B. Has-ell’s Favorite”—

LASTON, BULLOCH COUNTY, GA., August 4, 1882.

*Elder J. R. Respass:—Dear Brother in the Lord:—*I feel like trying to write you a few lines, and while I write my mind is exercised on the words of Christ which may be found recorded in the 5th chapter and 40th verse of our Lord's gospel by St. John: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Such is the strength of sin's dominion that we have found it impossible to remove his yoke or break his chain so as to relieve us from that tyrannous hand which subjects us to his dreadful influence. This rule has no exceptions; the whole human family are involved, with no ability to come to Christ while in a state of nature, they being dead in trespasses and sins. Notwithstanding they can read the unquestionable scriptural facts that Christ declares he is the way, the truth, and the life. Then surely he is the great highway to God, heaven, and happiness.

But the will is perverse: the passions,  
Blind, in paths of ruin stray:  
Reason, debased, can never find  
The safe, the narrow way.

While in this condition they are in love with sin, and not in love with Christ. In this situation we are destitute of eternal life. We must have life before we can live to God. Should we do the things contained in the law, this could not save us; for there has been no law given that could give life. Then poor sinners have no other resource for life but the merits of Jesus, who, only, has eternal life to give. Then it is a happy day with the poor sinner when he can feel that he has an interest in the merits of Jesus Christ. The works of repentance is all that will give poor sinners the will to come to Christ. Then the words of the text clearly demonstrate that while in a state of nature man is destitute of a will to come to Christ. Therefore he is destitute of a will to repent; for the goodness of God leadeth to repentance, and not the goodness of the creature. So we may clearly see that repentance is the work of God, for it worketh a godly sorrow for sin. This certainly demonstrates the fact that it is a spiritual work,

it being the work of God, and God is a spirit. But poor, finite man, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.—Rom. x. 3. Then it is clearly shown that the creature's works of righteousness will not give him the will to come to Christ, because their righteousness consists of natural obedience to the letter of the law, in which it is clearly shown that the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. So, then, while we are in this condition we are in open rebellion to God. But God's immutable love is all-sufficient to remove all self-righteousness and every thing that is contrary to that of his own righteousness, which is by the faith of the Son of God.

Well, Brother Respass, I have a great desire to travel and preach, but my time is entirely filled up at home; and my writing this article has been with a desire of getting ease from these impressions. If you think it worth a place in your valuable paper, the GOSPEL MESSENGER, you can publish it; if not, throw it into the waste-basket, and all will be right.

From your unworthy brother, if one at all,

JAMES L. SMITH.

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BLANCO CITY, TEXAS.

*Elder P. D. Gold* :—I have for some time been thinking of trying to let you know our deprivations in regard to church privileges, hoping by so doing the readers of your paper might know our destitute circumstances. As to Baptist preaching, the nearest church of our faith is sixty miles from here. I have been living here ten years, and have heard but two Primitive Baptist sermons preached in that time—and they were preached by my father, James Wagner, of Tennessee, while he was here on a visit. He thought there would be a church organized here if some preacher would come. There are several holding letters waiting for a chance to join. I believe it is only those who are for awhile destitute of church privileges that know how glad we would be for a church to be organized here, so we could hear the gospel preached, or the power of God preached. There are large bodies of other denominations here, but they all preach man's power and his works, which is poor food for one of us.

I read our papers, and highly appreciate the privilege of such valuable papers, and wish you success; and may the Lord bless you with health and strength. I think there are others that have no other preaching but

these papers, and are situated just as I am. I often feel to thank God and take courage for the consolation I receive reading your paper.

How thankful should those be who are blessed with the privilege of attending Church Meeting and hearing the gospel preached! 'Tis a great blessing indeed. I am afraid that every one doesn't realize such privileges as being great blessings; but if they were deprived of them, as I have been, I believe they would know their worth. When I received my letter and bid farewell to the members of our church at Wagner's Creek, in Tennessee, I felt that I was alone. It grieved me as much to part with the church as it did to part with my father's family—and I think I love my father, and brothers and sisters, as well as any one does theirs. I was alone, and I felt it—and to think that I can't hear any more preaching! I sometimes think it very hard. We stay here for my husband's health, which was very bad until we came to the Blanco Mountains.

This is a healthy country, with good water. I would willingly give any information regarding this country that might be asked, so far as I am able, thinking that some Primitive Baptist preacher might be contemplating a move to Texas. I hope that they may come to Blanco, where one that is sound in doctrine is much needed.

Dear Brother Gold, I wish you would look over this and publish, so your readers may know our need of a preacher. I hope there is no harm in asking what I have; if there is, excuse

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

SARAH JONES.

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## EDITORIAL.

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J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors.

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### THE UNJUST STEWARD.—LUKE XVI. 1-10.

Several months ago an aged brother, Elder King, of Georgia, requested such views as we might have of the Parable of the Unjust Steward, as recorded in the 16th chapter of Luke; but we have had so many similar requests, and been so pressed for time, and felt to know so little of the true intention and application of this subject, that we have hesitated to write upon it at all. But at present we have concluded in a brief manner to offer a few remarks as the Lord may give ability, with a hope that if any brother has clearer light, he will let it shine forth to the edification and instruction of our readers.

In examining the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ to his

disciples, we find him frequently introducing certain parables, figures and illustrations, to prepare their minds for the opening change from the Legal to the Gospel dispensation.

It had been an unlawful thing for a Jew to associate with those of other nations; and for this reason the Samaritan woman at the well was much astonished that Christ, whom she regarded as a Jew, should speak to and ask water of her, knowing as she did, that the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings one with another. The Jewish disciples were also much astonished that he should be talking with this Samaritan woman.

But the time was hastening on when the "middle wall of partition" should be broken down, and the Israelites as a nation, and the disciples particularly, should be scattered abroad among other people besides their own nation. In this dispersed and perilous condition they would need *friends*, and it was proper and becoming in them to wisely consider the duties and responsibilities of their stewardship and make a proper use of their time, their talents, or of their earthly goods which God had committed to their trust.

In the subject which we are considering, a "certain rich man" is represented as having a steward. This steward had wasted the goods of his lord, and was told to give an account of his stewardship, as his lord had determined to dismiss him. The steward, knowing that he was about to lose a good position, begins first to look out for his own future interest; and in order to make friends of his lord's debtors, he authorizes a discount or deduction of from one-fifth to one-half of what they were really indebted. By this shrewd policy he would be regarded by the debtors as a very liberal and clever gentleman; and as he doubtless intended to secure a future support at his lord's expense by this policy, he could call on them when he should be turned out of his office, and the fifty per cent. which he had deducted from their debt would be a good friend to him now as a *Bonus* to be received into the families of those to whom he had been so liberal in time past.

Now, it is said the lord *commended* the unjust steward. But

what did he commend him for? Surely not for his unjust and fraudulent dealing? No, by no means; but he commended him for his wisdom: "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." The children of this world are children of corruption, and their wisdom is corrupt, earthly, sensual, and devilish; and in these particulars they show more wisdom in looking out for their earthly support, than the children of light do in "following after things which make for their peace, or things whereby one may edify another." They make a wise use of their corrupt wisdom for corrupt ends, and so the children of light should make a wise use of their pure wisdom, which is from above, to obtain the highest degree of spiritual peace and comfort that God has promised them in the path of duty and obedience.

And it strikes our mind that this is the main gist of the lesson designed to be inculcated by the metaphorical narrative of The Unjust Steward. There are, perhaps, other points of instruction in it, but they are as *adjuncts* and tributary streams running into the one leading channel, where all the waters combine together to show forth their united beauty, grandeur, force and power. This world, with all its varied wealth and beauty, was not made for the special convenience nor accommodation of any one man nor class of men of Adam's race. Whatever may be the peculiar favors which a kind Providence has lavished upon us, we should not forget that others of our fellow creatures, who appear to be less favored, have rights and privileges as well as we; and if we, as *stewards*, are put in trust with more of our Lord's goods, whether temporal or spiritual, natural or acquired, we are thereby placed under greater responsibility not to *waste* our Lord's goods, nor misapply them to the hurt of any of our fellow creatures, nor to our own hurt.

The Jewish nation was, doubtless, to a certain extent, represented by this unjust steward. They had been put in trust with the most precious treasures which had ever been committed to any people under the whole heaven. No other

nation ever had God so nigh unto them, nor had they statutes and judgments so righteous as "*all the law*" was which the Lord gave Israel.—Deut. iv. 8. And the "sweet singer of Israel," when rejoicing in spiritual song, says, the "Lord hath not dealt so with any nation."—Psalm cxlvii. 20. They had the "law and the prophets," the types and shadows all pointing to Christ; they had the sacrifices and offerings, and in fact the whole of the oracles of God committed to them. But, like the unjust steward, they had wasted their Lord's goods. They had misapplied and perverted the law. They had either entirely forsaken the worship of God, or so corrupted it by inventions and traditions of their own, that all their services were vitiated, and so polluted in the sight of God, that even their solemn assemblies were hateful to him, and incense was an abomination in his sight.

But the time had come near at hand when this nation must be put out of its stewardship, and no longer have the legal right to use any of these precious things with which they had been so graciously put in trust. And as the apostles and first converts to christianity were of the Jewish nation, Christ would have them specially to understand that the nation should "fail" as a nation in all its machinery, and they should be scattered among all nations, and should therefore now make a wise and proper use of their time and of such things as they had still in trust, for this *right use* of what had been to others as the "mammon of unrighteousness," would be to them as "friends" in the day of their dispersion and trial. By these *friends* they should be received into "everlasting habitations," by which we understand they would have temporal support and protection during their earthly existence. This was the wisdom of the steward—that when he was put out of the stewardship, his lord's debtors would, for his kindness to them, receive him "into their houses." Instead, therefore, of cultivating hatred of the Gentiles, they should cultivate kindness and friendship, and for their own future good, make a wise and lawful use of such things as God had committed to them.—M.

## OUR HOUSE ON FIRE.

About breakfast-time on the 26th of December last, as we were about going to breakfast, we heard a chorus of fearful screams of Fire! Fire! issuing from the room occupied by our daughter, Mrs. Phillips, who had been confined to her bed five weeks with typhoid fever; and rushing in that direction we met her in great excitement and fearfully alarmed, in the hall. Our fear of the fire was instantly swallowed up by apprehensions for her, not knowing but that it might kill her at once; but as soon as we could think, her husband took her in his arms and carried her, with a light shawl thrown over her, about one hundred yards in the raw morning air, to Elder Rowe's. In the meantime the fire had made considerable headway. It was discovered in the closet in Mrs. Phillips' room, and could probably have been extinguished with but little damage, but for the necessary care bestowed on Mrs. Phillips, and the wild excitement produced by it. The cook, a colored woman, ran to my wife in the dining-room, screaming, saying, "Miss 'Liza is burned up!" which so alarmed my wife that she was thrown off of her balance, and ran wildly to the room against our daughter, Minnie, with a bucket of water, spilling it over the floor. The children were screaming and crying, and the tumult was heard into the town, and soon crowds were gathered, and they worked with a will, and in about half an hour the fire was extinguished, and the house—the bulk of it—saved. The furniture was badly broken and otherwise damaged; the papers in my office scattered over the street and road; four beds and the furniture of two rooms ruined, and the two rooms much of them charred—resulting in a loss of several hundred dollars. But we are thankful that it is no worse. Many letters of correspondents were probably lost, that we designed publishing, some of which had been on hand for a year. We are glad to say that Elder Bartley's letters on "The Church" are safe, and we shall resume its publication in a short time. We saved our books, and the MESSENGER is not otherwise damaged.

We would take this occasion to make an appeal to our subscribers to remit to us at once, both for past dues and in advance for the present year; also to aid us as much as possible in getting new subscribers, and with their prayers.

We are thankful to say that Mrs. Phillips is doing now very well, and will, we trust, entirely recover.—R.

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### FOR CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—Again we come to you on our regular monthly visit with a letter, and we are glad to know that so many children, as well as older people, approve of our letters to you. Our design in writing is that you may be benefited by reading, not only what we write to you, but by other reading also. Some things that are written and printed in books and papers are good and useful for children and young people generally to read, and some things are very bad and ought not to be read at all. And as we do not want our little readers to be hurt in any way, we would here caution them to be very careful as to how they employ their time in reading. Always shun reading long stories and tales of falsehood. They will do you no good, but much harm in many ways. It is a useless waste of precious time that the Creator has given to young people, for them to throw it away by reading that which will hurt them and have a bad influence on their character through life.

To feast the mind on falsehood, such as is found generally in Novels, can never have any other than a bad influence on the general character and conduct of the young.

Parents, or those to whom the care of children is committed by the special providence of God, if they have any regard for truth, honor, good morals, or good manners, would not willingly and knowingly allow children to visit their family every week, when such children are known to be always telling lies or speaking vulgar or profane words. They would caution their children against keeping such company or having such vulgar associates, because they know that such company would

have a bad influence, and would corrupt the morals and manners of their children.

Now, children, you know, if you will think for a little while, that if bad company would do you harm by bad conversation, then bad books, bad papers, false tales and foolish Novels would be equally as bad, if not worse; because you have them with you in the house, "on the *shelf*," in the secretary, or somewhere every day, while bad company perhaps is only once a week or less.

We are rejoiced to know that some of our young readers, as well as the older ones, know this, and they are writing us from every direction, giving us words of encouragement to continue to have a letter in each number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER for children to read, that their youthful minds may be led away from so much vain, light, frothy reading to that which is useful and good for them.

And now, dear children, we tell you we are much delighted to work for your good; and, as some can not read very well, we will try to write in a very plain, familiar way, using but few, if any, big, long words; and we hope, if you do not understand what we write to you by reading it over one time, that you will carefully read it again and again, till you can read it correctly and understand what it means. This will be learning you to read, as well as giving you instruction in other things.

Some of you will remember that in the December number, 1882, of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, we told you that we would send you a nice Testament of 288 pages for every new subscriber whose name, money and address you would send to *Elder W. M. Mitchell*, Opelika, Lee county, Ala.; and now we are glad to tell you we have had several orders of that kind from almost every direction, and have sent off quite a number of neat little Testaments to our young friends, which we hope and pray that God will bless to their good by giving them a "new heart," and putting a right spirit within them, that they may love His holy and precious word.

The first little friend that sent us a new subscriber, money

and address, desiring the Testament, lives away up in Tennessee; the next came from Georgia for *five* Testaments; and then here comes another from North Carolina; and then again in a few days another order comes from Texas; and soon one comes in from Arkansas and other places.

One little friend who had obtained a new subscriber and sent for a Testament, wrote us a nice little letter, saying: "Papa takes the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and I love to read it all, but especially those good Letters to Children." Another says: "I have got two new subscribers, and I want you to send me two New Testaments." And then again a precious father writes for his children and says: "The MESSENGER is a great source of comfort to me and my *children*." How nice and pleasant that is to see a dear father, mother and children all enjoying the same kind of reading together! It is lovely, and makes home pleasant, and will give children home attachments which they will never forget; and besides, it will tend greatly to keep them out of bad company, and from the corrupt influence of modern Sunday School teaching.

Another father writes us in this way: "Dear Brother Mitchell—My little daughter sent for a sample copy of your magazine over a year ago, and I have never had so much comfort in reading any thing, except the Bible, as I have had in reading it. Please find *three dollars* enclosed for the following names," &c. You see, dear children, how one "*little daughter*" made herself useful by sending for even one sample copy of the MESSENGER, and thus gladdening the heart of her dear father.

And now, in order that you may all have an opportunity to be useful both to yourselves and to others, we make another offer to those who can not send one or more new subscribers. That is this: For *trial* copy *three months*, send the name and address to W. M. Mitchell, Opelika, Lee county, Ala., enclosing eleven 3-cent postage stamps, or an equivalent in money, and he will send the GOSPEL MESSENGER for three months, and one Testament postage paid, to each trial subscriber thus sent, and stop or continue the MESSENGER at the end of three months, as may be desired. Let us hear from you.—M.

## REPLY TO REQUEST OF BRO. S. G. WILLIAMS.

But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you, with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye should know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part; that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many.—2 Cor. ii. 1-6.

We have often admired the tender and affectionate spirit of the apostle, as well as his unwavering steadfastness in the gospel of Christ. The Lord, who put him into the ministry, counted him faithful, and enabled him by grace to speak and write to his brethren, not as a man-pleaser, but as one who should give account to God, who trieth the hearts of his people.

It is clearly indicated in the first verse of the above text, that the holy apostle had been with the church at Corinth in sorrow and heaviness of heart; and such was the bond of gospel love that existed with him and this church, that his sorrow and heaviness caused sorrow to them also. When, therefore, he was with them in a heavy, sorrowful spirit, there was no hope of his being made glad except in the gladness and joy of those who were made sorry by him. He had written unto them concerning shameful disorders among them: "that one should have his father's wife;" and worse still, if possible, that "some were puffed up, and had not rather mourned that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among them." He had commanded them by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they were gathered together in their church capacity, to put such an one away by "delivering him unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

It is generally best, if the order of Providence permit, for gospel ministers to be present with the churches when there is any trouble or disorder among them, though it be in much sorrow and heaviness of heart; but when they can not be

present, or from other causes it is best they should not, they may sometimes be serviceable by writing. It was "out of much affliction and anguish of heart, with many tears," that the apostle had written to them concerning these things. Who, but such as have experienced the weight and responsibility of the "care of churches" which the Lord has committed to them, can know the "anguish of heart" and "*many tears*" that a faithful minister sheds when there are carnal strife, divisions, contentions, and disorders in the church?

It was the spirit of Christ in the apostle that moved him thus to write; though it was done in "much affliction" and "with many tears," it was done in abundant love in the spirit. "Not that you should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly toward you." Neither gospel ministers nor any other christian should speak or write, even to erring brethren or churches, in a haughty, ambitious, nor dictatorial spirit, as though they wished to have dominion over their faith, or as though they would cause them more grief than they were then in, by adding fuel to the fire. But they should "speak the truth in love," and thus show that they suffered with them, or joyed with them, as one body of Christ. "I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved." When we are constrained to write unto our brethren in tears and prayers for their welfare, we are not apt then to add to their grief. We do not then write with the bad motive of adding sorrow upon sorrow, by abusing them for their wrongs, or magnifying their faults; but in candor, tenderness, faithfulness and love, we seek to show them their faults, and convert the sinner in Zion from the error of his way, and thus, in a disciplinary sense, "save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 20.

"But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part; that I may not overcharge you all." We should be very careful not to charge more on a church than it is guilty of. There may be one or more members that have "*caused* grief." Their disorderly conduct has not only caused grief to us as ministers and pastors of churches, but the church of

which they are members is in grief and trouble; and, either through negligence, or from not knowing how to proceed, nothing has been done to heal the breach, nor remove the disorder. Now, we should not overcharge the church in this condition as having *caused* the grief that we may feel, or that others have felt. This trouble, affliction and grief has been caused by the one who has first gone astray. Errors should be traced back to their first start, and taken up by their roots, and then the branches will soon wither away and die of themselves. "One sinner destroyeth much good," says Solomon. But "cast out the scorner, and contentions will cease."

In concluding this article we wish to say, that in our humble conception of things, no portion of the New Testament is more instructive with regard to the doctrine, discipline and government of a gospel church in her organized capacity, than the two Epistles to the church at Corinth. And we insist that if brethren and sisters have not read them carefully, that they at once do so, or as soon as they have the opportunity. You may read these Epistles carefully and prayerfully—not only once or twice, but as often as you can—and you will find something new for reflection and meditation every time. Will you make the experiment?—M.

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WINCHESTER, KENTUCKY, November, 1882.

I would be glad for you to write on Acts xxvi. 18. What is meant by "opening their eyes, turning them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins," &c.? JAS. J. GILBERT.

The scripture to which our esteemed brother and fellow laborer refers us, are the words of the Lord to Paul, at the time of his conversion, instructing him in regard to his work as an apostle and minister of the gospel of Christ; that He had appeared to him for this purpose, to make him a minister and a witness both of these things which he had seen, and of those things in which He would appear unto him; delivering

him from the people and the Gentiles, "unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

The Gentile world was in gross darkness. The darkness that covered the earth about that time was probably without a parallel in the history of the human race; so much so, that it was no doubt "to the remnant according to the election of grace" even, "a day of darkness and gloominess." But as the prophets had foretold, and as Christ himself had taught, God had a people in all nations, and they must hear his voice. The Gentiles—the world outside of Palestine—had been given up to darkness and idolatry for ages; "because that when they knew God in the letter, his providences and temporal blessings, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations (like this nation, it is to be feared, will become), and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator; for this cause God gave them up to vile affections," &c.—Rom. i.

The most enlightened of the Gentile nations—as the Greeks and Romans—knew nothing of the true God, even in the letter; and though the "Greeks sought after wisdom," and in many of the arts—as architecture, poetry, oratory and sculpture—have not been surpassed in any subsequent age, yet in religion they were given up to the grossest idolatry and superstition. They had gods many, to whom most magnificent and costly temples were erected, and upon whose altars human victims were sometimes offered. The temple at Ephesus erected to the goddess Diana (Acts xix.) was one of the Seven

Wonders of the World. It was 425 by 250 feet; supported by 128 columns, of white marble, 60 feet high, each weighing 150 tons—presented by as many kings; and was 220 years in building. Diana was “worshiped by all Asia and the world.” Paul’s preaching opened the eyes of some of them at Ephesus; and the eyes of Demetrius were opened to something he did not want to see; because he called the craftsmen together and said, *Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth; moreover, ye see and hear that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands; so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised and her magnificence destroyed, &c.* According to the myths, Diana was the daughter of Jupiter, the chief god of the universe at that time amongst the Gentile nations. At Lystra, where Paul healed the cripple, the people seeing it cried out, *The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men; and they called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker (Acts xiv.); and the priest of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands to the gate, and would have done sacrifice with the people, which when Paul and Barnabas heard, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out: “Sirs, why do ye these things? we also are men, of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways; nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”* The eyes of some were opened, no doubt, at Lystra. In addition to his preaching, Paul could work miracles, as in the case of the cripple, and others; which gift has not been conferred upon any successors of the apostle, because no such work as the apostle’s has been required of them. Mercurius was the god of speech

and eloquence, who, according to Heathen Mythology, left his cradle four hours after birth, and finding a turtle, he invented the lyre or harp, using the shell as a sounding board, and making strings out of the entrails of a sheep. He had a son called Pan (from whom the word "panic" comes)—a very noisy little god. He was the god of pastures and flocks, and was peculiar from his birth. He came into the world with horns—according to their superstition—a goat's beard, a crooked nose, pointed ears, a tail, and goat's feet, which so frightened his mother that she ran off; but Mercury, his father, carried him to Olympus, where all the gods, especially Bacchus, were charmed with the little monster. Bacchus was the god of wine, and was reared by nymphs—female goddesses of inferior rank—by whom he was attended in his wanderings. His worship consisted of noisy, and often, no doubt, drunken revelries, celebrated with a licentiousness destructive of morality and society itself, being made the occasion of the most unnatural excesses. The Feast of Herod, in which John the Baptist's head was given a lewd woman for dancing, was perhaps a mild form of bacchanalian excess—save that it was not religious.

It would be a waste of time and space to enumerate the gods of the abhorrent superstition of those days, but we have thought proper to merely hint at them, to show the gross darkness that shrouded the minds of men at the birth of Christ. But there were those even then who had no respect for the disgusting orgies of heathen idolatry; those of whom Paul speaks, "which have not the law, but do by nature the things contained in the law, and are a law unto themselves." In addition to this the Jews, who had the law and prophets, were scattered, and had been for centuries, by trade and commerce, and by the captivity, throughout all nations—some of whom, "devout men, out of every nation under heaven," were dwelling at Jerusalem, and were in the temple upon the day of Pentecost. They were from Parthia, and Media, and from all nations, but were Jews, or proselytes to the Jewish religion. And even the corrupted religion of the Jews, was in the

letter, very far in advance of heathen superstition. The "Eunuch" was, no doubt, a Jew, though the treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia—and had, like many thousands of Jews from every quarter of the earth, gone up to his annual worship at Jerusalem. Thus in all nations the letter of the knowledge of God was, to some extent, diffused. This was true of the Jews in Babylon in the days of Esther, Mordecai and Daniel; many of the people of the land becoming Jews from what they saw of their lives and the providences of God toward them. Paul found an altar at Athens with this inscription, "To the Unknown God," showing that amidst the gross darkness in which all nations were enveloped, that even then some were groping toward the light that should come; and as the inhabitants and idolatry of Canaan gave place to the better civilization of the Jews, so all nations have given place to the light of christianity; and though it may degenerate into a mere superstition in spirit, as the times indicate, yet before its peaceful sway the gross idolatry of the heathen has given way, and fallen, as Dagon, before the Ark of God. The temple of Ephesus has long ago crumbled into dust, and its shrines and altars to disuse and oblivion. Not that a great, or even a considerable part of the so-called christian nations, are real christians, but that the moral influence of their better civilization that ever follows in the track of christian teaching has superseded the barbarism of paganism. It is due to christianity that we have our form of free government; nor is it responsible for the perversion of it. The world to-day owes its thousand blessings to christianity; and the real christian, his ten thousand. And woman! what does she not owe to it? It has elevated her in all nations from the degraded state of an inferior, and oftentimes a concubine and slave, to a social equality with man, and has set her to preside as queen in her own domain. It has shed its beneficent influence over all classes of mankind, from the highest to the lowest. Kings and rulers, seeing its moral and social advantages, have literally come to its light, and modeled their institutions and laws, more or less, in conformity to its literal precepts.

But to return to the text. Christ had finished the work he came to do; he had atoned for his people, and had ascended into the heavens, but his truth was to be taught and his name set up everywhere; and of his disciples, some were called to the work of teaching or the ministry, and sent by the Holy Ghost to the people to be taught. God knew where they were; and in some cities he had much people—in others none at that time. Paul was one of these chosen vessels for this special work; and he, in common with the other apostles, in view of the magnitude of the work assigned them, and the opposition and darkness they would encounter, were endowed with extraordinary gifts, without which their work would have failed, but which gifts have never since been necessary. They could, as before said, work miracles. The eyes of some were no doubt opened to the beneficial worldly effects of christianity, as perhaps was the case with Agrippa, when Paul preached to him; others, filled with a temporary dread of God's final judgment upon their sins, as was Felix, before whom Paul reasoned. Paul's preaching to many, at Athens and other places, was no doubt supremely foolish; but to the called of God, it was the power of God and the wisdom of God; and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. Of course, it does not refer to the natural eyes, but the "eyes of the understanding," as Paul terms them. When a thing is explained that we did not before understand, our eyes are opened, and we say we see it. We often have our eyes opened now by preaching and writing, and are made to understand scriptures. Apollos had his eyes opened by Aquila and Priscilla. The Eunuch's eyes were opened by Philip's preaching, and he saw it, or believed, and was baptized; thus was turned from darkness to light; and thus he was freed from the power of Satan, or darkness, and turned unto God. He had peace, or rest. And having this, he received an experimental forgiveness of his sins. They did not trouble him then. He realized now what Christ had done for him,—and praise be to His name!

Since we began this article, the Fire has so torn things up, that we send it forth thus unfinished, hoping to conclude it when we have more composure of mind.—R.

## THE REGENERATION.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—My subscription to the GOSPEL MESSENGER needs attention, and I enclose subscription price and wish you to continue sending as heretofore. Please give your views of Mat. xix. 28, especially in regard to the regeneration through which Christ passed and was followed by his disciples. By so doing, I think many others as well as myself would be much gratified.

*Claiborne Parish, La., Oct. 15, 1882.*

W. F. BROWN.

The text to which Brother Brown calls attention, reads as follows: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In the first clause of the above text the Lord Jesus Christ identifies the characters who shall, in the regeneration, sit upon twelve thrones to judge or expound the law of Christ to the twelve tribes of Israel—by which we understand the gospel Church is represented. "The Regeneration," in this text, refers to the whole of the gospel dispensation, in distinction from the legal or ceremonial dispensation, and it stands connected with the sitting of the Son of Man in the throne of his glory, and does not refer to any regeneration through which Christ passed. It shows, however, that when he should sit upon the throne of his glory in the gospel kingdom or regeneration, then the twelve apostles should be officially installed and enthroned with him as the only official judges and expounders of his law to the gospel Church.

In this *Regeneration*—this gospel Church—Christ Jesus as the Son of Man sits upon the throne of his glory, and his twelve chosen apostles are the enthroned judges to expound the law of his kingdom and decide upon all matters of doctrine, ordinances, discipline and government in the Church of Christ till time shall end. From their decisions there can be no appeal. What they have bound upon the Church on earth

as doctrine or order, is bound in heaven; and whatsoever they have loosed the Church from on earth, of carnal ordinances, legal ceremonies, and traditions of men, she is loosed from them in heaven.

The Lord Jesus Christ is frequently spoken of by inspired writers both as the Son of God and as the Son of Man. He combined in himself both natures, that he might be a faithful and suitable Mediator between God and men. "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."—Rom. i. 4.

The regeneration mentioned in our text, though it began to be indicated and inaugurated by the ministry of John the Baptist, was not fully developed nor consummated till after the Son of Man was declared also to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. Then the "Son of Man" was seen "coming in the clouds of heaven," and all his holy angels or gospel ministers with him. The law and the prophets and all that was contained in the Old Testament scriptures, testified of Jesus. He himself said the Scriptures "testify of me." John v. 39. Out of this "Bright Cloud" of inspired testimony God the Father speaks to James, Peter and John, on the holy mount, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—Mat. xvii. 5.

When the apostle Peter had been fully installed into his official position as one of the twelve judges to expound the law of Christ to the Church of God, he affirms that he and the other apostles had not followed "cunningly devised fables when they made known to the church the power and coming of the Lord Jesus, but they were eye-witnesses of his majesty when he received from God the Father *honor* and *glory*, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—2 Pet. i. 17.

Every type, every shadow, and every sacrifice of lamb or bullock under the ceremonial law, pointed to Christ as clearly and as fully as the prediction of the prophets did. He is

the great centre, sum and substance of the law and of the prophets. These form the "Bright Cloud" of witnesses which testify of his power and coming. We see him, therefore, coming in these clouds of heaven, and fulfilling all that was shadowed forth in the law, and all that was written of him in the prophets. As the Son of Man, he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." In this capacity he came into direct sympathy with his people, and being sustained by his eternal Godhead which dwelt bodily in him, he could bear their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, and make reconciliation for their transgressions. "This man, *after* he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, *sat* down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." This sitting down at the right hand of God, signifies that his Mediatorial work is perfect and complete. The atonement is made, the curse of the law is removed, "death is abolished, and life and immortality is brought to light through the gospel." He sits down upon his throne of glory, not as a usurper, but as a King who reigns in righteousness; and his apostles are as lawful princes who rule in judgment in all matters pertaining to the character of the subjects of Christ's kingdom, or the doctrine, laws or ordinances by which they shall be governed. From their decision there is no appeal to be taken to any other authority. In this new dispensation—this *Regeneration*—the judgment and decision of the apostles remain as a guide and law for the Church till time shall be no more.—M.

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"The Image of His Son," an article by Elder J. R. S. Bullard, will appear in the March number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

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Christ is styled the Finisher of our faith, as well as the Author of it. There is as much necessity for the Spirit to keep up our graces, as there is to bring forth our graces.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

SANDY CREEK, NORTH CAROLINA, December 15, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—The MESSENGER comes regularly, filled with gospel truths, if I have any understanding of spiritual things, so that I could hardly do without it. I am well pleased with Brother Mitchell's "Letters to Children." Ah! so well do I remember, when I was but a child, how often I felt a distress of mind that would prompt me to send up a petition in the form of a prayer to a throne of mercy, not knowing what was the matter with me. But why I was permitted to run so deep into sin in after years, remains a mystery to me to this day.

Our church—Sandy Creek—is very small, and we have no pastor. Our pastor—Elder A. Wright—died a year ago last June, after serving the church over fifty years. Ministers visit us occasionally, which is much appreciated. I send a minute of our—the Abbott's Creek—Association.

With much love to you and Brother Mitchell,

Your sister in hope,

VANDELLA E. JONES.

LAGRANCE, NORTH CAROLINA.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I certainly do enjoy the many soul-comforting and cheering letters to the poor, afflicted people of God, that I find in the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I often think what a blessing and privilege it is to have the MESSENGER and the *Landmark* to read. Brother Mitchell's "Letters to Children" are so good; and they have a good effect. My youngest son is always eager to get hold of the MESSENGER to see the address to children, and he is only ten years old.

Dear Brother and Sister Respass, I have thought of you many times after the loss of your children; but the will of the Lord must be done, and he does all things well. He afflicts his children in various ways, to which we should try to feel resigned. Oh! may we be enabled to say in spirit, Thy will be done in all things! My dear husband is still living, but has been helpless three years last September. He bears his affliction with patience, never complaining at his lot. Oh! the Lord has been kind and merciful to me; though I am afflicted, yet the most of my time have been blessed with strength and health to nurse my husband, both day and night. I sometimes feel to say, "Bless the Lord for his goodness and tender mercy to me, so unworthy as I feel to be!"

Brother Respass, your kind letter written to me 15th March, 1881, was very comforting to my dear husband and me. I want to take the MESSENGER as long as I am able to pay for it. My love to Sister Respass. never expect to see either of you on this earth, but trust that we shall meet in heaven.

Your sister, as I hope, in Christ,

H. F. DAWSON.

FORREST, CHEROKEE COUNTY, TEXAS, December, 1882.

*Dear Friend* :—You have been so kind, to send such an unworthy somebody as I am, such a good magazine so long after my time was out, or else you would have stopped it last July. I have been in Texas three years, and haven't heard a Primitive Baptist sermon only in the MESSENGER. We would be glad if some of the Old Primitive preachers would pass through this country and preach for us—or, as the people here call them, the "Hard Shells."

Yours, as ever,

MISS G. A. COLEMAN.

SWEET HOME, TEXAS, December, 1882.

*Dear Brethren* :—We are all pleased with the MESSENGER. May the Lord bless it to his people, and bless his Church everywhere! I am still crippled; can't walk, nor write with a pen. I am now 79 years old, and very feeble in body, and more so in mind. Brethren, pray for me, and God's Church and people everywhere; and may the blessing of God rest upon you and yours, is my prayer.

F. G. CULPEPPER.

POND TOWN, MILLER COUNTY, GA., December 10, 1882.

*Dear Brethren* :—The word of eternal truth teaches us that we should speak often one to another; and as we can't see each other face to face, it is a consolation that we can speak to each other words of comfort and cheer in the MESSENGER. Dear brethren, as I have seen no account of our Association from any other brother, I will say that we had a good meeting; a goodly supply of ministers were present, all of whom preached salvation of the Lord. We received one newly constituted church into our union; and the probability is that our—the Flint River—Association will continue to grow. Brother Respass, we, the churches west of the Flint River, are almost destitute of preachers; and may the Lord send some of you to see us soon. Farewell, in love!

J. PHILLIPS.

It seems to be a singular provision, that whilst many sections are apparently overcrowded with ministers, that many are almost wholly destitute of them; and another thing, too, that whilst many of our traveling ministers are going to and fro, that very few of them seem directed to the destitute places—the very places, it would seem, to which they ought to go. There is but one way that we can account for it, and that is in this way: The most of our ministers are very poor men, and whilst they feel impressed to go and preach, they are unable to do it without some material assistance. May brethren pray over this subject, both in destitute places and in places that abound with preachers. There is a great cry for preachers in many destitute places; and may the need prompt to work in that direction.—R.

PONCECANNAH, ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA.

There are a great many people here who never heard a Primitive Baptist preach. Bro. Z. H. Bennett is preaching all he can, and his health is failing. If you know of any minister who wishes to move to Florida, we would gladly receive him here. I think the Lord has some children here—enough to keep house for the Lord if they were gathered together. Brethren, pray for us, and pray that laborers may be sent into the Lord's vineyard. The MESSENGER is a great comfort to me. My health is bad and I can read comforting words in the MESSENGER. Trusting that you may live long and be blessed, I remain

Your brother in Christ,  
R. L. KIRKLAND.

CLEVELAND, KENTUCKY, December 12, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respess* :—Enclosed you will find Five Dollars, for which continue the MESSENGER. I don't want to miss a Number. It contains reading and is filled with truths I love. Please send it as long as the five dollars pays for it, and at the expiration of that time, if I am living and the MESSENGER existing as it is, I will remit again.

Yours in Jesus,

STEPHEN LANGFORD.

OAKY STREAK, ALABAMA, December, 1882.

*Dear Brethren* :—I have never written any thing for publication, but as I have been taking the GOSPEL MESSENGER one year, I feel that I want to give the doctrine that its editors and correspondents advocate, my hearty approval. Paul teaches, "That it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; not to offer to save, nor provide a plan whereby man might save himself. The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me, draw him;" and giving his people the appellation of sheep, said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And now, dear brethren, though we know the Book is full of this blessed doctrine, yet it is despised by the unregenerate man, but loved by the poor, hungry, thirsting soul, when in the exercise of faith he is given to see that his salvation is in Jesus.

Truly yours in love,

R. S. HUGHS.

TOWRY, LINCOLN COUNTY, TENNESSEE.

*Dear Brethren* :—Being pressed in mind, I venture to tell the Lord's people scattered abroad, my feelings, in part. Dear saints, I was for several years, at times, in great trouble in regard to my future condition.

and at other times my trouble was much less. It seemed to me that I could see all that I ever did that was evil, and only evil. I kept my troubles hid as much as possible until 1872, when I became so wretched and miserable that I was no company to any one; as one alone I seemed to be, my sins testifying against me; and that to die I must, and that very soon, and to woe and misery must I go. I fled to the law, but no comfort from it could I draw; though sometimes I thought I could feel the heavy load something lighter, after going and praying with all my heart, in tears, saying, "Lord, have mercy on a sinner condemned to die!" I went three times a day to seek the Lord in this way, that this load of guilt and sin might be removed; but my prayers did me no good, and I gave up all to die, justly condemned, and was just rising from my knees, when my mind was freed from the load of bondage that had held me so long weighted down, and then I found Jesus the end of the law to every one that believeth. I believe that I there and then died to all hope of all salvation by works, and rose to the new life of faith in Christ; and realized, if not deceived, that "they that go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them."

HENRY M. DANIEL.

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AFTON, GEORGIA, October 22, 1882.

*Dear Brethren:*—We had a very pleasant meeting at the Union Association. It seemed to me to be the most pleasant meeting I had ever witnessed. There was the greatest manifestation of love and unity among the brethren, and also in the congregation. Oh! how inexpressible the feeling to see, as it were, the weeping Marys and trembling jailors throughout the congregation, and the briny tears stealing down the cheeks of the old and young!

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. J. WILLIAMS.

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BRAZIL, TENNESSEE, November 28, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Our family has been sick since September with malarial fever and the effects of it; but we have moved, and hope now to get rid of it. I have seen a great deal of trouble since I wrote you; but, somehow, *something* always happens to show me that I am not forgotten of the Lord, who sees even the sparrows fall to the ground. You little thought that the "proof" of the song, "On the Sea," that you sent me before it was published, would be of any service to me, and I must tell you about it. The College here had just been opened, and they had a Music Class, but no teacher, and they asked Mr. Crawford if I would take the class, and I sent the sheet you sent me, telling them that it was all the recommendation I had; and they said it was sufficient, and I moved here last week to be convenient to the school. So you see, Brother Respass, I am more indebted to you than you thought; and now if I keep my

health, I shall try to repay you by helping you all I can. When I saw in the MESSENGER that you were sending so many "free," I did wish I could pay for some of them.

I wish, Brother Respass, you would ask Sister McDaniel, of Acworth, Ga., to write her experience for the MESSENGER. I love to read them, and hear of the time when they gave up all for lost, and thought eternal woe was all they could expect.

Your sister in hope,

ELLEN CRAWFORD.

## MARRIED.

At the residence of the bride's brother-in-law, near Madison, Alabama, on Thursday, November 23rd, 2 o'clock P. M., Mr. JEHU LAWLER to Miss SUE CRUTCHER. Eld-r J. W. Holman officiating.

## OBITUARIES.

### MRS. NANCY EMBRY.

Died, in Villa Rica, Carroll county, Ga., on the 25th day of September, 1882, Sister NANCY EMBRY, in the 75th year of her age. Her husband, Abel D. Embry, having preceded her to the grave about twelve years since.

She was born in Franklin county, Georgia, the 7th of June, 1807; was the daughter of Groves and Martha Yarbrough, of said county; and was married to her first husband, James Chatham, in Franklin county, and shortly afterwards removed to DeKalb county, Georgia, where he died. She joined the Primitive Baptist church at Utoy, DeKalb county, in the year 1828, and was baptized by Elder Radford Gunn. She shortly afterwards married A. D. Embry, who joined the same church, and was ordained a deacon. They then removed to Campbell county, Georgia, and joined County Line Church, to which they belonged when the division took place among the Baptists; but she held firmly to the Primitive Baptist principles, and remained in that belief to the day of her death. She lived a consistent member of the several churches to which she had been attached for about fifty-four years; her membership being at the time of her death at Bethel, Carroll county, Ga., where she joined in 1854. She requested that her funeral be preached at her burial, which was done by Elder James D. Hamrick, from the text: "And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." After which her remains were deposited by the side of her husband, there to rest in peace until the general Resurrection. She was loved and highly esteemed by all who knew her, and I am persuaded that she laid down this mortal life without leaving an enemy behind. Notwithstanding her many christian vir-

tues, she often expressed her doubts and fears, until, shortly before she died, she told her weeping daughters attending her, that she had no fears of death; that she felt perfectly resigned to the will of her heavenly Father; that all doubts and fears had been removed; and that Jesus, in whom she had trusted so long, had given her dying grace to bear her through the dark valley and shadow of death, and she was ready to go when it was God's will. She was perfectly rational as long as she could be understood, and exclaimed several times through the day, that

“Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are”—

Her life as a mother, christian and neighbor, is a boon to leave behind to her six dear daughters to emulate. Whilst they feel lonely and sad at the loss of so good a mother, they should feel that their loss is her eternal gain, and not mourn as those without hope. And though she was afflicted with that dread disease, cancer of the breast, she bore her sufferings with as much patience and fortitude as any person I ever saw; her prayer all the time was that God's will be done, and not hers. Notwithstanding she had every comfort and attention that could be bestowed by earthly friends, her sufferings were very severe for several months before she died. Her children should try to be as much resigned to the will of our heavenly Father as their dear mother was.

*Villa Rica, Ga., Nov. 22, 1882.*

J. M. C.

#### MRS. MALVINA MORRIS.

*Dear Brethren:*—The messenger of death has visited Siloam Church again, taking from our midst Sister MALVINA MORRIS. Sister Morris was born in North Carolina, on the 15th of December, 1820. Her parents moved from North Carolina to Wilson county, Tennessee; and then to Benton county, Tennessee, when she was about eleven years of age. She lived there until she married Mr. James Morris, December 15th, 1836; remaining five years after marriage, when they moved to Fayette, on the line of Mississippi, in 1844; in February of which year she received a hope in Christ, but from a felt sense of her unworthiness she never joined the church until October, 1859. She was then living in Columbia, Arkansas, where she was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, with her husband, by Elder T. Foster; both of whom lived orderly and consistent members for nearly twenty years; after which they moved to this county—Nevada, Arkansas—and joined at Siloam Church in the fall of 1877; and, though they were seven miles from the church, they never missed a meeting unless kept away by bad weather, though they had to walk to meeting. The writer was acquainted with them about twenty years, and can say there was no sounder Baptist than Sister Morris, and she seemed to understand the Scriptures as well as any woman I ever talked with, and adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour by a pious walk and godly conversation. She was ever ready, when attacked by enemies of the truth, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the

saints. She was stricken August 14th, 1881, with something like congestion of the stomach. It was my privilege to visit her often during her sickness, and sing and pray with her; and after a long and tedious spell, she got up again. I talked with her on the subject of death, and she told me often that she did not dread death, and that she was perfectly willing and ready to go when the Lord called her; and would talk to her husband, telling him not to grieve after her—that she would be better off than to be in this world of sin and trouble. I don't think I ever saw two old people more affectionate than they were to each other. She was stricken down again on the 14th of September, 1882, about midnight, and never spoke a word, nor moved hand or foot, and at 9 o'clock p. m. next evening she died without a struggle, and was buried the succeeding evening, about twilight, at Friendship Church; prayer offered by Elder A. L. Turner. In the death of Sister Morris, Siloam Church has lost a bright member; she was a loving wife, an affectionate mother, and a good neighbor—esteemed by all who knew her. But we mourn not as those who have no hope, believing that our loss is her eternal gain. May the God of all grace sanctify this sore bereavement to the good of our dear old brother, to our good, and to His glory!

No name signed to the above.—Ed.


#### MRS. MARGARET MILLER.

MARGARET MILLER, widow of Emson Miller, late of Schley county, Georgia, was born on the Cumberland River, near Nashville, Tenn., on the 4th day of March, 1796. She was a daughter of William Harden, who died near Nashville, in 1797. Her mother moved and settled in Columbia county, Georgia, in 1808. In 1812 she married William Binion, with whom she lived until 1824—raising to be grown, from her first marriage, two children. In 1833 she attached herself to the Primitive Baptist church at Piney Grove, in Columbia county. In 1834 she married Emson Miller, then of Monroe county, where she went; and in 1836 moved to Marion county, and put in her letter at Philippi Church, where she kept her membership until the forming of Prosperity Church, in Taylor county, about 1852, where she remained until about 1862; having lost her second husband on the 27th of December, 1861. She then moved her membership to Talbot county. She raised two children by her second marriage—all of whom preceded her to the grave, except one son, John H., who was with her when she breathed her last on the 2nd of December, 1882. Her age was 86 years, 7 months and 28 days. All who knew her, doubt not but she is now at rest with the children of God.

The above written by Brother Miller, of his dear mother, who was a Baptist beloved by all the brotherhood of this section.—R.

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**W**E are glad to say we have, after a long delay, secured more of the celebrated **YOUNG'S CONCORDANCES**, the best, by far, that has ever been published; and will give one to any person sending a club of 10 new subscribers with \$10. They need not all be sent at once, but in the course of three months. Every minister ought to have one, as well as every bible student. Churches could make their pastors no better New Year's gift than a copy of Young's Concordance; and this they can easily get by **sending a club of 10 subscribers.**

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**ZION'S LANDMARK.**—A semi-monthly periodical, devoted to the Primitive Baptist cause, by Eld. P. D. GOLD, Wilson, N. C., at \$2.00 per annum.

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J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELD. MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

MARCH, 1883.

*All Letters, Remittances and Communications, should be addressed to J. R. RESPESS, Butler, Ga.*

*Money should be sent by Money Order or Registered Letter.*

*Be certain to write names and post-offices plainly.*

*Subscribers not receiving the Messenger should notify us.*

*Any one sending us Five Dollars for five new subscribers, shall have one copy of the Messenger for one year free.*

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## APPOINTMENTS TO PREACH.

ELD. WILDE C. CLEVELAND, of Thomaston, Ga., will preach, the Lord willing, at the following places in the Lower Canoochee Association:

On Friday before the third Sunday in May, at Lower Black Creek, near No. 2, C. R. R., Bryan County, Ga., at which point he will be met on Thursday; at Fellowship, Bulloch County, on Saturday; at Upper Black Creek, on Sunday, 3rd; at Ashe's Branch, on Monday; at Spring Grove, Bryan County, on Tuesday; Deloache's on Wednesday; Lower Lott's Creek, on Thursday; The Lake, on Friday; Rosemary Hill, on Saturday; and at Upper Lott's Creek, on Sunday.

M. F. STUBBS.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 3.

BUTLER, GA., MARCH, 1883.

Vol. 5.

## IN CHRIST.

*Dear Brethren:*—I send you a New Year's greeting, and with it a few thoughts for your readers upon the expression, "In Christ," which is so often in the mouth of Paul and others of the New Testament writers. We are continually running across this expression in the writings of Paul. In a hasty looking over of his epistles, I have counted no less than sixty-seven times in which he has introduced these words. How very important must the truth contained in these words have seemed to him! and how fondly and lovingly does he introduce them upon every occasion! With him, every thing is in Christ. There is nothing out of Him. We are continually meeting with such expressions as, "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ," "baptized into Christ," "all one in Christ," "God in Christ," "faith and hope in Christ," "rejoicing in Christ," "walking in Christ," "faithful in Christ," &c. &c. Our dear Lord Jesus contains all the fullness of the Godhead. In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The children of God are complete in him. In every way and everywhere Paul introduces the name of Jesus, and exalts and glorifies Him. So let us strive to contemplate these wonderful words for a little time, that we may be comforted and instructed and prepared to exalt his name also.

1st. Believers are said to be in Christ. In this we have the testimony of our blessed Redeemer also, as recorded in the parable of the vine and its branches (John xv.); and in His prayer (John xvii. 21, 23.) This is the peculiar privilege

of believers. Others are in the world, and of the world. Others dwell in sin, and worldly-mindedness, and uncleanness. Others are in darkness and blindness; their dwelling-place is the kingdom of darkness. But this peculiar and happy people are in Christ Jesus. None but a quickened, penitent sinner and believer in Jesus, has any right to claim to be in Christ. It is of believers that Paul predicates this truth; it is to believers that he holds out the comforts of it. It was to his own chosen disciples that Jesus said, "Ye are the branches;" "abide in me." It was for his own disciples that he prayed that they might be one in him and in the Father. How much are believers exalted above the worldly and the unbelieving! They may be poor in this world, they may be sick and suffering, they may be friendless and homeless, but they are in Christ and he is in them. Of course it is not meant that we are in him as I am in my house, in any physical or bodily sense. Neither is he said to be in us in any physical sense. But spiritually and figuratively, and yet really and truly, the believer is in Him. When it is said that Christ dwells in us, it is meant that his spirit, power, grace, life is ours, to guide, uphold, save, and preserve us. It is also meant that his humility, meekness, love, obedience, and all that makes him lovely, dwells in us. Often we say that we love another because we see Jesus in them; that is, we see the meekness and gentleness of Christ manifest in their deportment and language, and also the other graces of Jesus. Sometimes we say that we love some who follow the Lord, better than others; and the reason is given that we see more of the image of Jesus in them than in others; that is, we see more conformity to the will of God, more obedience, faithfulness and love. In the same manner, to be in Christ, and to dwell there, is to believe in him, to trust in him, to hope in him, to live in him. It is to see and feel that our salvation is all in, and of him. Such an one can say, If I live, it is because he lives; if I am warm, it is because he warms me; if I walk, it is because he strengthens me; if I love, he has shed his love in my heart. "He is my all, and in all."

“I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all—  
But Jesus Christ is all, and in all.”

2nd. We are said to be in Christ because we were “chosen in him before the foundation of the world.”—Eph. i. 4. Election, then, is one of the blessed gifts which were treasured up in Christ for his people. Sinners were chosen (before the world was made, before Adam was formed of the dust of the ground, before man had sinned), to be saved. There was no reason why one sinner should be chosen and another not chosen, save the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself ere time was. Here we can have no controversy with any man. Paul, in Romans ix., has put any controversy where it belongs. It is a reply against God. And God will justify his own ways. The life of every child of God, of the whole Church, was in Christ in eternity. It is eternal life. Christ himself is the life. And he gives this life unto his chosen sheep. In eternity God chose or elected what ones of Adam’s fallen race, should be made recipients of this life—in whom he would himself dwell—and who should finally be brought to himself in glory. Their life was in him, and therefore they were said to be chosen in him. Our natural life was in Adam; and so it may be said we were in Adam, and died in him. In like manner, our spiritual life was in Christ; and so we could be said to be in Christ, and to be made alive in him. The fallen nature of Adam descends to us all as his children; and so the spiritual life and nature of Jesus is given us when we are born again, and appears afterward in our emotions, our affections, our words, and our conduct. There is nothing spiritual, nothing that pertains to salvation, aside from Jesus. From the election of grace to the final glory, all, all is in Jesus. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge! As all that we need to save us is in him, so the election was also in him.

3rd. All spiritual blessings are given us in Christ. God himself is revealed to us in Christ. He said, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”—John xiv. 9. “We have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of

Jesus Christ.”—2 Cor. iv. 6. “He is the image of the invisible God.”—Col. i. 15. “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”—Col. ii. 9. To be absent from God is to be dead. It is life and hope when he is revealed. He is revealed in Christ. To know him is life eternal. To be ignorant of him is death. The revelation of the fullness of the Godhead bodily is in those words: “In Christ.”

4th. Here also in Christ, the fullness of the Church dwells. Here, God the righteous Judge, and man the fallen sinner, meet. His name is emphatically “Immanuel” (God with us.) In the incarnation of Jesus, he contained the sum and substance of the kingdom of God. The “forerunner” preached, “The kingdom of God is at hand.” He was as entirely the Son of man as he was the “Son of God.” “He and his Father were one,” and in like manner his believing people and he are one.

5th. All that we need to help us in this life is in Jesus. What precious things does that name, Jesus, mean! What do we need that we do not have in him! For the hungry, bread; for the weary, a staff; for the laboring, rest; for the condemned, righteousness; for the sinful, sanctification; for the foolish, wisdom; for the lost, salvation. Are they sons, he is the Elder Brother; are they sheep, he is the Shepherd; are they a bride, he is the Bridegroom. He is their Prophet to teach, their Priest to intercede, their King to rule over them in righteousness. What is there that he is not to his people?

6th. They abide in Him. It is not as boastful man would have it: that we may be in Christ to-day, and out of him to-morrow. “They are kept by his power.”—1 Pet. i. 5. “They are preserved in Christ.”—Jude 1. “He that has begun a good work in them, will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ.”—Phil. i. 6. Jesus said: “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”—Mat. xvi. 18. How safe they are in Christ Until the powers of darkness can prevail against this refuge believers are safe.

“He that hath for his refuge God,  
Shall find a most secure abode.”

7th. Being in Christ is the christian's security for final glory. “They that sleep in Jesus, God shall bring with him.” The bodies of the saints can not be holden of the grave; for He in whom they dwell conquered death and has ascended on high. Jesus destroys death, and, abiding in him, we may join the enraptured strain and cry, “O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Thus, dear brethren, I have briefly sketched a few thoughts that in my mind have linked themselves to this wonderful expression, “In Christ.” I submit them to you. I wish other brethren would add to what is here said.

As ever, your brother in hope,

Reisterstown, Md., Jan. 7, 1883.

F. A. CHICK.

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### THE WORK AND WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

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*Dear Brother Respass:*—Being prevented by high waters from meeting my appointment, I thought I would, if the Holy Spirit would guide my pen, write something about the work and witness of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's children. I can not do better than tell just what I have been taught, and no more. Should I tell more than I experimentally know, it would not be the truth concerning myself, though it might be according to the word of God. Such would be holding the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. i. 18.) I know more of my own vile, sinful, selfish and deceitful heart, than I do of deliverance from bondage. I am continually mistaking presumption for faith, and carnal ease for gospel liberty. I sadly fear I have only received a natural conviction, that will be attended with only a natural deliverance. The lapse of time will, sooner or later, wear off such guilt. And when it grows out of neglected duty, a discharge of that duty will always give relief. But this is not the peace of God, that passeth all

understanding, and shall keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ (Phil. iv. 7.) There is a port where ships may lie in safety during a storm; a ship may encounter a dead calm after a storm in mid-ocean, but she is no nearer the haven during the calm than when she was facing the storm. The merit of a crucified Jesus is the only haven in which the storms of divine wrath will never reach the soul (Acts iv. 12; 1 John i. 7; Heb. ix. 14.) God receives no notes for liquidation that his own hand has not signed. Guilt, when laid upon the conscience by divine power, is a terrible thing. None can endure it and live (Heb. xii. 20.) But as terrible as it is (and I think I know it by divine teachings), I would rather endure it the few remaining days I have to spend on earth, than that it should be removed any other way than by the blood of sprinkling. Daily am I made to do things I disallow; to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? If, then, it is with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin, this ought to be some consolation; for none but the quickened family of God are thus led. To win Christ, and be found in him, and have only that righteousness which is by the faith of God in him, is the earnest desire of my soul (Phil. iii. 8, 9.) To live without him, I can not. I would see his glorious person as bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, and yet the eternal Son of God; feel his blood, taste his love, and know his power. I would have a faith that could receive out of his fullness grace for grace. Only that faith, as a grain of mustard seed, wrought in the soul by divine power, overcomes the world, works by love, purifies the heart, subdues kingdoms of evil, works righteousness, obtains promises, stops the mouths of lions (especially that roaring lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour), quenches the violence of fire (temptations that overwhelm the soul in despair, if grace prevent not), brings strength out of weakness, escapes the edge of the sword, which is the word of God (Eph. vi. 17) that our enemies so often turn against us, but faith blunts it.

edge, and makes us wax valiant in fight, and turns to flight the armies of the aliens. Notion in the head is not faith in the heart; and though it may give us a right conception of the letter of truth, will only leave us where it found us—under the curse of the law, and consequently under the wrath of a sin-avenging God. Faith is to be distinguished from mere notion by its always operating in the heart, and in connection with love for God and hope in his promises. What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it (Rom. viii. 24.) Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life (Prov. xiii. 12.) Blessed is the man that continueth, and is not found drawing back at the perils of the way. God declares he has no pleasure in such (Heb. x. 38.) Such will be found to be every professor, however gifted—and to our view surrounded by a bulwark of grace—that God does not save by his power, renew by his Spirit, and cleanse by his blood.

How are we to obtain this Holy Spirit, bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, but by God sending it into our hearts, making us cry, Abba, Father? Oh! how often have I dreaded to take the name, Father, between my defiled lips, unless God give me the evidences that I have been predestinated unto the adoption of a child by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. I know there are some he did not thus predestinate. The expression in Eph. i. 4, 5, carries in itself the idea of exclusion; and if some be excluded, why not I? I know every one will be excluded, however strong their desires for heaven and happiness are, if those desires are not the operation of God's Holy Spirit in the soul. The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat (Prov. xiii. 4.) Many in the name of Christ cast out devils, prophesied, and did many wonderful works,—as no doubt Judas did,—that Christ will disown when he comes to make up his jewels. The just, but not the unjust, shall live by faith. But to wait for the vision, that tarries so long!

when His chariot wheels are so slow in coming! Oh, how I long to see him as he is!

The loving wife whose husband is gone a long journey, knew not how well she loved him till the hour of separation came. She knows she is his loving and beloved wife in his absence, as well as in his presence; yet his absence grieves her, even when she knows duty called him away. She knows, too, something of his will, and what will please him, and is all the time meditating in her heart many little comforts for him against his return. But unruly servants, gossiping neighbors, reverses in providence, or family affliction, or all combined, may impede, if not wholly destroy, her labor of love; but not the love of, nor for her husband. "The old man is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. iv. 22.) Carnality, pride, fleshly lusts, covetousness, worldly-mindedness, presumption, vain hopes, erroneous doctrine, and rotten evidences from the false jack-o'-lantern lights of the bogs and brushwood of my fallen and corrupt nature, seem well nigh at times to overwhelm me in despair. The blood of Christ shed for sinners, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness with my spirit to a personal interest in it, is what I want. I pant, hunger, thirst, roll upon my midnight bed, and supplicate with groanings which can not be uttered, for it. I do not say that these spiritual strivings are unintermitted with me, for there are times when carnality seems wholly to swallow me up. This is what makes me so fearful I have received it only in word, and not in power. If Paul, who was favored with an abundance of revelation, was fearful lest while he preached to others he himself would become a castaway, should we not fear the doctrine of final perseverance of the saints does us no good, if we are not sanctified to persevere? The doctrine of election will do us no good, if we have not, through sanctification of the Spirit, been elected to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ (1 Pet. i. 2.) Man's inability to come to Christ for life and salvation, will do us no good, if it never makes us lie at mercy's gate, poor beggars, that God feeds with that hidden manna, without money and without price.

There must be a work of grace in the soul, as well as a knowledge of doctrine in the mind.

Now, if I have traced out any of the ups and downs, crosses and crowns, captivities and deliverances, of any of God's little hidden ones, may the glory, power and honor of it all be ascribed to him.

HENRY ARCHER.

*Farmerville, La., Dec. 25, 1882.*

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.—Mat. v. 10.

These words, spoken by Christ the Saviour of the world, on the mount, is only a small portion of the comforting things that he there uttered to his disciples. "He opened his mouth, and taught them." Whom? His disciples; for we read that "when he was set, his disciples came unto him." So this memorable sermon was delivered to them, it would seem, and probably none others; for we see, "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him" (chapter viii. 1.)

This, the fifth chapter, commences: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit," &c.

Now, taking it for granted that this sermon was for the disciples' special instruction and comfort, we may be able to draw a little more encouragement and consolation for ourselves in this day, if we are the disciples of this blessed Teacher, that spake as man never spoke. Are we the disciples of this same Teacher? If so, we can draw comfort from the words at the head of this article. The writer, at least, can say he has felt the persecution, and that he hopes "for righteousness' sake." If so, if my sorrows and troubles have been for the truth's sake, I know the promise is sure, and will work for my good; for we read that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

We also have the question asked in the form of an asser-

tion: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or *persecution*, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" This same writer tells us that he had been in perils of various kinds, and some of these perils were even among "false brethren." So it seems in the days of the apostles there were those professing to be brethren that would put the followers of Christ "in perils." But says Paul: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." If, then, we can appropriate the language of Paul, and say, "None of these things move me," and can turn to the chapter our text is in and there see the characters that are pronounced "blessed," and can truly say, we are "persecuted for righteousness' sake," we may well "rejoice and be exceeding glad;" for the same speaker says, "Great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The Master has also said, in another place, when talking with his disciples: "If they (your enemies) do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" letting us know that we may expect persecutions, for they have persecuted him, and the servant is not above the master.

We are commanded, in this same chapter that our text is in, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." In the same chapter we read, "that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." In view of all these things, ought not our brethren to be very cautious, and take care how we hurt one of God's little ones? When the spirit of Christ is with his children, they are enabled to so walk and so act that others may see their good conduct and take courage therefrom.

I was much pleased to see in your "Salutatory," Brother Mitchell, for this volume of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, that there had been peace, and that all the writers for your paper had showed this spirit of love and brotherly esteem for each other. With the psalmist, I was made to say: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in

unity!" If there is one thing on earth I desire, it is the peace and fellowship of the brethren; and when strife and discord is caused by any, it grieves my heart.

I have read a few copies of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and am well pleased with its appearance, and also the doctrine it sets forth, as far as I have read it. I do not know personally either of its Editors, but am led to believe we have been taught in the same school, and by the same infallible Teacher, Christ; and if so, all know the same glorious truths, and are ready to ascribe all the honor, glory and power to His holy name.

I have been trying now for nearly four years, in a very feeble, imperfect way, to hold up Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life;" and have been a poor, dependent, and often feel unprofitable, follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, for nearly forty years; but I have no other hope for life and salvation than in the blood of Christ, and am trusting in that, and that alone, for a blessed life beyond the grave—believing that Christ will come again without sin unto salvation. Jesus has said: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

At the request of Elder Isaiah J. Clabaugh, I have written; not that he gave me a text to write from, but he requested me to write occasionally and send to you. Feeling a desire to serve with just the ability God giveth, I remain yours in gospel bonds,

JAMES M. TRUE.

*Maryville, Mo., Jan. 5, 1883.*

SHELBYVILLE, TENN., December 22, 1882.

*Dear Brethren:*—It is my duty and privilege, in a concise way, to give an account of a trip made by Elder James Wagner and the writer into Georgia and Alabama in November last. We started from Decherd at 4:20 A. M., Friday, 3rd November, traveling by rail, by way of Chattanooga, Atlanta and Barnesville, to Thomaston, where we were met by brethren Charles and B. F. Matthews and conveyed to their father's

residence, three miles distant. We reached Bro. Joel Matthews' about 9 P. M., having traveled about 300 miles. Next morning met the congregation at Emmaus Church, Upson county, Ga.; and after preaching were conveyed by Bro. Thos. J. Nelson to his own home. Sunday, 5th, met the congregation at Trinity, Upson county, among whom was Elder J. W. Bassett, who concluded the services. Thence, by Elder Bassett and Bro. J. M. Middlebrooks, we were carried to the dwelling of the latter. Monday, 6th, were conveyed by these brethren to Sharon Church, where we were introduced to Elder J. E. Duke. After the services were concluded by Elder Bassett, we were conveyed by him and Bro. T. J. Bazemore to Bro. Thomas Zelner's; and after dinner to Brother Bazemore's. Tuesday, 7th, met the congregation at Mount Calvary, where again Elder Bassett concluded the services. Elder Isaiah Grant and brethren James Grant and James Harris transported us to the abode of the last named, for dinner; and the first two carried us on to Bro. James Grant's. Wednesday, 8th, met the congregation at Salem Church, and after a very refreshing and encouraging interview, Bro. I. Grant having concluded the services, we repaired, in company with Bro. J. N. Matthews, to Bro. Leroy Hicks', for dinner. Thence, through Knoxville, Crawford county, to Bro. J. N. Matthews'. Thursday, 9th, met a small assemblage at Providence Church, where Elder Grant again concluded; then returned to Bro. J. N. Matthews', with whom we spent another night. Friday, 10th, were conveyed by Bro. Joel N. Matthews and Mr. Wiley Jordan to Union Church, where Elder King concluded the services. Thence we were escorted by Bro. and Sister J. W. Hardison to their dwelling in Fort Valley. The writer attended the appointment at the Missionary Baptist Church in Fort Valley, in the evening, and tried to preach "Christ and his Cross." At 9:50 A. M. Saturday, 11th, took the train for Butler, where Elder J. R. Respass and other brethren met and conducted us to the church in that town. After Brother Respass had concluded the services, in company with several we repaired to Brother Respass', for dinner. We regretted

that we could not visit Sister R. Anna Phillips, whose acquaintance we here made. Thence we were escorted by Bro. J. Fountain to his dwelling, where we met Elder Bennett Stewart. Next morning, Sunday, 12th, went to Bethlehem Church, where Elder B. Stewart concluded the services. Conveyed by brethren J. M. Meadows and J. B. Murray, we then went to Bro. G. W. L. Watkins'. Monday, 13th, met a small assemblage at Ebenezer Church, Macon county, and, after preaching, were conveyed by Bro. James L. Ogburn to Mr. Mustlewhite's, to dinner: thence to his home in Reynolds. Tuesday, 14th, met a few at New Hope Church; thence repaired to Brother Ogburn's, for dinner; after which we were conveyed by Bro. John Windham and Mr. Childers to the abode of the former. Wednesday, 15th, went to Bethel Church, and had among our hearers Elders J. R. Respass, B. Stewart, S. Bentley and John G. Murray. After Brother Respass had concluded the services, and Brother Bentley had avowed fellowship for Brother Wagner especially, we repaired to Bro. Respass', and remained at his dwelling until time to take the train for Columbus, on the 16th. Bro. G. W. Cargill met us at Butler, and going with us to Columbus, thence conveyed us to Bro. A. J. Digby's, in Browneville, Ala. At candle lighting, Thursday, 16th, we repaired to Bethel Church, in Browneville; and after preaching went with Elder H. Bussey to his home in Columbus. Friday, 17th, conveyed by brethren G. W. Cargill and A. Land, we met the appointment at Mount Moriah, and at Bro. A. Land's spent our last night in Georgia.

Saturday, 18th, conveyed by brethren J. B. Thompson and G. W. Cargill, we met the congregation at Mount Gilead Church. Here Elder Wm. M. Mitchell met us, and concluded the services; after which we dined at Mr. Coleman's, and then went to Bro. L. Pickard's. Sunday, 19th, returned to Mount Gilead Church, and after services were conveyed by Elder Mitchell and Bro. Wm. G. Taylor to Bro. William Webster's, for dinner; thence to Dr. Wm. G. Taylor's. Bad weather, in the providence of God, detained us at Brother Taylor's until

Tuesday, 21st, when we visited Brother Puckett and Brother Carmack, on our way to the appointment at Union Grove. At this point we met Elder Wm. Lively, and, after preaching, Elder Lively accompanied us to Brother Carmack's. Wednesday, 22nd, proceeded to our last appointment in Alabama, at Mount Olive Church. Here we met Elder J. S. Baxley. We had an impressive interview. Thence we repaired, with many others, to Elder Mitchell's, from whom we had already enjoyed such instructive and edifying and fraternal discourses. Thursday, 23rd, we were conveyed to, and around, the neat and handsome town, Opelika, by Elder Mitchell and his son, Charles. Here, at 10:10 A. M., we took train for Atlanta, having bid farewell to Elders Mitchell and Lively, and reached Elder James Wagner's home, near Decherd, Franklin county, Tenn., before midnight.

Brother Wagner and I enjoyed our visit to the brethren in the Echeonna and Upatoie Associations, in Georgia, and in the Beulah, in Alabama; rejoicing greatly "that we found them walking in the truth, as we have received commandment of the Father." We highly appreciate the privilege we enjoyed in declaring unto them "the gospel we have received;" and are encouraged, by the cordiality with which they embraced it, to be more indefatigable in our labors henceforth. We were truly "comforted, my brethren, by the mutual faith of you and us." And, we feel certain, God will not forget your labors of love and kindnesses toward us, in accompanying us from place to place, in bringing us on our way, and in so graciously ministering to us. May the God of all grace bless each one of you and your families! But has he not blessed you, my brethren? Has he not "sealed you with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession?" Have ye not "received abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness," whereby ye may certainly believe that ye "shall reign in life by Jesus Christ?" "I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor

height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

On my return home, I found my good wife in much affliction; she has had a severe attack of pleuro-pneumonia, and has been unable to sit up for over four weeks. I have spent nearly all the time, since my return, by her bedside. Brother Wagner spent last Saturday night with me, and on Sunday preached at Bethlehem Church. Pray for, and visit us.

Yours to serve in love,

FRANK. E. LACY.

### EXPERIENCE.

SPRINGTOWN, TEXAS, December, 1882.

*Beloved Brethren:*—Having been often requested to write my Experience and send it to you; and having been blessed with life and an opportunity, I now proceed to pen a few lines for the consideration of the many readers of the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I was born in Tennessee; my mother was a Methodist, and died when I was a small boy; but my father belonged to no religious order, and being a poor man, I was raised without any educational advantages, and with but little preaching advantages—in fact, none. I married in Franklin county, in 1855, into a Methodist family, and went to their meetings, and became, as I thought, seriously concerned, and got religion, and joined them. But when the excitement wore off, I found that my religion was gone, though I tried as much as I could to be religious until I believed I was doing wrong; so I called for my letter, and was dismissed in full fellowship; and after taking it home and laying it in the fire, I was better satisfied—because I knew I had not been changed, and did not wish knowingly to act the hypocrite. In 1861, I went into the army in Colonel Turner's regiment, and was wounded in the battle of Seven Pines, and sent to the hospital in Amelia county, Va. Here I had some serious thoughts and trouble of mind on the subject of salvation. I returned home and remained a month, and the night before my return

to the army, my father made a supper for me, and had a party, and we danced all night; but I did not enjoy myself, because something seemed to say to me, "This is no place for you, and you had better be studying about something else." I rejoined my command, and in an engagement, August 22nd, 1862, I lost my left arm, and was sent to Richmond, and thence to the general hospital at Lynchburg, where I remained some time. My trouble whilst in the hospital there, was that I thought I should die, and was unprepared for a better world. My trouble none can tell. I was one alone; no relation, and not one that I had ever seen before. And oh, my soul, it was a sink of sin! I felt condemned without hope. It seemed to me, that had I the whole world, I would have given it for a hope of salvation; but there was none for me. I desired to feel that the Lord had shown me that I was a sinner, but could not feel it as I desired. As I lay on my cot in the hospital, it seemed to me I could see my grave and hear the clods fall on my coffin; and I would cry unto the Lord to forgive my sins; but oh, my soul, there was no forgiveness for me! but torment was my portion; for I had sinned away my day of grace; but if I went to hell, I would go trying to pray. So, dear brethren and sisters, I made all the vows and promises I could that I would live better if God would spare my life to return home—that I would never swear again and do as I had done. It seemed that my desire was to get home to see my wife and baby, and if I died to die at home. It pleased God to spare me to get home and find all well, but destitute of any thing to live on, and this troubled me. Meeting my family and friends relieved me to some extent of my troubles, and after awhile I returned to my old wicked habits, as the dog returns to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire—though, at times, I continued to have serious thoughts. In 1863, there was a meeting of a sect called Separate Baptists, and my wife wished to go, but I wouldn't go at first, but after it had been going on several days, I concluded to go with my wife; but I did not go into the house, but took a seat in the yard under a beech tree. While the

meeting was going on in the house, the feelings I had, sitting under that tree, are indescribable; every thing I ever did, all the promises I ever made, and all the thoughts and feelings I had whilst in the hospital, came upon me with redoubled force, so that it seemed my heart would burst. I got up and went to the woods, and thought I would get down on my knees and pray. But oh, wretched me! I was afraid to get on my knees. I returned home, but no relief could I find. I could neither eat nor sleep, for something seemed to say, "You have to die and be driven into torment, for your time is come." There was no peace for me. I returned to meeting the next day, and whilst they were singing, I felt to be sinking down, down, to rise no more—and if I ever died, I died then and there. When I came to myself, the first thing I knew I was praising God for his goodness and mercy to me, a poor sinner! At that time it seemed to me I would never do any thing but love and praise the Lord; and a desire to tell everybody of the goodness of the Lord and the plan of salvation was within me; so that if I ever had a call to the ministry, it was then, when the Lord forgave my sins, and put a new song in my mouth—even praise to his name. I felt a desire to follow the Lord in his commands, and we joined these Separate Baptists and were baptized. I began now to search the Scriptures to know my duty, for I felt that I had a work to do; and the more I read the stronger I was confirmed that salvation was by grace. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, and there being a church in the neighborhood, I decided to go and hear them; so I went on Saturday, and again on Sunday; and for the first time I heard salvation by grace preached by Elder J. E. Frost, and I loved the doctrine, and love it yet. I told my wife they were my people, and if I did not get better satisfied I would go to them. So, when I could stay away no longer, telling my wife that she could do as she pleased, I went and related what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and was received and baptized by Elder Petty, of the Round Lick Association, Tennessee, at New Hope Church, near Wartrace; which church liberated me to exercise my gift wherever my

lot should be cast; and had me ordained, though I begged them not to do it, feeling my unworthiness and lack of qualification. The presbytery consisted of Elders James Hollman and M. T. G. Mills; the 5th of April, 1873, being called to the care of three churches. In 1875, I moved to Johnson county, Texas, where I found no Primitive Baptists for some time; so I thought I could not bear to stay, being so much dissatisfied and miserable. I, however, heard of Brother Clark, and went to hunt him up, and finding them, had a pleasant time. They being Primitive Baptists, we soon organized a church; and continued to organize churches until we organized an Association, calling it Villada Creek Association, with three churches—Elder Thomas Clark and myself being then the only ministers; but now we have seven churches and six ordained ministers, and claim to be sound Primitive Baptists, believing in the election of grace; that God chose his people in Christ before the world was; and that Christ atoned for their sins, and the Holy Spirit calls and regenerates them, according as he has chosen them in Christ before the world began. We regret to say that there are some claiming to be Primitive Baptists who believe in an eternal two-seed and non resurrection doctrine, that we think to be unsound. We hold that the entire Adam family is alike in sin, and dead to all spiritual good, and will so remain until quickened by the Holy Spirit according to his eternal purpose in Christ; and that when the poor sinner is brought to the end of the law, he is made to rest in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not in his own works.

Dear brethren, may the God of all love bless you in the publication of the GOSPEL MESSENGER; for I love to read the communications of the brethren and sisters I find therein; and I would be glad to help support it, but it has fallen to my lot to be poor.

B. L. THRANEBERRY.

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A typographical error in last issue made us say that Elder Jehu Clark was dead, when it should have been Elder John Clark.

## THE IMAGE OF HIS SON.

*Dear Brethren:*—I feel very weak to write any thing for publication, especially amongst correspondents of more ability than myself; but where there is but little given, there is but little required. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose: for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First Born among many brethren.” In considering Christ Jesus the Lord of glory, we should approach the subject with much reverence, fear and trembling; yet it is a subject that has been much upon my mind since our Association in September last, at which I was called upon for an explanation in regard to the “image of his Son.” Now, of course, we know nothing of Jesus Christ outside of revelation; for it is not in the power of man to know, of himself, how two natures can be brought so closely together as to be in one person. The Scriptures represent him as being God, and yet he is called the “Son of man.” He is the Son of the Most High,—the second person of the Godhead,—equal with the Father; the same titles are given him as are given the Father. (Read John i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 16.) These scriptures confirm the divinity of Christ; he is a divine person, which is plain to be seen in the Scriptures, considering all his perfections, &c.; and, in my mind, it is not to this image or likeness of all the divine perfections, that the children of God are to be conformed, but to the Humanity. When Adam was made, he was placed in the garden, a living soul; but in this state he did not remain long, for there was a law given him, the violation of which was death. Hence it is written, “In Adam all die.” Then were all dead. We could not use a more powerful expression to set forth the condition of man in a state of nature. A dead man—“corruption, earth and worms.” Shall these live? Ah! not only live, but they shall be conformed to the image of God’s Son. Now, from the reading of the Scriptures, we are led to consider Christ Jesus in his pre-

existent state; for it is written, "He declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand," &c. He calls things that are not, as though they were; for there is nothing new nor old with God. His delight was as much with his people before the world was, as it has been since; for God is perfect, in every sense; there can be nothing added to him; he is all powerful, all wise, all good, all mercy, all love,—sees and knows all things at once. "In his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Then Christ Jesus must have existed before the world was; and I believe that he did stand forth as the Head of the Church, and as the Word of God, which Word was God, and being God, he was able to assume any appearance he desired that was not contrary to his nature; and, in my judgment, he stood forth in covenant clothed with humanity, soul and body; for his divine nature could not be offered and stand as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We can not make any thing like unto God, for no man hath seen his shape; then I conclude that it is to the Humanity of Christ, that those foreknown ones are predestinated to be conformed.

What a beautiful picture we have to contemplate in the humanity of Christ Jesus! Was there such a picture ever drawn by art of man? We have seen photographs of kings and princes of the earth leading captive other kingdoms; we have read the narrative of David and of the children of Israel singing, "he has slain his ten thousands," and it seems glorious; but when we turn our eyes to the Son of Man, what do we see? Under the law dispensation of types and shadows, it required perfect sacrifices, without spot or blemish, which only served to the purifying of the flesh; and the people loved the tabernacles of God; but behold the antitype, Christ Jesus, clothed in humanity! And here I may differ with some; for though he took upon him human nature, I don't believe that his was a natural body, for it is written that his mother was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost. Again, the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. Here we have the two before us—the

first earthy, the second heavenly: in this heavenly, we see perfect beauty; he is righteous altogether; he is holy; he is without sin; guile was not found in his mouth; yea, he is altogether lovely. The Father expresses his approbation at his baptism, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In all his work he was perfect, never shrinking nor murmuring; he bore all things for his body's sake—the Church; became poor that we through his poverty might be rich; but after his suffering and death we see him again, born from the dead, the first-born among many brethren. And, beloved, I believe that as the high priest of old had the names of the children of Israel upon his breast when he entered into his service, that Christ also entered into his sufferings with the names of all that the Father had given him before the world was. He died as their substitute, was buried, and the third day rose again, and now, beloved of God, we have a picture before us that is worth our looking upon; the world of nature could look upon him before his passion, but now their eyes are holden, and only those beloved ones can behold him—and they only as he is pleased to reveal himself unto them. Now it seems, as heaven and earth have met together, he went down into the grave with the names of his people, he rises from the dead with the names of his children; and, beloved, if we could get the scales from our eyes, and could see the mighty Conqueror coming forth, methinks we would see the whole Church of the first born in his bosom, for he is the First Born among many brethren. But he has not yet entered into the Holiest; he stays forty days to complete his work of manifestation, in which time he shows himself often to those whom he had chosen to be witnesses for him; and now, having done all things, and having manifested himself sufficiently to his disciples, and all things being now ready, Mount Olive was the appointed place from which he should ascend. See the glorious One! not a mist, not a "patch of fog," as Mr. Ingersoll would have it; but the glorious Son of God, King of kings, and Lord of lords, the High Priest of the Most High God. Oh! is our Joshua clothed?

is he prepared to enter into the presence of God for us? will the doors of the Holy of Holies be opened? Ah! wait a moment; the congregation of saints are around him; methinks I see him standing in his shining garments, his hands spread over his people, as the high priest of old, when the heavens become thick with clouds. Elijah was carried to heaven in a chariot of fire; but this Man, Christ Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, was taken up in clouds of glory. Now, beloved, we have a picture before us—the Humanity of Christ—and as we have borne the image of the earthly, so we must bear the image of the heavenly. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!” “Beloved, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” “Whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First Born among many brethren.” Are we to be like Jesus? Yes, this same Jesus which is gone into heaven, shall come in like manner as you have seen him taken up (Acts i.) “Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we also look for the Lord, who shall change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own glorious body.” He is King and Priest; ye shall be made kings and priests unto God. Beloved, ye are not called unto a mount that burned, and that might be thrust through with a dart, but to the Church of the First Born—the New Jerusalem. Christ is eternal, and says: “Because I live, ye shall live also.” As God, he is not a priest; as man, he is made a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” So, beloved, when Christ shall have finished his mediatorial work, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, then it seems that all things will be complete; when the sea of glass is spread out, and those conformed to the image of Christ, the Anointed of God, shall enter into their service, then it is that the saints of God will see and feel the perfect bliss of heaven. We now behold in a glass, darkly; but then face to face. And now beholding, we are “changed from glory to glory;” but then there will

be no more changing, no more measured time, but one unbounded eternity! What shall we do then? As kings and priests, offer up spiritual sacrifices to God, and sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" Amen.

Brother Mitchell, look over this. As for myself, I feel very unworthy of such things as I hope to enjoy. I will try to aid in the circulation and usefulness of the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

I remain yours to serve in hope of eternal life,

*St. Elmo, Ala., 1882.*

J. R. S. BULLARD.

*Elder J. R. Respass:—Dear Brother:—*To-day I am at home from affliction and weakness, while a congregation will soon wait to hear the sound of my voice to speak to them concerning the good things of the blessed Jesus; but instead of preaching to them I must remain at home, on, or close by, my bed.

I have been much edified of late by reading the GOSPEL MESSENGER and *Zion's Landmark*. The communications seem to be flavored with great sweetness; or, it may be, that since I have become weak, and have to spend much of my time in doors, that my mind has been more direct on the things contained in the gospel. I sometimes feel to say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."—Psalm cxix. 71.

The Lord's children are always afflicted, yet some of them know but little about natural affliction. Natural affliction can never bring us to remember the Lord unless we have been spiritually afflicted. We may, while confined to our beds and suffering naturally, make many promises to do better, and walk more upright, if we ever get well again; but such promises are easily forgotten unless they are ingrafted in the mind by the Holy Spirit. One that is only naturally afflicted may be restored to his usual health, or, perhaps, better, and then become sick again. Our natural affliction acts like the

Arminian religion, of falling from grace and being restored again time after time; but not so with the spiritual. David says: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." That is the effect that spiritual affliction has on us. One that is spiritually afflicted never is healed in this corrupt nature any more, for there is a continual sorrowing for sin, a mourning, and a dying every day as long as we live. We also have some joy; so it is joy and sorrow mingled together; but the joy and sorrow will not run together and mix up so that they can not be told the one from the other, for the one is the consequence of natural, sinful lust that dwells in the flesh; while the other is caused by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our spirits bearing witness that we are the children of God. What a blessing to have a hope that all our sorrows, mournings, trials, tribulations and distresses are full in this life; and while they seem to dwell in all their glory in us, and cause us so many uneasy moments, they can not separate us from the love of our heavenly Father.

The question might arise, "What causes this spiritual affliction?" I answer, it is for one to be convinced of sin and its power against him; that is, when this affliction first arises. But is there no deliverance from this sad affliction? If not, the Arminian religion would seem to be the best, for they seem to have an abundance of joy, and enjoy themselves by partaking of worldly amusements, and still hold to their religion. This is evidence to us that they have their joy in this life, and that their religion is of this world. Such things as these are no comfort to the child of grace. What comfort can a child of Jesus, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, find in such things as sitting around the card table, partaking in the ball room, bar room, Sunday School picnics, or other evil things, such as are set up by wicked men and devils, that their children may have plenty of attraction in every direction to lead them from even moral obedience to the laws of God? It seems to me that the Lord's poor and afflicted have

to look to another source. They have to look to Jesus, who has redeemed them from such corruptible things by his own precious blood, and by the grace of God they are removed into his glorious kingdom, where they look for the food of the kingdom, which is the flesh of Jesus. Wholesome food, that if a man eat of he shall never hunger, and he shall drink living water, and shall never thirst.

But the time of his deliverance from this affliction will come. The promise is sure: "If I go away I will come again and take you unto myself, that where I am there may you be also." Jesus went away, for the witnesses have testified to the truth of it. And we are witnesses this day, that he has ascended upon high, for we feel the comfort of his intercession. Then, so sure as he has gone, he will come again, and take us to enjoy his heavenly bliss. O, what an amazing deliverance this will be—delivered from sorrow, sighing, pain, distress, crosses, temptations, sin and death; to have no more afflictions, no more disappointments, or distresses, but to dwell in the presence of our blessed Jesus forevermore. Brother Respass, I have written much more than I anticipated, but my mind kept running and I kept following; so I have reached this point.

The churches in this section seem to be in peace, with occasionally a small addition, which gives us great consolation. Please remember us in your prayers.

Yours in hope,

L. H. HARDY.

*Newport, Carteret County, N. C.*

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#### EXPERIENCE OF ELDER J. H. SHIRLEY.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell:*—I have long desired to write you some of the dealings of the Lord with me, as I hope.

And first, permit me to say that I am the son of Hezekiah and Margaret Shirley, born unto them in South Carolina, 1828. We moved to this county, in Alabama, in 1833, and even at that early age, and for years following, I had solemn thoughts about death. I thought I would be a good boy

before my death, and thereby be prepared for the joys of heaven; and the kind of preaching I often heard; after I became old enough to notice preaching, confirmed me in the belief that heaven could be attained by my own good deeds. In my fourteenth year I attended a camp meeting, and the people seemed to be very devoted and religious, and I desired to be like them, and set out to "get religion," intending to join them, for they preached just what I then believed. For two years I lived as good a Pharisee as the one who thanked God that he was not as other men—unjust—nor wicked like some other boys. I prayed two or three times a day, and felt that I was righteous, and ready to die and meet Jesus at any time. Thus things went with me till I had a kind of vision, or dream, of dying, and being brought to Judgment, where I saw my mother (though she is yet living), with an innumerable multitude, arrayed in spotless white, all singing with one accord the sweetest music I ever had heard. I never had looked upon any thing so delightful. At the entrance I saw Jesus, and he said to my mother: "Come in, ye well beloved of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There I stood like the convicted jailor, trembling under a sense of guilt and condemnation, feeling to be the blackest of the black in character, waiting my sentence: "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you." In this awful condition I awoke, feeling sensibly that I was not righteous in the sight of God, but that I was a poor, condemned sinner.

From this time trouble commenced in a degree, and of a kind which had before been unknown to me, and for the first time in my life I really felt the need of true prayer, and of an all-sufficient Saviour to save me from my sins. But much as I felt the need of praying, much to my astonishment I found that I could not pray; and, also, to increase my distress and sense of guilt before God, it did appear to me that I had committed the unpardonable sin in my former prayers, thanking God that I was better than others. I felt as though the

Lord would not suffer me to open my lips to plead for mercy, and that it would be sin in me to mention his holy name.

Thus my trouble grew worse continually, and my condition more hopeless, until I felt that the day of grace had passed with me, and that I was without God, and without hope in this world, or in the world to come. Fain would I have exchanged my condition for that of the beast of the field, or with the little crawling insect. At times I wished that I had died in infancy. Such was my ignorance of the plan of salvation by grace that I could not see how the Lord could be just and justify me, a poor, guilty and justly-condemned sinner against God. Feeling that I was sinking forever, I fell to the ground praying God to suffer me to praise him for his justice even in my condemnation; and there I lay, and there I thought I must die, and be forever banished from God. O, my dear brother, I can not here describe my feelings to you. The sun, the glorious luminary of day, was shining in his strength, yet to me it did seem that it was a day of darkness and thick gloom; all created things upon which I looked seemed as if they were draped in mourning over my awful condition. In this wretched condition of soul my prayer was, "O, Lord God, if it be possible, let this cup of eternal death pass from me." The next thing I knew of myself I was sitting on a fence near where I had fallen to the ground, and was, as I then thought, praying the last prayer that I should ever be permitted to pray, when all of a sudden these lines came rushing with comfort to my soul:

"My christian friends in bonds of love,  
Whose hearts in sweetest union join"—

Here Jesus was revealed to me as my Saviour, the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Then I was enabled to see how God could remain just and be the justifier of the ungodly through the imputed righteousness of Christ. Joy filled my soul, and I felt for a time as free from the guilt and condemnation for sin as though I had never sinned. I felt that the Lord had, indeed, done great things for me, whereof I was glad, and I desired to praise his holy name all

the remainder of my life. The love of God, and love to his people, was such as I had never before felt, and thinking my troubles all gone forever, I thought I would go and tell my mother all about it, and let her know how God could justify and save sinners. But before I got to where she was, doubts assailed me that I was deceived, that my burden of sin and guilt was gone, but still I was no Christian. This was a heavy shock, and sore trial, to my happy soul. Every thing for a time had seemed united with me in giving praise and glory to God, but when this dreadful assault was made upon my faith, tempting me to doubt the Lord's gracious work, nature again resumed its usual natural appearance, and I could see no change as I had done in my joyful moments. I desired my burden of distress back again, not because it was so pleasant to have it, but that I might know, if possible, how it was taken away from me. But to this day I never yet have felt that burden of condemnation as I had felt it before my deliverance from it. But in spite of all these doubts and fears respecting the genuineness of my conversion, my mind became much exercised about baptism, and this led me, though very slyly, to read the New Testament, and I found written therein that to the Church of Jesus Christ there is but "One Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism." I had seen the Methodists baptize, as they called it, by immersion, sprinkling and pouring, but such a variety of ways did not now seem to agree with the scriptural rule.

Up to this time I had hated the Primitive Baptists for their doctrine worse than any people on earth, but after my deliverance, the first Primitive Baptist preacher I heard was Elder John M. Pearson, and he took up the condition of the convicted sinner, telling my great troubles and deliverance so plainly that I was irresistibly drawn to him in love. Some time after that, Brother Mitchell, I heard you preach, and it had the same effect upon me. You told me plainly of my desires to talk to the Lord's people, and to be baptized, and of my unworthy feelings to do so, but I could not understand how you could know and describe my feelings so minutely

for I knew I had never, at that time, told any one of these things. From this time I greatly desired to talk with you, much more so than with any other person I had ever seen, and I thought at times that I would go to the church at Enon, in Chambers county, Alabama, when you lived near there, and had the pastoral charge of that church, for I desired you to baptize me, and thought I could not be satisfied unless you did. But when you became so greatly afflicted, in 1851, as to resign the care of the four churches of your charge, I felt as though the Lord had laid his afflicting hand on one of his most devoted servants, lest you should baptize one so unworthy as I felt myself to be. At the close of that year, as your afflictions continued, you moved to where you now live, with but little, or no hope, as I suppose, of ever again being able to preach, or serve churches; and this was such a back-set to me that I did not offer myself to any church, nor relate the dealings of the Lord with me, till Saturday before the third Sunday in July, 1854, when I went before the church at Emmaus, Chambers county, Alabama, and was received, and baptized the next day by Elder John M. Duke. With this church I am yet a member, and am trying to serve it in the cause of my heavenly Master the best I can.

Dear Elder Mitchell, I have long been impressed in mind to write you the substance of the above as a private letter, though I fear now that I have written, it is so imperfect, and badly written, that it will rather annoy, than interest or comfort you. It is, however, submitted to your better judgment to dispose of as you think proper. If you publish, please correct. I remain affectionately yours in adversity,

JOEL H. SHIRLEY.

*Tiller's Cross Roads, Ala., Dec., 1882.*

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Elder Hassell has suspended his school to devote himself exclusively to the work of the Church History; and hopes to complete it in a few months. May the blessing of God attend his labors, so that the History shall be worthy a place in every christian household.—EDS.

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

### A WORTHY EXAMPLE.

Some time ago a brother, who is a member of a Primitive Baptist church in a large city, sent us *Five Dollars*, giving the name and address in full of the church, and requesting that we send the GOSPEL MESSENGER to said church. We shall, therefore, if the Lord permit, send *six copies* for one year as directed; and in this connection we wish to say that we very highly commend this course of our beloved brother, and think it well worthy of imitation by brethren of other churches, if the Lord has so prospered them and put it into their hearts and minds to do so.

In most of our churches there is a large majority of poor members as to the things of this world, though many of them are "rich in faith," and greatly desire to read our magazine, and thereby become better acquainted with others of "like precious faith" who are scattered abroad, and partake with them of whatever may be published to the comfort, edification or instruction of christians. Now, if the example of our brother should be followed, not only by individual members who are able to do so, but by *churches*, in having a few copies of the GOSPEL MESSENGER sent to the church for monthly distribution among the poor widows and other poor members, we have reason to believe that it would cheer their hearts, and thereby be a work of faith and labor of love showed unto the Name of our Lord.

One of the inspired men of God calls very special attention to this point, that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labor of love which you have *showed* toward his name, *in that* ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."—Heb. vi. 10. Can there be any better or higher calling for one of the Lord's children upon earth, than to "minister to the saints" in the name of Jesus of such things, either temporal or spiritual, as the Lord has put us in trust

with? We are all as stewards of the manifold grace of God, and under special command that, "as every man hath received the gift, so minister the same, one to another, as *good stewards*."—1 Pet. iv. 10.

We can not, therefore, be as "good stewards," discharging the duties of our stewardship honestly and faithfully, unless we do minister, one to another, of such things as the Lord has committed to us for the mutual benefit and comfort of one another.

The GOSPEL MESSENGER is a neat monthly magazine, published at the low price of *One Dollar* a year—or six copies for *Five Dollars*; and as most of the churches have monthly Conferences, it would be very convenient at each meeting to have a few copies of the MESSENGER to distribute among such as wish to read, but are not able to pay. Send on your orders.—EDS.

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### TO CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—Since we last wrote you we have had some very damp, cold weather, making it very important for old people and children to keep within doors much of the time.

Long-continued and unnecessary exposure to bad weather, frequently causes much pain and sickness, and, perhaps, will lay the foundation of disease which may continue through all future life. The sooner children can learn to avoid such things as will be hurtful to them, the better it will be for them as long as they live.

There are certain laws which our Creator has given for the government of every thing in order to secure the best results to his creatures; but if any of those laws are violated by us, we must expect to suffer in some way for it. *Fire*, you know, is very useful to us in many ways, but yet you also know that it often destroys much property, burns houses and destroys human life. Very little children are much inclined to want to "play in the fire," and the little, innocent babe

struggles at times to get hold of the lamp or the red burning coal of fire, because it looks pretty to it, and it has not yet learned what you mean when you tell the little innocent thing, "It *burn* you! it burn you!" It does not yet know what *burn* is, as applied to its own little hand, but let it once touch the fire and feel the pain, it will then get a very impressive lesson, that possibly may last it through life.

No doubt, you have often heard the remark that "A *burnt child* dreads the fire;" and well it may, for sometimes children, and even older people, get so badly burned by being careless about fire, or careless in the way they use it, that they carry the mark or *scar* of the burn on them to their graves.

Now, dear children, what is true about the improper use of, or unnecessary meddling with fire, is also true about almost every thing else. If we do wrong in any thing, or meddle with things in a way that we ought not, it will not be for our good, but for our hurt. "Fire will burn." And so will any wrong-doing. If we violate any law that the Great God has fixed for our good, that is what we call sin; it is wrong, and it is for sin or wrong-doing that people generally have to suffer. They are tempted like the little thoughtless babe to "play with the fire," and so they get burned. We say the fire has burned them, or tobacco or whisky has ruined them, but the fire is not to blame. It would not hurt them if they would keep it in its place and not meddle with it improperly. Whisky is not to blame for making men such fools. It will never hurt any body if kept in its place. But it will no more do to meddle with it improperly than it will for a child to play in the fire. If any are hurt by carelessness about fire, they are to blame, and not the fire; and if any are hurt by a careless tampering with whisky, they are to blame for it, and not the whisky. Sin will always bring suffering and punishment. Remember this.—M.

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Would you resolve more than others? then you should love more than others.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.—Acts xvii. 30.

In pursuance, somewhat, of our editorial in the February MESSENGER, we remark that the eyes of men were to be opened by christian teaching in a two-fold sense. They were to be opened in a natural sense to the moral and worldly advantages accruing to individuals, families and nations from its precepts and examples, and thus be delivered from the barbarous superstition that blinded their eyes, fettering national, social, domestic and individual progress and elevation. In the train of christianity went the elevation of the mother and the sacred relationship of husband and wife; and in the elevation of the mother was the elevation of the child and of mankind. In its train went the spirit of human liberty and personal responsibility. The world, long shrouded in darkness, as a minor kept under tutors and governors of superstition, had now, so to speak, come to the age of manhood, and was to enter into the inheritance reserved in the light of christianity for all classes, and therefore all men were commanded to repent. As the child or heir, when grown into his majority and vested with his estate, could no longer live as the minor, but is under responsibilities and obligations from which he was before free; so were the nations, that before grovelled in the moral darkness of superstition, and for which God did not destroy them as he did Sodom and Gomorrah, but winked at it, now required to turn away from their former course, and live in a moral sense to the honor of the living God, instead of gods of gold, silver, wood and stone. Up to this time the moral influence of God's word had been confined to the Jews, but it was no longer to be restricted to them, but was to spread over the earth and possess the gate of all nations; which it has done in a literal, but not a spiritual sense. God purposed a reformation of the world in the regeneration of his people by the gospel; and, therefore, in blessing the world with the gospel, in a natural sense, he required of them as he bestowed upon them. Not that he commands of them spiritual obedience, but moral obedience only—and that because he gave

them, in the light of the letter of the gospel, the ability to perceive its superior advantages over pagan superstition. This was a great gift, though not spiritual, and not therefore requiring spiritual obedience. To whom much is given, of him much is required; and this is true not only as it applies to christian obedience, but also as it applies to natural and moral obedience. If God has bestowed upon a natural man—one not a christian—great powers of mind and advantages over others, he is by the gift involved in greater obligations than his less gifted fellows, and thus more is required of him than of them. And so of christians, is required an obedience not required of the most learned and gifted natural men; because the ability to render it, is not given. A natural man is not required to be baptized, because he is not able to be baptized in faith, being destitute of faith; but those to whom faith has been given, are under obligation to render the obedience that the gift involves them in, to God; they are able to be baptized, and it is therefore required of them. The advantages given the whites over the less gifted race of black people, involves the whites in obligation to use those advantages to the benefit rather than the injury of the blacks; more being required of us than of them, as more has been committed to us. More tribute or tax is required of a rich man than of a poor one, because more is given him. The liberation of the blacks involves them now in obligations from which they were free in slavery; with the gift of liberty goes the obligation to perform the duties of freemen. God, therefore, requires more of them now than then; because, in a state of slavery, they could not fulfil the duties of freemen. Upon them now devolves the care of training and supporting their families; from which they were before free. Female chastity, that in slavery was little regarded amongst them, is now required, as well as moral family government and personal responsibility. So it may be said that whilst in a state of slavery, God winked at many things in them as a class, of which he now commands them to repent; and commands them because he has given them ability to repent in the sense re-

quired. An unmarried man is not under the same obligations and responsibilities that the man of a family is; there is not as much required of him; he is not required to support a family, rear and train children; but God having given him a wife and children, with the gift goes the obligation imposed by it. This is duty; for whatsoever is commanded is a duty, and punishment follows in the neglect of it. God has a right, as Ruler of the universe, to command all,—for all are his subjects,—not only the saint, but the sinner also; and he cares for all, but not for all alike. He did good to all in their wicked idolatry—giving them fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness; he even feedeth the ravens and the young lions. He maketh one to differ from another in natural gifts; and makes his people differ from all others in spiritual gifts; but he blesses all with worldly gifts.

But the eternal salvation of none, not even of the Elect, is dependent in no sense upon their duty or obedience. God has not required of any sinner a duty, the performance of which would be the means of eternal life; because none have ever been able to do such a duty; nor will any sinner ever be damned for the non-performance of such a duty. Even if repentance was merely a christian duty, it is one that can only be performed after the new birth. God commands his people to do that only which he has given them the spirit and ability to do. Repentance, as a christian duty, is based upon grace and ability previously given; as when some of the first churches were commanded to repent—Ephesus and Pergamos, for instance. In Pergamos Church were those that held to the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans; of such doctrines they should repent by clearing themselves of them. If, therefore, repentance was a christian duty, the spirit of it is a gift of God's grace. But the principle of christianity, as enunciated by the Great Teacher, is: "Doth he thank (or reward) that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are

unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do."—Luke xvii. 9, 10.

One more word in conclusion upon Elder Gilbert's text. We do not understand that Paul's preaching or teaching was designed to impart eternal life, or to save in any eternal sense; but that its spiritual effect was based upon the work of the Spirit (though maybe apparently simultaneous with his preaching) in the hearer. His preaching was necessary—was ordained of God—but would have been of no avail in one destitute of the Spirit. He preached the word in the Spirit; they heard in the Spirit; and by this union of the word and Spirit, faith was, so to speak, born. It seems from the text that forgiveness of sins was based upon their eyes being opened, and their being turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; that is to say, these things preceded an experience of the forgiveness of sins; as if one might have his eyes opened and be turned away from darkness to light, but still not feel that his sins were forgiven. This is true in conviction. Conviction for sin, precedes penitence for sin, and both precede faith; but these, and all graces flow from the atonement. One may know he is a sinner, but not be penitent; and he may be penitent, and not feel pardoned. When David had slain Uriah, and the Lord convicted him of his sin with a message by Nathan, and he became penitent and confessed it, Nathan said to him, The Lord hath also put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. His sin had been atoned for or pardoned, and therefore he was convicted of it, became penitent and confessed, and received or experienced the pardon or atonement that had been made for it by Christ. This is what christians experience; they experience what Christ has done for them; some of which they will not experience until after death. Thus it seems that David's experimental pardon or forgiveness of sin was based upon his conviction, penitence and confession; but had his sin not previously been put away he would never have been convicted of it; his eyes would never have been opened to it. There is no better evidence of an interest in Christ's atonement than conviction and penitence.

itence for sin; but these graces do not procure it. Every sinner who has felt, after penitence, peace with God, has experienced the forgiveness of sins, and has thus, inheritance amongst the saints; enters into, to a limited extent, the joys of the Lord. He inherits that which Christ has provided for him and all His children—which is a common estate, or one in common. But it is, in comparison to that which awaits them, but an earnest or foretaste, as the grapes of Eschol were of the fatness of the land to which they were journeying. There is another sense in which we receive forgiveness of sin. A disorderly member returning to the church in penitent confession, receives forgiveness of the church, and is restored to his inheritance. What the church forgives, in Christ's spirit, is as if Christ forgave it; and we suppose the penitent so realizes it.

Here we will stop; asking the charity of the brethren upon our weakness, and their prayers that we may be saved.—R.

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#### WHEAT AND TARES.—MAT. XIII. 24.

In reply to Brother A. King, of Byron, Ga., we offer a few thoughts upon the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, as recorded in the 13th chapter of Matthew.

In this chapter we find a cluster of parables, which Christ put forth to the vast multitude of people who were thronged around him to hear the gracious words that fell from his lips. His parables were always adapted to the circumstances and surroundings under which they were spoken; and though the true meaning and application of them was not always fully apprehended by the multitude, yet, when he was alone with his disciples, he expounded all things to them as far as they were then capable of knowing, or as far as it was his purpose they should know. To his immediate and chosen disciples it was "given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," while to others no such gift from God had been imparted.

God is sovereign, and has the most absolute and undisputed right to do what he will with his own.

“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; and while men slept the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way; and when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.”

In expounding this parable to the disciples the Lord Jesus Christ applies it to himself as sowing the good seed. The field in which he sowed these good seed is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed these tares among the wheat is the devil.

It should be distinctly observed that the comparison introduced in all these parables is to be found in the “kingdom of heaven,” and not in the “kingdom of darkness.” The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of Christ and of God, whether it be found in the old Jewish nation under the legal ceremonies of worship, or in the Gospel Church under the principles of the New Covenant. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were in the kingdom of heaven, and the faith which the Lord God gave them manifested them as the “children of the kingdom” and the “good seed” which the “Son of Man” had sown in *His* field. The field in which the good seed was sown, is explained to be the *world*—by which, we think, is meant the old Jewish world, or legal dispensation, with its carnal ordinances and worldly sanctuary. This is the field, or world, in the end of which Christ, as the Mediator of the New Testament, “appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Heb. ix. 26. The children of the kingdom—the good seed which the Son of Man had sown—were embodied in this Jewish nation, under the law of carnal ordinances, in common with all others of that nation, until the “time of harvest,” the end of the old Jewish economy; then the tares—or children of the wicked one—were, like sheaves, bound in bundles to be thrust out and burned.

The ax was laid at the root of this legal tree. It never

could bring forth the fruit of the Spirit; it gendered to bondage, and must be hewn down and cast into the fire. It was of no use then to say, "We have Abraham to our father;" we have grown up "*among* the wheat," and should be regarded as wheat, and entitled to be gathered into the garner with it! The time is fulfilled, the harvest is come, the reapers—John the Baptist, the chosen apostles and ministers of Jesus—are at work, gathering out all that offend and that do iniquity, and gathering the children of the true spiritual kingdom into the true Gospel Church.

But some may want to know what is meant by the "children of the kingdom," which is the good seed; and the "children of the wicked one," which was sown by the devil. Such forms of expression do not indicate that there is really a difference by nature among men; that one is the lineal descendant of the "Son of Man" by ordinary generation, and the other the lineal descendants of the devil by the same rule of generation; but it signifies a difference of character, according to the different spirit by which that character is formed. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 14. They are the sons of God in character; and so, also, the children of the devil are manifested by character. Such forms of expression are often used, not only in the Scriptures, but among men generally. If one's general character or whole life has been marked by adversity or heavy affliction, and we should speak of him as a "child of affliction," it would very readily be understood that in all his practical life affliction had such an influence as to form his character as a gloomy, despondent, suffering man. Thus we also speak of children of mirth, children of joy, and children of sorrow. We find also in the Scriptures that inspired writers represent some as "children of light," because they were so under the guidance and influence of heavenly light as to walk with God and manifest his spirit in their general character. But others, though by nature the same as the children of light, are denominated "children of darkness," because the darkness of error, sin and unbelief had such com-

plete dominion and control over them as to form their character. Some are said to be "children of promise," and "children of the resurrection," "children of Zion," "children of Jerusalem," and "children of the free woman." Now, we are not to suppose that these forms of expression indicate that those to whom they are applied had sprung from a different ancestry, or that they are not of Adam's fallen race, or not men of like passions with other men. The children of God—the children of promise, and of light—are, *by nature*, children of wrath, just as all other sinners are. If they are denominated as "good seed," which the Son of Man hath sown, it is because of their faith, which the Lord has wrought in them, and of the doctrine they hold, as well as the pious and orderly walk, which characterize them in their practical life.

Throughout the whole of the legal dispensation the wheat and the tares grew together. All were under the same legal forms of worship. The tares, or children of the wicked one, like Ahab and others, were so under the influence of the wicked one as very fitly to be denominated his children. In character they were such; but still they grew together and were in the same field with the children of the kingdom, for whose sake the nation was then spared. "Thus saith the Lord, As the *new wine* is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all."—Isa. lxxv. 8.

Long before the actual manifestation of Christ in the world as the humble Babe of Bethlehem, it had been predicted that "The sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come." The nation must be spared; the wheat and the tares must grow together till *the time* of harvest, lest, if the tares should be taken up any sooner, the wheat would also be taken up with them.

We are aware that many able and gifted brethren have preached and written much about "The wheat and the tares." And some, who contend for what is generally known as the "Two Seed" doctrine, have applied this parable of our Lord as representing two distinct classes of people by nature. Con-

nected with this theory is the idea of an uncreated, self-existent and eternal devil, having a seed or generation in the world bearing the same relation to him that the children of God do to the Lord Jesus Christ. These children of the devil, it is said by this Two Seed theory, never had the law of God given them in Adam, and never fell nor transgressed the law in him, and consequently are not redeemed by Christ. This theory to us seems far-fetched and very absurd; and wherever it has been preached for any length of time among those claiming the name of Primitive Baptists, it has been clearly manifested that the *tares* are *among* the wheat, and that the children of the wicked one are very busy to manifest the traits of character that belong to their father. "His works they will do." Discord, strife, confusion and speculative divinity among christians are his work, and when these lusts predominate among those professing godliness, they manifest them *characteristically* as children of the wicked one.

Simply by virtue of a natural, fleshly birth, we are neither the children of God nor the children of the devil. We are, however, the creatures of God, and the proper lineal descendants of Adam, by whom "sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Whoever is under the reigning power and dominion of sin, is, characteristically, a child of the devil. As saith the holy apostle, "He that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning."—1 John iii. 8. But he who is under the reigning power and dominion of grace, and led by the Spirit of God, is a child of God. In the absence of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and such works of obedience to God as show forth that faith, no son or daughter of Adam is manifested to us as a child of God. "For," saith the apostle, "we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 26.

What we have hastily written upon this subject, is submitted to our dear aged Brother King simply as our views. If others wish to write upon it, we would be pleased to see it.—M.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” The crystal streams of divine actions flow only from the pure streams of divine affections. Though there be many things for which we should not love man, yet there is not any thing for which we should not love God.

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Firm resolutions are like rocks, which the waves can not move. By our prayers, we shew what we wish God to do for us; and by our purposes, we manifest what we desire to do for God. By the illumination of God the Spirit, the understanding conceives holiness, the will resolves on holiness, and the life produces holiness.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

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EXCELSIOR, GEORGIA, December 28, 1882.

*Dear Brethren* :—Having recently returned from a preaching tour in Baldwin, Bibb, Crawford, Upson and Monroe counties, according to promise I here give a short sketch of it through the MESSENGER. Elder Patterson met me at my first appointment, and accompanied me to Bethlehem, Macon, where I met Elder Field, who had just returned from a long visit in Florida and South Georgia. From here I went to Byron, where I was met by Elder Story and conveyed to Union Church, where I met Elders Respass and Sikes, and had a pleasant two days meeting—spending Saturday night together at Elder Sikes’ with our much esteemed friend and cousin, Elbert Fagan. From here we went to Salem, and though the weather was unfavorable, we had a meeting that will not be soon forgotten. Here I had the company of Elder Grant. At the next place, Providence, owing to the inclement weather, no one met us; from which place we went to Mount Carmel, where I met Elder Dickey, who conveyed me to his home, and accompanied me to Ebenezer the next day and back to his home—thus spending two nights with this dear brother and his beloved family. From here I went to Bethlehem, where I met Elder Smith; and thence to Trinity, where I had a two days meeting and baptized Brother Traylor and wife. The Lord blessed me with good liberty to preach at this place, spending three nights with our dear Brother Nelson. I next went to Emmaus, where I met Elder Cleveland; and next to Sharon; and thence to Mount Paran, where I met Elders Grant and Burnett. In company with Brother Grant, I spent the night pleasantly at Brother Hancock’s; and next to Shiloh, with Brother Grant, at which place I got a note as I was leaving the pulpit, saying our little son was lying low with typhoid fever. None but those having similar experience can know my feelings—to receive such a message and two hundred miles

from home! I thought of Elder Eubanks, who, on a tour from home, received a dispatch that one of his children was at the point of death, and returning, found his child dead and buried! How few know the trials of a minister's wife—the many lonely and disconsolate hours she spends! Leaving several appointments unattended, I immediately returned home, and found my child improving, though very low. Some of the churches I visited were in a cold and barren condition. May the Lord give Zion a travailing spirit, that she may bring forth sons and daughters, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother, M. F. STUBBS.

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*Dear Brother Respass* :—I was at one of the best meetings it has ever been my privilege to attend, of three days, at Cobbtown, Tatnall county, Ga., fourth Sunday, January, 1883. If not deceived, the Lord blessed me with liberty to preach to a large and orderly congregation, in which deep feeling was manifested. We met at the water on Sunday morning and baptized three, though there is no constituted church at this place. In eight months we have baptized seven, and the probability is that we shall baptize several more soon. Our expectation is to constitute a church there the present year. Whilst it has been our blessed lot to rejoice, we have had also to weep. The hand of death has removed from our midst our beloved brother, Elder J. I. Keel, who departed this life 5th January, 1883, and was buried on the 6th. He was known by most of Baptists in Georgia as a faithful soldier in defence of the cross of Christ. We mourn, but not as those who have no hope—believing he has only ceased his labors here to receive his reward in heaven. May the blessing of God rest upon his dear, bereaved wife and little children.

M. F. STUBBS.

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POPLAIN'S CROSS ROADS, BEDFORD CO., TENN., Dec. 25, 1882.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I thought I would speak a few words to you, as I have time. I am glad of this, for God gives us this mind. I rejoice to know that there are Baptists in your State as well as here; for I believe God has had a chosen people in the world from the days of Abel. Christ said, My sheep hear my voice and follow me, and a stranger they will not follow. He said also to Peter, Feed my sheep; and thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Thus we are taught that there is a people chosen of God; who are born not of the will of man, but of God. This birth is of the Spirit; for that Christ taught to Nicodemus, that he must be born again. Brother Respass, I would like to read a piece from you on the subject of "All these died in the faith, not having received the promises." Heb. ii. 12, 16. God bless you, and to the Lord be praise.

W. M. BRYANT.

## OBITUARIES.

## DEACON J. J. M'ELROY.

“For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

What solemn words are these! Yet, soon or late, *all* must realize their awful meaning. Death is truly the “King of terrors.” Nothing is more sure. Yet most persons speak of it carelessly, and act as though it were a mere possibility. Of the vast multitudes constantly departing this life, how few there are who seem willing to go!

With sorrow we announce the departure, from these stormy shores, of Deacon J. J. McELROY, in the 65th year of his life. He was born in Georgia, April 1st, 1818. After a brief illness he departed this mortal existence at 1 p. m. on Tuesday, May 30th, 1882, at his own pleasant residence, near Sweet Home, Lavaca county, Texas.

Josiah McElroy, father of Brother McElroy, moved from Georgia to Dallas county, Alabama, when he was a child two or three years old. Here he was raised. We know but little of his youthful days, but feel sure that they were not all spent in following the ways of vanity. Here, March 1st, 1840, he was married to Miss M. M. Riesor, who still survives him, and with whom he lived happily more than 42 years. They have never had any children.

In the summer of 1844 Brother McElroy moved to Union county, Arkansas. Previous to this it had pleased our heavenly Father to reveal to him his lost condition as a sinner. After his entire failure to find peace and pardon, Christ Jesus our Lord was revealed to him as “The Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” But feeling so unworthy, he tarried many days, waiting for a brighter evidence: In August, 1858, he was received into Salem Church, of Primitive Baptists, and baptized by Elder J. M. C. Roberston. Soon after his reception he was made Clerk of the Church, which position he held till March, 1871, when he moved to Lavaca county, Texas, and, in connection with his dear companion, was, in August, 1872, in the Constitution of Salem Church. Here he was again made Clerk. In April, 1879, he was ordained Deacon by Elders W. S. Dubose, J. Davis, and the unworthy writer.

Brother McElroy was an exemplary man; contending earnestly for the true faith; always filled his seat at meeting when not providentially hindered; was a constant reader of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, *Signs of the Times*, *Pathway*, *Landmark*, and most of our papers and literature. We miss him sadly. Our true and tried friend, we shall not forget while memory claims her own. But our dear Sister McElroy feels so stricken. She writes: “He looked so calm and pleasant, I felt that he had made a happy exchange. But how hard it is to give him up! How quick I have been stripped of all my earthly enjoyments—husband, home, and the pleasure we had of going among the people we loved. \* \* I will try to be submissive to the will of Him who doeth all things well. The time is not long when I will have to go. If I can only be ready when He calls for me, all will be well.”

We feel that our dear sister has the sympathy of all that know her, as well as of all that may chance to read this. We desire to commend her, with al

the poor afflicted ones of earth, to the keeping of Him who has said, "His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their cries." To His consideration may he help us, dear readers, to be submissive.

In hope,

J. W. SHOOK.

*Cistern, Texas, January, 1883.*

*Signs and Landmark, by request, please copy.*

#### MRS. ELIZABETH CONRAD.

Died, October 27, 1882, Mrs. ELIZABETH CONRAD, relict of the late Elder William Conrad, at the old homestead, near Williamstown, Grant county, Ky.

She was born January 27th, 1799; consequently she was 83 years and 9 months old when she died. Her maiden name was Boyers. She was married to Elder Conrad September 11th, 1817. They raised five sons to be grown, two of whom are yet living. She professed hope in Christ in the winter of 1820, and joined the church in 1821. She had told me her experience many times, dating it from her husband's baptism, when she felt like she was forever separated from him; and thus the work of conviction went on, till she found rest in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour. Her house and heart was ever open for the reception of the humble followers of Jesus Christ, of whom she fed many during her 61 years' service in the kingdom of Christ. She was truly a *minister's wife*, ever ready, willing, and urging her husband forward to his appointments, as long as he was able to go. The last words her husband ever wrote of her are as follows: "A tribute to the memory of the dear companion of my youth—Elizabeth Conrad—who has served over 64 years (over two years helpless), still lives to remember ministers and brethren she fed at her well-supplied table during 59 years the past June. Her unworthy husband knows best her freedom, as well as her cheerfulness, in supplying her table, as well as seeing they were comfortably provided with resting places for the night, and every other needed help she had on hand. Yes, and still is having the ministry and brethren furnished at her table, and lodged for the night."

Thus wrote her dear husband a short time before his death, when he had to quit, being too weak to finish it—requesting me to do so after her death. She was always found at her post on her meeting days, when able to get there. She gradually wore away, her mind giving down with her body, for some weeks before her death. Her burial was very largely attended by her large circle of relatives, friends, and acquaintances. All who knew her believe her at rest with the blessed Saviour; and yet, her only hope was based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ, with the benefits applied by the Holy Spirit. Thus the aged are passing away, and but few are taking their places. May the Lord yet appear for Zion, that many poor sinners may be brought to praise his name.

Yours, to serve in Christ,

*Winchester, Ky., Jan., 1883.*

JAS. J. GILBERT.

## STEPHEN B. WOODWARD.

STEPHEN B., son of J. H. and Cassie M. Woodward, was born in Bibb county, Ga., October 25th, 1862, and died of consumption, at the residence of his father, in Dooly county, Ga., November 27th, 1882. Conscious of his approaching dissolution, he often spoke of his future prospects, the plan of salvation by grace, and his hopes therein. His desire was to live, if consistent to the will of God, on account of family and friends, to see and know more of the world, if he could enjoy ordinary good health, but was resigned to his fate. *No fear of death, none of hereafter; he had made his peace with God, which was fully manifest in his last moments.*

When death struck him, in a calm and peaceful manner, he bid his fond parents good-bye; said he was willing to die; said he loved his heavenly Father, and his earthly father and mother, too; he asked me to tell his brothers and sisters to love their heavenly Father and their earthly parents, too; and when they come to die, they will be all right.

The writer, his fond stepmother, never witnessed a more triumphant, a more calm and peaceful death, a brighter evidence of a blessed immortality. He gave minute directions as to the disposition of his effects, as to his dress and burial, funeral services, etc. At his request, he is buried near the family residence, where he sleeps serenely in the silent tomb, in his new-made grave, in full view of his afflicted father and family, who deeply mourn his untimely loss. As his stepmother, the writer has known him from early childhood to manhood, and to his new-made grave; and of a truth, I never knew a more affectionate, dutiful, truthful, honest, faithful child, son, brother and friend, from childhood to maturity, and to death, than was the subject of this sketch. With implicit confidence in his sincerity, and his honest convictions of Bible truths, which he frequently manifested to me during his sad afflictions, as his almost constant attendant and my motherly care for him, I have an abiding faith in his happy abode with his blessed Redeemer. Peace to him.

His affectionate stepmother,

N. B. WOODWARD.

## DR. J. D. HEAD.

By request, it becomes my sad duty to write, and send to you for publication in the MESSENGER, the obituary of my dear father, Dr. J. D. HEAD, who departed this life on the 18th of November, 1882, being 77 years, 2 months and 20 days old. He leaves an aged companion, who has passed her three score years and ten, and five children, and several grandchildren, to mourn their loss; but I feel to sorrow not as those that have no hope, for I believe our loss is his eternal gain; and I would say to all the bereaved to be submissive to the will of Providence, for the Lord has been good to us all in sparing to us a father so long. He has gone to reap his reward, and if we are prepared by divine grace we can, ere long, go to him, in that home of the blest.

He was born in Clark county, in this State (Georgia), the 29th of August, 1805. He commenced to practice medicine in early life, and continued to

practice until 1867, when, his eye-sight failing him, he retired from the profession. He was married, first, to Martha T. Head, 27th June, 1830, who did not live long, leaving one child, only a few days old. He was married, the second time, to Nancy H. Underwood, March 20th, 1838. He joined the Primitive Baptists at New Fellowship Church, in Monroe county, Ga., at their regular meeting in December, 1840, but, owing to the absence of the preacher, was not baptized until January, 1841, by Elder Jason Grier. He was a kind and indulgent father, a good husband, and fair in all his dealings with his fellow-men. From my earliest recollection his house was a home for his brethren of the Primitive order, and especially the ministry, which many that will read this notice will verify. The last thirteen years of his life was spent in literal darkness, having lost his eye sight, produced from congestion. He often said to me that he was resigned to his affliction, and felt that it was a blessing to him, in that he enjoyed religion more; and it was a great comfort to him to have his brethren go to see him, and he sometimes complained when they did not. Dear brethren, we should remember the afflicted ones, and visit them as often as we can. I was with him in his last sickness a great deal; and while he suffered a great deal of intense suffering, he was remarkably patient, lying with his eyes shut as if asleep, only when he would have a paroxysm of vomiting. His disease was gastritis. He died at the end of the seventh week, to a day, from the day he was taken. A short time before he breathed his last, when his pulse had ceased to beat, he grasped my hand, and spoke in a calm and even voice, "Good-bye, Tommie," as he always called me; and then leaned back in my arms, and said, "At rest," and expired. Oh! I shall never forget that moment. May the Lord pity us all, and prepare us for that *hour that surely will come to us.*

Your unworthy brother in Christ,

December 13, 1882.

THOS. J. HEAD.

#### ELDER ELIJAH BLACKSHEAR.

We get the following sad item from the Thomasville (Ga.) *Enterprise*:

**STARTLING AND DISTRESSING DEATH.**—A few days ago a startling and distressing death occurred in Colquitt county, Ga., near the Thomas county line, and in the neighborhood of Murphy's precinct. It was on the occasion of the marriage of Mr. James White and Miss Deliah Anderson. Rev. ELIJAH BLACKSHEAR officiated, and all had proceeded happily and well until the conclusion of the service. Just as the reverend gentleman, however, pronounced the happy pair man and wife, he fell over into the arms of a bystander—dead.

Naturally, this sad termination of the marriage festivities excited widespread consternation, and wherever the news of the sudden taking-off of the respected divine was told, it created a genuine sensation. The scene of the deplorable event was immediately changed from one of happiness to one of mourning, and sincere grief was depicted on every countenance. The deceased was a worthy man, highly respected in the community in which he lived and was known. Heart disease is presumed to have been the immediate cause of his sudden demise.

Obituary in next issue.—Ed.

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## MALINDA CUSHENBERRY JONES.

MALINDA CUSHENBERRY was born October 29th, 1810; was married to Bro. Albert T. Jones, December 29th, 1834, and died Sunday, September 24th, 1882, at her home in Middleton, Simpson county, Kentucky.

Sister Jones made a profession of hope of eternal life, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, in the year 1831, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Old Bethany, Ky., and was baptized in January, 1832. I have been partially acquainted with Sister Jones for over a quarter of a century, and *intimately* acquainted for the last seven or eight years, and can say, of a truth, that she came as near, or a little nearer to the scriptural standard of a christian walk, than any person with whom I have ever been acquainted. In my long acquaintance I have heard many speak of her (neighbors and acquaintances of various denominations, etc.), and have yet to hear the least hint against her good name in any manner.

Sister Jones was ever ready to aid the orphan, the poor, and, indeed, any who were in distress; and in all her acts of charity there was no ostentation, but, on the other hand, they were ever done in that love and child-like simplicity that should ever characterize the children of God. Many times have I seen the dear sister rejoice in hope of a blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears, at her dear "Sulphur Springs."

Brother and Sister Jones had three daughters, all of whom are married, and she lived to see them all, with their husbands, and some of her grandchildren, members of her own church. Oh, how she rejoiced to see her grandchildren coming into the fold! Her last illness was long and painful, yet she bore it with that christian resignation so truly characteristic of the true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. When she found that her dissolution was near at hand, she expressed no fears regarding a future state, but was somewhat distressed about a future home, etc., of an orphan girl (Sister Kittie Phelps), who had lived for many years at her house, and for whom she and Brother Jones had exercised the most parental care and attention. Sister Kittie told her that the same LORD that provided a mother in *her*, could, and would, still provide for her. I was present, and saw her breathe her last, and all of us believed that, while the body was left to moulder in the dust till the resurrection morn, the soul went to that dear Saviour she had loved so much to praise and adore. Not only did white relations and friends meet to take the last view of the body now still in death, but old family servants and colored friends, in numbers, met and seemed more distressed, and spoke of the good traits of "Miss Malinda."

On Monday, the 25th, at the church (Sulphur Springs), the writer, in presence of a large congregation, preached a funeral discourse from 1 Cor. xv. 26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." After which the body was consigned to the tomb, there to await the call of Him whom she had loved so dearly in life. Then, by the Spirit that dwelt in her, she will have been raised immortal, spiritual and heavenly! like her blessed Redeemer there to dwell in peace and glory with loved ones forever and ever. I know her friends sorrow not as those who have no hope. Peace to her memory.

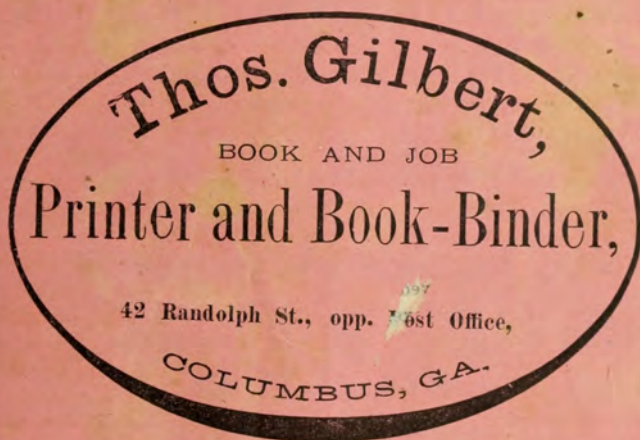
*Bethphage, Tenn., Jan. 11, 1883.*

J. W. REDDICK.

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Vol. 5.

No. 4.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 4.

BUTLER, GA., APRIL, 1883.

Vol. 5.

STATE ROAD, DEL., February 14, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—In the commencement of the third chapter of the Book of Revelations is recorded a message to the angel of the church in Sardis. There are several remarkable points in this message; and as they have been somewhat upon my mind, I propose to make them the subject of the present letter.

John appears to have had a kind of general oversight and pastoral care over these seven churches—named in the second and third chapters—to whom he sent these messages. What the Spirit said to these churches we may understand as being said to any and all churches in like condition, in any and all countries, unto the end of time. Nevertheless, I have long understood these churches to be representative in their character, and prophetic of church history, in the order in which they are placed. If they do present to us a succession of church states, the consciousness of this fact will aid us materially in applying the admonitions and instructions where they belong—the only difficulty being to fix rightly the point of time and attendant circumstances where one of these periods ends and another begins. Pursuing this track of investigation, we find Ephesus named first, and of course representing the gospel church state in its primitive organization, and during the apostolic age. Remarkably enough, apostles are mentioned—while they are not mentioned, or referred to, in any of the succeeding messages; and the fact is also mentioned of pretended apostles having been tried by the church,

and found to be impostors. In regard to the purity of the church, as we might expect to find it under the ministry of the apostles, it may be observed that but one sentence of fault is found with her, and nothing more or higher is enjoined upon her, or required of her, than a return to *her first love*, and *her first works*. This admonition may have been designed for the later years of the period of time allotted to her. A period of bitter persecution and proscription follows, during which the saints are called to suffer all manner of tortures for the truth's sake. This period, according to this view, is represented by Smyrna—of which church not one word of censure or reproof is said, but instead thereof: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Passing over the succeeding names to the fifth in course, which is called Sardis, I think it will not be difficult to determine its place and time. It will do no harm at least to examine what is said to this church, and of it, and see how it will apply to a certain period, of recent date, of the church's history. It is known to those who are at all conversant with church history, that a few generations back, there was quite a general uprising in many of the Old countries against the oppressions and persecutions which had been so long endured; and that where resistance failed, that the discovery and settlement of America afforded an asylum. The multitudes of those who had been victims of religious proscription and fiendish cruelty, finding a place of retreat and shelter in the New World, led, as we are aware, not only to the enjoyment of freedom from persecution, but to the establishing of religious liberty as an inalienable right of the people. I need not speak of the growth and triumph of this principle. That such a triumph of human rights, and vindication of liberty of conscience, should influence the more enlightened of the Old countries was to be expected. The event has been that in many countries the very idea of religious freedom has become popular; and those who had long been trodden down under the heel of tyranny, and overwhelmed with reproach, suddenly find themselves the subjects first of sympathy and

afterwards of popularity. Religious profession and the christian name rapidly become respectable. It becomes, indeed, the surest pathway to popular favor. Now what shall we see? That element of human nature that ever courts public favor, would as soon seek it in the church as anywhere else. The church will be sought unto by ambitious men of the world. She will soon be filled up with a mere empty profession. She will rapidly conform to the world, and open her doors to all kinds of worldly attractions. But one sentence need be said. It covers the whole ground. It tells the whole story: "Thou hast a name that thou livest, *and art dead.*" Her having, or retaining, a name as a living church is not all that is implied in this sentence. She has a reputation among men. She has become popular. She has risen from her proscribed position to notoriety and fame. She has become respectable and influential in the eyes of the world. She enjoys her popularity, and hence courts it; and congratulates herself upon her wonderful progress and prosperity. Now, let any candid inquirer after truth look over this picture—beginning at the time that open persecution ceased, and following on to, perhaps, about forty years ago—and see if he, or she, can not see *Sardis, and her state.* Let them remember the interdiction, that there *should in no wise enter into the city any thing that defileth*; and consider whether or not almost every thing that defileth was not, and still remains, in many churches, to be admitted? If we have ever studied the Old Testament worship, and observed the sacredness and purity of the sanctuary; or given any attention to the clothing of the worshiping priests (its purity extending even to the fabric, or material, of which it was composed), we could hardly fail to have understood something of the sacredness of that worship, and the purity in heart and life of those worshipers, of which the former dispensation was typical. They were clothed with the garments of God's salvation, which constituted for them a righteousness which was comparable to fine linen, clean and white. They were covered with it, as with a robe. They were adorned with it, as with the attire of a bride. These garments are clean as

the fountain of living waters. They are white as no fuller on earth could whiten them. They are *white as the light*. Do our modern churches have these garments on? Have they ever worn them? If they have, have they been satisfied with them? Have they been aware of their sacred and heavenly beauty? Will it be pretended that they have kept them unspotted from the world? I find myself shrinking from the task of recording the answers to these queries; so instead thereof, I will leave the reader to answer for himself.

“Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,  
And the world and his children were there;  
Laughter and music and feasts were heard  
In the place that was meant for prayer.”

“Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments.” Those who know any thing of the garments with which the Lord has clothed his people, must know how defiling and polluting are many of those things with which they have been brought in contact. Whoso is wise, and has observed these things, will be well aware that in the general apostasy it was, and is, and remains true, as recorded by the inspired evangelist: that a few names of churches, and a few names of individual members, have kept their garments in all their original purity, free from stain.

I will here say that when churches, as a body, become corrupt, or conformed to the world in doctrine or practice, so as to have their names blotted from the Book of Life, that individual members suffer sometimes, and lose their standing, because of their connection nominally with said churches, while their own individual garments are clean. It is only, “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.”

We have not seen Sardis *repenting*, nor *watching*. She has paid no attention to preserve *the things that remained*. He, whose eyes were like a flame of fire, has come upon her, and she did not know the time of her visitation. What remains to us now is to hear the Redeemer's loving voice to his people, and note its effect. There are a few names whose garments

are free from the prevailing defilement, and they *shall walk with Him*, for they are worthy. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you. And I will be a Father to you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." These few names thus called out in their acknowledged purity, constitute the materials for a purer church state, and a purer worship. They are the materials out of which the church is reorganized, and which is afterward recognized as the Philadelphia state. This is the state of *Brotherly Love*, and gospel fellowship. There is no fault found with her. Her enemies shall know that her Redeemer has loved her. She has *a little strength*, and much to discourage her; but the Lord hath set before her an open door, that no man can shut. She has overcome the world, and this is the victory—even her faith. "She shall go no more out." "He will lay upon her no other burden" than that which she has already. "Hold fast till I come."

"A pillar there no more to move,  
 Inscribed with all my names of love;  
 A monument of mighty grace—  
 Thou shalt forever have a place."

I submit these considerations to the candid reader. May I ask a candid and impartial examination of them? Wisdom is worth searching for, as for hid treasures; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared unto her.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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*Beloved Elders*:—The love of God constraineth me to write of the things which have appeared to me in the latter days. I am old, and have had a name to live with the Baptists, that are everywhere despised, since about my twenty-fifth year, though unworthy to be called a follower of the Lord Jesus. I have been almost always low down in the valley of despair and misery; and in my earlier life I read the book of the Lord's servant, Job, more than any other, because he appeared the nearest to me in affliction,—and also I had a longing to

fathom the depth of the wisdom and teachings of the God of heaven in the afflictions of his servant, Job, who was a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. Time sped away, year after year, and I cried: "O Lord, thou art holy; but I am carnal, sold under sin." I wandered about as it were, in solitude, after the leadings of the carnal mind and fearing that the candle of the Lord would utterly be taken away from me, and that I would soon become a crazy man and a raving maniac. This was darkness indescribable, keen despair. And so it was, on the second night after I returned from the Indian Creek Association (Butler county, Ohio), in the past year, somewhat refreshed and strengthened, I awoke out of deep slumber in the dead hours of the night—wakened indeed, as never before. I lay in astonishment, and marvelled at the things which appeared, and answered and said: "O Lord, I am an old man, and yet am a little child—a very little child." And so it was, my meditations turned immediately to the coming of the Lord Jesus, and the setting up of the Kingdom of heaven, and the passing away of old things which were under the old dispensation; and these eighteen hundred and eighty-two years, as given by our calendar, is no other than the years of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I felt to have the Lord in my heart and soul for his amazing goodness and mercy to me, a perishing mortal. This was real indeed. And my meditations and reading of the Scriptures were more especially fastened upon the word of the Lord as recorded by his servants, the Evangelists, and the setting up of the Kingdom of heaven. The Scriptures appeared so new to me, that I verily thought I never knew of them before, more than by the hearing of the ear. And so it was that a few days and nights passed, when I again awoke out of a peaceful night's repose with the words, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, Zion, city of our God!" sounding in my ears, and continued all the day, and I never before had such a desire to make melody in my heart and soul by singing praises to the Lord. I nearly believe the Lord renewed my voice to talk and sing. And so it is, the Scriptures, the whole

Scriptures, and the Psalms and Hymns of the Lord's poets, are as my meat and my drink. Praise the Lord, O my soul; praise his holy name! I am in my 70th year.

Yours in love of the brotherhood,

Dunlapsville, Ind., Feb. 4, 1883.

I. HILL.

I AM THAT I AM.—EXODUS III. 14.

This sentence, though short, comprehends the being and attributes of Deity, some of which I will allude to.

1st. His *eternity*. He is said to be the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity (Isa. lvii. 15); King eternal (1 Tim. i. 17); the eternal God (Deut. xxxv. 27.) His eternity proves his essential self-existence; that he is underived and independent; the source and cause of all created being, and consequently the only eternal being. His *independence* follows, as consequent upon his eternity and self-existence. The attribute of independence extends to all his perfections. To his *knowledge*—Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; or being his counselor, hath taught him? (Isa. xl. 13.) Who hath known the mind of the Lord; or who hath been his counselor? (Rom. xi. 34.) His *power*—Thine is the power, and the glory (Mat. vi. 13.) In thy hand is power and might; and in thy hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all (2 Chron. xx. 6.) The thunder of his power who can understand? (Job xxvi.) His *immutability*—With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James i. 17.) I am the Lord; I change not (Mat. iii. 16.) He is of one mind, and who can turn him (Job xxiii. 13.) His *omnipresence*—Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him (1 Kings 8.) Whither shall I go from thy presence? if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me (Psalm cxxxix.) Am I a God afar off, and not a God at hand; do not I fill heaven and

earth? saith the Lord (Jer. xxiii.) *Invisible*—There shall no man see me and live (Exodus xxxiii.) No man hath seen God at any time (John i. 18.) Whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 Tim. vi.) His wisdom or *omniscience*—Blessed be God, for wisdom and might are his (Dan. ii.) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! (Rom. xi.) His *purity*—The heavens are not clean in his sight (Job xv.) Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity (Hab. i.) His *immortality*—Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light (1 Tim. vi.)

These attributes belong to God in his distinct Person or Godhead; his love, mercy and justice are relative ones, and enter into and form a part of his government over his creatures. All his divine perfections unite in his economy in upholding the pillars of his universal government, which, in its grand results, will terminate in his own glory in the salvation of his elect children.

I have thus cited a few of the many passages of scripture with reference to the being and attributes of God; and wish in continuance to say something of their manifestation on his works of creation, providence and grace. Brother Respass, I want you to feel free to dispose of this as your judgment may dictate.

Your brother, I hope, in gospel bonds,

Dechard, Tenn.

JAMES WAGNER.

---

FOUNTAIN HEAD, TENN., February 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I am eighty-nine years old, short eleven days; very feeble, much afflicted, and quite deaf; far advanced in my second childhood. But I have some desire to write a little for the MESSENGER, provided you should see proper to give it a place in the paper; but if you should not, perhaps you can use it to light your lamp, and it will be well with me. My text is: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."—John i. 16. To my mind, this fullness consists of wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, which Christ is of God made to his

people in the regeneration (1 Cor. i. 30), and by them received grace for grace. Now, the word "for" has a two-fold meaning: it means because of, and in order to, as is exemplified at Rom. iv. 25, "who was delivered for our offences (because of them), and was raised again for our justification" (in order to it.) Grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. i. 9.) Because of that grace in Christ. It is manifestly given to the children of God in the regeneration, and is therefore grace for grace.

M. HODGES.

P. S.—I have never heard any man express the same views that I entertain of the words, "grace for grace." If I am wrong, I would like to be corrected by you or Bro. Mitchell; that is, if you publish.

M. H.

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### ORDINATION.

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MT. PISGAH CHURCH, CHAMBERS CO., ALA.,

FRIDAY, February 2, 1883.

Pursuant to previous notice, and at the instance of Macedonia Church, in said county, petitioning for the ordination of Bro. John T. Satterwhite, a member of this church, to the gospel ministry, the church at this place convened, and a presbytery being organized—consisting of Elders J. C. Jackson, H. R. McCoy, H. S. Burson and C. B. Taylor—proceeded to the ordination, after an appropriate sermon by Elder H. R. McCoy. Next in order was the presentation of the said candidate by the church, through Bro. Isaac Stephens. After the church had been thoroughly examined as to the character and qualifications of Brother Satterwhite, by Elder H. R. McCoy, and found satisfactory, the said brother was then himself duly examined by Elder C. B. Taylor; and being found sound in faith and practice, was ordained a minister of the gospel by the imposition of hands of the presbytery. Elder H. S. Burson leading in the ordination prayer. In the conclusion of which Elder Jackson tendered to the newly ordained brother a certificate and suitable charge.

ELDER J. C. JACKSON, Moderator.

W. P. FINLEY, Clerk.

ADAIRSVILLE, GA., January 30, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—The brethren and friends in this section are well pleased with the GOSPEL MESSENGER; and I hope that you and Brother Mitchell will be, both temporally and spiritually, sustained in its publication. The Baptists in this country are in a very barren state; the winter has been severe, the roads bad, and we have not had many meetings during the winter. Oh! how forcibly do the children of God realize the truth of the Scriptures in their experience—that they are destitute and barren, as Sarah was (Gen. xi. 30); and Rachel (Gen. xxix. 31); (Judges xiii. 2, 3.) And yet the command is, “Sing, O barren; thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing!” Hence as David said, “It is good that a man both quietly wait and hope for the salvation of the Lord.” For by experience we have often learned that there is no deliverer only from him. “The Lord is my rock and my deliverer.”—Psalm xviii. 2. “The same did God send to be a deliverer.”—Acts vii. 35. “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer.”—Rom. xi. 26. May the Lord enable his children in this dark and cloudy day to see and truly realize the great need of his deliverance from darkness, from sin, and from confusion of face, that they may truly travail in soul, spirit and mind, and serve the Lord with reverence of heart and godly fear! “For unto that man will I look, who is of a broken heart and of a contrite spirit.” But it is not in us even to command or exercise the grace of humbleness or the spirit of prayer; for only when the “law enters does the offence abound.” And again, “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” And so I do believe that when we are in possession of a knowledge of sin, that we mourn and desire to be delivered and saved from sin; and such can not say, “I am rich, and increase with goods, and have need of nothing.” It is the “poor and needy that He fills with good things, and the rich is sent empty away.” Jesus said, “I can of mine own self do nothing.” Oh! how true is this expression with the children of God: “I can do nothing.” “For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.”

What a blessing to have the will, even, though we feel to be destitute of the power! And with Christ to strengthen us, we can do all things in his name. Such, then, can and do look unto God—yea, even from the ends of the earth—for he is their God, and besides him there is no Saviour. I hope and believe the Lord will give his children grace sufficient for their day and trials.

Yours in the love of the truth,

F. M. CASEY.

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ARKADELPHIA, ARK., December 20, 1882.

*Editors Gospel Messenger*:—*Dear Brethren*:—As I have not addressed you any thing for publication since last June, and thinking that some of the dear brethren and sisters might be pleased to hear from this part of the country again, I have concluded to write. I feel thankful to God, and to the many brethren and sisters from whom I have received tokens of love and fellowship since the publication of the travail of my mind in grace, in the October number of the MESSENGER, who have manifested comfort on reading the same; particularly Brethren Thos. Vass, of Kentucky; J. S. Chesire, of Louisiana; W. J. Dubose, of Texas; J. H. Jeter, of Alabama; and Elder Ansel Parish, of Georgia, together with many others, from whom I have received cheering words of comfort, which seems to have been the means in the hands of the Lord to renew my energy in his service, endeavoring to comfort his dear people.

On the 16th of October, I received a postal from Elder John Rowe, of Georgia, authorizing me to publish appointments for him for November, which I gladly proceeded to do. Elder Rowe arrived at my house on the 7th; rested two days, as he had been on a tour of preaching over a month; preached at my house the 9th; at Pleasant Hill Church, 10th; at night, at the town of Okalona. Then left Clark county, crossed Little Missouri river into Nevada county, and on the 11th and 12th was at Smyrna Church, where two manifested repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were

received into the fellowship of the church by baptism. On the 12th, at night, at Ephesus, had meeting; where we met with Elder B. L. Landers, who kindly accompanied us to New Hope Church the 13th, where we met Elders Lewis Williams and Cook; the latter, with Brethren Williams and Kemp, accompanied us to Siloam Church. On 14th, at night, had meeting at Brother J. T. Mathews'; 15th, rode all day, but had meeting in the town of Gurdon, where my son met us and took charge of our conveyance (a couple of ponies), and Brother Rowe and myself took the train for Hot Springs county; on 16th, had meeting at Bro. H. S. Fuller's; and on 17th, at Sardis Church; there we met Elder J. S. Lee, and remained three days, having meeting, but missing two appointments on account of high water. On 20th, came back to my house; 21st, meeting at Bro. H. W. Meador's; 22nd, at the town of Hollywood; 23rd, at the town of Alpine, in the vicinity of Center Church; 24th, at Mount Zion Church, where we met Elder J. M. Williams, formerly of Enon Church; 25th and 26th, at Ebenezer Church, at which place Brother Rowe met quite a number of acquaintances and some of his wife's relatives. Elder D. R. Leard, of Center Church, met us at Hollywood and was with us the remainder of the trip. At Ebenezer our appointments closed; then accompanying Elder Rowe to Arkadelphia, I bid him farewell with a great deal of reluctance, after having been with him three weeks, and traveling over 350 miles on horseback.

I do feel to thank God for his goodness in sending Elder Rowe amongst us; for both while he was with us and since he left us, I have had many evidences that God did send him, for which cause I feel to thank God for his manifold blessings. Many of God's people manifested evidences of joy and comfort at listening to his very edifying discourses on the God-honoring and soul-comforting doctrine of the Election of grace. May God in his mercy and goodness continue to send forth his laborers in his vineyard, for the harvest truly is great and the laborers are few. I feel to desire that God may impress

other ministers to come among us; and if it is the Lord's will, I do hope that He will enable Elder Rowe to visit us again.

Now, dear brethren, may God bless you in the publication of the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I have been edified and comforted by it, and shall continue to induce others to subscribe for it and aid in its usefulness, when I can. I still desire an interest in the prayers of all God's people.

Yours in hope,

ALEX. MASON.

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### PROHIBITION.

*Dear Brethren:*—As there has lately, in this State, been considerable excitement about the sale of intoxicating liquors, I wish to say a little on that subject; not that it will influence the final result of this question, but mainly to relieve my own mind. It is manifest to me that liquor drinking is on the increase, and hence the failure of the so called, moral reforms, temperance organizations, evangelization schemes, and protracted meetings, to sober men; and now, in this State, the petitioners pray the interposition of the arm of the law to do for them that which the so called moral suasion, has failed to do. Prohibition is resorted to. What men could not be persuaded to do, it is proposed to force them into. Is this a right principle? I claim that it is not; because the same principle, with the power, would lead them into forcing men to believe as they do in religion—to the support of their measures—or punish them, and maybe kill them, if they resisted. This question will probably, in a short time, be a political one in Florida, and we feel confident that its adherents will vote for men to legislate who favor their views, however unfit they may otherwise be. Now, as I understand the Bible, better men than we are, drank wine—men more honored of God; but still I confess that drunkenness is a great sin, and that dram-drinking leads to it. Grog-shops are a reproach to civilization, as brothel houses, allowed by law, are a blot on our character as a people—and would be still darker, if our

character was purer. But the movers in this prohibition are, we think, intemperate themselves in demanding so much. The truth is, there is an evil in fallen man that these mistaken philanthropists can not reach—which nothing can reach, save the grace of God. We know that if there were no drinking in our land, that there would be far less crime, less expense, and much greater prosperity; but let us ever have the true principle with it. For who is so visionary as to look for such a state of things in this world? only those destitute of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. We might almost as well expect the time to come when all men would be born holy. It seems to me, it would be good for the whole country, if there was not a grog-shop in the land; and I would hail the day as one of joy, that freed us from drunkenness; but for one, I never expect to see it in this world. And if men were held strictly accountable for crimes committed whilst drunk, it would no doubt tend, to some extent, to the checking of it. Drunkenness is condemned in the Scriptures; but temperance is commended, and is applicable to eating, drinking, talking, and other things.

Brother Respass, I will close, though I could say much more.

*Jasper, Fla.*

D. B. SHEFFIELD.

WARE COUNTY, GEORGIA, January, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—Feeling assured that the GOSPEL MESSENGER is designed for the benefit of the household of faith; and from my personal knowledge of the standing and condition of the churches composing the Mount Enon Primitive Baptist Association, in South Florida, I want to say a few things, through the MESSENGER, in their behalf; hoping thereby to enlist the prayers of all the household that read the MESSENGER, and the labors of as many of the Elders as have the will and ability to visit these brethren and people. I herewith give you a short sketch of a tour made by myself and Elder Z. H. Bennett, Moderator of said Association.

Left Elder Bennett's on 20th December last, for our first appointment at Friendship Church, Orange county, and met a good congregation; at night preached at Bro. M. Rowell's, and spent the remainder of the night at Bro. F. Holland's. On 21st, departed for our next appointment, 23rd and 24th, at Bro. Jesse Blanton's school-house, in Hernandez county, where we arrived in due time, meeting a good congregation. Departed

from Brother Blanton's by his conveyance with him, on 25th, for our next appointment at Mount Enon Church, in Hillsborough county, where we met a good congregation. On 26th, took our leave of the brethren and sisters for our next appointment at Mount Olive Church, Polk county, on 28th, and met a good congregation, and stopped for the night at Bro. John Altman's; left for our next appointment at Bro. T. Alderman's, 29th, and met a good congregation; left Brother Alderman's for our next appointment at Peace Creek Church, Polk county, 30th and 31st, where we met good congregations; left this church for our next appointment at Empire Church, Sumter county, January 2nd, where we arrived in due time, meeting a good congregation; left this church for our next appointment at Orange Church, Orange county, January 4th, where we arrived in due time and met a good congregation; left this church for our next appointment at Mount Zion Church, Volusia county, on 6th and 7th January, it being their monthly meeting. This church being about one mile from Elder Z. H. Bennett's, lay over at Elder Bennett's until the 10th; when we left this place for Mount Olive Church, Volusia county, yearly meeting, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, where we engaged in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and also washing each other's feet, in presence of a large audience, who witnessed the same with solemnity and apparent interest. May the Lord abundantly bless them!

This finished our tour in the bounds of the Mount Enon Primitive Baptist Association, having traveled about 330 miles within its bounds. Thus you see to what extent of labor and sacrifice the brethren are exposed, and especially the ministry, in discharging the duties enjoined on them. Here, surely, is a great opening for ministers, as the harvest seems to be plenteous and the laborers are few. This country is large, and adapted to stock raising, and also for the raising of many of the tropical fruits, which are being cultivated in many localities with great success. The country is fast filling up from almost every nation, and has an inviting appearance, religiously as well as temporally. In my sojourn among the people of this State, I have never met any more clever and liberal; and although the Baptists in these parts are few and distantly situated, they prove that they know how to make brethren from other regions feel at home amongst them, and assist them from place to place. I might refer to many incidents that occurred on our tour; of acquaintances made, and assistance rendered; but suffice it to say that the acquaintances made were agreeable, and the assistance rendered was sufficient; and we took our leave for our home in Ware county, Georgia, on the 15th, arriving there on the 16th, feeling improved in health and relieved of a burden of mind; finding my family all well on the thirtieth day from leaving them. I want to, and hope I do feel thankful for the kind manner in which myself and Elder Bennett were received and cared for by the churches and friends in general; and more abundantly for the liberty of speech among them. And may the good Lord ever remember them in mercy, and deliver them ever from all harm, and finally save us all!

Yours to serve in the gospel of Christ,

R. BENNETT.

## EXPERIENCE.

*Dear Brethren and Sisters:*—I have thought for some time I would write some of the dealings of the Lord with me, but feel to be so unworthy that I don't know whether I have any experience of the Spirit—I have been such a sinner, even from my earliest recollection. I joined the Missionary Baptists at the early age of sixteen, and remained with them until I joined the Primitive Baptists last September. After I joined the Missionaries I became very much dissatisfied. I was made to see my mistake and my awful condition. I read the law, but no comfort from it could I draw; so that I was made to cry unto the Lord for mercy on me, a poor, lost sinner. My condition was, indeed, an awful one, my sins being as mountains before my eyes. I tried to pray, but my prayers did not seem to ascend to God, but to die away in my own heart. Night after night I could not sleep, there was such an awful fear before me; and could say nothing but "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor, wretched sinner." Many times, my heart feeling as if it would break, I sought some secluded spot, and there would try to pray again, hoping that the Lord would hear me; but it seemed that I was only making a mock of God's religion, and that he would never hear such a sinner's prayer, who had gone on in sinning too long to ever be heard. No tongue nor pen can express my feelings; all was woe and misery, that I was condemned to die in this awful condition, and that my soul would surely be lost forever. I went to bed in tears, realizing that all my efforts were in vain; and that I could do nothing of myself, feeling as helpless as a new born babe. I cried, "Here, Lord I give myself to thee, 'tis all that I can do;" what then transpired, I have never been able to tell. I awoke next morning, praising God for his goodness; the burden of guilt that had been crushing me down so long was gone, and I felt that my sins were all forgiven; and that I loved everybody and every thing that God had made. Every thing seemed to be perfectly lovely and to be praising God. I thought I should never

have any more trouble. I offered myself to the church, and to my great delight, was received and baptized on Sunday morning by our worthy and much beloved pastor, Elder A. W. Patterson.

But, beloved brethren and sisters, I have since had many doubts and fears, sometimes fearing that it was all imaginary, and that I am deceived in myself and have deceived others. I want you all to pray for me, for if I am ever saved it will be by the grace of God alone, and not by my good works. I have wondered, at times, why it was that the church received me at all—I told so little, my tongue cleaving, as it seemed, to the roof of my mouth. I felt so unworthy, but I believe that I died to all hope of salvation by works.

I remain your unworthy sister, if one at all,

*Sun Hill, Ga., January, 1883.*

LULA TANNER.

Dear Sister—You have walked in the light of the Spirit, and are now journeying to that country that the Lord has told us of. Many trials you shall have, but great spoils will you win. Oh! what a friend we have in Jesus!—ED.

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WILSON, N. C., January 22, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—It has been on my mind for some time to write something for the MESSENGER, but when the impression has come, I have made excuses. Yes, dear brethren, could I write as I desire to write, or speak either, with joy and singleness of heart, I could tell you much of “the one thing needful” for us poor mortals, for time and eternity. And I count this as an unspeakable mercy, to have a desire after God and the things of eternity, which are God’s in Christ Jesus reserved in heaven for you who are kept, by the power of God, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. To hunger and thirst after the eternal of the Spirit, is a blessing bestowed upon the heirs of God by his grace, as well as the gift of a thankful heart to his dear name, under all his dealings in providence, nature and grace. The

Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. This is Israel's song; and, brethren, it is my desire to join in the song, which none but the redeemed can learn.

To thee, O God, I cry,  
With infinite desire;  
And yet how far from thee I lie,—  
Dear Jesus, raise me higher!

The older I get, the more I desire to know for myself, the will of God concerning me. Am I interested in the great Atonement? Did Christ Jesus, my beloved Lord and Master, die for me? Does my name stand in the Book of Life? Has God, in that great and marvellous act of eternal love and election, loved and chosen me in Christ Jesus before the world began? Ah! I may believe all this, because it is so written of Israel, the people of God; but does the Spirit of God bear witness with my spirit that I am one of them? Are there not moments that I can recall to mind that Jesus was precious to my soul? That his name is as ointment poured forth! the ointment of everlasting love? If so, then I can say with the poet:

“Did Jesus once upon me shine?  
Then Jesus is forever mine”—

When the Lord is graciously pleased to quicken the dead sinner, He openeth his eyes too, and then he sees himself loathsome in the sight of God. Then he finds, that all he can do, all human doings, creature efforts, creature duties, are of no use whatever—nor will they contribute one iota towards the salvation of his soul. “The one thing needful” now he craves, and the name of Jesus becomes precious to him—becomes the chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. His mouth is most sweet. Grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee forever, and all his people in him, with all spiritual blessings in him also.

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

When, on the other hand, the scene changes. Satan sug-

gests some sore temptations; tries to persuade the poor child of God, that he is nothing but a hypocrite; and this they often fear themselves, and often exclaim within, "If I do love the Lord, why am I thus; why do I fear that all is a delusion, and that I shall finally be lost?" But so it is. God's poor have many changes; where all is calm, a storm will set in by-and-by. Soul trouble you will have, and the great depths of iniquity within, will be broken up. Oh! the depths of sin that lodge in a human heart! When this is felt, such will cry unto the Lord; and out of the depths they cry, and the Lord hears their cry: "Lord, save! Lord, help! God be merciful to me, a sinner!" And the answer comes, saying: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

I have heard some say they know nothing of this old man of sin in the christian; and I fear it is but too true; for they can not know this till quickened or made alive by the Spirit of God. These are they who know that the Holy Ghost is truth, and has shown to the Church, by Paul, in the 7th of Romans, the old man in all his carnality, enmity and hatefulness. Whence all the rebellions that arise in the heart against God? The old man will show himself in spite of all we can do. And he would overcome us, but for restraining grace. Sin shall not have the dominion. Sin nevertheless abounds! But thanks be unto God, where sin abounds, grace much more abounds! Those that are taught of God, will find that they daily need his everlasting arms to support them, his wisdom to direct, and his power to keep them from falling into every abomination of sin; for they find that they have within them a heart to know that when they would do good, evil is present, "bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. vii. 23.) When the exceeding sinfulness of sin is thus revealed, I find it is utterly impossible to come to God by the holy law—for I am carnal, sold under sin. Duties will avail nothing here. I firmly believe that a duty religion, is no religion at all. Duty faith, and duty prayers, are all useless. I know that my heart and affections are at variance to God and godliness. And this knowledge has cost

me many tears, sighs and groans. I have also a secret desire in my heart after God and godliness—a secret desire, at times, to look into the mysteries of Christ. I have a longing after eternal things; my soul is tired of feeding upon the husks that the multitude so much seek after. I find that these things are not what I want. I want more of the love of God shed abroad in my heart. I want the teaching of the Spirit of truth. I want to have sweet fellowship with the blessed Saviour—one with Christ; or else what advantage will it be to know that Christ died for sinners if I am not one of those for whom Christ laid down his precious life? To have a belief in Christ, a precious faith, which lays hold upon Christ; to feel my interest in him, and that he died for me! These are the realities that I am seeking after; and I fear not—yea, hope with abiding hope—but in the Lord's own time I shall realize this glorious truth, and be able to say: Indeed, "Jesus' name is above every name; the Lord is my song and my salvation." To them that believe, he is precious. By the work of God and power of the Holy Ghost this experience is wrought in the soul. All mere external faith is not the faith of God's elect. Hence, if my faith is the faith of the Son of God, it will produce fruit pertaining to spiritual life in the soul. "This people have I formed for myself: they shall show forth my praise, saith the Lord." In their various deliverances they will be able to praise him, seeing that "salvation is of the Lord."

And now, brethren beloved, farewell! Excuse the attempt I have made to address you. And may God, even our own God in our precious Christ, by his Holy Spirit teach you all spiritual things. None teacheth like our God. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

B. GREENWOOD.

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"If ye love them that love you, what reward have you? Do not the publicans the same?"

## MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

Having been requested to write on the above subject, we have concluded, in the fear of God, to do so; and as much as in us is, to give the true scriptural rule, without being swayed to the right or left by either applause or censure.

There is one thing we do know most assuredly before God, our conscience bearing us witness, that we entered upon the work of the gospel ministry from no vain or carnal motive of obtaining money or its equivalent; and having labored for near forty years under trials, hardships, persecutions and afflictions greater than it is possible for us now to describe, we expect by the sustaining grace of God, to finish our labor as we began. No motives of earthly gain, honors, popularity, or applause of men, prompted us at the first, and none prompts us yet to labor, according to the ability the Lord hath given, with tongue and pen, for the edification, instruction and comfort of God's dear children.

We do not write upon this subject by way of complaint against our brethren for any neglect towards us individually, nor by way of giving any undue praise or commendation for liberality, though we have experienced both. But our thanks are due continually to our God for his sustaining grace to enable us to know how to suffer want and neglect, as well as to abound. Considering the many afflictions, losses, crosses and drawbacks that we have had in our temporal progress, we regard it as most marvelous that we have never yet suffered for the plain comforts of life. The Lord has surely taken care of us, chastised and fed us, all our life long.

Christian churches are bound by a gospel obligation, from which they can not free themselves without sin, to "Remember them which have the rule (of God's word) over them, and who have spoken to them the word of God."—Heb. xiii. 7.

We desire, dear brethren, to speak to you, not simply by appeals to your fleshly sympathies, nor in the words of men, but by the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe. This word, spoken unto you in the name and

by the authority of the Lord, by his ministers, pastors and teachers, is the "rule" that is over you, as you read in Heb. xiii. 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you." Disobedience to this divine rule is sin, and hence it is written: "As many (and no more) as walk according to *this* rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—Gal. vi. 16. To this divine and infallible "rule" let us now appeal for instruction on ministerial support: "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 14.

In the application of this text last quoted, there are two extremes into which some have gone. *First*—For any professed gospel minister to put his preaching in the market as an article on which he may trade, the highest bidder in money obtaining it; or to agree with a church or congregation to furnish so much preaching for so much money as a salary, is a gross perversion of the subject. Neither such preaching nor such preachers are included in this text, because it only includes such as "preach *the gospel*," and that kind of preaching not being the gospel of God, they have no scriptural right to claim that they shall, in any sense of the text, "live of the gospel." "The Lord hath ordained that they which *preach the gospel*, shall live of the gospel." If they preach something else than the pure, unadulterated gospel of Christ, this rule, which the Lord hath "ordained" for his church, does not apply to them.

A *second* extreme and perversion of the text is, that they which preach the gospel shall receive nothing in the way of a temporal support, but the meaning is, that they shall "live of the gospel" in a spiritual sense; that the same gospel they preach to feed and strengthen others in the faith, shall be strength and food to themselves; they shall live of it in that sense. This application looks very plausible,—and, in fact, the principle is correct in a spiritual sense,—but it is a gross

perversion of the word 'of the Lord to say that the text, or the connection in which it stands, has any such meaning. The apostle is very clearly treating of the temporal support of those who preach the gospel, and of the duty as God hath ordained and established in his word for his church and people to administer of their earthly things for their support—and there is no use trying to evade, disguise, or cover up this plainly revealed truth. It is the rule that God hath given—and no church can be healthy and prosperous, with God's blessing upon it, neither in temporal nor in spiritual things, unless this ordained rule is observed and obeyed.

But some say, "If it is *ordained* of God that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, that is God's decree, and it will be accomplished whether we give any thing or not." But, dear brother, if you are candid in this way of reasoning, you have taken a wrong view of the sense in which the word "ordained" is used in this text, as well as a few others. The Lord hath *ordained* good works that his children should walk in them, but shall we so construe that ordination or decree of God as to say that *they always* do right? There are some things which God has ordained as a rule of his own conduct, and some that are ordained as a rule for the conduct of his people. Any rule, law or command, therefore, which he has given them to regulate their worship to him, may be, and is, properly considered as *ordained* and established for his church till time shall end. No power on earth or in heaven, among men or angels, has any right to change this or any other ordination of God—to amend, or repeal it—to annul, restrict, or enlarge it, in any sense whatever. Whatever, therefore, our God hath ordained as to ministerial support, must stand as his law, to which his people must conform, or be guilty of sinning against him as a Father, against Christ as King in Zion, and against those heavenly ambassadors who pray you in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God."

Gospel ministers, as individual christians, often feel poor and needy; and, apart from their ministerial calling, they desire some lowly, humble position; neither claiming, asking,

nor looking for, any assistance, favors, or attention, beyond what is due to any other orderly private member. But when they come in their official capacity as gospel ministers, in the name and by the authority of Jesus, who hath called and sent them forth, they do know that subjection and obedience are due to Him in whose name they speak, and to the *office* which he has ordained and established in his church. To see that authority disregarded by their brethren, and the ministerial office practically trampled under foot, and not lift a warning voice to claim that respect for the sacred calling that is due to Christ, would be a criminal and sinful neglect of duty upon the part of any pastor or teacher in the church of Christ.

In the 9th chapter of First Corinthians the apostle shows the power that he and other ministers had *in* the gospel to have their temporal wants supplied by those to whom they preach. But, like all other powers, rights and privileges which God has given, it is subject to be perverted and abused. Hence the apostle was careful, as he says, "Not to *abuse* my power in the gospel." "Have not we power to *forbear working?*"—1 Cor. ix. 6. This power may be grossly abused. As ministers of Christ, who give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word," they certainly have this power and right, "ordained" of God as a rule for his church. But as private members, of whom no such official services are required, none have such power, right or privilege to live from the labor or liberality of others; but they are commanded by the authority of Christ, that with quietness they *work* and eat their own bread; and if any work not who are able to do it, as thus commanded, neither should they be allowed to eat from the public bounty which had been made up for the poor, destitute and afflicted (2 Thess. iii. 10, 12.)

In treating upon this subject the apostle quotes from the law of Moses: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it *altogether* for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this was written." To withhold from the faithful minister

that temporal assistance necessary, and that is enjoined on the church by the word of the Lord, is to "muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," which the God of Israel forbid to that people by a positive law; not simply and alone because he had so much care for oxen; but because it was to serve as a type or figure to enforce and illustrate that *ordained* law in his church, that "he that preaches the gospel shall live of the gospel." Or, in other words, he shall have temporal assistance, freely and liberally contributed, without being muzzled. It was an ancient custom to tread out the corn,—or what we call wheat,—with oxen, but in more modern times with horses. The faithful ox, when allowed by the law of God to partake freely of his owner's wheat, as he patiently labored in treading around from day to day, would very naturally feel very free and easy as to his daily food, feeling that he was well cared for, and that he had a kind of common or joint interest in the crop, and he would not feel much reluctance to be led to the pile of wheat and tread around all day, because he was allowed, by a divine law that was enjoined upon the owner of the ox, to put out his rough tongue at any time he desired, and take such quantity of the corn as might be sufficient to satisfy his necessities. But if, contrary to God's ordinance and law in Israel, the ox,—which, in some particulars, is a figure of the gospel minister,—should be muzzled from day to day, and sparingly fed by his covetous owner, he will show signs of discontent, will move reluctantly, and perhaps low most piteously in the ears of his cruel and guilty master, who, to stifle his own guilty conscience and direct attention away from his own wrong-doing, will perhaps abuse the poor, weary, though faithful and hungry old ox, telling him that he can *graze* enough at night, and that times are too hard to spare so much of his crop to the ox. In this case we know that the authority of God would be set at naught; the poor, weary ox would suffer a wrong, as though his toilsome labor was not appreciated, and if he should show signs occasionally to hook or kick at his unjust and wicked master, or become stubborn so as not to work at all, both the ox and his covetous owner would be unhappy.

Churches and brethren often give as an excuse for not assisting the minister in temporal things, that they are poor and have nothing to spare; they are hard-pressed and in debt. This is doubtless true, that many are in debt; but how did they get in debt? Surely not by their over-liberality to the minister of Christ, nor to the poor and needy, nor by their obedience to the law of Christ. But has it not been in too many instances that brethren have become poor and in debt by withholding from proper gospel subjects that temporal assistance required by the gospel, in order to build up their own fortunes, or to gratify the pride and vanity of their family? Debts have been contracted to acquire property which was not really necessary, and in some instances, what is due to the minister and to the poor has been criminally kept back to meet the debts incurred by vanity or lustful prodigality. Will not those who pursue this course become still harder pressed? And will they not have less and less enjoyment with what little they do have? "To withhold more than is right" is to keep back that which belongs to another, and the wise man, Solomon, says, "It *tends* to poverty."—Prov. xi. 24. It is only when the blessing of God attends our labors that we can prosper, and that blessing can not be hoped for when our labor, either as pastor or church, in things temporal or spiritual, is in direct violation of that which He has ordained as a law to guide His church.

"The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."—Prov. x. 22. The poor in spirit are rich in faith, and no sorrow is added with such riches. And christians may get rich in earthly goods, but have much sorrow, perplexity and distress with their wealth, because they get it not by the blessing of the Lord in doing right. We may use a little lawfully, and scatter it in the spirit and letter of the gospel, and that little will increase to us without sorrow, guilt or remorse.

"Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith."—Prov. xv. 16. Earthly goods are only valuable as servants, and according to the real

and lawful comfort they can bring us; and if we can draw more solid comfort of mind from a little than others do from much, then that little is more valuable than their abundance. "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."—Psalm xxxvii. 16.

But we have, perhaps, said enough upon this subject at present. Whatever construction brethren may place upon what is here written, we can assure them that nothing more nor less is designed to be inculcated than what is given us in the 9th chapter of First Corinthians and other corresponding texts. It is a point not to be regulated by agreement between the church and minister, but it is a standing law regulated by the authority of God. Let churches and ministers see that they do not add to it, nor diminish from it. No faithful pastor of three or four churches can follow any remunerative worldly business to support his family. His time is too much broken to keep any business in shape to prosper. It is true, he may, and ought to do some work if able to do it, and ought to use every lawful effort of industry and economy so far as he can without impairing his pastoral duties, and he should not use the liberality of his brethren to foster pride, vanity or idleness, neither in himself nor in his family, but for a decent support, and for relieving his own mind and hands that he may be the more serviceable to his brethren and churches. He should do this even for the sake of example, if nothing else (2 Thess. iii. 9.) Gospel ministers are men of like passions, naturally, with other men, and are as liable to be governed by improper motives for liberal contributions as their brethren are in withholding what is right from them. When the turning point of pastoral services is placed on a money basis by any preacher, it would be best for the church to withhold from him. May the Lord enable both pastors and churches to do that which is right in His sight!—M.

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"If you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?"

## SPIRITUAL ADOPTION.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.—Eph. i. 5.  
That we might receive the adoption of sons.—Gal. iv. 5.

God's servants of the ministry, as well as others, are required to be faithful in all things, and to show themselves approved unto God, in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and in rightly dividing the word of truth. There are several grand and glorious principles of doctrine set forth in the sacred oracles, as demonstrating the relation sustained by God in Christ to his believing children. Conspicuous among them is "Adoption," as set forth in the text at the head of this article. God has been pleased, in the revelations of his grace, to use phrases easy to the comprehension of his believing children, and illustrations common among men. We have no difficulty in ascertaining the significance, literally, of the term, "adoption." We know that it means the taking of the child of another, of whatever rank or class, however degenerate or clever, and raising and educating the same to all the privileges and immunities of one's own child by blood and birth—even of one's own legal begetting. We will suppose the child adopted, to be of the very lowest, abandoned and degraded class, and the adoptor to be of the very highest in wealth, splendor, and earthly glory and magnificence. We readily discover the disparity between the parties in the beginning, and just as readily may we discover the great and essential change of state and character of the adopted, in the end, when the design of adoption is accomplished. And, following up this thought in the application of the subject, we are enabled by faith to get a glimpse at least, of the great disparity between God the great Jehovah, as the Adoptor, and the wretched and ruined sinner, of Adam's polluted family, as the adopted. Our finite minds utterly fail to measure the absolute distance between the parties to this adoption. But the reign of God's grace, by faith, enables us to see from the centre as it were, gradually, and to some extent, down this line of disparity—at least, to the state of the just condemnation and

vileness of the sinner; and by the same grace of faith, to look up this same line of disparity, and behold the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, and so rejoice in hope of the glory of God, through the blood of the once crucified, but now risen Lord and Saviour. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God."

Our text reads: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." But there are other principles of doctrine vitally connected with that of adoption, as going before and in order to the adoption of children. There must, necessarily, be a choice made by the adoptor, of the person or persons to be adopted, and a determination to carry out the choice or election thus made, to its full and thorough completion in adoption. And hence we read in the context: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself."—Eph. i. 3, 5. Thus we see the identity of the subjects, so chosen or elected in Christ, and by him adopted; and so leads on, in the same identity, to redemption by the blood of Christ (as in verse 7): "In whom we have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." So we see a direct and immediate connection between Jesus Christ as Mediator and Saviour, and all three of the doctrinal principles of Election, Predestination and Adoption, and the identity of the subjects in Redemption; and, therefore, all four of these principles of doctrine must, of necessity, be principles of the gospel, to be inculcated by a faithful ministry; and the three first of which, to be regarded as belonging to the everlasting covenant of Grace, ordered in all things and sure, and among those spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus with which the Church of Christ is blessed (as presented in the 3rd verse.) Surely this is sufficient ground upon which to base the right

of redemption, as according to God's good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself (as seen in verse 9); the more especially when we discover that these subjects, which were predestinated unto the adoption of children, were the gift of the Father to the Son in the same covenant of grace, and by him redeemed from the condemnation and curse of the violated law of God. We see, then, God's eternal purpose in his election unto salvation, his predestination unto the adoption of the heirs of his electing love, and so far in their redemption, in fulfillment of his purpose in himself and in and through Christ Jesus. As seen in Eph. iii. 11: "According to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." But does this exhaust his purpose in fulfillment? Surely not. The child must be prepared and made sensible of his adoption, and put in possession of the inheritance. Redemption truly has opened the way to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and all uncleanness, but not provided the principle of the preparation of the heirs of promise. The sovereign reign of grace must not, can not stop here. The way is opened, but the prisoners not yet delivered. We read of "three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or Son), and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one;" and the three in one God are harmoniously engaged in the work of human redemption and salvation. The electing love of God the Father hath chosen the vessels of mercy to the end that they should be holy and without blame, and determined upon their future adoption. God the Son, by his sufferings, death and resurrection, hath paid the debt due to their transgressions, and thus met and satisfied all the claims of law, in all of its jots and tittles, in full satisfaction to the justice of the divine throne. But have we no work for God the Holy Ghost? But our second text comes in: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Here the Holy Ghost

comes in for his share of the works of the preparation of the heirs of adopting grace. An eminent apostle seems to glory in this work as under the inspiration of the Spirit, when he says: "I am bound to give thanks always unto God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." And Peter speaks of these adopted children as "elect of God according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." What a demonstration of the work of the three in one God, is found in this text!

But the doctrinal principle of Sanctification seems to be set forth as the peculiar work of God the Holy Ghost, in fulfilling the eternal purpose of God in the preparation of the vessels of mercy in regenerating and adopting grace; even as it is the peculiar work of God the Son to redeem, and as it was the peculiar work of God the Father to choose and determine upon the subjects of adoption, of redemption, of sanctification, of pardon and justification, and eternal salvation. But, notwithstanding the peculiar work of either one, the unity of divinity in the three is so closely allied and united, that wherever and whenever the one is engaged in his peculiar work, the three are present. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; nevertheless, God was manifest in the flesh." Let the faith of every adopted child of God bow in humble submission to the truth of the great mystery.

Jesus the great Saviour was made of a woman for a specific purpose, and we are told that in him, as Mediator and Head of the Church, dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and we read further, that "as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" and "it is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." And our Saviour Jesus hath said: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Again: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot

enter into the kingdom of God." We are on the hunt, now, of the subjects receiving that adoption to which they were chosen and predestinated from before the foundation of the world, as under the reign of sovereign grace; and I don't know that we can do any better than to consult the Book of Ephesians, though other portions of scripture give abundant testimony. The saints at Ephesus had received abundantly of the fruit of the Spirit of sanctification unto the adoption of the children of God, which made them what they were not before, to wit, the "workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: wherefore remember that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made with hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who were some time afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. ii. 10, 13. Thus we get a glance at the children of God, under the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, receiving their adoption to the extent that they are enabled by grace (the grace of faith) to cry, Abba, Father. But let us go back a little, to the first of the chapter. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, and (though dead) were walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; and were by nature (by sin and transgression) the children of wrath, even as others." This was the condition in times past of the saints at Ephesus, and before they received the adoption of sons. But what is this we hear: "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?" This is the result, so far, of the work of the Spirit in sanctification, it

regenerating and adopting grace, in fulfillment of God's purpose in adoption. Just here, not only the Spirit of adoption is received, but the adoption of sons, and heirs of immortality—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, the only begotten Son of the Highest, to that glorious "inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for all the subjects of adoption, who are kept (and they shall all be kept), by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Here a wide field opens, which space will not admit even an effort to explore. But only let the sinner, as made a saint, under the power and efficacy of the Spirit in adopting grace, just go back in the retrospect five, ten, twenty, or fifty years, or longer, to his first espousals to Christ—when, by faith, he first discerned the broken body and spilt blood of Christ, as shed for many for the remission of sins—and at or about the same time feel the burden of sin and condemnation rolled back into the sea of God's forgetfulness; for that Jesus hath done all things well, and God is well pleased for the righteousness' sake of his dearly beloved Son. Was it not a raising up, indeed, and most truly, a heavenly place in Christ Jesus? Would we not then, for a season at least, substantially claim our adoption, as by faith, through grace, and that "not of ourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." But I must leave this experimental and delightful branch of the subject for the children of the regeneration, and adoption, to preach out, each for him or herself, according to their respective experimental exercises in all their great variety of detail—from their first taste of the wormwood and the gall—and remembering the rock whence they were hewn, the hole of the pit whence they are digged, indicating a state of conviction and repentance toward God, against whom they had sinned. "For then shall they remember their own evil ways and doings, which were not right, and shall loathe themselves on account of their abominations." But let these remember that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath abounded unto death,

even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

So it is that grace, sovereign grace, reigns throughout the whole gospel system, even to the final resurrection of these vile bodies. The bodies of the saints, being the subjects of redemption, must also follow as the subjects of regeneration and adoption, and resurrection as well. "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Yours to serve,

E. S. DUDLEY.

*Hutchison, Ky., Jan. 5, 1883.*

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"He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord." Who would not lend to the Lord? or would be afraid that he would not be paid back? "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least one of these, ye have done it to me."

PELHAM, GRUNDY CO., TENN., Feb. 20, 1883.

*Editors Gospel Messenger*:—I wish to make known to you and the readers of the MESSENGER, that we have an old brother, EWTON, and family, in a very destitute and afflicted condition. He is 76 years old, unable to work; has no horse, cow, hog, or any thing of the kind. His wife, Sister Ewton, is of like age, and blind; and a grown son and daughter, nearly blind. The church here is small, only four male members—he one of them—and most of them quite poor. His children that have families living near him, are almost as destitute as he is, and unable to help him, and are objects of charity themselves. The *whole* family here seems to be afflicted with scrofulous sore eyes. His daughter, Sister Cox, is almost blind herself, and Brother Cox unable to work much, having been wounded in the war, and has to work for what they eat, and no children big enough to work. Brother Ewton's married son is, at times, almost blind, and is frequently himself a beggar. I need add no more; and if you insert this in the MESSENGER, and it shall come under the eye of any brother or sister whose circumstances will permit them to contribute any thing to the relief of Brother Ewton and family, they can

do so by post-office order, or registered letter, addressed to Elder James Wagner, Dechard, Franklin county, Tenn., who will convey it to them, by whom it will most assuredly be thankfully received.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ, J. M. WILKINSON.

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## EDITORIAL.

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J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors.

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### FOR CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—Every thing we say or do in this life, is somewhat like sowing seed: it will bring its own proper fruit to us or to others, either good or bad, according to the quality and nature of the seed sown.

Preaching, writing, talking, or working, is often compared to sowing seed; and you know that the nature of seed which is sown in our field or garden is to bring forth a crop after its kind—or, in other words, just like itself. If we sow wheat, we do not expect to reap barley, nor rye. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”—Gal. vi. 7. He will get a crop of the same kind and nature with the seed that he has sown.

In harmony with this well established principle in nature, christian people are warned to “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for *whatsoever* a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” And again it is written, “They that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same.”—Job iv. 8.

If we preach or write merely to honor man, or that we may have honor of men, or get some worldly gain or advantage from men, our motive is bad, and our labor will as certainly bring bad results as the sowing of bad seed will bring corrupt fruit.

Now, children, we want to call your attention very specially to this point with regard to what is called preaching. All preaching is like sowing seed: it will bring forth fruit after

its kind. If a false or corrupt doctrine is preached to any people, and they listen to and encourage it, they will be certain to reap a corrupt crop. It will have a bad influence—causing them to be vain, or to treat with lightness the worship of the Living God. It will lead away from that reverence and simplicity that should be observed by those who assemble for worship. It will lead children, as well as grown people, into error, and cause them more and more to hate the truth. To give heed to the preaching of the corrupt doctrines of men, is to “bid them God’s speed! and he that bids them God’s speed! is partaker of their evil deeds.” Every thing that is preached by men is not the pure gospel of Christ. It is true, they call it the gospel, but it is not.

In the first chapter of Galatians and seventh verse, certain preachers are spoken of, who “pervert the gospel of Christ.” That is, they preach something which they say is the gospel of Christ, when it is nothing but the gospel of men. Now, this is like sowing bad seed: it will bring bad fruit. It will feed the natural pride and vanity of the sinful hearts of men, women and children, and harden them more and more against the truth. All men, women and children are sinners against God, and all their works respecting salvation are just like themselves. “An evil tree will bring evil fruit.” “A corrupt fountain sends forth corrupt streams.” So it is written in the Scriptures, that “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”—2 Tim. iii. 13. “Seducers,” in religious matters, are men who pretend to be very good preachers, but it is only a *pretence*; for they tempt seduce or draw people away from the right way, and corrupt their minds. This is sowing bad seed: and it brings a bad crop of pride, vanity, self-will, and self-righteousness.

Now, children, if you will get your Testament and read the first chapter of Philippians and 15th to 18th verses, you will find that the Lord says, by his apostle, that “some preach Christ of envy and strife.” They preach of a contentious spirit because they like to hear themselves talk. They do not preach “sincerely;” that is, they do not mean what they say

They are "seducers," to draw honest-hearted, unsuspecting christians away from the right way of the Lord. Their preaching is nothing but a "*pretence*"—for so the holy apostle calls it in the 18th verse of the above chapter. In the first chapter of Titus, also, he speaks of "unruly and vain *talkers* and deceivers," who had "subverted (or deceived) whole houses;" that is, whole families or churches had been led astray by these vain talkers, who had "taught things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Subverting or turning people from the right way in order to obtain filthy lucre, or unjust gain, is the crop that is produced from the vain *talking* they have done. Some men are very fluent talkers, but very bad preachers. It is but a small matter with some men to be "vain and unruly talkers," but it is a great and important thing to be a good, humble, and instructive gospel preacher.

We feel confident that though there are many deceivers and vain talkers claiming to be gospel preachers who are not, yet there are some good gospel preachers whose preaching is compared to sowing good seed. "The sower, sows the word." "The seed sown, is the word of God." It is sent of God. It brings a crop like itself. The fruit is good. It feeds the hungry soul, and makes the poor in spirit feel "rich in faith, as an heir of the kingdom which God hath promised to them who love him." It makes mourners glad, and rejoices the heart of the sorrowful.

And now, children, we bid you farewell for this time, and pray God that what we have written may be prospered as good seed in honest hearts.—M.

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Correspondents will please bear with us in the delay of their articles. Many were lost and misplaced by the fire and the general tear-up that has been in the house since; but we will publish them as we find them. Elder Mc.'s (of Dooly county, Ga.) article will be published when found. Meantime write on as the Lord inclines you all. Short articles are best.

## PETER IN PRISON.—ACTS XII.

Our space is limited and our words must be few. We have thought there was something in this chapter with which our experience accorded in part. There is some comfort in the fact that James died for his devotion to Christ. Men have died for many things; died for worldly honor and glory and religious superstition; but there was no worldly motive in James' death; no honor of men to be gotten by it; but to the contrary. A christian's death is, of course, like the death of other men in a natural sense; but there must be something about it more than natural. There was something in the agony of Christ preceding his crucifixion that can not be accounted for from natural causes; and we have no doubt that there is at times a horror of death to the christian, that the merely natural man knows nothing of; a horror such, perhaps, as Job had when he sadly queried, "If a man die shall he live again?" But be that as it may, for we know nothing, certainly, of it yet, it being something not yet experienced by us; but it must have been a test or trial for a time at least, of James' faith, resulting in a victory to him over death. How severe the struggle was we have no means of knowing; but we know he had the victory, for he died, and might have lived by recantation.

Peter's faith was tried; and it was, perhaps, more bitter than that of James, as he was in long suspense; and with Peter the faith of the church was tried. Now we have not been cast into a literal prison or jail for our religion; and yet we seem to know something of being bound by chains in darkness from which we could no more free ourself than Peter could. As Peter realized his impotency and helplessness, so we think have we realized our spiritual impotency and helplessness, and thus been made to believe that not only is the sinner impotent, but that even the christian himself is impotent; but with this very important difference, that the christian realizes his helplessness and the sufficiency of Christ, whilst the sinner realizes neither. There is another little

morsel of comfort in this, and that is, that this trial did not come upon Peter and the church for disobedience. We are prone to attribute our trials to some dereliction of duty and some defection of the church, and not, perhaps, without some just grounds at times; but at this time the church was pure and primitive, and was in spirit in the days of unleavened bread, and yet persecution came upon her. Persecution might even now not be far off if the church was as pure as she was then. But the comfort is, that we may even in the discharge of duty sometimes be cast into prison and bound in darkness; but we will wonder at it that we should be, if we are doing right, and think maybe we are doing wrong, or something not required of us, and therefore are cast into darkness and bound with chains so that there is no going forth with us, but are fast and sensible of one thing only, that we are helpless. Not long since we went, as we thought, by direction of God to a place to preach, but were providentially prevented. It was a great sacrifice to us to go; but we were not only frustrated, but deeply tried, and bound in darkness, and held in chains of fear and distrust, from which we could by no means free ourself. If we had gone off from home to drum up subscribers for the MESSENGER, we might have felt condemned as being influenced by carnal motives; but that was not our motive, and never has been upon any occasion when we have gone to preach. The church was praying for Peter, so that this trouble brought the spirit of supplication to the church on his behalf. They may have been growing overconfident in the Lord and becoming self-reliant and presumptuous; we don't know; God knew. They prayed without ceasing for Peter. The church realized her impotency also as well as Peter, and felt as helpless to deliver him as he felt to deliver himself. If we could feel so now it might be good for us; God knows; and when it is for our good it will come. But it does seem that if that unity of spirit that existed between Peter and the church was now prevalent, that the darkness of our prison, the chains of worldliness, deadness, coldness, and prejudice, would drop and there would be

a going forth out of the prison bonds into the house of prayer. We thought one dreary night whilst trembling in our bed with fear and sickness, realizing our impotency to free ourself from the chains of unbelief, worldliness and deadness, of the troubles of others, as we trust the church thought of Peter's troubles; and there was a going forth of our heart in sympathy to them. We had been thinking only of ourself, and that none pitied us or thought of us, when it occurred to us that we, ourself, thought of ourself only. We could hear of the bereavement of others, of husbands of their wives and wives of husbands and children, and of many reduced to want and poverty, and only a momentary impression made, and passing away as a tale that is told, and with hardly a prayer to God for them. Surely this chain of selfishness is made of iron, by which we are often bound, thinking only of our own trials when they should prepare us to sympathize with the troubles of others. We thought of the miserable occupants of upper stories of houses in the flooded city of Cincinnati; how, crouching, shivering with cold and pallid with fear and weak with hunger, they passed the long night away by slow inches, in fearful apprehension that every moment the house would be swept away by the torrent and they left in darkness to be swallowed up by the turbid waters. We could say God pity them! and those in a still worse condition as they were given up a prey to the devouring flood! The angel of God came upon Peter and a light shined in the prison. We almost hoped a light shined into our prison—and the chains fell from his hands, and Peter was led forth. We go forth as we are led forth. He was being led to where they were praying; it is true, the iron gate was in the way, but that opened of its own accord; Peter didn't have to open it. Let us follow the Lord and the iron gates will open. We need not use words of guile, flattery, or the honied words of Absalom, to steal the hearts of God's people; that will not open the gate; only to be faithful to Christ, that is all that's necessary. We wonder if any pray for us. Oh! that they could!—R.

We publish on cover of our magazine an advertisement of "Brewer's Lung Restorer," a medicine manufactured and owned by Messrs. Lamar, Rankin & Lamar, of Macon, Atlanta and Albany, Ga. This firm is one of the largest and wealthiest in the South; and we believe that they would not endeavor to introduce an article unworthy the notice and trial of the public. Furthermore, we have used and are now using "Brewer's Lung Restorer" in our family with beneficial results. For these reasons we are willing to advertise it, not as a cure-all, but as worthy a trial in the diseases for which it is recommended.—R.

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### REMITTING MONEY.

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It is unsafe to send money in a common letter. We lose a good deal in such letters. Brethren will please not do it, or if they do, they must take the risk themselves; and if any do send it in that way, and do not get a receipt in a few days, they should write again; and any who have sent in that way, and have not received a receipt, will please write us at once. The MESSENGER is a \$2.00 magazine, and brethren could well afford to register, or buy money order for it, at \$1.00 a year.—ED.

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We put as little in small print as we can, to get in the amount of matter we do. We will reduce even the present amount. But the small print costs us a deal more than the large. Besides, it is extra. We originally started a magazine of 32 pages for \$1.00, and now it is oftener 48 than otherwise, with from 36 to 44 pages of reading matter in large type. We would suggest that brethren and sisters have their children read the small print to them, and thus kill two birds with one stone.

## EXTRACTS, FROM LETTERS.

ALBANY, MISSOURI, February, 1883.

*Very Dear Brother in Christ*:—The GOSPEL MESSENGER is gaining in favor with the Lord's humble poor; and we believe the blessing of Heaven attends its monthly visits, to the comfort and consolation of God's afflicted and tempest-tossed children. If those of our more favored brethren were placed in some nook or corner of the earth where the gospel is seldom preached, and should experience the many heart-aches and soul-yearnings of the poor saints thus situated, they would certainly think differently of the utility of such periodicals as the MESSENGER. How many of our dear kindred in Christ are thus fed upon the bread of heaven and the sincere milk of the word! Dear brother, I have just returned from a visit to some of the brethren of our Association, and whilst with them presented the GOSPEL MESSENGER and obtained a few names, which I herein forward, &c. May the Lord bless you! ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

How easily, if brethren generally, would do as Elder Clabaugh, we should have a list of subscribers that would enable us to send them a much larger magazine than the MESSENGER now is. May the Lord reward him in his soul with the consciousness that he is serving the cause of Christ in his labor of love.—ED.

STATE ROAD, DEL., February 15, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I have shared the copies of the MESSENGER sent me, and the brethren admire it very much. One of them wishes to know whether there was any more of "Rabshakeh" than was in the December number? and would like to see it all, if there was. The MESSENGER is very ably conducted, and I feel disposed to help you along and give you encouragement. Yours to serve, E. RITTENHOUSE.

[We send Elder Rittenhouse the September and October issues—about the last we have—containing the preceding articles on "Rabshakeh." We feel thankful to the Lord for the approbation of our brethren, and of such faithful and long-tried veterans of the Cross as Elder Rittenhouse.]

ARKADELPHIA, ARKANSAS, February, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell*:—I do hope to see the MESSENGER prosper. It is a great comfort to me to read it; and my wife, a son and widowed daughter are delighted to receive a new number. It is growing in favor in this country, because of the manner of conducting it, as well as the delightful reading matter.

Affectionately yours,

ALEX. MASON.

COCKRUM, MISSISSIPPI, February, 1883.

*Dear Brethren*:—I am glad to send you your money, and hope you will not think hard of me for the delay. I can say that I enjoy the MESSEN-

GER; and the editorials have so much enlightened me that I, with another brother, B. J. Woods, went on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1882, twenty miles and joined the Primitive Baptist Church; and we must say that we feel like we are, or have gotten home to the right family, with our brethren and sisters. If you have light, please give your views on 2 Pet. iii. 8.

E. CHISENHALL.

Will some brother write on the above?—ED.

STAR CITY, ARKANSAS, January 16, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—I had last Sunday the pleasure of leading a brother into the water and baptizing him, who had been a Missionary twenty years. I have also a call to visit a sister church next Lord's day, to baptize three that have been received and are waiting the administration of the ordinance—the pastor of the church being a cripple. I think one of them has been a Missionary.

J. B. MATHEWS.

SPRINGPORT, INDIANA, January 15, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I am passing through the 79th year of my pilgrimage on earth, having many enemies to encounter, and finding sinful self the greatest of all. But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Your brother, I hope, in the Lord,

JOSHUA HICKMAN.

UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS, January 25, 1883.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell* :—*Beloved in Christ* :—For near half a century I have been in the service of my God as best I could, and more than a third of a century in the gospel ministry, and now, late in the evening of my life, I understand that rumors are sent forth, far and near, that I deny the doctrine of the Resurrection of this vile mortal body. I most emphatically deny the charge. I do most certainly believe, and preach, that this vile body shall be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ, and that his mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruption shall put on incorruption. I do certainly believe that the saints will all be conformed to the image of Christ—"be like him, and see him as he is." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Whether the rumor charging me with advocating the Non-Resurrection theory be from misapprehension, imagination, or prejudice, it is utterly untrue; and, not knowing but that it may have reached Alabama and Georgia, where I lived and labored in the early part of my ministry for many years, I desire this published, that brethren with whom I have taken sweet counsel in days past, may not think me entirely deranged in my last days.

I remain, as ever, your affectionate brother to serve, in trouble and affliction,

JEFF. STRINGER.

We are glad to hear from Elder J. Stringer on the point presented in

the above letter. We were personally acquainted with him for many years before he left Georgia, and have frequently met with him at Associations and other meetings, hearing him preach the gospel of our salvation; but do not remember that we ever heard anything preached by him, nor presented in private conversation, indicating a denial of the Resurrection, or of a change of the mortal bodies of the people of God. So long as we knew Elder Stringer before his going to Texas, he was an humble, devoted and uncompromising Primitive Baptist, without a blemish upon his ministerial, moral, or christian character; and we trust that the grace of God that *brings* salvation, will still sustain him in the evening of his life to bear hardness, shame and reproach, if needs be, for Jesus' sake, till he gets his final and everlasting release, and receives that crown of glory that fadeth not away, which the Lord has laid up for him.—M.

RICHLAND, ARKANSAS, December 10, 1882.

*Dear Brother Mitchell* :—Our children are very much delighted with your letters to them, and with the nice present you have sent them. I do think this is a step in the right direction. You have no idea how much our children are neglected in this country. They seldom ever get to any of our religious meetings; they read nothing about us, and hear but little except in a sarcastic, abusive way, and thus their youthful minds are poisoned more and more continually against the truth, and led away unto fables. Many of our brethren and sisters, I think, fall far short of coming fully up to their duty in this particular; and I have repeatedly tried, in my weak way, to admonish them to a discharge of their duty as parents, to whom God has committed the care of children. I feel thankful that God has put it into the heart of you and Brother Respass to come to my assistance in this particular. It is a pleasure to me to circulate the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and thereby aid in its usefulness. I feel like I was engaged in a good work when I do it. Our country is flooded with religious trash, and the minds of children are early poisoned with corrupt reading, and our children, being of the same sinful nature as others, are easily caught in the snare of error, and drift along in the popular current with those who lie in wait to deceive. Yet many will say that it makes no difference—that “All things work together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose.” [We should not do evil that good may come; nor should we continue in sin that grace may abound.—ED.]

Your unworthy brother,            E. J. DEAN.

TUCKALECHEE, TENN., December 20, 1882.

Our people here, though generally poor, are able to take a paper, but there is so much *trash* that they are somewhat prejudiced against them. I would not have you think that our people do not read, for I think they search the Scriptures more than any people I know. I think we ought to hear from our brethren, because it encourages us, especially when we are

cast down. My wife and children love to read the MESSENGER, and this is one reason why I like it; for though I have taken and read papers—religious and political—for the last fifteen years, my wife and children took no interest in them until the MESSENGER came, and now they are impatient to wait a month for it to come. Before, she studied only two books—the Bible and “Pilgrim’s Progress”—but now she has the third, the GOSPEL MESSENGER; and when I joke her for reading papers, she says, “Oh! this is just good preaching.” Secondly, I like the MESSENGER for the meek and humble spirit of its contributors; and, thirdly, for its Church news, revivals, notes of travel, experiences, &c.; and, lastly, for its soundness in doctrine. I would have been sorry to have missed those last numbers containing “Rabshakeh,” and Elder Mitchell’s “Secret Societies.” I think we need more on the same subjects, from brethren who are competent and can write in the same spirit manifested in those articles. The increase in the Tennessee Association for 1882, was 140.

JOHN B. J. BRICKEY.

ATHENS, GA., February 21, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—The brethren all seemed well pleased with the MESSENGER, and wish you great success in your labor of love. I feel that you and dear Elder Mitchell are doing a great deal; not for the conversion of the world, but for the comfort of such as the Lord converts. For we read that “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” And I am glad it is so perfect in every respect that it does not need the assistance of poor, puny man in any way, but will certainly prove effectual in finding, under the guidance of our heavenly Father, all the heirs of promise, as in the case of Jacob, and leading them about and instructing them, until fully converted and saved with an everlasting salvation. To all such the gospel, as contended for by you, beloved editors, is the power of God. \* \* \* \* In conclusion I would say, in the language of a dear brother to me: “I feel sad over the declension of Zion.”

Yours in hope, love and fellowship,

F. M. McCLEROY.

JONES’ PRAIRIE, TEXAS, February 20, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I have not been as punctual as I should have been in remitting for the MESSENGER, but when I tell you that my poor heart has been almost crushed to ruin since I wrote you, you will pardon me. On the night of the 10th of February, 1883, my dear wife left me in this sin-smitten and sorrowful world, with four little children. But, thank God! we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Yet it nearly kills me to have to give her up! Dear brethren, I have never seen you, and never expect to in this world; but I sometimes have a little hope that your God is my God; so that if you can find in your hearts to pray for your least brother, if one at all, please remember me when it goes well with you.

Your unworthy brother,

DAVID HART.

## OBITUARIES.

## ELDER E. P. BLACKSHEAR.

Elder BLACKSHEAR was born February 13th, 1828, and fell dead January 10th, 1883, whilst marrying a couple. He and his wife were baptized together at Beulah Church, Terrell county, Ga., in April, 1858, by Elder James P. Ellis and was ordained to the ministry at the same church by Elders Davis and Hubbard in December, 1873. He had many friends in this part of the country, and was serving three churches at the time of his death. Also, his little daughter died November 29th, 1881; aged 11 years, 6 months and 14 days.

JOHN H. STANALAND.

## MRS. NANCY M'CRARY.

Gone home! Departed this life near Geneva, Ga., our dear mother, Mrs. NANCY McCRARY, on January 6th, 1883; eighty-three years old lacking two days. She was a member of Upatoie Church, Talbot county, Ga.; the widow of the late Deacon Matthew McCrary, and a firm Primitive Baptist of unwavering faith. She was prompt in attending her church meetings as long as she was able to ride, after she got too feeble to walk; and was in every respect a faithful christian, ever ready to lend a helping hand, her house always being a home for Christ's ministers, whom she loved to hear preach the word. She was a good neighbor, especially to the sick; and a self-sacrificing mother, grandmother and stepmother. She had seen much affliction in her earthly pilgrimage, having been bereaved of her husbands and children by death; some of whom were killed in the late war, some dying in Virginia and Alabama, so that nearly all her children and stepchildren went before her. She, therefore, had many ties in the spirit-world, making her ready, willing, waiting, and sometimes impatient for the Lord to call her home. She leaves but two daughters and one stepdaughter of the many she had raised, and grandchildren to mourn our loss; but we mourn not as those without hope. She did not seem to suffer much, but laying her hands across her breast and closing her eyes, she calmly fell asleep in Jesus. Her spirit is with the blessed of God, and her precious body sleeps near her old home in the family burial ground until the Resurrection, when it will arise, and her mortal body shall put on immortality and shall ever be with the Lord. Oh! may the Lord incline our hearts to feel that this sad dispensation is for our good; for we know that he doth not willingly afflict, but for our good; and that

Death is the gate to endless joy,  
And mother had no fear to enter there.

God ever lives and reigns, and may our hearts be inclined to glorify his name that we, too, like our precious mother, shall be ready when God says, "Child thy Father calls thee! Come home!"

Her daughter,

*Butler, Ga., 1883.*

L. R. EDWARDS.

The poetry omitted in this issue for lack of space.—Ed.

## MRS. MARY ANN THOMAS.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord”

Sister MARY ANN THOMAS, wife of W. E. Thomas, of Hampton county, S. C., was the daughter of Bro. John W. Shipes, and was born August 3rd, 1866, and departed this life December 31st, 1882; aged 16 years, 4 months and 28 days. The writer was present when she joined the church at Prince William Primitive Baptist Church, on Saturday, September 18th, 1880, and baptized her the next day. I was called to marry her, December 28th, 1881, and finally was sent for to speak at her grave. As is apparent from the above, she joined the church early in life; she was a very regular attendant, and by the preparation of a kind husband was enabled to continue her prompt attendance after marriage. She was of a gentle and amiable disposition; so dutiful and obedient, with a character so pure—above the price of gold to her husband. She leaves, besides her husband, a father, sisters, brothers, grandfather and grandmother, and many other relatives and friends to mourn the loss of a dutiful daughter and sister and a kind and affectionate wife. And the household of faith feels the loss of a devoted sister, though we mourn not as those who have no hope.

A. J. HARRISON.

## MRS. E. J. DURHAM.

Mrs. E. J. DURHAM, the daughter of J. B. Cooper, departed this life 18th November, 1882, at the residence of her sister, Mrs. J. C. Zinn, of Breckenridge, Stephens county, Texas. She was born in December, 1835, in Pontotoc county, Miss., and was married to her husband, William Durham, in her fourteenth year; was the mother of twelve children, and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, having been baptized into the fellowship of Hopewell Church, Pontotoc, Miss., by Elder C. Maples, and moved to Texas in 1878. I made her acquaintance some two years ago, and found her a consistent Baptist and a widow indeed. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Shiloh, Stephens county, Texas, at our August meeting in 1882, by recommendation, not at that time having received her letter from Hopewell Church, Miss., but received it during her last illness. She requested her sister, Mrs. Zinn, to give it to me, and have it read to the church, which was done. I visited sister Durham during her illness, and found her perfectly resigned, saying, “The will of God be done.” She spoke to me of her hope beyond the grave, frequently making mention of the last sermon she heard preached by Elder T. A. Waldrip, of this place. Sister Durham was here some two years before she found her people, and frequently spoke of the comfort and satisfaction she realized in finding them in this western country. She leaves even children—five sons and two daughters—a father living in Mississippi, one sister—Sister J. C. Zinn, of this place—and one brother, Wm. H. Cooper, of Pontotoc county, Miss., to mourn her loss. Their loss is her eternal gain, and they mourn not as those who have no hope. She was buried in the cemetery at this place, to await the resurrection of the just, when the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

*Breckenridge, Texas, Feb. 14, 1883.*

J. H. MILLER.

## NANCY D. CARR.

Our dear and beloved sister, NANCY D. CARR, daughter of W. A. and V. Carr, was born in Calloway county, Ky., June 24th, 1860, and departed this life 23rd February, 1879: aged 19 years and 29 days. (She moved, in 1876, to Morgan county, Mo., and in 1877 to Rockwall county, Texas. Our dear sister was afflicted many years with consumption, but death came at last as a sweet messenger of rest. We humbly hope that she fell asleep in Jesus—that sleep from which none ever awake to weep. We mourn the loss of our dear sister but must try the best we can to be resigned to the will of God. Dear sister farewell!

Sister, thou wast mild and lovely,  
Gentle as the summer's breeze—  
Pleasant as the air of evening.  
When it floats among the trees.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber,  
Peaceful in the grave so low;  
Thou no more shalt join our number—  
No more thou our songs shalt know.

Yet, again we hope to meet thee,  
When the days of life are fled—  
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee,  
Where no farewell tears are shed.

## WALTER B. CARR—ALLIE ELISABETH CARR.

WALTER B. was born 26th August, 1878, and died 15th June, 1879. ALLIE E. was born 26th November, 1880, and died 15th February, 1881. It seemed hard, indeed, to give them up; but the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. "Bless'd be the name of the Lord!" Unworthily.

*Rockwall, Rockwall Co., Texas.*

JULIA JACKS.

## ISAAH CALDWELL.

Died, in Floyd county, Ga., December, 1882, at his father's residence, of typhoid fever, ISAAH CALDWELL, SON of John Caldwell and Sister Emil Caldwell; aged 33 years and 3 months. Isaiah, when quite young, was afflicted with spasms, from which he suffered many years, partially destroying both his physical and mental powers, thereby becoming an object of pity and special care; but as he advanced in years his health got better, and he was more intelligent and useful in domestic life. "Zedie," as he was piteous and affectionately called by all who knew him, was a good and obedient boy and moral man, and much devoted to his parents—especially to his mother. He loved to attend preaching, and often seemed to be benefited under the influence and power of the gospel of Christ; and though his mind was impaired by affliction as to deprive him of a practical enjoyment of saving grace in this life, yet we believe that he now sleeps in Jesus, and rests from all his labors and afflictions in this sorrowing and suffering world. I would say this to his heart-stricken and suffering parents, brothers and sisters, Cease to mourn; for the God of the whole earth will do right; and that of God's children it may be truly said—

"Ere first I drew this vital breath,  
From nature's prison free,  
Crosses in number, measure, weight,  
Were written, Lord, for me.

"Yet, so comforted and so sustained,  
With dark events I strove—  
But found them, rightly understood,  
All messengers of love."

*Adairsville, Ga., February, 1883.*

F. M. CASEY.

## APPOINTMENTS TO PREACH.

ELD. WILDE C. CLEVELAND, of Thomaston, Ga., will preach, if the Lord willing, at the following places in the Lower Canoochee Association:

On Friday before the third Sunday in May, at Lower Black Creek, near No. 2, C. R. R., Bryan County, Ga., at which point he will be met on Thursday; at Fellowship, Bulloch County, on Saturday; at Upper Black Creek, on Sunday, 3rd; at Ashe's Branch, on Monday; at Spring Grove, Bryan County, on Tuesday; DeLoache's on Wednesday; Lower Lott's Creek, on Thursday; The Lake, on Friday; Rosemary Hill, on Saturday; and at Upper Lott's Creek, on Sunday.

M. F. STUBBS.

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**PLEASE NOTICE.**—In ordering a change of offices, mention both; that to be changed to and that to be changed from. Also, in sending money, always give the office of those for whom it is sent. Those sending at different times for clubs, when money is sent to pay for the club, send all the names and offices again, so the proper credits can be made.—EDS.

**ZION'S LANDMARK.**—A semi-monthly periodical, devoted to the Primitive Baptist cause, by Eld. P. D. GOLD, Wilson, N. C., at \$2.00 per annum.

**THE PRIMITIVE PATHWAY.**—A semi-monthly periodical, devoted to the Primitive Baptist cause, by Eld. J. E. W. HENDERSON, Troy, Ala., at \$1.50 per annum.

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Cures Consumption, Bronchitis, Asthma, Catarrh, Sore Throat, Hoarseness, Shortness of Breath, Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Laryngitis, Influenza, Clergymen's Sore Throat, Whooping Cough, Difficult Breathing.

The only remedy in the world that will cure Consumption and Bronchitis, as thousands will testify.

**READ! READ! READ!**  
"One bottle Brewer's Lung Restorer cured me of Bronchitis in a week." H. G. DAVIS.  
"Brewer's Lung Restorer cured my little daughter of Bronchitis." GEO. F. WING.  
"It has proven a sovereign remedy in my family. Cured my wife." GEO. W. SIMS.  
"Two bottles cured my friend who was almost gone with Consumption." F. T. ABLE.  
"Stopped my Hemorrhages and cured me." HENRY WOOTEN.  
"It is the best medicine in the market." L. W. HUNT.  
"Cured my wife of Bronchitis when every thing else failed." N. C. MUNROE.  
"It is helping me very much." JAS. G. GARDNER.  
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Beware of Imitations.

We are honest in our opinion of this Medicine, and believe that all who testify as to its virtues believe and understand by what they say.

We have placed many articles of merit upon the market, but none with such merit as

Brewer's Lung Restorer

There is not one in a thousand that fails to benefit, and the suffering people knew one-half as much about the Medicine we do, they would hesitate to give a thorough trial.

Some may think too highly endorse us, but we are willing to do stake our reputation (which is on it being the THROAT AND LUNG MEDICINE in the market.

[Signed]  
LAMAR, RANKIN & L.

Vol. 5.

No. 5.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELDER MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

MAY, 1883.

*All Letters, Remittances and Communications, should be addressed to J. R. RESPESS, Butler, Ga.*

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 5.

BUTLER, GA., MAY, 1883.

Vol. 5.

## "THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT."

*Elders Respass and Mitchell:*—Often the question is asked by those inquiring to know the Lord, "How may I know that I am a christian? What are the evidences of the new birth? What is the witness that the Spirit bears with ours that we are the children of God?" I feel like writing a few things in answer to these questions for your readers, if you will allow me, which I hope may be of satisfaction and help to some who love the Lord.

There are a crowd of thoughts rushing into my mind, in response to these questions, a few of which only can I speak about now. And, first, I want to say a word or two for the encouragement of those who feel that they have such a small experience that they fear it is not genuine. I have met those who have said to me, "I fear that I have never met with a change, for I can never remember a time when I did not know that I was a sinner—when I did not feel the plague of my own heart, and desire to be a christian." Some of these say, "I always loved christians, and desired to be like them. I always loved the preaching of the word, and knew the difference between salvation by grace and salvation by works." And then go on to say, "I have never met with any such change as many speak about, and therefore I can not be a christian." And so they go, halting and fearing, perhaps for years, waiting for some great change—they know not what—which never comes, and never will come. Now, for the encouragement of such timid, halting, fearing ones, I desire

to mention some Bible cases of the same kind. Samuel, Jeremiah and John the Baptist were followers of God from childhood. They were born from above as soon as they were born of this life, and one—John the Baptist—leaped at the near presence of the Saviour before he was born. See 1 Sam. iii.; also last verse of first chapter; Jer. i. 5; Luke i. 41. Also, I might perhaps mention Timothy; see 2 Tim. iii. 15. Now, all these could never have told when the birth from above took place with them, and yet they were just as certainly born of God as are any who can tell the exact hour when they were convicted, and the exact hour when they were delivered from their darkness and fear. They were just as certainly born of God as was Paul. Are there any such ones who may read this, who have been saying, "I can not tell the time of my change?" Is it not enough to be as Jeremiah, Samuel and John, since you can not be like Paul? Perhaps if you had Paul's revelations you would need also Paul's thorn in the flesh.

2nd. There is another class of believers who are troubled because they can not tell of as great an experience as others. They read of an experience that seems especially striking and wonderful, and straightway write bitter things against themselves, judging that they can not have had a genuine work of grace wrought in them because they have never met with such wonderful visions and changes of feeling as they read about. Now, for the comfort and strengthening of such as these, I desire to call attention to the fact that of the apostles Paul alone ever tells of such wonderful signs attending the work of grace with him. The other eleven were just called and followed the Lord. None of them in that first experience ever saw such a light as blinded their natural eyes, or heard any audible voice, or afterwards recovered their natural sight. Now, these things are not essential to christian experience. May we not be satisfied to walk with the eleven, if we can not be like Paul in this respect? I meet with scores who love the truth and have felt its power in their hearts and lives, who can not tell dates and times and seasons, in whom the light has shined gently and gradually so that they can not tell

its beginnings or progress; where I meet with one whose experience can be dated at given times, and who can tell on the one hand of such horror of darkness, or on the other of such overwhelming feelings of joy and light. I wish that some of those who have such simple stories to tell, could be encouraged to write them. These would do especial good to others who are just like them. For myself I would say that I can not tell when I first knew that I was a sinner, or began to long to be saved, and my hope in after years sprang up gradually, so that I can hardly tell when I began to hope. Through many years of conflict I at last ceased from my own works and entered into rest. The blind man could only say, "whereas I was once blind, now I see." In order, my fearing brother or sister, to join the choir of the redeemed who hymn the praise of God on earth, singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Lamb, it is only needful to inquire, Can you sing that song? It does not matter whether you went through days or years of hard training to prepare you to sing that song in time and tune or not. It is interesting to hear you tell about that. But after all, the one great question is, Can you sing? Do you know that salvation, *your salvation*, is all of the Lord? Can you say—

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is all, and in all?"

If so, this is enough to stamp you a child of God.

3rd. What are the evidences of the new birth? What is the witness of the Spirit within? "He that is born of God, hath the witness in himself."—1 John v. 10. Let us then see what this witness is. It does not consist in frames and feelings simply. The witness of the Spirit in the heart will produce frames and feelings. There will be feelings of sadness as the Spirit shows us our own depravity, and feelings of gladness as the Spirit shows us of the things of our Lord. But the excitement of the emotions may be, much of it, fleshly, and produced by natural causes; and then again, the degree of feeling, either in one direction or the other, depends much upon the differences of natural temperament in the believer.

So that a state of highly wrought feeling is not the test of being a child of God. Here in this very thing many real believers trouble themselves needlessly. Because they can not speak in as highly colored terms as others, they are tempted to believe theirs is not genuine experience. I suppose that if five hundred people were on shipboard, and all alike passed through a storm and shipwreck and were all saved, we should get five hundred different methods of narration from them. One would occupy a half-hour in telling us the story, and would move us to tears in hearing; while another would be able only to say, We were in danger of death, and were saved by the exertions of others. And yet the first has no more really experienced these things than the other. And this other would have no right to doubt that he was saved from shipwreck because he could not picture the storm, the danger, and the rescue so vividly as others. The true witness of the Spirit likewise is not our vivid state of feeling, but what we have really been taught of God. The first witness of the Spirit in us is a knowledge and conviction of sin. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."—Rom. vii. 9; Isa. vi. 5. This is seen in the light of the holiness of God revealed through his law (Rom. vii. 12.) The second thing is that a sense of condemnation is produced, and that this condemnation is just (Rom. vii. 14; Luke xxiii. 40, 41.) A third witness is that now a cry for mercy arises in the soul. The sinner prays (Luke xxiii. 42; also xviii. 13; Acts ix. 11.) A fourth witness is that this awakened sinner now abhors himself and repents of his sins. It was so with David (see Psalm li.; also Isa. vi. 1-10; Rom. vii., last few verses.) Another witness is that the soul has come to love God, his law and his people. "I will love thee, O Lord."—Psalm xviii. 1. "O how I love thy law!"—Psalm cxix. 97, &c. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." 1 John iv. 14. Growing out of this love, we find in our hearts a desire to be with the people of God. Such a desire as bears fruit in our every day life and conduct (Ruth i. 16, 17.) To a child of God, the ordinances of God's house, all its appoint-

ments and worship, look lovely, and he desires to dwell there all the days of his life (Psalm xxvii. 4.) The true believer feels unworthy of all his privileges—unfit to share in any spiritual blessing. Like the Roman centurion, he feels to say of his Lord, even when he calls upon him most earnestly for help, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof."—Luke vii. 6, 7. And like Peter, he feels to cry, even when receiving tokens of the Master's love and good will, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man."—Luke v. 8. These things are the real evidences of the Spirit's seal upon the heart. These are the fruits of that heavenly life which Jesus gives, and which he is to his people. And out of these things arises joy and peace and all spiritual comfort, when they are sealed to us by the Spirit of truth. And these things, my-doubting, timid brethren, you have in your heart, whether it be sunshine there or not.

If I may bear witness here, I believe that I am more conscious of some of these things when all looks gloomy and I seem far off from God and righteousness, than when I am filled with peace and happiness. But in addition to all these witnesses in the heart, there comes times when we do feel a sense of comfort and rest that can not be put into words. There are times when we know that the Master is present, and has come so near to us that nothing can have power to interfere—when he speaks such sweet words that we can only listen and rest. But these seasons with me are only occasional, and most of my time I have to fall back upon this—that I know that "I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all." And I know that Jesus Christ is every thing to me—"my all, and in all." I do love God, and his truth, and those who bear Jesus' image. But still I can but cry, O that I had more life, more light, more zeal, more of the meek spirit of the dear Saviour!

"O for a closer walk with God,  
A calm and heavenly frame;  
A light to shine upon the road  
That leads me to the Lamb!"

I leave these thoughts with you. May God bless his truth written here, to the good of some one.

As ever, your brother in hope,

Reisterstown, Md.

F. A. CHICK.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, MICH., March, 1883.

*Dear Elder Mitchell:*—The GOSPEL MESSENGER comes to me in order, and I like it very much indeed, and have often thought of your kind invitation to write something for it. I have felt it would be a pleasure to me if I could send some fitly spoken word unto the readers of the MESSENGER, but have feared that perhaps the word was not with me; feeling such a lack of spiritual understanding, and iniquity prevailing against me, so that I often have no word for any one; and also a feeling of backwardness in making myself known unto those who are in one sense strangers to me, and I unto them. The apostle Peter addresses his epistle unto the "strangers scattered abroad," and his salutation unto them was, "Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." Let it be many times increased; not that Peter could give grace or peace, but this was his wish toward them. But it is God who hath said, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and of him it is said, "He giveth more grace." And it is Jesus who said, "My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." And how much we have need of grace—all sustaining, all restraining grace! Assisting grace doesn't do us so very much good. Often we long for such a time as was in the ancient day, when great grace was upon them all; and many times we long for peace—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. So the apostle could say in his greeting, "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." This was unto the strangers scattered abroad. Whether he considered them as strangers in the flesh, or as strangers in the different localities whither they were scattered; like those who confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth—that they have no continuing city here, but seek for one to come; wherefore God is not ashamed

to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. And of this Peter also speaks when he says unto these same strangers, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time; wherein ye greatly rejoice." This must be a source of great rejoicing; though we may be for a season in heaviness through manifold temptations, if need be, for the trial of our faith, which is more precious than gold and silver that perisheth, yet we must rejoice in that, though we are but pilgrims and strangers on the earth, there is so great an inheritance reserved for us—such a pure inheritance, such a lasting one, a city prepared for us by God himself. Surely Peter had knowledge of these strangers when he calls them "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This was the distinguishing characteristic by which he knew them—that they were manifested as those who were called and set apart by the Spirit of God unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for them; brought nigh by the blood of Jesus Christ, although elect or chosen according to the foreknowledge of God, for he knew them—every single one—before the foundation of the world. "And whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." In this same sense were they elect through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Yet there was a time when, as far as we had knowledge of ourselves, we were without hope and without God in the world; being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise; knowing nothing of our election of God—of our being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Though this was the case with us, all the while we knew

nothing of the exceeding great and precious promises, until through sanctification of the Spirit, being called or quickened by the Spirit, we began to see and know indeed that we were without hope and without God in the world. Lost we truly felt we were; the commonwealth of Israel we were truly strangers unto; the inheritance of the saints in light we durst not hope for. All this we were made to feel before it was manifested unto us that we were the very ones for whom all this was prepared. But when the love and mercy of God our Saviour appeared unto us, when the working of regeneration, which was abundantly shed on us through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was given unto us, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy by the blood of the everlasting covenant, we are now brought nigh by the blood of Christ, so that we are no more strangers and pilgrims, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of faith, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. So, though we may be ever so scattered over the face of the earth, yet we are but one building in Christ Jesus, fitly framed together, each one filling the place which the great Master Builder has assigned him, all growing into an holy temple in the Lord; as lively stones, being built up a spiritual house, to offer up spiritual sacrifices well pleasing unto God. Now, all the promises are ours, whereby He has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world. "Ye are not of the world," said the Master, "even as I am not of the world; if ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Then these who are strangers in the world, are not loved by the world; no, for the Saviour himself tells them, "therefore the world hateth you," and his words must prove true. But he says, "it hated me before it hated you." Nor should it be a surprising thing

that we are unknown; the Jewish world knew not their King—God's everlasting Son. So, though we may be unknown to those around us, they know nothing of the "hidden manna" on which we live; nothing of the "white stone," with a new name on it, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it, which is given to them who overcome through faith; this same precious faith, which is also the gift of God; the like precious faith, for the faith of the children of God is alike; there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Whether our earthly place of sojourning be in the warm South, where no doubt they are having spring-time now, or in the cold peninsula of Michigan, where we have scarcely parted with our winter snow, yet I do trust we have but one faith; that we are called and sanctified by the one Spirit of God; and it is this one Spirit which draws the children of God together and makes them known to each other, manifesting that they have all been taught of the Lord, according to that which he hath said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." We may be scattered in different places, yet there is but one God, but one Church of the living God, but one law of the Lord to govern his Church; no matter where our locality is, nor among what nations of the earth we dwell, we are to dwell alone, and not walk after the customs or manners of the nations round about us; but are a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a peculiar people; as strangers, waiting our time when we shall be called home, to that better country, that is an heavenly; for yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not arry.

For strangers into life we come,  
And dying is but going home.

KATE SWARTOUT.

Please say in the GOSPEL MESSENGER that my address is changed from Rutledge, Ga., to Social Circle, Ga. I am well pleased with the MESSENGER, having derived much comfort from its precious pages. May God bless you.

D. F. P. MONTGOMERY.

CHAPEL HILL, TENNESSEE, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—The MESSENGER comes regularly, laden with rich, comforting and instructive matter from the pen of its editors, and correspondents also. If I could write intelligently, I would like to contribute something by way of correspondence to the dear people of God, through your valuable paper, the MESSENGER; but not being competent, I must be content with what the Bible says upon the subject, that "where little is given, but little is required;" and also hope that the brethren and sisters will pardon me for my negligence. Believing that my weakness will be borne with, I will venture a few thoughts in regard to the cause of the lukewarm and almost lifeless condition of our people at present. I give it as my honest opinion, and claim that my belief in the matter is based on the teaching of the Bible, that it is in consequence of the fact that our membership have become so careless in seldom meeting in church conference in order to attend to the things wanting in the house of God. And especially our preachers have been neglected, until well nigh all are worn out and starved out; so that there are but few able to do much preaching. We need not expect prosperity until we return to our first love; repent and do the first works. If we fail to do this, we may expect the candlestick to be removed out of his place quickly (Rev. ii. 4, 5.)

Dear reader, if I live to see Wednesday night of the second week in next April, I will have been trying to preach fifty-one years. I made my first effort in the year 1832, now 1883. I have been a close observer for the last half a century, and do know that our people do not take the same interest in church matters now, that they did when I first became a member with them. If, then, any of the members were absent on church days, it was taken for granted that there was some providential hindrance over which they had no control; but now, if we meet one out of every ten of the entire membership, as a general thing, it is about as many as we look for. The unworthy writer has been trying to preach for the same churches ever since he commenced at the time above named.

calling attention to and insisting upon practical godliness ; in consequence of which I have been called "Missionary," and "Methodist;" and because I held and advocated the doctrine of the means and instrumentalities of God's appointment and using, as seems good in his own way, I have been called "Arminian." But, thank God! none of these things move me.

I will here state that my health has improved, and I hope to be able to travel and preach more than I have done for the last year or two, when spring opens. Brother Respass, we would be much pleased to have you and Brother Rowe visit us again. We enjoyed your company and preaching so much last summer, whilst with us. We would also be much gratified to see and hear Brother Mitchell preach.

Your poor, unworthy brother in tribulation,

JEREMIAH STEPHENS.

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*Dear Brethren* :—Having to write for a change of office, I thought I would give a sketch of my experience, though it is with fear and trembling that I make the attempt—it seems to be so small. I often think why should I call it a hope, but when I reflect that it was pleasing to the Lord to give me that, and no more ; and believing as I do, that what the Lord does is right, I content myself and look to him, and him only, for all things.

When seventeen years old, I left home and joined the army in the service of the Confederate States, and a promise I made to my dear father had a considerable bearing upon my mind ; though I confess I did not regard the promise as I should have done, yet it was with me, to a great extent. I had become a habitual swearer and continued in this course till about nineteen years of age, when, walking through the camps one day, and hearing a young man swear, and seemingly to me the bitterest oaths I ever heard uttered, I made a short stop and cast a glance at him ; and while standing, O, what a horror seized me ! I turned and walked on, but with a feeling I never had before ; a feeling of guilt rested heavily upon

me. I was then enabled for the first time to see myself a naked, guilty culprit before a sin-avenging God; and O, what should I do! And seemingly to add to my troubles, an idea presented itself to my mind. I was facing the enemy, and liable (as I thought) to be cut down in battle any day, and if I should be, what would become of me! I knew myself a great sinner, and if killed in that condition, eternal destruction would be my doom. I determined there to try to pray; but O, how could such a wretch as I was take the name of so great a being as God, in his sin-polluted lips! But notwithstanding, I must try. I hunted a secret place, and tried to pray. When I came to the place, I was afraid to make the attempt, but I could not leave without trying; so I fell down upon my knees and tried, but could find no words for the occasion. What a condition to be placed in! What few words I did utter, seemed to roll off my lips and fall to the ground; not one word seemed to go up. I continued in this condition till the war closed, and I returned home safe, but my troubles followed me, and continued to follow me until July, 1865, when a protracted meeting was going on at a Missionary Baptist church. I attended the meeting every day, and would ask the church to pray for me, for I thought perhaps the Lord would hear their prayers in my behalf and remove the burden from my soul, that I was so anxious to get rid of. But their prayers did not seem to do me any more good than my own had done. O the trouble and anguish of soul! I could think of the many pleasures I had seen; but, alas! they were all gone now. I could find nothing that there was any pleasure in for me. On returning home one evening after services—riding along alone—it seemed that my troubles were more than I could bear; seemed as if I was sinking down—a great mountain on either side, eternal destruction in front, and the enemy in the rear; the mountains began to shake and tremble, and seemed just ready to fall upon me. O the awful doom. All my prayers had availed nothing, but I must try once more so I raised my eyes toward heaven to try, as I thought for the last time. But bless the Lord! as I raised my eyes, I wa

enabled to behold Jesus upon the cross for sinners, and was enabled to embrace him as my Saviour! What a change! one moment upon the brink of destruction, the next moment in the embrace of a loving Jesus! The whole forest seemed to be strung with silver, and I could see the love of God streaming down upon me. That memorable day, that moment, will never be forgotten by me. I have never been enabled yet to express my feelings upon that occasion, but can say that it's better felt than told.

This seems to be a very imperfect sketch of my trials, but it is the best I can do. Since the time I received a free pardon of all my sins, I have been trusting in the merits of a crucified Saviour for eternal life, knowing that there is no worth or merit in me, and that if ever saved, it will be a poor, unworthy sinner saved by grace. So I can here adopt the sentiment of the poet—

“Self-righteous souls on work rely,  
And boast their moral dignity;  
But if I lisp a song of praise,  
Each note must echo, Grace! free grace!”

For Paul says: “By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” I have heard some claim a great deal for having faith; and they seemed to think that a poor, dead sinner can exercise faith; but I must confess, that had it not been for the quickening influence of the Spirit of God, I never would have had any faith in the power and goodness of God. So I am obliged to believe that faith is a gift, as well as grace. O, how beautiful the plan of salvation by grace! Then, self-righteous souls, what will you do? for the apostle says, “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” What will you come with? you can't claim your works; there is no salvation in works. Self-righteousness will not do to come with. Bless the Lord, O my soul! If I am what I hope the good Lord has made me, I can claim a work that will do; a created work,—yes, an ordained work,—a work that God hath ordained, that we should walk in it. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works; not a self-righteous work; no,

but a work that none can or will do unless wrought upon by the power and Spirit of Omnipotence.

Then, brethren, let us be found walking in these works, giving all the honor to the Lord of glory for enabling us to walk in them. How pleasant it is for me—a poor, unworthy sinner—to meditate upon the goodness of God! How merciful he has been to my unrighteousness!

Your brother in Christ, I hope,

Thomaston, Ga.

JAMES G. HUCKABY.

GIBSON STATION, LEE CO., VA., Feb. 25, 1883.

*Eld. Gilbert:—Dear Nephew:—*You write me that you learned through your mother that I had professed religion. Well, to be brief, I can say I hope in Jesus. I can say that the things I once loved I now hate, which is sin; and things I once hated I now love, which are all saints of Jesus Christ. For months after months I was troubled about my future destiny. I would try to do right—live soberly, morally, &c. Self was always diggermost with me. But, my dear sir, I got to that point where I could see no ground on which to stand in the future; and to look back, I had none. I saw man as I was—a poor, helpless creature, and vanity. I could do nothing within myself. I then tried to pray to God to have mercy on me. I saw no other help but by and through him, and him alone. And when I was stricken down in body with the fever, I was worse off in heart and mind. My thoughts were not on my sickness of body, but toward my heavenly Master, asking for mercy. In a few days after I was stricken down, I met with a change. My load of sin left me; and, O my soul! my soul! James, never shall I forget the time or place. I tried to praise God for his goodness and love shed abroad in my heart. I tried to tell all around of his love. I tried to exhort them all to turn to him, and him only, for mercy, until I was compelled to stop, owing to my bodily sickness. I cared but little for this. I wanted to tell of his goodness to me, a poor sinner. And now to look back, it does seem to me I was the worst

sinner on earth. James, permit me to say I have no use for self-righteousness. It is nothing I have done that saved me, if saved at all, but alone the mercy of God through Christ his Son. I have joined no society or church as yet, but feel it impressed as my duty to do so by-and-by. But you may rest assured I will never attach myself to the Methodists. I hear nothing else preached but self-righteousness (you move towards God, and God will come towards you.) I witnessed no such.

I have been brief in this; could I see you, I could talk more than I can write at present. I subscribed for the GOSPEL MESSENGER last November, and got a receipt for the money; received the February number a few days ago. I am well pleased with it. It does me good to read it. My love to your wife, though I have no personal acquaintance with her. Write me when convenient.

Your uncle,

THOMAS S. GIBSON.

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SHELBYVILLE, TENN., February 28, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass*:—In looking through the March number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, I see the name of Elder B. L. Throneberry, of Texas, among your contributors. I read with interest the account he gives of the reason of his hope in Christ, and my poor mind was carried back to my boyhood days, and my distress in regard to the salvation of my poor soul. Well do I remember the sorrow and sadness with which my soul was bowed down at times for five years, often wondering and saying, "O Lord! what shall I do?" I often think that the burden of the mind, under a guilty conscience, on account of sin, is indeed the most wearisome and trying suffering that mortals ever undergo in this life, from which there is no escape or release by any thing they can do. And that the deliverance, when it comes, is the most complete and triumphant of all things under the sun; so sweet and glorious, sudden and unlooked for; coming at a time when the soul is in its greatest distress. It is not astonishing that the soul cries out in sweetest exclamations of joy: "Bless the Lord, O my

soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" Well do I remember the time when first I felt a Saviour's love thrill through my poor heart, with joy unspeakable and full of love. The joy thus received lifts the mind from earth to heaven, and by faith lays hold on Christ as the blessed hope of eternal and never ending glory; and like one of old says—yes sweetly says—"Blessed is the man that putteth his trust in the name of the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." This the christian experience teaches, both as to the deep agony of soul on account of sin, and the joy of heart on receiving the deliverance therefrom, "through the gift of righteousness by faith." April, 1844, Saturday night before the fourth Sunday, marks a period in my history that often comforts me, when my poor mind can call to memory the sweet consolation and comfort of soul, that I first felt when Jesus spoke peace to my troubled mind.

Dear brethren in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ who contribute to the columns of the MESSENGER, remember that the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he would send laborers into his harvest. For more than thirty years, in my feebleness, I have been trying to preach Christ and the Resurrection to poor, dying mortals, and point the poor sinner to Him who meekly said, "The Son of man is not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and in my great weakness I cry to the Lord for mercy, and that he would hasten the time—yea, the set time—to visit Zion with the outpouring of his Spirit and the incoming of his grace.

Dearly beloved Brothers Rowe and Respass, I would be so glad to see you and hear you tell what the Lord has done for us, what he is now doing, and what he will do in the end. The glory and crown he will give to all who love his appearing. I hope Brother Throneberry will write often. I pray God to bless you, my dear brother, in your far away home in the West. Yours in hope of a glorious resurrection,

J. E. FROST.

RIPLEY, MISSISSIPPI, March, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—We read in the Scriptures, of eternal life, and also of natural life; of life in Christ, and life in Adam. When a minister undertakes to show a congregation how this is, but few will be able to comprehend it, and some have therefore thought it unprofitable to undertake these deep points of the doctrine of our God. Adam, we read, was in his first estate blameless before God, but not perfect; nor do we find that he was a fit subject for eternal happiness. Though some believe that if he had not violated God's law he would have been a fit subject for heaven; but this view is not sustained by the Scriptures. I understand and believe that he was the very identical Adam in whom we and all of his descendants had natural life; and when he was first formed of the dust, and when he violated God's law, so then and there did we in Adam violate the law of God, and so we are all sinners. Then in course of time Christ, in whom God gave eternal life for us or all the election of grace, came down from heaven and took upon him our nature, to suffer death for those of God's choice in him before the world was, and certainly therefore before Adam's creation. The God of heaven and earth has so arranged it, that none of the fallen race of Adam shall know him in his grace, come unto, serve and obey him in spirit, except he works in them to will and do according to his will; and therefore those in whom he does not thus work never do his will as his children; but we know that he could and would work in all, if it were his will and according to his purpose so to do. Then those that are lost, are not lost for lack of power in God to save, but because it was not according to his will and purpose to save them. In Adam's transgression no one of his descendants was more guilty than another, but all sinned alike. We read of some of them that were predestinated to eternal life, and of others that were not; and some believe that the devil predestinated the lost to eternal death, but it is nowhere taught in the Bible that the devil predestinated any thing. In Col. i. 16, we are taught that God created all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible;

thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, &c. ; and all things by him, and for him, and in him consist; and if the devil is not in heaven, nor in earth, nor anywhere as above enumerated, then we need have no fear of our being destroyed by him in this world nor the world to come. But we so often meet with him in earth, and see so much of his works in our presence, that we are bound to confess that he is among the people now living. But does he frustrate God's purpose and cause any of God's choice, those to whom He gave eternal life in Christ before time, to lose that eternal life by leading them or having led them into sin? If so, then the angel was deceived when speaking to Joseph and Mary the mother of Jesus, declaring that Christ should save his people from their sins. Now, if the blood of Jesus did not cleanse us from sin, what will ever do it? not our own works, even of righteousness, according to Paul, who says that it was not by our works of righteousness, but by God's grace and purpose. Now, dear reader, be honest if you can, and acknowledge that you cannot save yourself by any means; but Christ died for you, and in his death he saved all for whom God the Father had given him eternal life. Now, dear mourner, wait the Lord's own good time when he shall communicate to you by the revelation of the Spirit, which may come to you as to Paul when he was made to believe in the election of grace to eternal salvation. Don't let blind men deceive you, but give heed to the Holy Spirit, who will teach you right. Do not despair, fearing that you have committed sins too great for God to forgive, for such is not the case; for if God has called you, he has called you to Christ, who says, "Follow me." And let us see what it is to follow him: he was persecuted, and so will we be, and maybe by our friends at that; it was disputed that he was the Son of God, and so will it be, that we are the true followers of Christ; he was denied by Peter, one of his own, and so may we be by our friends; he was crucified, lost his life as a man, and so must his followers die with him. Then, dear children of God, if Christ suffered and died to save us from sin, can we not do as he has taught us—deny ourselves, take

up our cross, and follow him? And can we do it and not go into the water? It may be that you would follow, but do not want to go through the water; if you do, he will not own you, but will deny you. To fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man. Eternal life in Christ—natural life in Adam; two natures—spiritual and natural. When I would do good (spiritual mind), evil is present with me (natural mind.)

Yours in christian love,

T. L. MORTON.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.—Phil. ii. 12.

I am apprised that this text is one upon which there are different views; nor do I doubt but that men often honestly differ in their opinions, for we are at best but frail beings, and differences but more fully manifest our frailty. Therefore we must appeal from the opinions of man to the judgment of God in matters spiritual. The term "work," the first in this text, is one of which much has been said; and now, how shall we speak righteously? Is it to speak that which we think to be right? and many would answer, "yes;" and why? because, I suppose, they would make their thoughts the rule in judgment, being unmindful of Isa. xxxii. 2, of Mat. xvi., the rule given by inspiration of God, which declares that the time would come when they would take the life of the dear saints, and think they were doing God service; believe they were serving God in murdering his saints! But what says the believer in conditional salvation? his theory is, that it does not matter, so you are honest in what you do; and hence those believing in this system of religion apply the text to the world at large, and affirm to sinners (such as are dead in sins) that they are not dead, but alive, and that Christ has died to save them; to make the way "possible and passable," so that they can now save themselves; and thus to say that his blood is shed to no purpose unless the sinner himself makes it efficacious in working out his own salvation. And to say at the same time to them that they are saved by grace, whilst their whole argu-

ment, from first to last, shows that they mean it not by grace, but by works—enforcing the idea by a misuse of the above text. That they must work; that God had done all he is going to do; that Christ had died for them; and then, in a few breaths after, saying that God was still at work, wooing and beseeching sinners by his Spirit to be saved. Has God done all he is going to do? if so, why not so tell it and stop? if he has not done all he is going to do, why say he has? How will a good, honest-hearted person live under such teaching after he has been enabled to sift it? and, dear friend, if you do, never claim again to be a disciple or follower of Christ. Christ did not teach such contradictory doctrines. Those who are following Christ are called christians; and to such, and such only, the text under consideration applies. But let us not leave this “to think so’s,” but turn to the epistle and examine it; because, whilst it is charged to the Primitive Baptists that they want nothing in religion except as the Scriptures teach and authorize it, it should be the case with all, who desire to serve God acceptably. This epistle is addressed to the saints, with the bishops and deacons. Such and all such, are brought to view in the Scriptures as being sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called to be saints in light; and as such, have been saved according to the Scriptures, over eighteen centuries, by the obedience of Christ. No sin, therefore, of the individual can make the meritorious work of Christ for him, of none effect. It stands fast forever. But they are called by the Spirit to the fellowship of Christ and his people, and being thus prepared, are welcomed into the kingdom. There is a time of salvation—not that which Christ wrought out, but that which his children are commanded to work out with fear and trembling, as God works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. As Christ, having delivered his bride and presented her spotless to the Father, so will she ever remain in the eye of Deity. But whilst in the flesh, though called and beholding the kingdom, they have the world, flesh and devil to contend with; and know, as the Scriptures teach, that i

they live after the flesh, they will die; not that they apostatize and finally fall away; oh! no, for that would be to make the obedience of Christ worthless on their part. But to die to their usefulness and enjoyment of the sweets of christianity; for the light in them to become darkness, which would surely burden them heavily. Therefore the apostle would admonish them to deliver themselves therefrom. And though they feel a deep sense of their unfitness and nothingness, and are thereby greatly troubled, yet without it they would be incapacitated to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. And, finally, the reason he works is because God first works in him to do His, and not his own fleshly will.

Yours in tribulation,

J. C. WILLIAMS.

*Kate, Ga.*

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*Brother Respass*:—As I have written an article on the Being and attributes of God as applying to him in an abstract or absolute sense, I wish now to pursue the same subject, and speak of them in a relative sense as evinced in creation, providence and grace.

1. *Creation*.—The psalmist says: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches."—Psalm civ. These are the utterances of a soul deeply penetrated with the subject in its vastness, grandeur, and adaptation in parts to the harmony of the whole and consequent preservation of His creatures. Solomon says: "Every purpose is established by counsel."—Prov. xx. "He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."—Isaiah cxviii. "Known unto him are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. These are a few of the many scriptures of the same import, according to which He determined upon His measures in eternity before time and creation; and what has been manifested, or ever will be, has resulted from those eternal counsels alluded to in the above cited scriptures. As God is wise to perfection, and infinite in power, we can not suppose any new determination or subse-

quent resolves in the eternal mind; therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the divine mind embraced as fully before as after creation, the same in all its parts and properties, both in their elementary principles and in their motions and activities in the many and varied relations they sustain to each other with all the circumstances attending them, with the means applied in time and place in the accomplishment of his purpose in their creation, as he declared the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This created or material world, and the spiritual world may be considered correlative parts of one vast system of his universal government; and in view of the beauty, majesty and grandeur of which, "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."—Job xxxviii. And to behold him in his wisdom, power and goodness, as exhibited in creation, providence and grace, should beget in the beholder emotions of adoring gratitude and veneration throughout all time and the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Having said something about the perfections of God as exhibited in creation, I will refer to the same as recorded in Genesis. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Thus the material world was brought into being which in no sense had a previous existence save in the mind of God, though when created and existing in chaos it embraced universal nature in its elementary principles; for it is said, "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and God said, Let there be light and there was light." Read the remainder of the chapter. Here we see that to every part of creation was imparted symmetry and form, giving to every part a definite and distinctive character, which it has ever since retained, and ever will; for He says, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree, whose seed was in itself, after his kind." And again He said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and

beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so." Thus we see it is one of the inviolable laws of God that all his creatures, in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, produce after their kind and reproduce themselves in a manner peculiar to their distinctive characters. We also see from observation that all animal nature has a principle or instinct given that causes them to occupy the place assigned them on the earth. And for an important purpose God has given all the lower animals a principle of subordination, and the instinct of self-preservation. Thus we behold this material world invested with such beauty, grandeur and harmony in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, that the finite mind can not grasp nor the tongue express. And to heighten the magnificence, the great Builder has given the sun to attend the earth to light and warm it; the moon and stars also he set in the firmament, all of which he assigned their place, so adjusted in their orbits that they have obeyed the unerring laws that govern them from their creation. The psalmist, in view of this, with emotions of joy and admiration gave vent to his feelings in the following strain: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament sheweth his handiwork: day unto day uttereth speech; night unto night sheweth knowledge: their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world: in them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race; his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat hereof." In all this beautiful arrangement we behold the interposition of God, who inspires, moves, directs and governs all nature. Thus we have day and night, time for labor and time for rest; the various seasons, so needful to minister to the necessities of His creatures; the spring, with its attendant blessings; the summer, to warm the earth that her fruits may grow and ripen; the autumn, with the busy throng hoarding away the blessings which grew and matured in the seasons; and winter, to prepare the earth for another crop.

In view of this, can the sane mind conclude that it is the result of chance or accident? Nay, verily; but it is the result of the well adjusted forms and harmonious combinations of universal nature, and challenges the admiration of all intelligent beings; a sense of which is embraced in the language of the psalmist, saying: "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord! and thy saints shall bless thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power."—Psa. cxlv. May the Lord enable us to view him in his wisdom, power and glory.

JAMES WAGNER.

*Dechard, Tenn.*

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#### BRIEF SKETCH OF SULPHUR SPRINGS CHURCH, KY

*Dear Brethren in the Lord:*—In the hope that it may be interesting and profitable to the readers of your excellent magazine, battling as it is for the cause of God's truth, I send you a brief historical sketch of Sulphur Springs Church, Simpson county, Kentucky.

This church was organized in May, 1827, about fifty-six years ago; and as the world is full of creeds, and for an introduction to God's humble poor, the Articles of Faith are presented first.

Constitution of the Baptist Church of Christ at Sulphur Springs, Ky. Article 1. We believe in one only true and living God; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. 2. We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule of faith and practice. 3. We believe in the doctrine of original sin. 4. We believe in the doctrine of election; that God made choice of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. 5. We believe in man's inability to recover himself from the fallen state he is in by nature, of his own free will and ability. 6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them. 7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, converted, regenerated and sanctified by

the Holy Ghost. 8. We believe the saints shall persevere in grace, and never finally fall away. 9. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the subjects; and the true mode of baptism is by immersion. 10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgment. 11. We believe the punishment of the wicked and the joys of the righteous will be eternal. 12. We believe that no minister has a right to the administration of the ordinances, but such as are regularly baptized and called, and set apart by the imposition of hands by a presbytery of the church.

Elder Benjamin Jackson was the first Moderator; and John Hail, Clerk *pro tem.* Elders B. Jackson, Popular Springs Church; William Angel, Whippoorwill Church, Logan county, Ky.; Richard Owen, New Salem Church, Simpson county, Ky., constituted the presbytery. The church petitioned for membership in the Red River Association; was received, and remained but about six years, when, at her request, she was dismissed, and joined the Drake's Creek Association. Elder Isaac Steele was the first minister called to the oversight of the church, and was her pastor until 1862, a period of thirty-five years; and he joined this church in 1855. New Salem Church is now "Two Seed," as are all the churches of the Drake's Creek Association. The candlestick has long been removed from Whippoorwill Church, and a Missionary church now occupies the old grounds. Popular Springs Church went down years ago, having been absorbed by other churches. Bethany and Middle River churches had their candlestick removed years ago. All the above churches are mentioned because they were within a radius of about ten miles of Sulphur Springs Church.

Sulphur Springs was very prosperous until 1834, when, at the May Conference, a motion was made by J. P. Bush, and seconded by H. Mason, "That the church say whether she will approbate her members joining the temperance societies or not." At the Saturday Conference, June 14th, 1834, the church resumed the consideration of the business of yesterday,

and after due deliberation upon the motion of Brother Bush as to whether the church would approbate her members joining temperance societies or not, the church voted "No," by 33 to 20. Upon motion and second, a letter of dismissal was granted to Elder O. H. Morrow and as many others as may apply to the Clerk. Many went off from us under this pretext, but it was afterwards manifested that the 7th Article of Faith was the real cause. Elder Morrow immediately organized a Missionary Baptist church in a few yards of the old church, and has ever since been the most active enemy of the Primitive Baptists. It is a little remarkable that O. H. Morrow is the only one ever ordained to the ministry by Sulphur Springs Church, though its membership has been generally large. In 1856, at July Conference, the church considered the propriety of withdrawing from the Drake's Creek Association on account of the "Two Seed" doctrine; and at August Conference agreed to grant letters of dismissal to any member that might wish it, on account of said withdrawal. In August, 1859, Bro. Enoch Powell and wife asked for letters, which were granted; but the dear old brother is still with us, never having taken his letter. He joined by experience in October, 1833, and has been a faithful member. In August, 1859, the church joined the Stone's River Association and has since remained with that body. In August, 1863, Elder Joseph Pitt, now a very old man, was called to the care of the church. About the year 1870, Elder M. Hodges was called to serve the church. The dear old father still lives, but is too feeble to preach, but has been a minister of remarkable ability. The next pastor was Elder J. B. Stephens, of Nashville, Tenn., whose labors the Lord blessed; the Lord adding at intervals quite a number of active, useful members. And in 1876, an excellent house was built, the membership being now about 100. Elder Stephens, owing to the practice of medicine absorbing his time, did not attend the church regularly the last few years; and last fall, Elder J. E. Frost was called to the care of the church.

Yours in hope,

J. W. STOWERS.

*Simpson County, Ky., 1883.*

We would like similar sketches to the above, of other old Primitive Baptist churches.—ED.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel! thou that leadest Joseph like a flock.  
Psalm lxxx.

The psalmist had just been lamenting the deplorable condition of Israel, which he could not have done had he been destitute of love for her. The fact that we are concerned for the welfare of God's people is proof that he has not given us over to hardness of heart. The heathen had come into God's inheritance, which they never could have done had Israel watched and prayed. All watching and no praying will not keep the enemy out of the camp; nor will all praying and no watching do it. God has commanded both, and hence both are required of us; and therefore we are to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. The spirit is willing to serve God, but the flesh is weak and apt to enter into temptation, and hence it is impossible for us to be too watchful. No doubt but that the watchmen had become carnal and sleepy upon the wall, and slow to see the wrongs of Israel, and more slow to tell her of them. An Israelite might have worn a gold ring, or golden ear-bobs, or gaudy apparel, which the Scriptures forbade, and the law of love, meekness and humility written in our hearts forbid. Israel was much weaker, probably, than any other nation, and could not be safe and prosperous on God's common blessings only, but needed his special ones. All her strength was in God, but she did not remember that truth long at a time; and when given riches, which she ought to have sacrificed to him, she forgot they were special favors, but came by chance; and hence she went after her lovers, and forgot God, and was no longer glad when they said unto her, Let us go up to the house of God. The service of God could no longer be attended now, for they did not have time; and if they did have time, did not have the heart. They could not have gone to church willingly on Saturday, and not on Sunday if it had been a little rainy. She would not have been willing to hear the weak preach, but only the ablest could have entertained her; and the Bible would have been dry and stale, though a novel or newspaper might have been entertaining. Thus God gave them over into the hand

of the heathen, and their old oppressors came upon them; the old diseases break out again, the old weakness that they thought was overcome; and they are oppressed very sorely, but are too proud and stubborn to pray, and could not were they to try; they have become destitute of faith, and can not walk either by faith or sight. In this condition they begin to dig in the earth for a remedy; the gloomy man begins to jest and joke, or do something worse, to feel better; but this is going down into Egypt for help, and God says woe unto them that go down into Egypt for help; and that the horse is a vain thing for safety, neither can he deliver any by his great strength. It is true, he may run fast, and seemingly carry us from our pursuers, but when the most aud worst of our enemies are internal, safety is only of the Lord. They row hard to get to land, and why do they not awake Jesus, who is near by, and ready to come at a call? but then the call must be of the very humblest kind, and that they have not; they fret and tug at the oars, and row as if to say, We will not give up; we will be men, and not whiners. But the storm rages higher, death or destruction stares them in the face, so that their pride and manhood all give way, and they come humbly to the feet of Jesus, submissively begging him to save them; and immediately he rebukes the waves, and there is a calm! So David prays to God, and no doubt his prayer was the sentiment of Israel. God had caused them to repent by causing godly sorrow, which wrought it. They begin to cast away their idols—first of wood and stone, and then of iron and brass, and lastly of silver and gold. Behold, what clearing of ourselves! what vehement desire! what zeal is wrought in our heart for God! We have put away our adulteries and returned unto our first husband, who, she says, shall lie all night betwixt her breasts. To serve him now is her chief delight; he is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand; his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven; his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely (Song v. 10.) She now loves her husband, and delights in his law, and is glad to go up to Jerusa-

lem, and feels to say, Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember not Jerusalem above my chief joy; if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces (Psalms.) Then, like Jonah, we pay our vows and offer the best of the sheep and fattest cattle. We are willing to go to church on Monday even; not only willing, but anxious; the Bible and christian company are most entertaining of all things; we are not ashamed of Jesus, nor afraid to tell our experience; in fact, we are not afraid of any thing, except it is to do wrong—and of that we are exceedingly fearful, so that our heart says, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God! We then are patient in tribulation; and if afflicted, wonder why we are not doubly so, why we have not two diseases instead of one. We wonder and are astonished at his great mercies, and like the poor woman who had nothing but bread, are disposed to say, "What! all this bread and Jesus too!"

I feel like I am not through with the subject, but will close for the present.

Yours in hope,

*Kinston, N. C.*

I. J. TAYLOR.

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### "THOU KNOWEST MY PATH."

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From human eyes 'tis better to conceal  
 Much that I suffer, much I hourly feel;  
 But, O, this thought doth tranquilize and heal—  
 All, all is known to Thee.

Each secret conflict with indwelling sin,  
 Each sickening fear I ne'er the prize shall win,  
 Each pang from irritation, turmoil, din—  
 All, all is known to Thee.

When in the morning, unrefreshed, I wake,  
 Or in the night but little sleep can take,  
 This brief appeal submissively I make—  
 All, all is known to Thee.

Nay, all by Thee is ordered, chosen, planned;  
 Each drop that fills my daily cup, Thy hand  
 Prescribes for ills none else can understand—  
 All, all is known to Thee.

## THE WAY BY WHICH GOD SAVES SINNERS.

*Dear Brethren in Christ:*—I take the present opportunity to write you a few lines on the way by which God saves sinners. Of all themes in the world that of salvation by grace is the most pleasing and comforting to those born of the Spirit of God. We have abundant testimony in the Scriptures that God has but one way of saving sinners—and that is, by his grace. There never has been, nor ever will be, any sinner saved for any worth or merit in them; but will only be permitted to enjoy heaven through the imputed righteousness of Christ. Paul says, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,” and certainly none need misconstrue the language of the inspired servant of the Lord. If, then, it is a gift, it cost the receiver nothing; he gave nothing in exchange for it. Paul says to the church at Rome, “If by grace, it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no more of grace; otherwise works are no more works.” Again, he says to the Ephesians, “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and has raised us up 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 towards us in Christ Jesus; for by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” Many other scriptures might be mentioned, but we forbear, as these are sufficient to prove the position if there were no others in the Bible. It is clear to my mind that there is nothing in man to recommend him to the favor of God—being represented in scripture as “full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores, from his feet even unto the crown of his head;” “there is no soundness in him;” “the way of peace he has not known, and the fear of God is not before his eyes.” And yet further he is also represented as being dead in trespasses and in sins; and as David

declares, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Can a man that has trampled the law so often under his unhallowed feet, and is so polluted in sin, do any thing pleasing in the sight of God? Nay, verily! In order to work out his own eternal salvation, he must have kept the law in all its demands; he must not have committed one sin; he must not think, nor have thought, one foolish or sinful thought; for says the apostle, "If they keep the law in every particular, and yet offend in one point, they are guilty of the whole." Is man capable of fulfilling the law in all its demands? he certainly is not; for he is defiled with sin and depraved in every part, and it is impossible for him to reinstate himself from what he has already done; he can't, therefore, take refuge under the law, for it demands a full and complete satisfaction—exacting "that thou owest." The carnal mind is enmity against God; not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. And "if there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." This language clearly implies that there was not a law given that could give life. Again, "if by the deeds of the law, then is Christ dead in vain." But his coming into the world, his sufferings, death and resurrertion, were not in vain; for God is wise, and doeth all things well. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Another argument is that man is dead in trespasses and in sins, is totally depraved, and incapable of performing any spiritual act; because he can not perform spiritual acts without spiritual life. "They that worship him (God) must worship him in spirit and in truth."

I often hear it said in this country, that it is left entirely with man to make the start for heaven; that if you will do your part, God will save you. But according to that system, the whole human family would be lost—both adult and infant; because man has neither the will nor ability to do any thing of the kind until God gives it to him; he must have life, as life must always precede action. The unregenerate has natural life, and can only do natural things; he has natural eyes

and ears, and can see and understand natural things. All rational men know, and are willing to admit, that the infant can't do any thing to save itself—which is then a concession that the one way God has to save sinners is right, or else he must devise two plans of salvation. In addition to his "works" plan to save the adult, he must have a "grace" plan to save the infant. But the Bible teaches but one plan of salvation which saves both the infant and adult. Jesus says, "I am the way (not ways), the truth, and the life;" and "I am the door (not doors); by me if any man enter he shall be saved."

There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved but Christ, and him crucified. Paul says, "When I came to you, I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus and him crucified." Let us see if the Bible teaches who begins the work. Paul says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun the good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Here the servant of the Lord evidently settles a very important question—*i. e.*, that he that begins the good work must perform the work until the day of Jesus Christ. If man begins it, he must perform the balance. We will quote further from the same writer, who says, "It is God that worketh in you, *both to will and to do*, of his good pleasure;" and "you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins. To quicken means to make alive. The prophet Jeremiah says "The Lord hath appeared unto me of old, saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." And Paul to Hebrews, "Being made perfect, he (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him;" and again, "he (Jesus) is the author and finisher of our faith;" and "no man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." And, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

*Fate, Texas.*

F. P. CHANDLER.

[*Continued.*]

## FAITH.

The Bible says a great deal about Faith. It is clearly and accurately defined. Its source is definitely pointed out. Its purposes and relations in the plan of redemption are minutely described. The miraculous achievements of many of the ancient possessors of it are enumerated. Yet, in nature, how ignorant are we of its true meaning, as we read of it in the Sacred Volume! Natural talent, or acquired scholarship, can not unfold to us its true import.

We are naturally led into the view that faith is a voluntary act of the mind, produced by external existing facts; a knowledge of these facts being received through the medium of the senses, forming in the mind an idea, which we call faith. Such a faith is the production of education. For instance, we look around us and behold the charming field of nature. We know by the common law of reason, that the existence of creatures, or things created, proves the existence of a Creator. We read the Bible, and become acquainted with the historical facts therein related. We view the history of the world as it has been since the occurrence of scriptural events, and behold the spread of gospel light and its benefits to mankind, and are thus led to have faith in the authenticity of God's written word.

This *acquired* faith may give us many correct ideas of God's works as seen in his Creation, and of our moral obligations to him as a Creator. But while this is true, we can know nothing, by this means alone, of His infinite mercy and love. We can not thus learn the true mission of our Saviour, or behold the rapturous beauties of the story of the Cross. A very different kind of faith is needed to give one correct views of these things. Paul says: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."—Heb. xi. 1. Let us pause to examine this text a moment. "Things hoped for." To hope for things is to desire and expect them. We may desire things ever so greatly, but can not expect them without some *evidence* upon which to predicate our

expectations. The text tells us that *faith* is the *substance* and the *evidence* of those things which are hoped for. How do we come into possession of this evidence, or faith? "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Then these spiritual things can not be pictured to the eye; through this medium we can not behold their beauties. The story is such that the ear can not receive and appreciate its sweetness. How, then, do we receive the evidence of them? "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. ii. 10.

Jesus, in his prayer, cried: "I thank thee, O Father, God of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid *these things* from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Then the evidence of things not seen, is the revelation which God gives of them—and Paul says this is *faith*. We find faith enumerated as one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If he has not the Spirit, he can not bear or produce the fruits of the Spirit. Hence man, unregenerated, can not have faith in Christ. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. But some one asks, "Can not any one have faith?" Not unless he has the Spirit; and if he has the Spirit, he is a true believer, entitled to all the promises which God has made to such as have faith in Him.

What a blessed state it is to be in possession of *faith*! Of such Jesus says: "He that heareth my word, and *believeth* on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. Now, since without faith it is impossible to please God, and since to have faith is to be in possession of everlasting life, it is evident to all candid, properly taught minds that faith must precede all good and acceptable works. "Where is boasting then?" says Paul. "It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; *but by the law of FAITH*."—Rom. iii. 27.

A law of works would never exclude boasting. The subjects of such a law would ever be disposed to inquire: "In thy name have we not cast out devils and done many wonderful works?" They would be seen standing haughtily boasting of their superiority over others. But the law of faith, or, in other words, "the law of the spirit of life in Christ," excludes all boasting, and causes its subjects to look out of self up to the source of faith.

Again, by a system of works, some might fall short of the requirements and miss the promise. But Paul tells us: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."—Rom. iv. 16.

Filled with this blessed faith, the saint can look beyond this evil world to one free from sin and sorrow.

"O, that home of the soul! in my visions and dreams,  
Its bright jasper walls I can see;  
And sometimes but thinly the veil intervenes  
Between that fair city and *me*."

JOHN R. DAILY.

Circleville, Ind., 1883.

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*Dear Brethren in the Ever Blessed Gospel of Christ Jesus:—*  
The GOSPEL MESSENGER is truly worthy of its title. I have read it carefully the past year; and it seems to be entirely free from the many *isms* that are at this time troubling the Zion of our God; and earnestly contending for the doctrine and faith of the apostles. I did not design becoming a permanent subscriber for the MESSENGER, but you will find herein one dollar for the present year. And I hope you may continue to be supported by the grace of God in contending for the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Your brother in hope, PETER L. BRANSTETTER.

Curryville, Mo., Feb. 26, 1883.

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors.

## WHAT IS PREACHING FOR?

A letter bearing date September, 1882, has recently been handed us by Deacon J. R. Thompson, of Columbus, Ga., received from his niece, Mrs. Burmingham, in Texas, in which are several questions on various points of the gospel; requesting, also, that if he should not feel inclined to answer them, that he get some of our ministers to do so. At the request of our brother, we will try to notice some of the points presented, though we regard Brother Thompson as being fully competent to answer these questions, and perhaps more satisfactorily to his niece than we can.

From the questions presented by Mrs. Burmingham, and the deep concern she manifests to know the truth, we are led to believe that she is a subject of saving grace, and that the Lord has given her a "new heart and put a right spirit within her," as he hath graciously promised he would do to his chosen and redeemed people. And He hath also promised by firm decree, that "I will put my Spirit within you, and *cause you* to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."—Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

Believing, therefore, that our strange friend is being led by the Spirit of the Lord, we the more readily and cheerfully attempt to comply with her request; and hope that we also may be led by the same Spirit in writing, that has prompted her in asking information.

The first question is, "What is preaching for?" And then our querist goes on to say, that "Some think there is no need of preaching if it is not to save sinners from hell, or to make them repent and believe. 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they

hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?"—Rom. x.

With regard to the necessity and use of preaching the gospel of the Son of God, whether we be able to give a satisfactory answer or not, if we could give no other reason than that God hath ordained and commanded that it shall be preached, it ought to be sufficient to silence all cavil upon the subject. And without, at this moment, attempting to solve or explain either the use or blessed results of preaching faithfully in the name of Jesus, we call attention to this point: that God has commanded it, and it is the duty of those whom he has commanded to preach the preaching he bids them, without asking its use, or being very curious or desirous to know what will be accomplished by it. The command of God to Jonah, as it came unto him the *second time*, was: "Arise and go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." This was sufficient authority to preach, whether the people would hear or whether they would forbear. What the Lord commands, it is right to observe and obey, without asking the reasons for such and such command. The instructions of the mother of Jesus to the servants at the wedding in Cana of Galilee were, "Whatsoever he saith unto thee, do it." It is God's right to command his servants, and it is their duty to observe and obey; and for this reason he works in them the spirit and principle of obedience, "both to will and to do."

That God hath chosen some of his servants to preach the gospel, and commanded and prepared them for it, can not be successfully controverted. The Lord Jesus Christ himself—though he is the sum and substance of the gospel of the grace of God—was chosen and anointed of God to "preach righteousness in the great congregation" of the Lord; and for this purpose he saith by the prophet: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, to proclaim liberty unto the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. lxi. 1. This text and its connection very clearly gives a

reason for preaching; and the inspired apostles affirm that the Lord Jesus "commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."—Acts x. 42.

Not only has the Lord commanded that his gospel be preached, but he has irrevocably decreed that it *shall* be done "in all the world, for a witness unto all nations."—Mat. xxiv. 14.

The gospel, as preached by those whom the Lord sends in his name, is a faithful witness to testify what the Lord hath done in the salvation of sinners, as well as a witness to manifest the character of friends or enemies of our blessed Lord. It is a most wonderful detector of character, and wherever it is faithfully preached, it finds out and exposes its own enemies and makes manifest its own friends. "Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one, we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other, the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"—2 Cor. ii. 12.

No one is sufficient for these things except God alone. He only, knoweth the hearts of all men; and he only, can make manifest the counsels of men's hearts by the faithful description given of them in the preaching of the word of the Lord. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," whether they are yet in nature's night, or whether they be basking in the glorious light of gospel truth. Hence by preaching he makes manifest "the savor of his knowledge in every place" that he is pleased to send his ministers to preach.

But it may be proper here to say a few things as touching the scriptural question, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?"

It is utterly impossible for any man to preach the gospel of the grace of God except he is sent by the Lord himself. Men may send men to preach something that they call the gospel; but it is not the gospel of God, except the King in Zion sends

men of his own choosing and of his own preparing. And when he calls and sends, he goes before them by his Spirit to prepare those to whom he sends to hear and receive the message he sends for them. At one time he sent forth seventy; two and two, before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come."—Luke x. 1. These seventy gospel ministers went forth as sent by the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and went to the very cities and places designated by him, preaching what he bid them. They returned from their tour with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." We see, therefore, that the preaching by those whom the Lord sends in his own name, without the intervention of any humanly devised means, always accomplishes just what the Lord designs shall be accomplished by it.

The apostle of Christ says by inspiration: "Christ *sent* me to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."—1 Cor. i. 17. Here is positive testimony that the Lord sends men to preach, and tells them what they must preach, and where they must go.

But lest we make this article too lengthy, we will now speak a little as to what is accomplished by the preaching which the Lord sends. One of the Lord's prophets testifies that the word of the Lord shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he doth please, and prosper in the thing whereunto he doth send it." And another inspired writer embodies all the gifts of the ministry which Christ has deposited in his Church, and says they are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. iv. 12. Not one word is said in all this connection about ungodly sinners being saved from endless torments by preaching, nor of their dying and being lost forever if men do not send men to preach to them, nor of their being finally damned forever if they refuse and reject the preaching which men shall send them. But still there is a use for gospel preaching. It is as food to the hungry, who are hungering after a righteousness which he has been brought

to know is not found in all the works of men; it is as water to the thirsty soul, who, like the wounded hart, is thirsty after God.

The pleasure of the Lord is in the preaching of his word, and his pleasure is accomplished by it. Though it be a stumbling block to the self-righteous, or foolishness to the learned of the world, it is to those whom God hath called by his Spirit, "Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God." "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;" not to make believers out of unbelievers, but to save those who have already believed. By the faithful preaching of the gospel, believers in Christ are saved from being "carried away with every wind of doctrine by the sleight and cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."—Eph. iv. 14. This is one great and glorious purpose of God for the preaching of his blessed gospel. It saves believers from many errors in doctrine and practice. It is "for the perfecting of the saints; for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Many of the saints of God are very weak and imperfect as to their views and understanding of the doctrine and order of the gospel. They need teaching in the things of the kingdom of Christ. Hence one of the apostles was impressed by the Spirit of Christ to pray, night and day, for the weak and afflicted church of God at Thessalonica, that he might be permitted to see their face, and by preaching the gospel of God to them, "perfect that which was *lacking* in their faith." 1 Thess. iii. 10.

However strong in the faith of the gospel any believer may be, or however gifted and enlarged may now be his understanding of the mystery of Christ, yet, can not he call to mind the time of his great ignorance in almost every point of gospel truth and gospel order? He needed instruction, and to have the way of the Lord expounded to him more perfectly, in order to "perfect that which was lacking in his faith." Preaching does not beget nor impart, the germ nor principle of faith in the soul, but it feeds, strengthens and

velops it, because it is already there. Often it may be that he has the principle and grace of faith in Christ begotten within him by the Spirit of the Lord, or as a fruit of the Spirit; but neither he, nor any other living man, knows that it is there—or if he knows that there has been something done for him, and something wrought within him, yet he does not know what it is, nor how, nor by whom it was done. This he needs to be told by the preaching of the gospel. The Ethiopian eunuch had this grace of faith within him, and it caused him to feel a deep interest in reading the Scriptures on his return from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship. He was a proper subject for gospel teaching, and the Lord knew that his soul was thirsting for instruction in what he was then reading in the Scriptures. These longings, which had been produced by the effectual work of the Spirit, were not to be disappointed, and hence a minister was dispatched at once to a certain place, and arrived at the very moment to hear this hungry child of grace read a text for him; and immediately, without any previous expectation or study of his text for that occasion, "he preached unto him Jesus," and hereby his faith and love were made manifest both to himself and to Philip, who was the preacher on this occasion. Acts viii. 35.

We see, therefore, that unless we hear preaching,—such as the Lord sends,—there is something lacking in our faith, which nothing else can supply. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "Therein the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith." Rom. i. 16, 17. "All men have not faith," and therefore all men are not capacitated to have the righteousness of God revealed to them as it is presented in the gospel of the Son of God. "It is revealed from faith to faith;" that is, from one degree of faith to another and another, and thus perfecting that which is lacking in the faith of believers.

Can we not see from this standpoint that there is great use for pure, unadulterated gospel preaching in this day? Is it not a day of darkness and ignorance, even among many, who,

we hope, are subjects of saving grace? They are led away by the error of the wicked, and have fallen from their steadfast adherence to the faith of Christ. Gospel preaching "warns unruly" christians, comforts the feeble-minded, and supports and strengthens the weak. It lifts up the hands of faith and hope that hang down, and strengthens the feeble knees, by presenting the great love of God, the righteousness of Christ, and the blessed promises of the gospel to the poor and needy. It reproves the erring child of God, rebukes the rash, exhorts the slothful, and admonishes all who "believe in God to be careful to maintain good works."—Titus iii. It collects and calls the family and household of faith together in the bonds of love and fellowship in the Church of Christ, where they are required to observe the ordinances, obey the laws, and honor their King and Saviour. Is there not a need for preaching?—M.

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WARTRACE, TENNESSEE, March 22, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Do you believe in Thirty Day Baptists? What I mean by the term is in reference to the custom Baptists have of meeting together once a month. I know primitive christians did not do that way, but met on the first day of the week for worship. Would you please give us a piece on that subject. The brethren of our church (Bethlehem) are well. Hope you will be able to pay us a visit soon. I will continue to work for the MESSENGER, and would be glad to see it in the home of every Baptist.

Your brother,

JOHN B. BRAMBLETT.

As to the custom of assembling monthly for worship, there is nothing laid down in the Scriptures; but, as Brother Bramblett says, the custom in primitive days seems to have been weekly meetings; and we have no doubt but that it would be much better now for the brotherhood to assemble weekly for worship, even if there was no preacher present. We have felt for many years that such a course would greatly promote our spiritual growth and prosperity. It is true, there are ob-

tacles in the way of many; some are so far from the places of worship that it is a great labor even to meet once a month, however anxious they may be to do so; and some even, are so far that they can't meet at all. Sister Dawson, in New Mexico, wrote us that she went thirty miles to see the nearest baptist to her that she knew of, and that she had not heard a gospel sermon in several years. Then some are too old and infirm, and have no means of getting to meeting; and others are able and disposed to attend other meetings where they can hear the gospel preached, which is a good thing. But there are generally many unable to get to any other place of worship except their own, and to these such weekly meetings would be a great privilege and blessing, whether held at the church house or at private houses of such as were too infirm to get to meeting. If there was no preacher present, or even if there was, the time could be spent in reading the Scriptures, singing, praying, and in spiritual conversation. It would be good for the children to be present. We remember the impression made on our mind by the words and fatherly admonitions given the young people and children in our youth, by a good deacon, long since at rest. We couldn't understand the preachers, but we could understand him. Such meetings would promote christian unity, sympathy, love and fellowship; and what better growth in spirit can there be than such as that? By the blessing of God, they would be real love-feasts. Jude speaks of feasts of charity amongst primitive christians; feasts to which all no doubt contributed—if nothing else, by their presence. And if no able sermon should be amongst the contributions, there might at least be a dinner of herbs, with love; some humble sister might tell her experience, her trials, joys and sorrows; some word fitly spoken by a contrite heart might infuse joy into many hearts. Simple diet is needed now in some places more than the stalled ox; simple food, plainly dressed, conduces often to health—especially to such as may have been pampered by excess of dainties, and roast meat. We do not mean as an exclusive diet, but for health, and in restraint of excess. We may go to excess in any thing

—even in religion—so that our good may be evil spoken of. Israel once became idolatrous over the brazen serpent, so that Hezekiah had it destroyed; yet it had been made by God's command, and for a good purpose—but not to be worshiped. Customs, forms, the Church and doctrine may be worshiped, and the creature idolatrously served more than the Creator. We have feared that in some places there was an excess of visiting preachers, and yet we believe that some go ordered of the Lord. But the other extreme is to be guarded against. We may indulge sloth and indolence until “poverty and want shall come as an armed man.” Too much eating of either strong or simple diet, will enfeeble rather than nourish and strengthen; and so will too little. Moderation is therefore required. We are told to “be sober.” There is now a great deal of religious intoxication, and the people of God should be careful not to encourage it. With many of us, it is a time of sore trial; there is a famine in the land of Bethlehem, and there may be danger of doing as Elimelech and Naomi did in a famine—leaving Bethlehem, the land of bread and promise, and going to Moab, the land of the flesh. May we have grace to endure, as Job, not departing from the Lord to either extreme. If we drink—spiritually, we mean—let it be because of our “often infirmities,” to nourish and strengthen, and not to inebriate and inflame the flesh, lifting it up in Pharisaical pride. Then the little wine will conduce to our health, humbling us with the consciousness that we are weaker than our brother having no such need, and therefore will be at his feet esteeming him better than ourself; and he also will be at our feet, esteeming our zeal as God-given and himself as comparatively worthless. All things should be done decently and in order; and, as many as are thus minded, let them meet together weekly, or as often as they can.

We are meeting twice a month at Butler now, and look forward to the day when many of our little few will meet some part of the day each Sunday. The strong, bearing with the weak, will meet with them—if not for their own gratification, for that of their brethren. Of ourself we may speak

and say we have sought too much our own pleasure in some things religiously; we may give, expecting to be repaid; we may be willing to talk with those who can talk to us; but to impart and not receive, to talk and give to those unable to repay and impart to us, is often a task hard to perform. Dear Elder Buie, whose obituary is in this issue of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, staid once several weeks at our house; and, like all blind persons, he asked a great many questions, it being the only way they have of finding out any thing; and sometimes, in our selfishness, we would forget, and growing weary, leave him alone. One day we walked to the field—not “the field that God had blessed,” for we were in that whilst denying ourself for his comfort, but the field of “thorns and thistles”; and going out, we said to our oldest daughter, “Go in and talk to Brother Buie, for it will be a pleasure to him, and you will be giving something to one who can not repay, but can only be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” Thus the strong and the weak would be blessed at such meetings, and, growing in grace, realize that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

We trust God is in this matter with Brother Bramblett, and with others who have written us—amongst them Bro. J. W. Harvey, of Big Harpeth Church, Tennessee. The notion that a church can't meet for worship in the absence of a minister, is a wrong one. We should speak often one to another, especially in these days, seeing they are evil. We need to give and receive encouragement one from another, and thus be mutually edified in the Lord. There are many christians of the class to whom Elder Chick has so fitly written in this issue, who need encouragement, and for whom we have faith, as Peter had for the cripple at the “Beautiful” gate; and who need, as he did, the lifting up upon their feet by our faith for them, and countenance; who, with our help, would walk and run to the temple of God in discharge of duty.—R.

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ELDER LIVELY'S article is crowded out of this issue. It will be in the June number.

## TO CHILDREN.

*Dear Children:*—Although we now write you in the month of March, it will not appear in the GOSPEL MESSENGER to be read by you until our May number is published and sent forth.

The spring season is generally very pleasant and beautiful, especially the month of May. Sweet roses and flowers appear and fill the eye with delight, and the air with pleasant odors and perfumes; the little birds chirp and sing merrily, and all things give signs of happiness, life and pleasure. Children also, are generally at this season more gay and cheerful.

But in the midst of the beauties, gayeties and pleasures which this season inspires within us, would it not be well for us to think, every day, from whom all those beauties come? Who has given us spring, summer, or winter? Who hath caused the earth to bring forth these beautiful flowers? Who is it that has sent forth “rain, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness”? It is God our Maker. Soon after the Flood, when every man, woman and child who were then in the world were drowned, except eight persons, God made known his purpose to Noah, and promised that “while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

Get your Bible, and read the 8th chapter of Genesis, and you will find the above promise there recorded, in the last verse of that chapter.

God’s word is true, and his promises are all faithfully performed, whether they relate to natural things, which we, as natural men, women and children, can see, hear, know and enjoy; or to heavenly and spiritual things, which are given by his Holy Spirit in the name, and for the sake of, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Inspired writers often speak in the Scriptures to the instruction and comfort of christians by the use of natural things as metaphors and figures. Human life and the short duration of it is compared to a “flower, and is cut down” (Job xiv. 2). And in the 103rd Psalm it is written: “As for man, his days

re as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." So you see that we may learn something of our condition by considering such little things as grass and flowers. We may "flourish" for a while, like a beautiful spring flower; but the spring-time of life, like that of the rose, is passing away. The beautiful flower soon begins to decay and fade; the wind blows upon it, and it is gone.

And thus it is, and thus it will be with us all. The winds of adversity, disease, sorrow and affliction blow heavily upon us. Our beauty, strength and vigor of life decay and fade away. Our youthful pleasures, joys and comforts must cease; and all of us, whether young or old, righteous or wicked, must lie down in death, and "rise not: till the heavens be no more, we shall not be waked, nor raised out of our sleep" (Job iv. 12.)

But, dear children, we do not wish to fill you with unnecessary gloom nor sadness this merry season. It is but proper and right that you should enjoy life in a proper way. We do not blame you at all for admiring and enjoying the beauties of nature. It is the work of God, and he has made nothing in vain. We are glad to know that you delight in his works. But while you study and delight in natural things, we trust that some of you are also delighted in the blessed gospel of the Son of God. It proclaims peace and mercy to poor, guilty, heavy-laden sinners. It speaks of salvation from sin and death, and brings a foretaste of joys to the mourning soul, which will last forever.

It is a happy spring season to the poor, distressed children of God when they can, by faith, see their interest in Jesus Christ their Saviour. One of the inspired writers describes it in this way: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo! the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."—Song ii. 10.

Then, dear young friends, we hope while some of you are

enjoying the festivities and beauties of May, in nature, you may also, through the abounding grace of God, be enabled to see and enjoy those undying beauties that are in Christ and his gospel.—M.

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### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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We regret that we can not find space in the GOSPEL MESSENGER to publish the many letters received from our correspondents more speedily than we do. But such is the abundance on hand needing much time and labor to correct and arrange for the press, that we find it impossible to give them a place at any early date. And even if we were able to employ extra labor to arrange those letters for the printer we have now enough on hand for several forthcoming numbers of the MESSENGER, some of which have been lying over several months already.

If brethren and sisters who have not been in the habit of preparing their letters for publication, would not crowd the words and sentences so closely together, it would save us much toil and perplexity. Many of the articles now on hand can be re-written with less time and labor than would be necessary to correct and arrange them into sentences. Besides this, the crowded letters, words and lines, without any distinction as to sentences, gives but little or no space to correct and also makes it very difficult sometimes to get the sense and meaning of the writer. We do not say this to discourage any from writing, but to encourage them.

We also request that what is designed for publication be not blended with business matters. Let business matters always be written on a separate piece of paper; and do not fail in any instance, when you send a remittance, whether to a new or old subscriber, to give the name and post-office address in full.—M.

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It is truly lamentable that the soul, which received its being from God, should be excluded from a being with God.

ELDER BARTLEY requests us to discontinue the publication of "The Church" in the GOSPEL MESSENGER, on account of its length; and as it is an ably written book, such as would be useful in any Baptist family, we propose to publish it in book form, selling it at the cost of publication, including time and trouble of Elder Bartley in preparing it. It will be a book of good size, and could probably be sent for about 30 to 50 cents a copy. We ask brethren to aid us in this matter, and send on names of any who will take a copy. The money may be sent when the book is published.—ED.

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BY letter from Elder J. W. Reddick, of Tennessee, we learn that the church at Fyke's Grove, Tenn., is in a healthy and prosperous condition; and that her pastor, Elder N. B. Jones, has been greatly tried, having lost his wife and oldest daughter, necessitating the breaking up of his household; and that he is now on a tour through Alabama and Florida, and will probably visit Georgia. The church at Fyke's Grove has received two accessions, and more are expected.—ED.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

STATE ROAD, DELAWARE, MARCH 5, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—I have occasionally written something to you of what I considered an encouraging state of the churches in this section. I might now mention what seems to be a very pleasant and promising state of things in my own family. I speak of domestic matters, or things relating immediately to my own family,—mainly for the sake of those of our readers who, like yourself, have a personal acquaintance with us.

Four weeks ago my oldest son's wife offered and was received at Welsh tract, and baptized by Elder Joseph L. Staton, the pastor at that place. Yesterday her husband and his younger brother went and offered and were received at that place. Two of my daughters were members there before. Although the step that was taken by the three was not unexpected, it was rather a surprise just at this time. Nothing special had been said to them, and but little on this subject had been said by them. The weather has been wintry and cold, and the meeting days stormy for most of the winter months. There had been no additions to that church

for many months. It was thus in a rather gloomy, wintry time that my children have chosen, making their own arrangements, to go and cast their lot with the little company who stand identified with the Redeemer's name and cause in this section of country. There are now six of my family members of that church. The churches of which I have the pastoral care being more distant from my residence, is the cause of my family going to Welsh Tract.

There is generally throughout the churches here evidence of much interest outside of the membership; and spiritual life and warmth are manifest in all our meetings. I may hereafter give you account of some individual cases, where we have been constrained to say, with more than the usual emphasis, It is the Lord's doing, and wondrous in our eyes.

Yours in the gospel,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI, March, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—The MESSENGER comes to us richly laden with the precious truths of the gospel of our salvation; and I feel to love its contents and communicants; because they write just what I feel to hope I have experienced. When I read from those I never saw, the same travels of mind, it makes me rejoice and glorify His holy and blessed name for His wonderful works among the children of men. I will use my efforts in getting all the subscribers I can from time to time; and hope the Good Lord of all grace will sustain you in conducting the MESSENGER to the good comfort and well being of the brethren everywhere, and to the advancement of the cause of our blessed Redeemer.

Your brother,

A. B. MORRIS.

We feel grateful to our beloved brother, Elder Morris, for his interest and efforts in behalf of the MESSENGER; and to hundreds of other brethren and ministers. We are amazed, and trust deeply humbled, at the favor God has given the MESSENGER with his people.—ED.

BREMOND, TEXAS, March, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—We have had a great deal of sickness in our family, and were in much trouble about our dear little babe, fearing that we would lose it; but through the mercy of our heavenly Father, he is still spared to us. Elder Denton has not been to see us this year, but we have heard several good sermons. A Primitive Baptist minister moved here from Mississippi last fall, and he is a good preacher, whom I do love to hear. He reminds me of our Georgia preachers. I feel that the good Lord has blessed us in sending him, Brother Debenport, amongst us. I saw a notice of the death of Brother Kiel, of Georgia, in the MESSENGER and was very sorry to learn that he was dead,—he was such a good preacher. I deeply sympathize with his bereaved wife and children.

Brother Respass, I send you a new subscriber, and will try to get more

er you, because I think it is such a good magazine and worthy a place in every family. I don't think I could do without it,—loving so dearly to read the experiences of the dear brethren and sisters, besides so much her good reading. My husband is not a member, but he loves to read the MESSENGER; and the children love to read the Letters to Children. May the Lord bless you and Brother Mitchell in your good work. Dear brethren and sisters, remember me and my family at a throne of grace. Your unworthy sister, if one at all,

SALLIE L. JACKSON.

Mrs. J. R. Worsham, of Mount Carmel Church, Crawford county, Ga., died Sunday, 18th March. She died the happiest mortal I ever saw; a perfect triumph of christian faith. Elder Wilde Cleveland preached her funeral from a text of her own selection: 2 Cor. i. 1. Also, Jonathan Olmes, an aged member of the same church, died Monday, 20th March.

Yours, &c.,

GEORGE W. MORGAN.

It would be hard to find two to excel this brother and sister in christian virtues.—Ed.

GORDON, GEORGIA, March 18, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—You, of course, do not expect a letter from me, but I have concluded to inform you of our condition as Baptists in this part of the Old Ebenezer. Though we have our cold and wintry seasons and many sore trials to pass through, we do have some very pleasant meetings. We are having now a mixture of joys and sorrows upon us at the present time, at Old Ramah. We are being served by Bro. William Carr, since Bro. J. I. Keel moved away. At our February meeting, we had large and attentive congregations both days; and Monday following our aged brother, J. M. Field, of Macon, met the church according to appointment, and Brother Carr staid over with us too. Brother Field preached for us in the power and demonstration of the Spirit; and after the sermon, an opportunity being given, a sister presented herself for membership, who for years had been trying to be satisfied with the Mission Baptists. Yesterday and to-day was our regular meeting again, and we had beautiful weather and large crowds both days. Bro. Henry Smith, young preacher in our bounds, met us, with Brother Carr, and we had one of those pleasant meetings long to be remembered. Two sisters visited us—one by letter, the other by experience. The baptism of the first sister being put off to this meeting from some surrounding circumstances, was agreed for the convenience of all to postpone baptism until our April meeting, when we hope to see others discharge a duty which we think they are impressed to do.

Dear brother, I have many temptations, trials and tribulations to pass through, and at times am almost ready to give up. But when in the midst of all this I am permitted to witness scenes like those two meetings past, I can almost exclaim with the psalmist David: "The Lord preparest a

table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

We are well pleased with the GOSPEL MESSENGER, the copy I receive being generally read in five families. My wife joins me in desiring to be remembered by you at a throne of grace. Farewell.

JOHN McARTHUR.

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VIENNA, DOOLY COUNTY, GA., March, 1883.

*Dearlly Beloved Brethren in Christ:*—I have received the MESSENGER for March, and find it crowded with gems from the dear brethren in the different parts of the Lord's vineyard. From all the evidences, surely the Lord has been the guiding star of the MESSENGER from its infancy up to the present time; and He, not you, has ordered all things connected with it, until it has become, if I am not deluded in my view, a great and valuable paper, connected with the rest of His appointments in nourishing, comforting, strengthening and establishing His poor, little, scattered flock in the wilderness, in this her dark and cloudy day. But for the promise, the sweet and sure promises of God, that he will not leave nor forsake his people in the time of their trouble, we would faint by the way. But, through the economy of his grace, the Lord's people obtain assurance that the set time will come when he will again revive and bless them; when Zion shall shine forth in her glorious dress, and demonstrate what she has ever been, and is, and will be forever—the light, beauty and glory of the whole earth. She is God's building, and everlasting monument, with the power and glory of God as a wall around her, and God himself the glory in her midst.

I started with a view of speaking of the utility of the MESSENGER, and the blessing it seems to have been made to the brethren and sisters, especially in this our section of country. It comes to us as a MESSENGER of peace and love. We are instructed, comforted and edified by the contributions of the brethren and sisters, and gain love and fellowship for those whom we have never seen, and never expect to see, being so far apart. But though the gray hills, and mountains and valleys separate us, and broad rivers glide between us, still we are united in faith, hope and love, and the wide domain of earthly separation is annihilated by fellowship in the Spirit, so that we have a general love-feast. Yours is a great work, and may the God of love and grace continue to bless you and Brother Mitchell with long life and health to send forth the MESSENGER to the scattered flock of Jesus.

Yours in christian bonds,

MIDDLETON McDONALD.

ALTOONA, FLORIDA, March, 1883.

*Editors of the Gospel Messenger, and especially Elder Mitchell, who has known me from Childhood:—Dear Elders:—*The MESSENGER is a welcome visitor to this part of the country, and to me especially. I delight to read it; not because I know the editors, but because it advocates the truth according to the teachings of the Bible. The Lord still continue to bless your labors of love, and those who write for it. Often it gives me light on passages of scripture, and I am thereby made to understand, as I numbly hope, the true meaning, so that I can witness, but not express it. Thus I am edified and instructed in my weak understanding.

Dear Elders, we would be glad to see you both, or either of you, in this country. Our churches are some distance apart; there are only nine churches in our Association, and they covering a large territory. We are blessed with some of the Lord's ministers, but there is room for more; and we will give any of our brethren a hearty welcome. We have a good country to make a living in. Any one can get a home here; and if any will write me, I will take a pleasure in giving all the information I can; and so will Elder Z. H. Bennett, Volusia, Fla. If any of our ministers will pay us a visit, and travel through our Association, and will write to Elder Bennett, he will arrange appointments for them. Will not some of the ministers do so? May God put it into your hearts to do so. I am happy to say that peace and brotherly love abounds throughout our borders, for which thanks be unto the Lord!

Your unworthy brother,

R. L. HOPSON.

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 PLEASANT GROVE, ALABAMA, March 17, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:—*I will say to you that eight have been added to our church, by experience, in the last twelve months.

GREEN CARVER.

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 WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, March, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass:—*We have been having some very refreshing seasons here of late. Elder Greenwood, of Wilson, has been visiting us monthly. Elders P. D. Gold, J. Cavanaugh and A. Davis were all with us at our quarterly meeting, third Sunday in February; and Elder Gold left an appointment for third Sunday in April. Elder Greenwood was with us last Sunday, and will be here, the Lord willing, at quarterly meeting in May. He is a live Baptist, and an able and interesting preacher, if I am any judge.

Respectfully,

ABRAM WILDER.

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## OBITUARIES.

## ELDER JOHN BUIE.

Died, at the residence of Ira Watkins, in Jefferson county, Ga., on the 15th of March, 1883, Elder JOHN BUIE, in his 74th year.

Elder Buie was a remarkable man. He was born blind, and had no advantages of an education. He joined the Primitive Baptists at an early age, and soon commenced preaching the gospel of Jesus; and for about forty-five years it was his great pleasure to preach whenever opportunity offered, except for the last year or two, his memory having become somewhat impaired; so much so that he could hardly give out a hymn, which in former days gave him no trouble. That true saying, "Once a man and twice a child," was true with John Buie. The writer often had deceased at his house, and often read for him; and any good thing was quite edifying; but light, trashy reading he would soon complain of. The GOSPEL MESSENGER was to him almost like the Bible. As late as the February or March number, while my daughter-in-law was reading some pieces to the family, he shed tears copiously. His mind, up to two or three years ago, was remarkably bright; so much so that he could tell any one born in this century; if they would tell him the day of the month and the date of the year, he would tell them in a few moments the day of the week they were born on. Elder John Buie, although blind in this world, can doubtless see in heaven. He leaves two brothers and many relatives and friends, who will soon join him in the spirit world, where parting will be no more. Peace to his ashes.

FRIEND.

## MRS. REBECCA CLABAUGH.

Died, at the residence of her son, J. S. Clabaugh, in Gentry county, Mo., July 20th, 1882, Sister REBECCA CLABAUGH, in the 72nd year of her age. She had been a member of the Regular Baptist Church over forty years, having been baptized by Elder Lewis Seitz about the year 1840, in company with her husband, Henry Clabaugh, in the fellowship of Honey Creek Church, Fairfield county, Ohio, where they remained worthy members until 1855, when they moved to Warren county, Ill. After the death of her husband, which occurred June 13th, 1859, she united by letter with Friendship Church, Knox county, Ill., in October, 1859. In 1866, with her little family, she moved to Gage county, Neb., where, in 1871, she went into the constitution of Blue River Church. But owing to the grasshoppers and the drought, they were obliged to give up their home, and settled in Gentry county, Mo., where the deceased was taken sick with flux. She told her son, I. J. Clabaugh, that she could not get well; and when asked if the Lord was with her, in her last hours, she said, "O, yes, Isaiah; you know that the Lord has been with me a long time, and now he is very near me. This has been the best day of the year; not a pain,—not a cloud,—but all peace." Then she gently fell asleep. During our acquaintance with her and her family, they have been in the faith, and all of them the children of God, and when with them we could feel at home.

## LUCY K. CLABAUGH.

Also died, of the same fell destroyer, August 8th, 1882, LUCY K. CLABAUGH, daughter of Isaiah J. and Fanny E. Clabaugh; aged 1 year, 4 months and 1 day. She was an unusually smart child; but death is no respecter of persons.

## MRS. NANCY E. CLABAUGH.

Also, NANCY E. CLABAUGH, wife of Isaiah J. Clabaugh, departed this life, August 22nd, 1882, after an illness of two weeks, of the same disease. Her maiden name was Beebe. She was born in New York, July 16th, 1848; and moved with her parents to Bremer county, Iowa, about the year 1863. She was joined in wedlock to I. J. Clabaugh, March 4th, 1866; by whom she had seven children, four of whom are yet living. She professed a hope in her dear Saviour, and was baptized by the writer, in 1870, into the Harmony Church of Regular Baptists, having travelled about three hundred miles in a wagon, in order that she might follow her Saviour down into the liquid grave. We can certainly say that we never saw a more calm and delighted subject. After she was taken sick, she told her husband that the Lord had called for her, and she would have to leave him. She then spoke to the children, and told them to live as she had tried to raise them; and to her dear, weeping husband she said, "Do not grieve after me, but do the best you can for the children. I am not only ready, but I am willing to die." Thus she passed away to her reward, leaving her children and husband in grief.

Dear brethren, a word of comfort to our dear, afflicted brother, from any of you, and a visit to him when convenient, would no doubt be a great satisfaction to him. I visited him in October last, and found him in deep mourning; but we rejoiced that he sorrowed not as those who have no hope.

As ever, yours in the bonds of the precious Redeemer,

*Harmon, Knox County, Ill.*

CYRUS HUMPHREY.

I would desire to add to what has been written, that my wife, in all the duties and relations of life, filled her station well. She was a fond mother, loving companion, good neighbor, and devoted to her church duties. It was her delight to care for the saints—especially ministers. O, how I miss her, and how lonely are my hours and days spent! But to God would I submit. Her devoted mother, two brothers and three sisters are living in Oregon, where her father, Elder A. T. Beebe, died in 1880. Elder True, of Maryville, Mo., came down and preached to us the words of life; after which her body was laid away to await the Resurrection. Elder True also preached mother's funeral, greatly to our comfort.

Your sorrowing brother,

*Albany, Mo., March, 1883.*

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

## MRS. CATHERINE OWENS.

The Lord in his divine providence has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved sister, CATHERINE OWENS, wife of Brother Joshua Owens. She died at her home in Wilcox county, Ga., 17th of July, 1882. She was born 22d of March, 1826. She was a daughter of Samson Gibbs, was married to Brother Owens in September, 1850, and professed a hope in Christ and was baptized by Elder Alfred Maples in 1860; having lived a pious and orderly member of the church 22 years. She was an affectionate wife, a loving mother, and kind neighbor, beloved by all who knew her. She was afflicted for several years, which terminating in consumption, ended her sufferings on earth. She bore affliction with patience, and was strong in faith. She left a husband and several children, and many friends and relatives, to mourn her death; but how cheering in the midst of it to have the assurance that her spirit is at rest with the Lord! May the Lord bless this dispensation of his divine providence to the good of the bereaved husband and children, sustaining and bearing them up by his grace, is our prayer. Written by request of the bereft husband.

D. W. TAYLOR.

*Davis' Mill, Ga., Feb. 23, 1883.*

## R. C. PARHAM.

Brother R. C. PARHAM, who departed this life September, 1882, was a citizen of Crawford county, Ga. He was married 24th of April, 1827, to Mary Jane Hammock, and joined the church at Mount Carmel, August 19th, 1858, and was baptized by Eld. W. C. Cleveland. He was ordained Deacon of said church 18th of July, 1873, to fill the vacancy in the church caused by the death of his father-in-law, T. D. Hammock. In the death of Brother Parham his children have lost an affectionate father, his wife a tender, kind and loving husband—one who never seemed to tire in trying to relieve her in all her afflictions through which she had been called to pass, which were many; his neighbors one who was ever ready to visit them in sickness and nurse them when needful, and the church a devoted member. Brother Parham was prompt in attendance upon his church meetings, manifesting a great desire for the peace and harmony of the church and Association, and was always distressed when any disturbance sprang up amongst them. He was a man who loved peace in his family, church and neighborhood. Much more might be truthfully written, but a volume would not cure the grief of the heart-stricken widow and orphans, nor fill the place made void in the church by his death. What I have written I believe to be true. We were members of the same church, living near each other for ten years or more. At the request of Sister Parham, I tried to preach a funeral discourse at Mount Carmel; and whilst I was thinking of the absent brother, tried to speak to the living present of the great plan of salvation through Christ the Redeemer. May the Lord sanctify to our spiritual good this sad dispensation of his providence and comfort the disconsolate and afflicted sister, and guide her and her children in the paths of righteousness, is the sincere desire of the unworthy writer.

SAMUEL BENTLEY.

*Butler, Ga.*

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[Signed]  
LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR

Mrs Lucy Dixon

Vol. 5.

No. 6.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELD. MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him : t Opelika, Ala.—R.

JUNE, 1883.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 6.

BUTLER, GA., JUNE, 1883.

Vol. 5.

STATE ROAD, DELAWARE, April 24, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—It is now a long time since the Baptists in this country were all one people, and the word "Baptist" conveyed but one signification. But although a long time, there are those living who remember it well; while a large majority of the present generation have grown up since the separation, and know nothing of the general division into New and Old School Baptists, only as they have been told by others. As a matter of course, the great bulk of the people are liable to be misinformed, and consequently misled, as to many important points involved in the controversy. I say controversy, because each party to the separation have generally claimed to occupy the original ground. Those who lived before and all through the conflict which ended in separation, are the ones to speak and to be heard; because they speak what they know, and testify what they have passed through, and such testimony will not be likely to lead us astray. I may, hereafter, write you particularly of some of the incidents and events of that time. One that occurs to me I will relate now, as bearing upon the question of what the division was, what led to it, and what it eventually came to be. I do not propose, however, to give real names.

In my early life, and long before the division above referred to, I was acquainted with the location of a certain Baptist church, and personally acquainted with many of its members. Of their character as church members, or their sincerity, I have nothing to say. This church settled a pastor, to serve

every Sunday. Of his character, as an upright man, and one that did what he thought was right, I have nothing unfavorable to say. As the elements that led to division began to work and to develop themselves, this man began to be regarded with doubt by some, as to his soundness in doctrine. No noise, however, was raised about the matter as yet, and the call was renewed and accepted from year to year. It may be observed here, that these yearly calls were in accord with the quite general practice of the churches, nearly always being accompanied with a stipulation for the year's services. On one occasion, the wife of one of the deacons told her husband that she would accompany him to the approaching annual church meeting. She told me that she had become dissatisfied with the preaching, and that she did not know of another one, neither did she expect any countenance or sympathy from anybody, not even from her husband. She felt constrained in honesty and conscience to vote against the preacher's stay, although she expected to vote alone. She said nothing, however, of her intentions to anybody. When the vote came, the large number in attendance voted unanimously to renew the call. As the reverse was called for, she rose to her feet, voting "nay." Of course she was questioned, and asked to show cause, if any she had; the preacher being spokesman. She said to me: "I told him as well as I could, 'You always put the sinner first; you say that the sinner must take the first step, and then the Lord will assist him; that there is a work for the sinner to do, and if he will do his part, the Lord will do his part. You say that if churches will have any revivals or other prosperity, that they must move first in the matter, and use the means, and then they may expect that the Lord will bless their efforts.'" "Well," says the preacher, "that is the way it is, and that's the way we must preach it." "*It don't read so; my Bible don't,*" was her quiet reply. I will not follow the church meeting further than to say that the preacher lost his temper, and got exceeding angry; the storm of passion raged around the quiet little woman, while she kept calm as a summer morning. The preacher accepted the call

and remained. The discussion of this day was but the beginning. The Association is about to convene with this church. Nearly all the preachers of the Association, including the pastor above spoken of, have by this time become known as in accord on the above sentiments. In order, I suppose, to rally all their strength, the questions thus raised were inserted in the church letter and presented to the Association. Now comes the issue, the interesting turning point. The session of the Association commences. The flesh is sometimes timid and weak; sister S. told me that she had resolved in her mind not to go, but remain at home. However, it was fixed for her to go, and she was urged and finally went, so as to hear the first or introductory sermon. The Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform; and if he did not move in this matter, to have that man preach there at that time, it would be hard to say how it came about. Because the interests and inclinations of that Association would never have had it so. Be that as it may, the man was there, from some place; and he came in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. His word was of that kind that burned and consumed like fire among stubble. It came not in word only, but in power. Sister S. said: "When he commenced he commenced well enough, but she expected to hear it spoiled before he went far; but instead of that," she said, "it got better and better as he went on, and better and better all the way through; that, take it all in all, it was the best sermon to her, and did her the most good, of any one she had ever heard, either before or afterward." After preaching was over, quite a number gathered around her, and as soon as they could speak to her, began: "Why, sister S., that is the kind of preaching you wanted." And truly enough it was; but it had not been heard in that place in so long that its peculiar ring had been almost forgotten. The other preachers complained: "Why, brother G., you give us *pork*, and give it to us in the *whole ham*." This meant, of course, that they could not swallow it. That sermon was, on that occasion, the *fan* that purged the floor; and fourteen members drew out from that

organization, to be known afterwards as "O. S. Baptists." That preacher (long since deceased) was afterwards extensively known as a sound and faithful minister among the Old order. It seemed that the Lord had need of him there at that time. The sister who acted the prominent part, as above shown, in these events, was a woman of a retiring disposition; one of the most quiet, modest and diffident of women, and withal under or linary size. That this battle should have been fought, and the victory won, by such a feeble instrument, was indeed wonderful. Strong and able men came in afterward to reap the fruits and enjoy the rewards of this victory. The Lord had indeed taken a worm, and threshed the mountain (Isa. xli. 14, 15.)

In this event can be seen the *elements* and the *workings* of the division. The bulk of the then Baptist ministry was gradually, but surely, drifting from the track. A few saw and felt it. A grievous famine was developing in the land, and the hungry were offered husks instead of bread. The preacher comes to a strange land, and among a strange people, to find some ready to famish with hunger for that very word of the Lord that he has brought. Can we doubt, or question, that He whose ways are equal has provided a gospel adapted to the wants of the hungry, the poor, and the needy? Can we doubt that this hungering for the word of the Lord, is the development of a life in the Spirit? The people personally are strangers to each other. No particular satisfaction is looked for. It has been long enough since pure gospel preaching has been heard, that it is not now expected. But a surprise is near. And it is like Joseph making himself known unto his brethren. The famine will yet go on in Egypt; but Israel will be nourished in the land of Goshen, and from Joseph's storehouses they will henceforth have plenty of bread.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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SACRED vows bind us to obedience, and sinful vows to repentance. Say not that you have noble blood running in your veins, except you can prove it by heroic actions.

ALEXANDER CITY, ALA., February 23, 1883.

*Beloved Brethren*:—By request of Elder Mitchell, I write you a thought or two on Romans xii.: “Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

The inspired pensman comprehended the necessity of the above admonition to the church at Rome, and if we are led by the same Spirit which guided his pen, we will see the subject as he did, and feel the importance of the same word being sounded in our ears. The apostle was well acquainted with the world and the ways of the world; he knew full well the weakness of the flesh; he knew the circumstances by which the people of God were surrounded. We here have the admonition in a negative sense, and in fact many important duties are enjoined upon us negatively. We are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, as well as to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The punishment inflicted on the people of God under the Jewish or Mosaic law was for worldly conformity; wanting to do like the surrounding nations; hence the pointed instructions and admonitions on this point, and a law positively forbidding their affiliation with them. “Be not conformed to this world.” The word “conform” carries the idea of mixing or making together; “con” signifies together—“form,” to make. Jesus teaches by the pen of John, that he that loveth the world the love of the Father was not in him; we are taught not to love the world, nor the things of the world; and if we are dead to these things, why and how do we live therein? When the apostles asked Jesus, on one occasion, to command fire to come down and destroy some enemies, Jesus rebuked them by asking them if they knew what manner of spirit they were governed by. Hence we see that the spirit of the world is not the spirit of God; and in this sense we are admonished not to be conformed to the world. The spirit of the world is opposed to God, and is an abomination in his holy sight; for “that which is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination

in the sight of God." "Whosoever is a friend to the world, is an enemy to God." "Ye are not of the world. I have chosen you out of the world: therefore the world hateth you." "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him; if we deny Him He also will deny us. We understand that we are not to conform to the spirit, practice, wisdom, nor the ways of the world,—but are separate and distinct,—belonging to another kingdom, which can not be moved. The spirit of the world is hateful, deceitful, and full of bad works of the flesh; and we are taught to keep our garments unspotted from the world; and whenever we enter the tents of the Kedarites we come out smutted and dirty. We are taught to cleanse our hands; to have clean hands, and a garment unspotted by the flesh.

We notice Paul's instruction to the church at Corinth: that the world by wisdom knew not God. Nor does it know Him to-day. The worldly-wise ignore the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, deny the glorious plan of salvation, and do not see nor admit that honey and oil can come from the flinty rock of his eternal predestination, and unsearchable, inscrutable purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began.

The most fascinating and delusive systems of the world are snares to catch the people of God. All that sugar-coated doctrine, and fly-catching systems, are practiced by them to deceive, if possible, the elect. Beware, brethren, how you walk, lest you get into that snare of the devil and suffer loss as an evil-doer. Colleges are erected, and professed divines are arrayed in classic style, to send forth bewitching teachers, who do bewitch and persuade men out of the way, and lead them away from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. This is of the world; "for the world heareth them, because they are of the world, and the world will love its own." "I have chosen you out of the world; do not as they do, for they say and do not." "Be not like them." The Church of Christ needs no such, for Jesus is her sufficiency, and it would dishonor Jesus to turn aside to these vain, worldly janglers, "who multiply words to darken counsel." "Ye are complete

in him, who is the head of all principality and power." The world believes in numbers, and is reaching out for the same; but you have only to look at Gideon and his chosen three hundred men, to make the multitude, like grasshoppers for number, flee before him. Therefore, don't think God's people are getting too few, and, like Sarah, get in too big a hurry for an increase; for if you do, you will bring in a score of Ishmaelites, and then will come trouble in the camp. Remember the Lord says, "one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight." Remember David and Goliath of the Philistines—how the stripling, contrary to all expectations, overcame him and took off his huge head. That is not of the world, but of God; and like many other lessons we draw from the word of God.

Practice of the world! They love dress and appearance, and deck the old frame of the flesh, and make it look like something, when it is simply a walking carcass of the live things of the flesh. They deck it off, and put on the appearance of something, when it is nothing but a body of death. And to see the people of God following it, after being taught the doctrine of crucifixion to the world and death to the same! I once asked a brother, if he had observed a brother in preaching to have on his gloves. He said, "No, he did not notice that; but at intermission he had a cigar in his mouth." I referred to his soft manner of preaching, but he thought I referred to his literal gloves. We are not of the world. I love to meet old precious sisters with fly-bonnets on; it looks pure to me to see them denying the flesh and human appearance; they have a right to use the world as not abusing it, but prefer that simplicity of dress. I heard once that Bro. R. T. Webb was preaching, and spoke of the old style sky-scraping bonnets worn in that day. He remarked, "that an angel would blush to be seen with one on." Remember, brethren, if we follow these things for appearance' sake and for style's sake, we are not denying ourselves and carrying our cross. I love simplicity of dress, as well as simplicity of speech. Beware, lest we be beguiled in these things. Paul

said it was not the braiding of the hair, nor the putting on of apparel, that constituted the "true hidden one," but a meek and quiet spirit, which in God's sight was of great price. How many of us bow the knee to the image of Baal in this sense! The robe we should wear is the spotless robe of the righteousness of Christ; and if we walk after his spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Our desires are to be controlled; inordinate desire after money is not in accordance with the spirit of truth. The christian should realize that he has unfading, undying riches in Christ, and daily feel his dependence on Him. But are not some of our brethren too much concerned in these things? so much like the world, and like Bunyan's man with his muck-rake, he doesn't have time to look up; can't go to church; can't visit his old, worn-out pastor, who watches for his soul; becomes selfish; becomes a victim to the deceitfulness of riches; the word is choked in him and becomes unprofitable. What is the difference between men worshipping the Sunday-school god idol and worshipping that eagle on an American coin? None, as I can see. Then here we are to listen to the apostle's admonition: "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; be not conformed to the world." The world is busy accumulating; heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. What is the christian doing? his money makes him stand higher in the world than his poor, unfortunate brother can. But how do they stand with Christ? The word teaches us to be content with such things as we have. The world loves to lay up and hoard away its gold; but the Spirit dictates to honor the Lord with thy substance. The world says take care of No. 1; but Jesus says minister to one another, and thereby show your love to Christ; for if we say we love God, and love not our brother, how can we love God, whom we have not seen, and not love our brother, whom we have seen? If we see a brother have need, and shut up the bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in us? Man of God, flee these things, and put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. Let us not love in word, but indeed and in truth;

for this is of Him, and is not of the world. The world back-bites, and says evil one of another; but let us, who are of the Spirit, condemn the world by laying aside all these things, and pursue that strait (difficult) way that Jesus has bidden us walk in.

The ministry, Elders, should not conform to the world, in manner nor address; not modify their language to make it set well with men, for that is man-pleasing and is of the world. Jesus did not so speak, neither did the apostles. John the Baptist suffered for his faithfulness in exposing error in the family of Herod; beware, lest we try to make our bed soft, and say we are doing it to the glory of God, when we really are serving the flesh, and are more popular by so doing. Some may say, if John had gone on and preached the gospel and let Herod alone in his family affairs, he would have lived to have done much good. Such argument is full of worldliness. John was faithful; hence he was persecuted. Jesus openly condemned the false systems in his day, reproving their hypocrisies. Worldly policy is practiced much in these days, but God's people are a people of spirit and principle, and that will not bow to policy—that is, of the world. Beware of these things. We should always guard ourselves when we speak against error, and do so in the spirit of the fear of God, and not the spirit of the flesh. I have had to fight the flesh, which dictated to me to modify and popularize my language and speak to please the people; but I trust the Spirit enables me to cry aloud and spare not! tell Jacob of his sin, and Israel of her transgressions!

“But be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.” “Transformed” means be formed against the world. The life of the christian is against the current of the world, and if he has not life he can not stem the current. A dead fish floats down, but it takes a live fish to go up the stream. The christian's mind is renewed by trials and afflictions; when he is the subject of great bereavement and heavy afflictions he almost despairs of life, and God gives him grace, which renews

his mind, and he then sees how it is. The poet says, speaking of grace—

“And new supplies each hour I need,  
While pressing on to God.”

When the “prodigal son” returned, and his father received him, he was renewed in mind. So often in this manner have our minds been renewed, refreshed by His presence, strengthened by His grace; and then are we formed against the world. We all know by sad experience that in the world we have tribulation; but in Christ we have peace. Hence our daily experience in the world, with the teachings of His spirit forms our minds against the world, as to its ways, forms and fashions; and we, by grace, deny ungodliness and worldly lusts which make up the world. And as Jesus taught the world had nothing in Him, so it has nothing in us if we are like Him. And if the world did what they did against Christ, the holy Son of God, what will they do to us? If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry tree? If they have called the master of the house “Beelzebub,” how much more will they call them of his household?

Besides this, it is needful for us as christians to manifest it by our lives. Can we live the life of the world and manifest the character of a christian? Not so; “we can not serve God and mammon.” God has a special purpose in calling and manifesting his children. The will of God is our sanctification. We have a high and holy calling; called out from the world—separated from the world. This is God’s will—his perfect will, which is good and acceptable. Jesus said: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and (you) glorify your Father which is in heaven.” God’s purpose is his glory and the good of his children; therefore, when they walk well pleasing in his sight, they do his will; and when they do his will, he heareth them. And I believe when His people are found in accordance with the admonition of Paul, God is well pleased and they are blessed in the deed.

I submit the above, realizing the imperfection of the same

Do as you see fit with it. I have only "run round" it; let some plowman of the Lord "split the middle."

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—Please allow me a short space to endorse the article of Brother Mitchell on "Ministerial Support." It is the best thing I have ever seen on that subject. It divides between the two extremes. We are naturally creatures of extreme, and it is amazing hard to keep out of it. How far to go, and where to stop, is the perplexing question in every thing. Our people, in battling against the moneyisms of the day, have gone into the other extreme. In condemning salaried and contract preachers, we must set up the principle that preachers must not be helped at all. This great delinquency on the part of the churches toward their ministry is mainly chargeable to the ministry themselves. They have created the impression, and the brethren have pursued it, often to the hurt of both church and preacher. The truth is, there is a sort of foolish timidity about our preachers which forbids their coming square out and telling their members their duty on this subject. It might be said he is sliding into Missionism, and we can not stand that; so we stand a neglect of duty sooner. Elder \_\_\_\_\_, of Houston county, once told me that he had received notice of a call to serve a church some distance away, and he must travel by rail; so the church informed him in their letter, that if he would serve them, they would pay his railroad expenses; and said he, "I never answered that church at all"; so indignant was he at their "proposed pay." No wonder our churches let their preachers scratch along as best they may. I once heard a preacher at the Echeconnee Association (he was from the Ocmulgee) say he had served churches thirty miles from home, and never received enough from them to pay his ferriage or shoe his horse. (You were there, Bro. R.) I thought I would not have said that for any thing, and I heard others talk about it. But whether it was proper for

him to speak of it there or not, one thing I know: those churches ought to have been ashamed of the fact. I have in my mind now a preacher, who served a church thirty miles away; had no horse; was too poor to pay his fare on rail and support a large family; so he generally walked it, and came home with feet blistered and belamed until he could scarcely work for several days; and I doubt if that man ever admonished the church on this duty; too timid. There is wrong under the sun in this direction, and the churches, as well as the ministry, suffer from it.

Unfaithfully, yours,  
*McVile, Ga.*

M. SIKES.

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### THE WAY BY WHICH GOD SAVES SINNERS.

[Concluded.]

Now, let us glance at the life of the apostle Paul, who says "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews which knew me from the beginning if they would testify that after the most straitest sect I lived a Pharisee. I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which things I also did in Jerusalem," &c. "Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priest, at midday O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them that journeyed with me; and when we were fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." I can safely say Paul was not expecting any thing of the kind; he was firm in the belief that he could save himself, and never would have believed any thing else if God had not shown him his error. Paul was just as good, and better than many Pharisees of the present day, and yet he says he persecuted many above his equals; so there was nothing short of the power of God that could bring him to

knowledge of the truth. But he says: "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace," &c. God is the same God, of the same mind, and has the same way of saving sinners that he had in Paul's day; he is of one "mind, and none can turn him."

Some people tell me that the Primitive Baptists preach the doctrine that God takes sinners by the hair of the head and drags them to heaven against their will, but they preach no such doctrine; but preach it as the Bible teaches it. David says: "Thy people *shall* be a willing people in the day of thy power." Jeremiah says: "The Lord hath appeared unto me of old, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee"; thus teaching that the Lord's people are willing to be saved when God brings his power to bear on them. So God takes hold of a sinner; he takes him by the heart, changing his will and affections; "taking away his stony heart, gives him a heart of flesh." He unstops his deaf ears, opens his blind eyes, and causes him to see what a great sinner he is in the sight of God. You remember the way God led Jacob; he found him in a desert land—in a vast, howling wilderness; but he did not leave him there, but took him by the hand and led him about and instructed him. God instructs all his children. "And they shall all be taught of the Lord; and every one that learneth of the Father, cometh unto me." They are all taught by the same Spirit. When God gives life to a poor, dead sinner, he realizes for the first time what a great sinner he is; he sees how good and merciful God has been to him, and wonders why God has not cut him off as a lumberer of the ground. When he retrospects his life he sees nothing good that he has ever done; the sins that he has committed look greater to him than they ever seemed before; he thinks how he once loved sin and rolled it as a sweet morsel under his tongue; how he drank it down as an ox drinketh water. But he now no longer takes pleasure in sin—no longer rolls it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. He has perhaps thought all his life that he could work out his salva-

tion, and now to work he goes; forsaking his evil associates, he tries to live a better life. But, poor creature! he finds the more he tries to do, the more he sees he can't do. He tries the "works" system to the very bottom, drinking the very dregs out of the bottom of the cup; but he finds all a failure, and he is made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" A bankrupt, and not a farthing with which to pay; and he is made to say in his soul—

"Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,  
I must pronounce Thee just in death;  
And if I'm damned and sent to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well."

He can now see that God would remain just to condemn him forever and ever. But when every means of escaping the wrath of God seems to be gone, at a time and in a way all unexpected to him, Jesus reveals himself to the poor, burdened creature, "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." His burden is gone, and he is made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Here is one now who is willing to acknowledge that the work is of the Lord from first to last, giving glory to God, and realizing that, "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new." May the Lord bless the truth.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, I hope,  
*Fate, Texas.* F. P. CHANDLER.

BEAN'S CREEK, FRANKLIN CO., TENN., April, 1883.

*Very Dear Brother Respess*:—I desire to say a few things, if I can, to the dear people of God scattered over this unfriendly and sin-cursed world. Dear brethren and sisters, I am fully aware that if I am not led or directed by the Spirit of our glorious God and Saviour, that all I may say will be as "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Well, somehow the subject of "GOD" has got hold of my mind to some extent and I know that it is too big a text for such a poor, ignorant

worm of the dust as I am to do justice to; but as a brother has said, "where little is given, but little is required."

The Bible is full of passages telling us of God, what he has done, and what he has promised to do. He has said, "I am God, there is none like me; I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour; I am God, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed; I am God, declaring the end from the beginning, from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Now, such a God as that set forth in the foregoing scriptures is the kind of a God I hope we poor, despised Baptists worship. That same God tells us by the mouth of his servants, that he rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; they tell us that whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth; they tell us that whatsoever he doeth, he doeth it forever, that none can add to it and none can take from it; and he doeth it that men may fear before him. O, what a God! how unlike to the God held up by some people, telling us that the sinner can outdo him, and drive his Spirit away, and be forever lost, because the God they hold up is not able to do what he desired to do! Well, that is our God, and I am glad of it. I wish others could see as we do. But the God that some profess to worship, we don't want. But, O my soul! when my mind contemplates the God who standeth on the circle of the earth, and rideth upon the storm, and is the Judge of all the earth, and will do right, and whatsoever he doeth is right, I am made to quake and tremble, and wonder how am I ever to stand before such a God, justified! If God leaves us (his people) to work their way to heaven, they are lost forever, and world without end.

Now, brethren and sisters, I hope you and Brother Respass will forgive any thing I have said amiss; and it seems to me that I have missed every thing. Brother Respass, please forgive me for not writing to you; and I ask all, young and old, big and little, sisters and brethren everywhere, to pray for me. O, I'm ashamed of what I have written! O, what a

friend we have in Jesus! yes, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Farewell!

ANDREW WOODS.

Since writing the foregoing I have concluded to write a little more, though I fear I shall darken counsel with words without knowledge. When I get a glimpse of the plan of salvation by grace, devised in infinite wisdom before man was made of the dust of the earth, I am forcibly reminded of the saying of Paul, when he cries out, "O the depth both of the riches and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" That God says, "your ways are not my ways, neither are your thoughts my thoughts; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." And I am glad it is so. But so it is with poor fallen man; and there is a way that seemeth right unto him, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Our ways are all wrong; God's ways are all right; and none but those who are born of God know it, and that by the revelation of Jesus Christ. "For no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand, for my Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." O, how devoted those sheep should be! how they should love one another, and walk together in the ordinances and commandments of their Lord, blameless! Jesus also says, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out"; and also he says, that power was given him by the Father "over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him." And I believe he will do every thing he has promised to do; for he is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, &c. Well, where does this eternal life come from? This is the record

that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. O glorious gift! O glorious record! The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God."

Dear brethren and sisters, I have no hope of being saved myself, or of any one else, only for what God has done for us. David says, "Draw near, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he has done for my soul: he hath taken me out of the mire and clay, and placed my feet upon a rock; put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his holy name; he has removed my sins as far from me as the east is from the west, and established my goings." O, what a glorious Saviour! he has done all for David that David needed. And then David could sit and sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name," &c. And so will all of God's people do.

Brother Respass, I wish I could tell it as I hope I see it, but I can't. My health is very poor. I hope all who see this will remember me in their prayers. I hope the MESSENGER is on rising ground and will prove a blessing to many of God's little ones over our country. God bless its editors and all their children!

ANDREW WOODS.

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*Editors of the Gospel Messenger:—Dear Brethren:—*Some one, I know not whom, sent me by mail a minute of the Mercer Baptist Association, held October, 1882. Looking over the report of the Committee on Missions, I find the following:

"The Foreign Mission Board, located at Richmond, sent out eight new missionaries last year, and still millions of immortal beings dying in their sins, cry to us for the bread of life."

What a horrible mistake the poor heathen labor under in crying to "us" for the bread of life! And who is responsible for their misconception? If they are crying to "us" for the bread of life, as the committee affirms, no doubt they do so as the result of Missionary teaching; for we know that if the Spirit of the Lord should influence their cry, then they would

not cry to "us" for the bread of life. If there are any heathen in heathendom that can out-heathen the heathenism of the general tenor of the report of that committee, we may well pity their state, though we be unable to change their condition. It should be remembered that the extract taken is not an inadvertent expression of a single individual, but the report of an official committee, brought under the observation of the Association, and published to the world on the face of their minutes. That there are many good people connected with that body (the Missionary Baptists), who serve the Lord according to the light they have, is not a question with me; but how they can endure such solemn mockery in divine things, is a thing I have not fully understood. "Millions dying in their sins, cry unto us for the bread of life." If they should cry to the Lord for the bread of life, they should not die in their sins; but in vain they may cry unto "us."

JOHN ROWE.

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COVINGTON, NEWTON CO., GA., March 11, 1883.

*Ebbs, Respass and Mitchell:—Dear Brethren in Christ:—*After reading the communications in the GOSPEL MESSENGER from the dear saints of God, north and south, east and west, to my comfort and instruction, I desire to give a short sketch of the dealings of the Lord with me.

I was raised in Jasper county by Primitive Baptist parents, and at the breaking out of the late war, I left home to join other comrades. I knew nothing about God, and no fear of him. In October, 1863, while on James' Island, I was greatly troubled about my condition, causing me to leave camp to be alone; but I did not know what was the matter, and thought I would die soon. I would try to ask God to have mercy; but my breathing would be, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" I was sick of sin; did not wish to be in company that I once liked, and I did not wish to sin any more during life. I think about the 1st of February, 1864, Jesus appeared to me as my Saviour, and every thing seemed to be beautiful to behold.

I wanted to tell about it; but soon I thought, "maybe I am deceived, and I will keep it to myself." At the close of the war I returned home, and meeting with the saints of God at their meetings, I often felt a desire to be with them, but was afraid I would be a trouble to those good people; so I put off the duty from time to time. Elder Hitchcock passed through here and preached, using the text, "Thy will be done," and I thought he was well aware of my condition. July 14th, 1863, I went to the church at Harris' Spring and told them my feelings, and they received me, not asking any question, and I was baptized the next day by Elder J. Hamby, and I realized a peace of mind that the world did not give. But I have had many dark hours since that time, and I still have a little hope of my interest in that blessed Saviour that spoke, saying, "It is finished." May the Lord give us grace that would enable us to trust him, is the prayer of your brother,

J. J. ADAMS.

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EMMET, ARKANSAS, March 8, 1883.

*Elder John R. Respass:—Dear Brother:—*You, I suppose through Brother Rowe, have sent to me the MESSENGER, for which I desire to hereby tender my thanks. Notwithstanding I had nearly given over the idea of patronizing any religious periodical, for the reason that their writers have often been puffed and ruined, and by their epistles thus sent out have done incalculable hurt among churches; all from a human infirmity that must exist, yet so seldom watched. Many are little enough to be great in their own esteem; but how few there are who are little enough to be really *great*! Faith is the only sure discipline, and what is *it*? a substance, and that substance an evidence of things not seen. We, my brother, hope devoutly for eternal life, and its workings, whereby we are freed from the working of a temporal life, that continually gendereth to bondage; bondage indeed grievous, that continually inclines us to be something that we are not; even gods, though but human beings. How strange, yet how true! But what did I say? is it indeed grievous?

does the point of time appear distinct at which it began to be grievous? if so, how or from what cause the change? Here, however unworthy the writer, and yet however highly his unworthiness is magnified by this manner of analysis, yet he is forced to observe that though at the time of this effect unobserved, yet it is an effect produced by a principle foreign to his native principle, by which he hitherto was prompted to action, and by which he was hitherto in his own imagination exalted, of which exaltation he now feels ashamed. If by this foreign principle, for what purpose, and by whom? If we but pursue this analysis, we can but observe that the workings of this foreign principle have produced the assurance (a substance), that itself is a grace working through this assurance the salvation of us—first, from ourselves; secondly, from deceivers, that lie in wait to deceive. So, also, that as a principle it declares of itself that it is flowing directly from the fountain of truth. As God is the fountain, this stream flows therefrom, and of his predestination, to effect the purpose of his own glory. Thus we see a glorious Providence in our behalf—a Spirit sent into our very heart, changing our affection for ourselves as well as for others. Whereas once we in ourselves were exalted and others abased, their faults seen and ours hid, and as faults alone procured our hurt, this assurance is a substance which, in very great power, without the least merit or even desire on our part, has been deposited in our minds, which remains, and in the hour of necessity is efficacious in disposing high looks, leveling the most exalted mountain, bringing all to a plain. And, O, though in myself but a worm, I am assured by these workings that the Lord of glory is abiding within me! Jesus Christ, indeed, by his unseen power, is formed in my soul, which is (ah! can I write it?) my hope of glory; the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (God manifest, or manifestation of God), who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ! I only write to express thanks for your paper, and have followed my mind.

Your brother in hope,

B. L. LANDERS.

ADAIRSVILLE, GEORGIA, March 5, 1883.

*Elder I. N. Moon:—Dear Brother in Christ:—*Yours of February 25th, is at hand; its contents read and appreciated. And as the first four chapters of Daniel have, of late, been to me a source of great delight, I will pen a few thoughts thereupon; not that I can teach you, only as I hope we are helps one to another. "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem and besieged it: and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god."—Dan. i. 1, 2. Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon (Babel, confusion), and Jehoiakim was king of Judah (praise); but the Lord gave him into his hand!

"God works in a mysterious way,

His wonders to perform"—

"And Nebuchadnezzar ordered the master of his eunuchs to bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes, to stand in the king's palace; whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank." We now see those Hebrews, seed of their kings, in bondage under the reign of the king of Babylon. I understand the king to represent the Law; for as the law has power over its subjects, so did the king have power over his subjects. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank"; having meat to eat that the king knew not of. "Give us pulse to eat, and water to drink"; He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 7, 8. "And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm"; yet

He had to be condemned. And the king "dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him." And the magicians, and the astrologers, and sorcerers, and Chaldeans were sent for to show the king his dream; and they said, "Tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation." But the king said, "The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill." "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith it unto them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Christ was "made of a woman; made under the law." Thus we see that all the king's wise men fail, and there is but one decree for them: they must all die. "By the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all." Here all the wisdom of the world is brought to naught. As it is written, "God taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and bringeth to naught the understanding of the prudent." And, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: for even so, Father, it seemed good in thy sight." Thus, no life in the law; but death every time. What terror in this flaming sword, turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life! Often have you and I looked this way and that way, and begged for mercy; but the law knows no mercy. Pay me, saith Moses, that thou owest! How, then, can one be saved only upon the principle of a previous arrangement or Covenant? Christ, our representative, our surety, upon whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, must come as law-fulfiller, and as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. But what the law could not do being weak (yes, those magicians and astrologers were weak indeed!) and so are all the law-preachers to gospel subjects weak. But God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Why is the decree so hasty from the king? (A short work will the Lord

make upon the earth.) “Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, his companions.” Here we see the whole Trinity engaged. I can of my own self, saith Jesus, do nothing. Again, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision! O, how dark the night was! every avenue of light, and all hope of mercy from the king or law, was gone! Yet, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are his!”

I find, Brother Moon, that the subject is so sublime that I can not condense it into my short letter; for I would like to go on and speak of the “image” in its four likenesses, which was literally fulfilled in the fall of Nebuchadnezzar and the rising up of other kings. But I think its great beauty, in a gospel sense, sets forth the overthrow and downfall of the national Jew, and the bringing in of the heirs of promise out of all nations, people, kindreds and tongues. We are all in our usual health.

Yours, affectionately,

F. M. CASEY.

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STONEWALL, SCOTT Co., KY., February, 1883.

*Dear Brother Gilbert:*—For several years past I have felt impressed to write a part of my experience; and it is only in part that I can express it; though when I read the work of the Spirit in the hearts of others, I feel it better than I can express it.

My father died when I was only ten years old, and my mother told me that he was gone to heaven; from which day on I had serious thoughts about my future welfare. My father and mother were both Presbyterians up to the death of my father. At twelve years old I was bound out to learn a trade, and whilst away my mother joined the Baptists; and returning, after eighteen months' absence, she told me about her troubles and deep sorrows she had waded through in her

change of heart. From that very night (December 24th, 1834) I believed a person had to have a change before entering the kingdom of Christ, but in what way I could not tell. I went back to my trade to work out my time. My master and his wife were Primitive Baptists, but he became so dissipated that he was excluded from the church—hence cared but little for his apprenticed boys. I therefore attended the Methodist Church regularly, and in 1836 joined them under the preaching of F. J. Perry, and was immersed in the Big Spring branch, at Georgetown, Ky., in December, 1837. My clothing was frozen stiff before I could get it changed, but I did not feel much chilled, though was greatly disappointed at not receiving a change of heart, as I expected to receive the Holy Ghost when I went into the water, or before I came out; but it was not so. I felt so distressed that I asked my Methodist brethren what I must do; and they told me to pray to God and he would pardon my sins; and, my dear brother, I did believe what they said, and went on in that way trying to pray for several years. In 1842 I went back to my old neighborhood to carry on a shop for myself, and there married into an Old Baptist family, but still went to my own meeting every Sunday to lead my "class," as I called it. By this time there were few better men than I felt myself to be. One day my mother said to me, "William, it is not your good works that will save you." I answered, "Mother, if I believed what you do, I would take my fill of sin." And seeing the tears stand in her eyes, I turned away and thought, "O, if I had that word back, I never would say so again!" About that time my wife was taken sick (1849), and remained sick about a year, during which time I had to go some six miles to see a doctor two or three times a week. About 3 o'clock one dark misty morning I propped my wife up in bed and started to see the doctor, and riding some two miles a thought struck me very forcibly, "If your wife dies where will she go to?" the answer, "To heaven"; but, "If you die where will you go to?" and I was bound to say, "To hell"; for I saw sin, like a mountain, rise up before me, making me feel that of a

creatures on earth I was the worst. I could not see how God could remain just and save such a sinner as I was. I rode on till I came to a very steep hill; there it got so dark I could not see the road; and when I got to the foot of the hill I could see a large rock worn white by the travel on the road. I got off of my horse, thinking I would there ask God once more for mercy to me, a poor sinner; but being afraid to kneel down lest God would strike me dead, I mounted my horse and went on to the doctor's, got my medicine and returned; but when I came in sight of my house, feeling so sure my wife was dead, I feared to enter; but feeling my doom was fixed, that God would banish me from his sight, I went on in and found my wife just as I had left her. She opened her eyes and looked at me, but I could not speak for some time; but when I did speak, I only said, "I am so glad you are alive," but did not tell her of my troubles. She soon got well, and said to me one day, "William, I want to join the church; what do you think about it?" I told her to hunt out the church of her choice and join them and be her own judge about the matter. This was in the spring of 1850. About this time old Brother Conrad would stop at my house once a month going or coming from Old Ray's Fork meeting. I would often hide myself when I saw him coming. I loved him, but did not want him to talk to me. One day I said, "Polly, I will go out in the woods to work," and taking up my axe, started out at the back door; as I went around the house I met father Conrad; reached out my hand, but did not speak; he went on into the house, and I stood still where I met him. He asked my wife "how Billy was getting along," and she said she "did not know what to say, for he ate and slept but little, and is almost crazy." This was Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1850; the next day (Saturday) being the regular meeting at Ray's Fork Church, my wife and I went to meeting, and she offered to the church that day and was received. I then thought I was not fit to live with her any longer, yet I loved her better than I ever did before. Next day was communion with the church, and as

my wife went up with the other members in front of the pulpit, I thought there was a line drawn between myself and her forever. They all looked like angels to me; but poor me! I felt so wretched that I thought I would sink through the floor. I sat there till one of the members came and said to me, "Let us go home"; and, O my brother, from that time on my troubles were sore to me! The first week in the following October my wife was taken sick again. I would get up soon in the morning and build a fire, put on the tea-kettle, and go to the spring for water. On the first Monday morning in October, 1850, while at the spring, I kneeled down and tried to pray to God to move that great burden from my heart; my words did not seem to go higher than my head, and I went to the house worse, if possible, than before. Tuesday morning I did the same thing over, but Tuesday night I was afraid to go to sleep lest God would kill me and send me to an awful hell. So I lay awake till about daylight, when I dozed off to sleep. When I awoke I was scared, and astonished to find myself yet alive and out of hell. I jumped up, took my bucket, and ran to the spring, and there fell on my knees and tried to ask God to move this great burden from my heart, that was pressing me to the ground. I well remember the sun was shining through the trees in my face, and I said, "O God, please let thy grace shine in my heart as that sun shines in my face!" Then and there I felt that great burden that rested so heavy on my heart, begin to move downward. It seemed as dark as night from my hips down; but above that, all looked yellow, as though all nature had changed. I got up on my feet and started to the house, getting nearly there before I thought of my bucket. I went back and got my bucket of water and returned to the house, told my wife I was well and wanted something to eat. My dear brother, I was perfectly easy; had no fear about me; don't know that I thought of God, heaven or hell, or any thing about my future. I was very stupid; indeed, I do not know that I did any kind of work the rest of the week, only to help my wife about her cooking. I ate very heartily and slept well the remainder of

the week. So on Saturday evening next I said to my wife, "Come, Polly, let us go down and see my mother; you have not been there for a long time." She said, "I have not been out for so long, I am fearful it will make me worse." It only being a short distance, I told her I could fix her up so there would be no danger; that exercise would do her good. However, we went down to stay all night with mother, who was living with one of her sons-in-law. Supper being over, I took my seat near a little table where my sister always kept her Bible and hymn-book. I took up the Bible and read about the sow that was washed turning to her wallowing in the mire, and the dog to its vomit, &c., in Peter, and began an argument with my brother-in-law (Abraham Jones) about a man falling from grace. I said, "Don't you see how plainly it is set forth in this scripture by the dog and the sow?" He said to me, "Stop; do you believe what you say?" It struck me to the heart like a dagger. I could say no more; and getting up, looked around the room for my wife, but she being puny had gone to bed unnoticed by me. I followed mother up stairs to her bed-room, and said to her, "Mother, I would not begrudge my right arm if I had not come here to-night." She said, "Why, my son? what is the matter?" I said, "I have hurt all their feelings; and above all I have hurt yours." She said, "O, no; you have not hurt me; but I feel sorry for you, yet I am glad for Jesus' sake." I got up, started down stairs, and when near where my wife was in bed, the thought struck me: "you need not lie down, for you can not sleep." So I left the house and went down to the mill-yard and there kneeled down between two saw-logs, and if any poor mortal ever did try to pray I did, begging the Lord to show me some way to escape the awful vengeance due to me. But when I arose to my feet I felt, if possible, two-fold worse than before; so that I was willing to have exchanged places with any of the brute creation, or fowls of the air, or any thing that had no soul to be damned. Went back to the house, and as I went to bed the clock struck 10; heard it strike 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, and thought it near time to strike 4, when, as quick as thought, a

voice seemed to say, "Seek out your own salvation, for by faith thou art saved." I turned over and asked my wife, "Polly, did you hear that?" She said, "No, I heard nothing." The joy that filled my poor soul at that time I never can tell. I felt as though I could fly. I arose, dressed myself, went out into the yard, and looked around upon all nature, feeling that I would be a happy man the rest of my life; that I would never commit another sin while I lived; every thing looked new, and all nature seemed to be praising God; the sun arose so beautiful and bright that even the rocks looked like gold, and the dew-drops on the trees looked like tinsels of silver. I thought surely I will be a happy man all my days, for now I could see how God could remain just and save even me, though I be the chief of sinners. I looked northward, and there between the heavens and the earth, was suspended the Son of God, his dear blood running down to the ground. This I beheld with the eyes of my understanding. I saw the way so plainly how sinners were saved, that I thought I could show it to any one—even through the finished work of Jesus, the blessed Son of God. I went on home, and went out into the field to cut up corn; by this time doubts began to arise in my mind: "was it a dream, or was it religion?" A voice seemed to say, "Thou fool! did I not tell thee to seek out your own salvation?" I quit my work and started to the house to tell my wife about my troubles, but before I got there that joy all left me; so I went to the bucket, took a drink of water, and returned to my work without saying any thing to my wife about it. From this time on I wanted to be baptized. I did not value my Methodist immersion worth any thing. I could hardly wait till the next meeting of Old Baptists at Ray's Fork; but when I went to the meeting, fears of disgracing the cause of Christ kept me from offering to the church. The next meeting—first Saturday in December, 1850—by the help of the Lord, I offered to the church, was received, and baptized the next day by Elder William Conrad.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,

WILLIAM LINN.

RUSSELL COUNTY, ALA., September 20, 1882.

*To the Members composing the Church at Mount Olive:—Dear Children of God:—*I hardly know how to present myself before you. I had hoped I could visit the church, and see your faces, but all hope is gone; and I have felt many times impressed to write you, but have neglected to do so until now. You received me as a sister in your church through Sister Sallie Key and my precious daughter and sister. When they brought the news to me, I felt thankful, and hoped to meet you some time; but my health being so bad, and the distance and many things unnecessary to mention, I have been disappointed. And now, dear brethren and sisters, if life lasts I soon will have to leave for a far-off country, where I know I shall never see your faces again on earth. O, how often have the tears run down my cheeks! and I can hardly see what I am writing now! I wipe them away. My lot has been one of loneliness and sorrow. I have felt that I lived in a wilderness, far from the building, and hear not the sound of the hammer nor the blowing of the trumpet; doubts, fears and darkness would seem to overwhelm; but many times, when ready to despair and sink down with my load, it seemed as though there was an invisible Hand that would lift my sorrows and make all things beautiful in His time—even death and the cold winter of life. It is only by hope that I live. Dear brethren, it is now the 9th of November. I have been so full of sorrow I thought I never would finish my letter; but this morning I felt so corrupt and defiled, and saw my sinfulness, and felt like I could not see how God could look on such a poor, corrupt worm as I with pitying eye, it came in my mind that Jesus died for sinners, and my mind ran to Calvary's bleeding brow, beholding a dear Saviour that had done all things well; that his blood "cleanseth from all sin"; yea, that he had loved me with an everlasting love. I then could say, "I am black, but comely." O, how blessed it is to feel that Jesus is your friend when all things else fail! Dear children of God, pray for one who loves you and desires the peace and happiness of the people of God. My lot has been to wander

alone in the wilderness of this world, and much sorrow I have seen; but if I am a child of God, my sorrows soon will be at an end, and I shall go to my sweet home that was prepared before the world began, and has been revealed to me in time that I shall possess it in eternity. O, the richness of God's mercy, love and wisdom! Dear brethren, I feel very thankful for your kindness. I pray God to bind you in one chain of love. Ever remember your pastor that labors for you. Be strong in the Lord; for if you are children, the inheritance is yours, and all the children shall come home to the Father's house. Blessed be God forever! Farewell!

ELVIE MYHAND.

UCHEE, ALABAMA, March 11, 1883.

*To the Church at Mount Olive:—Dear Brethren and Sisters:—* I hope you can excuse and forgive me for my absence and silence. I desired to come to both January and February meetings, but have failed, and I feel that it is my duty to write and send the above letter, which my dear mother left and requested me to send to the church. Mother is better pleased with her home in Arkansas than she expected to have been and thinks her health is better than it has been for years past. Dear brethren and sisters, I have felt at times that the Lord is with me, and has prepared me to meet sorrows, troubles and disappointments. This has given me a quiet and peaceful mind, and I hope I have a heart of praise to God. Believing that He doeth all things right, I desire reconciliation to His will. Pray for me.

Your sister, as I hope, in Christ, SABRINA C. KEY.

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By special action of the church at Mount Olive, Lee county, Ala., the foregoing letters of sister Myhand and her daughter, sister Key, were delivered to us for publication in the GOSPEL MESSENGER. Those letters were received at the March church meeting, and read at the close of conference under circumstances very touching and affecting to the whole church present.

Two members, a brother and his wife, had moved from the vicinity of the church, and for five years they remained away without ever once letting the church hear from them, and then returned and engaged in business, but still did not come to meeting nor give any explanation. Some of the brethren and sisters visited them, tenderly insisting that they attend their church meetings; and the church officially appointed brethren to request their attendance, but they did not attend, nor give any other explanation for their *seven years'* absence than the nature of their worldly business being such as to subject them to too much pecuniary loss if they should take time and expense to come *three miles* to meeting once a month. After waiting on, and laboring very tenderly with them, for months, a vote touching church fellowship was taken, and they were unanimously excluded.

At the close of the same church conference the above letters of sisters Myhand and Key were read, and the contrast being so great between the spirit manifested by these precious sisters and that of the two excluded members, the hard heart of the pastor and writer was touched, and he, as well as nearly the whole of the members present, were melted into tears of humble gratitude to God for the meek, humble and Christ-like spirit bestowed upon these dear, lonely sisters. The pastor and church at Mount Olive know that their opportunity has not been favorable to attend their regular meetings, and have never attributed any wilful neglect to them; but we are glad to know that the spiritual desires, pantings, and longings of soul of these sisters clearly show that they are fully identified with, and feel a deep interest for, the poor and afflicted people of God.—M.

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“AS MANY as walk according to this rule, peace be on them.” To tread in any other path on earth, is to miss your way to heaven. If the golden chains of love to God do not bind you to duty, the iron chain of darkness will bind you eternally. He who abuses his liberty in one world, will forever lose it in another.

## EXPERIENCE.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.—Psalm lxvi. 16.

*Dear Brethren:*—I have been requested by some of the dear saints to write my experience and call to the ministry, but have, from a knowledge of my imperfection, deferred it from time to time. I will now try to relate my travail, in part, in being led out of bondage, if not deceived in the matter.

At first I was full of my own righteousness, having but little use for the Primitive Baptists, speaking of them generally in a way of burlesque. I read the Bible some, but more for argument than any thing else. But when asleep, the Saviour appeared to me, and gave me the Bible to read, telling me to read it; to which I answered, "I could not"; to which he replied, "I could; that I was an improved scholar." When I awoke, every thing seemed to be praising God. This was in 1871, when God's work was with me thus begun; and I was like a poor castaway, seeking some secret place in which to pray. My own righteousness had all given way, and my fountain run dry. In that condition my love for the people of God seemed to increase,—the people I once hated. I hated the things I once loved. I intended that nobody should find out my feelings, and thought I had them all concealed; but it was but a short time until it was talked that I could not stay away from the church much longer; and I was surprised when I saw they had so much better an opinion of me than I had of myself. I wandered about in this condition for six or seven months; but finally going to the church and relating my feelings, I was, to my surprise, received. This was on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1871. That night I dreamed my Saviour came to me and put me to preparing timber for the altar, telling me that if well done, that I would have to hew for the temple; and one piece being prepared for the altar, and seemed to be well done. This was a happy feeling for a poor, east down sinner. I was baptized next day by Bro. John Dryden, and it seemed to me that all my trou-

bles and toils were over, so that I went on rejoicing for two or three weeks; after which there began a self-examination, and I found there was a member in the church for whom I had no fellowship, and that member was myself; and I concluded the brethren had received me more for sympathy than for the cause of Christ, and that they were deceived. I went on in this condition for some time, but did not wish to disturb the peace of the children of God, but desired to practice the things that made for peace, but could not feel that I was worthy of a name or place amongst them; and when going among the brethren and sisters, could not feel that I was worthy to go into their houses; and though they treated me as kindly as possible, I thought it was surely only for manners' sake rather than love. During this time I made several promises to God that I would exercise my gift in public in order to get rid of my troubles, but believing that if I did, the brethren would disdain me; but woe was with me if I did not; so when meeting time would come I would put it off to the next meeting and the next. I continued in this way until my mind was almost gone. They would send me to the Association, but whilst I could not feel that I was a proper one for it, yet I desired to be submissive to them. When I would get to the place of worship, this scripture would often come to my mind: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them."—Job i. 6. At times I thought I had gone beyond the reach of God's mercy, yet I seemed to be orderly in practice,—which may seem strange to some,—yet I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord, who restrained me from evil practices and crimes. I knew that God was not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness; and that he who knew his Master's will, and did it not, should be beaten with many stripes. I often sought some secret place to pour out my complaint to God, but no relief could I find; and like one alone I seemed to be, as I was led through the wilderness,—a land of desert and pits, of drought and the shadow of death,—one through which no man passed, and

where no man dwelt (Jer. ii. 6.) It was a time of lamentation; my feet had almost slipped, and I was almost insane, though I don't believe I lost sight of that blessed Victim upon the cross. O wonderful! (for I can say no less), that I should have been preserved in such distress,—for it seemed to me that every man's hand was against me, and I was made to hold my peace, counting all things but loss that I might win Christ, looking to him as the author and finisher of my faith. When I laid down at night, I knew not whether I would awake in this life or in the depths of hell. I went on in this way two or three years, viewing myself at times as hanging over the gulf of woe by a small thread, and that it would have been just in God to have cut the thread and let me sink never to rise again. I sought death, but it fled from me. But, dear brethren, I am unable to give a detailed history of my "ups and downs" whilst in that dark valley. One day I went to a meeting, and promised myself that if the brethren would agree to it, that I would try to close the meeting with prayer; but I drew back when the singing was over, as I had done before; and as Peter of old, when he denied his Master, and it came to his mind when the cock crew what he had done, so, if not mistaken, beloved brethren, I heard the same thing that Peter did, and examining, I found that Peter had denied his Master just as I had been doing. O the trouble I was in! compassed about with thick clouds and thunders and distresses, so that I cried, Can mortal be found with troubles like mine! so that, with Job, I could say, Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my hand? and, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; and I lay down, saying, When shall I arise and the night be gone? and, I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. It appeared to me that I had committed the unpardonable sin in the vows I had made to the blessed God of heaven, who rules the times and seasons. I came to this conclusion: that I could not die, neither could I live, and so took a trip to the western part of the State to see if I could get some relief, but none could I find. The day I left I was as if in the midst of a circle of

darkness. O, great was the darkness! so that it seemed that the brute creation and the fowls of the air were praising God, and I thrust out! In that condition I could think of nothing to reach my case but Jonah cast into the belly of hell for disobedience. Whilst there, in Hill county, I vowed to my God, if he would enable me to get back home, I would try to serve him the remainder of my days; and I now often when trouble awaits me, think of that. The nearer I got to home, the more the darkness gave way, until it was all gone. A short time after this a beloved brother (D. Richardson) said to me, "Do you not feel like it is your duty to exercise a gift in the church?" and I said to him, "I do at times feel so." But I was sorry he asked me that, for then I knew it was out and that I could not call it back. Elder J. R. Burns was the pastor of our church, and he requested the church to liberate any who might feel impressed to speak in the church; and about that time I made the attempt to speak in public. Bro. Burns was a father to me until his death, which was not long after I commenced, in August, 1877. I went on trying to speak in His name, when it came to my ears that I was going to be mobbed; but by faith only could I stand, and they be turned away by His command. When the church began to speak of my ordination, it seemed to me that it was more than I could bear, feeling to be so very incompetent for that high and holy office; so I cried unto God to show me my duty; and one night I dreamed that I was the leader of the people, and heard a great noise and thunder in the elements, as of great calamity, and I told the people that it was what we should have before the end of time; and looking, I beheld Christ coming in the clouds with his power and great glory, two golden lamps on either side and Christ in the midst; and in his brightness I went to fall at his feet, when he said to me, "I am come to take the names of my people in the book he had in his hand"; and said to me, "Your name is enrolled in it." No tongue can tell, nor pen write, the comfort I received from that heavenly vision. Truly,

"God works in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform"—

On the 9th of February, 1879, I was set apart as an ordained minister to the work. Dear brethren, it was a point I longed to know: was I a fit subject to baptize one of God's children? But when the time came for that work, I could then say, as David, "My heart was enlarged; and I could cry out and say, Salvation is of the Lord." So I have been trying to preach and trying to quit, and it seems I can't do either. But there are three things I love to hear preached: A finished salvation, A complete Saviour, A perpetual love. There are two things I can rejoice in: My infirmity, and the blessed little hope I sometimes think I have got. It is a comfort to me day by day.

Your brother in humble hope,

*Cairo, Jasper Co., Texas.*

J. S. CONN.

HELP FROM SORROW.—No words can express how much the world owes to sorrow. Most of the "Psalms" were born in a wilderness. Most of the "Epistles" were written in a prison. The greatest thoughts of the greatest thinkers have all passed through fire. The greatest poets have "learned in suffering what they taught in song." In bonds Bunyan lived the allegory that he afterwards indited; and we may thank Bedford Jail for the "Pilgrim's Progress." All the foremost worthies of our world, all the spiritual heroes of our race, have been men of sorrow and acquainted with grief. Take comfort, afflicted christian! you have often prayed to be made of some use in the world before you die, and now the answer to that prayer has come. God tries you because in some way he is about to use you; for your history will furnish no exception to the rule that when God is about to make pre-eminent use of a man He puts him in the fire.

When Achilles was asked, what enterprises he found the most easy; he answered, "Those which I undertake for my friends." Jacob's seven years' service seemed as nothing, because it was for a woman he loved so much. St. Austin says, "All things are easy to love."

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

## MOURNERS BLESSED.

Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted.—Mat. v. 4.

These are the gracious words which fell from the lips of Jesus the Son of God, when he preached his first sermon to his disciples on the mount. Whom he pronounced blessed, they are blessed indeed ; and blessed of God with a blessing never to be reversed. The Lord Jesus Christ, as a Minister of the word, unlike to any other minister, was not liable to misunderstand nor make mistakes in the application of things. When He, therefore, says the "mourner is blessed," no art of human reasoning, nor ingenuity of man, can possibly make it apply correctly to any other character than the mourner. True, there are other descriptions of character who inherit similar blessings, but this does not exclude the mourner from it, but rather embraces him as being partaker of all spiritual blessings in common with the poor in spirit ; the meek ; the merciful ; the peacemakers ; the persecuted ; and such as hunger and thirst after righteousness.

It is worthy of remark that in all this cluster of blessings, as applicable to these varied descriptions of character, not one of them is alone ; they are jointly connected. The truly poor in spirit, is also a mourner in Zion, hungering and thirsting after righteousness ; he is also merciful, and truly a peacemaker in heart. These are fruits and graces of the spirit of Christ, of which He is "full," and from whom the whole body of true believers in Him "have received grace for grace" ; that is, repeated supplies of it, according as the daily needs, afflictions, temptations and trials require. "Grace for grace." Grace after grace ; grace upon grace ; grace first and grace last. The first supply is like the last, and the last is as the first. And the poor mourner, who, by the gift of grace in his soul, has seen his polluted, wretched and needy condition, never receives so much at any one time as to feel no need for more

at another time. Like the manna gathered by the Israelites in the wilderness, none can be laid up for to-morrow. Day by day each child of grace needs to be reminded of his continual dependence upon God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift. That grace which strengthens, supports and encourages you in a certain affliction, trial or temptation now, will not help you through at another time. You may think, when you are enjoying the light of God's countenance, and blessed with comfort and strength in your soul, that you will never again be so distrustful of God's mercy and goodness to you; that you will never again yield to temptations, nor become so cast down under trials and afflictions, as you have done in days past. But let the trial come suddenly upon you, and the realizing sense of the Lord's spirit be gone from you, and you are again plunged in the ditch of gloom, despondency and despair.

But, dear christian reader, in our hasty consideration of these gloomy trials and forebodings, which the true worshippers of God have ever been subject to, let us not forget that the word of the Lord has gone forth, saying, "Blessed are they that mourn." This blessing is never to be withheld from them; this word is never to return void. It stands forever. These mournings and thirstings after righteousness,—these groanings under a feeling sense of sin and corruption,—testify that the poor mourner is not "dead in sins." He is not, as some are described by the Holy Ghost to be, "past feeling" (Eph. iv. 18.) But he is alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ. His mourning over his sins, his prayers and confessions, show conclusive signs of inward life. It is the living child that feels pain and cries for help. It is the living that hunger and thirst, and need to be fed.

And now, dear mourner in Zion, let us entreat you to cheer up a little. There are many exceeding great and precious promises which your heavenly Father hath graciously given you. And let us remind you that this blessed promise in the text, itself embraces all other promises. The mourner "*shall be comforted.*" This promise is freely made, without conditions

It is the unchanging decree of God: "They *shall* be comforted." They need it,—they mourn for it,—they hunger and pray for it,—because the spirit of Christ and of God is in them, creating a longing desire for the very things which the Lord has provided for them. Those who do not thus mourn do not feel any need, nor any desire for the spiritual comfort which the Lord has promised these mourners.

It is worthy to be remembered here that these mourners, to whom the promise of comfort applies in our text, are brought into the experimental and intimate fellowship of Christ's sufferings. In his Manhood, in "the days of his flesh," he was "a man of sorrows, and *acquainted* with grief." In this particular it is said, "he went a mourner all his days." Then, dear child, can you not take a little comfort, and be glad to mourn with him? If we suffer with him, we shall also reign in life and in glory with him.

But these mourners *shall* be comforted. And now let us see how well our God has provided for it. It is a most wonderful arrangement! It embraces "all the fullness of the Godhead in Christ." Infinite love! Almighty power! Matchless grace! Just listen a little how the spirit of the Lord speaks upon this subject, when Christ the Saviour is presented: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; to comfort *all that mourn*; to appoint unto them that *mourn* in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the *oil of joy* for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they (the mourners) might be called trees of righteousness; the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isa. lxi. 1-3. Thus we see that the whole plan of salvation through Jesus Christ is arranged of God in view of comforting these mourners. They are "trees of righteousness; the planting of the Lord," which will never be "rooted up," as others assuredly will, whom he has not planted in his garden of grace.

In contemplating the gracious provision which the Lord hath made for comforting these mourners, the subject swells

before us into such dimensions that we find it impossible, with our dim vision, feeble strength, and the limits of an editorial article, to present more at this time. Let this promise of God rejoice the heart: "*The mourner shall be comforted.*" The letter of truth is very precious, yet it often fails to comfort these mourners. Therefore God has provided "another Comforter, the Holy Ghost, even the *Spirit of truth*, whom the world can not receive. He shall abide with you forever. "Blessed are they that mourn."—M.

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### THE LAME AT THE GATE.—ACTS III.

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We have been so dead for the last month, that we have been unable to write any thing that seemed to be worth its space in the MESSENGER; but somehow we could not feel satisfied to send it forth without a word to the strangers and pilgrims scattered abroad in the world. And as there are many, even in this day, of the Lame at the Gate, we would, if we could, say something of and to them. This one attracted the interest of the apostles Peter and John, and they did him a "good deed"; and the same spirit is yet in the children of God to do good deeds to the helpless and needy, if not the same measure of faith to do the great deeds done by them. It was a good work, and therefore one not done by the flesh nor to the glory of the flesh; but of the Spirit, and to the glory of Christ. It was a wonderful work, and in a certain sense such as of which we in this age have no experience. Should we hear now of a man born lame, and so to above the age of forty years, being restored in an instant to "perfect soundness" by the words of some man, we would discredit it because it would be so greatly at variance with our experience. But when we read such things in the scriptures, we believe them, because they are confirmed as truth to us by the Spirit, as we believed an aged minister once, who told us, when we were to all appearance upon our death-bed, that he had in prayer experienced faith for us that we should live and not die; we believed him, because—well, because we did at

could not help it—as we breathe because we breathe. We have the witness of the Spirit, and therefore believe some things that we ourselves have not experienced, but which others in the same spirit have experienced. Those brethren with Paul in the tempest, when “neither sun nor stars in many days appeared” (Acts xxvii), believed him when he said, “There stood by me this night the angel of God, saying, Fear not, Paul; there shall be no loss of life among you.” They believed him, but they heard not the angel imparting the heavenly message to him for them as well as himself. He had faith for them, and they had it when he imparted the message to them. It was a good deed done them, too; but no better for them than for Paul. We have thought and believe that many of the children of God have the true spirit of faith, but are unable to tell why they believe, more than that they do because they do. They are as helpless as infants, and as infants, can not talk; but they hunger and suffer more; and though above forty years of age, are but as infants at the breast. Unbelievers and infidels point to such wonderful and miraculous works as evidences against the truth of the scriptures; and we wonder, because the truth of the scriptures, the true spirit of them, can not be received by the natural man. Christians are really the only true witnesses of the truth of the scriptures, because they only have the witness of the Spirit. It is true, that none of us in this age have experienced the physical healing of such an impotent man, but Paul, Peter and John tell us that they did, and we believe them, as those on board the ship believed Paul; and as you all believe what our dear fellow laborer, Elder Mitchell, tells us in this issue, of the operation performed on his eye; you believe him, because you have confidence that the spirit of truth is within him, and you know what that spirit is—that there is no lie in it. Therefore, though infidels are weakened, and reject the scriptures because they can not conform them to their natural and depraved reason, christians are rather strengthened by these displays of the power of faith in the apostles. But there is a sense in which we are eye-witnesses of the Lamé being

restored by faith to perfect soundness in Christ, and have seen them stand, walk, leap in heart and praise God. The kingdom in which we live as christians is a spiritual one—one not seen by the natural man, but only by those “born again”; it is not of this world. In it cripples are healed, the blind restored to sight, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised. We live, indeed, in two kingdoms—the natural and spiritual—but it is only in the kingdom of faith that the wonders are done in these days. The subject of our present notice was born lame—a thing of rare occurrence in the natural kingdom, but a universal one in the spiritual kingdom. All are lame when born into that kingdom, or born again; because it is the kingdom of truth, and therefore when we are born into it, we perceive the truth—and that is, that we are helpless by reason of sin. We were that before we were born again, but did not perceive it. This is a great change—this realization of our true condition in nature. We are not only born lame, but are born poor also; no rich ones are born into that kingdom. The kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor: “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” It not only means that they have Christ, but that they have nothing else but Christ; and that is their experience. This man was poor and impotent, and therefore a beggar at the gate. God’s lame are always poor; therefore realize the inspired truth, That the lame take the prey. When first born, as natural infants are destitute of knowledge, so are Christ’s infants; they know but little, but grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth. This poor man was, as we may say, an infant for above forty years; he knew little or nothing of the doctrine, and but little of himself, only that he was a poor cripple and had been so as long as he could remember; there had never been much change with him, that he could remember when it began. His ideas of truth were carnal; as Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, not as “unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.” His necessities carried him to the gate; he was there for alms, gold and silver, with which to exchange for food and raiment; as the

lame now seek to exchange their good works for God's grace; the progress of the pious, and their daily attendance at the gate of the temple for a living, and upon which they live, but do not grow strong, and which does not enable them to walk, and leap, and enter within the temple. So we come before God to barter, to offer him something for something, not expecting something for nothing; not that he did not desire what he got, but did not expect it; because if he had not desired, he would not have leaped in receiving it. So Peter and John came along, and seeing they were pious men, men going to prayers, he begged them. The right men for him came along at last—men whose preaching and faith restored him to perfect soundness. He was unsound before, but now he was sound. They fastened their eyes upon him; his condition attracted and impressed them, and then they called his attention to themselves, "Look on us"; not in an arrogant, boastful way, but to confess their poverty to him. We can't give you what you are begging for, because we haven't got it ourselves; we are as poor as you are: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk; and he took him by the right hand and lifted him *up*"—imparted his strength to him, as Paul did to the believers on board the ship. He saw that it was without money and without price—perfectly free—and he rejoiced, and entered within the temple with the apostles—went hand in hand with them—believing in, and preaching, salvation by grace.

May it not be that we pass by, so to speak, sometimes, impotent ones at the gate; those who would enter within the church, but they have no strength, no big experience, and we give them no encouragement, reach not forth our right hand to lift them up? But, then, if they are the spiritually impotent, would we not have faith for them? We were preaching one day, many years ago, and felt whilst preaching that some one was going to join the church; we didn't know who, but had faith that somebody would. When the door was opened, a lady arose at the back of the house and came to the pulpit;

and our assurance, before she spoke a word, that she was christian was as great as it was afterwards. We had, if we may so express it, faith that she was a christian, and have no doubt to-day but that she is in heaven—for she died many years ago. And in the church even there are cripples; those who need the countenance, aid and encouragement of the church to enter into a discharge of duty. Christ has something for the poor Lame at the Gate, however little they may know; and if Christ has, the church has. As for ourselves, it seems to us at this moment, that if we knew that we were really lame, as Christ's people are when born again, that we would walk, leap and skip, and praise God, even though we were helpless at the gate; that if we knew only that much, that we were lame by God's grace, that it would strengthen our ankle-bones to enter within the temple—to suffer, do and die.—R.

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By letter from Elder Lively, Alexander City, Ala., 22nd April, we learn that Bro. Z. L. Thomas was ordained to the ministry, by request of Hillabee Church, of Hackneyville, Ala., on Friday before second Sunday in April, 1883. Elders R. W. Carlisle, Whitten Cleveland, Garrett and Lively, constituting the presbytery. Of Elder Thomas the writer says: "He had been amongst the Missionaries for some time, and I could feel for and sympathize with him." Also that Brother Thomas' mother, also from the Missionaries, joined and was baptized Sunday morning. We have not space in this issue for the letter in full.

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ELD. B. L. THRONEBERRY, of Springtown, Texas, requests us to make corrections in his Experience, published in March. "I did not join the 'Methodists,' as therein stated, but the Separate Baptists; and New Hope Church did not have me 'ordained,' but only liberated me; but Arbor Church had me ordained in 1873, the presbytery being composed of Elders James Holman, T. G. Miller and J. A. Millhouse. May it be the will of God for some sound Primitive Baptist preacher to come this way, for such are needed for the truth's sake."

B. L. THRONEBERRY.

## TO CHILDREN.

*Dear Children*:—Casting around in mind what to write you at this time, we have concluded to say something to you about the Three Days Meeting, which we have an account of in the 5th chapter of Matthew. This meeting was very largely attended by nearly all classes, ages and sexes of people. There were “great multitudes” of men, women and *children* at that Three Days Meeting, and many of them had come a long distance on foot. There were many poor, helpless people there also, who had been kindly assisted by friends to get there, with a hope that they might enjoy the meeting and be greatly benefited. Some of these poor invalids were blind, others were lame; some were dumb and could not speak one word. But they had been informed of the Lord Jesus Christ; that he was good and compassionate to the poor and needy, and they wanted to be taken to him for relief. There was no fine house for them to meet in, but they went along and continued three days, until all their supply of provision was gone. It was a “desert place,” where no one lived to take care of such a big crowd.

Now, children, do you not think that these people must have felt a great interest in that meeting, to have remained three days in the woods, and so far from their homes, without any thing to eat? No doubt many of them felt a deep concern, and their motives for going to that meeting were good. Some may have gone,—like some people now go to meeting,—to be in company, or from idle curiosity. But whatever their motives may have been, they were *there*. Jesus knew the motives, as well as the condition, of every one of them. He reached to them; and these poor, blind people, who could not see any thing when they left home, were made to rejoice greatly by having sight given them. The dumb ones were made to speak and sing for joy; and those who went there lame, were made to walk all right. So you see, children, that those who went there or were carried there in the worst and most helpless condition, were the most benefited; and they,

no doubt, were the happiest people when that meeting broke up, of all the multitude who attended.

But as we can not now say much about it, we want to notice how that meeting broke up. Many of them had been made to feel very happy during their stay with Jesus in this "desert place," but now how should they get home? They had nothing to eat, and if they should continue fasting till they could get home, they would be so feeble as to "faint by the way." Jesus Christ knew all about them, and all about what would be needful for them; and as the poor invalids,—such as the blind and dumb,—had been made to rejoice, He now determined to show compassion to the whole multitude. He says: "I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way." But "seven loaves and a few little fishes" were all the provision present; but by Christ's blessing upon it, "four thousand men" eat of it, "besides women and children, and were filled." So that Three Days Meeting broke up, and all went away.

We think it would be well for parents now, as much as possible, to take their children along with them when they go out to hear the gospel preached. This they could generally do by adopting the ancient style, when they "ran afoot out of all cities" unto Jesus (Mark vi. 33.) M.

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### OUR AFFLICTED EYE.\*

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For some months past we have had some affliction in one of our eyes, and on Friday, April 13th, we went to Atlanta, Ga. to consult Dr. A. W. Calhoun, who is deservedly one among the most skillful and distinguished oculists on this continent. Having a note of introduction, kindly tendered us by our esteemed friends, Judge J. M. Norwood and Dr. J. B. Barnett of Opelika, we were very courteously received by Dr. Calhoun who at once informed us that nothing short of a surgical operation would do any good; and on Saturday, April 14th, the

skillful Doctor, with steady hand, performed the delicate, painful, and somewhat bloody operation. We remained in Atlanta for further treatment, a few days; but finding after twelve days at home that our eye had become painful, Dr. Arnett advised that we had better again return to Atlanta, which we did, April 26th. How long we shall stay here, is not now known; but, if the Lord permit, it is our design to leave here Wednesday, May 2nd, for Acworth, Ga., to fill an appointment for preaching at that place; and also in Tennessee. We hope to have the company of Elder J. S. Baxley, of Notasulga, Ala.

We wish in this connection to state that Eld. J. G. Eubanks, pastor of the Primitive Church in Atlanta, was with us when the surgical operation was performed on our eye; and during our stay in Atlanta, he and other beloved brethren gave us every attention possible to make us comfortable, for which we desire to feel very grateful.

As our condition will not now admit of our writing much, we may at some future time, if the Lord permit, give further notice of the kindness of our brethren during our stay in the city.—M.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

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ALAFIA, FLORIDA, April 14, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—We are having some increase in our churches in this section; and trust the Lord is adding daily to his church such as he would have to be saved. Brethren, I believe that as many as were ordained to eternal life will be saved in time with an everlasting salvation. Brethren, we have long had it in mind to write some of my ups and downs through life, but feel that it would be a big undertaking, as I am an old man, and having experienced many things, temporally speaking, and some things, spiritually. I was born in September, 1821, and united with the Primitive Baptists in the year 1847; and, in a hobbling way, I have been trying to preach the gospel of the Son of God. In trying to preach, I have had some very dark times, and have felt very badly because of inability to do justice to the cause; at other times, I have felt the answer of a good conscience. I have been trying to preach and trying to quit for a long time, and can't do either; so I am not my own, but bought with a price,

and hope that I am kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Pray for me and the prosperity of Zion, which prosperity is the desire of your unworthy servant,

THOMAS S. EVERS.

CADE'S COVE, BLOUNT COUNTY, TENN., March, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—After reading so many communications from brethren and churches, I feel that, perhaps, some of God's chosen few would like to hear from a Primitive Baptist church in this mountain country. Beloved brethren, to some extent, I suppose, we have the same trials that God's people have elsewhere. I feel like we have had our part of the afflictions of Zion, having been seemingly at times almost trodden under the feet of men, and our names cast out as evil. But we can praise God for the work of grace begun in our church. It has pleased Him to give us the greatest revival we have ever experienced. There have been 20 added to the church and more are expected; and all were revived wonderfully to duty. Dear brother, it looked as if God was preparing his people for judgment during this glorious meeting. Our church now has 68 members and two public speakers. Brethren A. W. Shields and James E. Gregory are set apart as Deacons. And in conclusion I want to say that although we live in a mountain country, we feel that as the mountains were round about Jerusalem, so the Lord God is round about his people. Dear brethren, as I can not tell when it will be winter in the heart again, I ask an interest in the prayers of the readers of the MESSENGER, as the lions are already roaring around us, desiring to devour us; and as for myself, I feel that I need the prayers of God's people, having been a member only five years and but twenty-five years of age, with the solemn responsibility of a minister (if I be one at all) upon me, feeling most sensibly my weakness.

We are pleased with the MESSENGER, and pray that God will bless you and Brother Mitchell in the good work in which you are engaged.

WILLIAM H. OLIVER.

DENMARK, LAFAYETTE COUNTY, MISS., April 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—Our brethren in this section are highly pleased with the MESSENGER. They admire the style in which it is gotten up and more than all, the gentle and lovely manner each one writes their communications. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But how painful and distressing it is to hear of strife and confusion! Our churches through this country are in peace and fellowship, and some of them are in a prosperous condition. But the harvest is great, and the laborers are few. We only have four or dained ministers and two licentiates in our Association, and three of them are old and nearly worn out. Elders Meader, Parks and Castleberry are worthy and highly esteemed fathers in Israel, and have faithfully con

tended for the faith once delivered to the saints, for more than half a century. May the blessed Lord richly sustain them in their old age, and give them a peaceful hour to depart and receive their reward! May the dear Lord bless his general Zion with the outpouring of his Spirit and the incomes of his grace, and send laborers into his harvest to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his blood!

Yours in love and fellowship,

A. B. MORRIS.

DADEVILLE, ALABAMA, April 25, 1883.

*Dear Brother:*—Enclosed you will find one dollar to pay for the MESSENGER, as I do not feel like doing without it. I have had a name among the Baptists for twenty-two years, unworthy as I am. I am now sixty-six years old, and don't feel like I was fit to be amongst as good people as I think they are. I had a dream some time after I joined the church, that has caused me a great deal of trouble: I was staying all night with a good old brother, and retiring to a room to myself, I went to sleep, and dreamed that there was something said to me, "This bed is for hypocrites to sleep in," and it has caused me to see great trouble for fear I was acting the hypocrite. I will stop.

Your brother in hope,

R. Y. WILLIAMSON.

A hypocrite has no such fear as that, dear brother.—ED.

ST. ELMO, ALABAMA, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—I would say to you in behalf of the MESSENGER, I appreciate the manner in which it is conducted, as well as the rich and instructive editorials, and also the precious letters from different parts of the country, bearing witness of the same Spirit of the Lord, which teacheth every one of his children to know him, whom to know is eternal life. I feel, dear brethren, somewhat encouraged in the circulation of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and many brethren speak in favor of it. I thank God that he put it into your mind to send it to me, and I hope before this year is out it will be increased four-fold. I do pray the Lord to bless it wherever it may be sent; for I must think, from the price of it, that it is a contribution to subscribers rather than a speculation upon them. May the Gracious Father bless you with all temporal blessings you need, and grace to sustain you in his glorious work while you live. I hope to remain your humble servant and brother, in hope of life eternal.

J. R. S. BULLARD.

ARCOLA, GEORGIA, April 15, 1883.

I, this morning, being 3rd Sunday, will write you a short letter, which will inform you that we are all busy about getting off to meeting, as you know it is our meeting time. We will have Baptism this morning. One was received yesterday by experience of grace; and, Brother Respass, it does seem that we have had a long cold and dry time here, but I do hope that the Lord has visited us again, and lifted upon us the light of his reconciled countenance. Brother Respass, do pray for us that we may ever live the life of the people of God!

As ever, yours in tribulation.

G. B. RICHARDSON.

NICHOLLS, COFFEE COUNTY, GA., April 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—A sad and distressing death occurred here 26th March last. Joseph G. Dedge, a nephew of mine, aged 12 years and 6 months, was killed by a falling tree. He was moving some rails, whilst his father was cutting down a tree, and as his father saw the tree was breaking across the kerf, he cried to him to run, and the poor boy ran into the path of the tree, which fell upon him, tearing his head all to pieces, scattering his brains all around for some thirty feet from the body, and breaking his bones. It was an awful sight to look upon, and seemed more than his poor father could bear.

Yours in hope of a better world,

C. W. MEEKS.

Brethren, I would be glad you would write on Rev. ii. 4, 5. [Will some brother do so.—ED.]

GORDON, GEORGIA, April 4, 1883.

*Dear Brother* :—I am deprived of the privilege of attending meetings on account of affliction, having been a sufferer from asthma for nine years, and the MESSENGER is a great consolation to me.

Your unworthy brother,

D. BATEMAN.

TALLOCS, BROOKS COUNTY, GA., March 31, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—Enclosed find pay for the continuance of the MESSENGER to me. It is a great comfort to me to read its pages filled with gospel truths. I feel so sad, lonely and cast down since the death of my dear husband. My only joy, I hope, is in Christ; and he is a stronghold in the day of trouble. Dear brethren and sisters, remember me in your prayers.

Your sister, I hope, in Christ,

JINCY STRICKLAND,

widow of John Strickland.

MACON, GEORGIA, April 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—This will inform you that we are all well except Brother Harrison, who has been very sick, but is now, I think, getting better. Elder Jimmy Smith was here, and preached for us a very comforting and edifying sermon. Brother Patterson baptized one last Sunday. Elder Rowe, also, has been with us, and preached a very instructive and consoling sermon. Nothing more save that our church is in peace and love. Hoping that you may visit us again soon, I remain your brother in hope,

F. L. BROWN.

AFTON, GEORGIA, March 20, 1883.

*Elders Respass and Mitchell* :—*Dear Brethren in Christ* :—I forward herewith a notice of the death of Bro. John Strickland, of Brooks county Ga., feeling at the same time I have fallen short of using language which will accord to him in outspoken terms the merit of which he was so much worthy as a citizen, neighbor, friend, husband, father, and member of

the church of Christ; which, though it is a little lengthy, I hope you will publish. I have been acquainted with him from his youth; had charge of the church of which he was a member, the last year; which church was, and is, in a prosperous and healthy condition. I think there were six accessions to it last year—four by letter, one by experience and baptism, and a beloved sister on confession of faith, the church to which she belonged having swerved from the faith, and went off with a party known in this section as Battleites; though in her confession she said she never went from the faith of the Primitive Baptists; the church went, but she did not.

My feelings seem to require me to revert to a late and unexpected visit to Salem Church (where I have membership and the pastoral charge from its constitution about the date of 1855 to the present) of Elder John Rowe, of Butler, Ga. The church numbers about 70, and is generally in a healthy and prosperous condition; yet we had some trouble at the previous meeting, but all agreed in the management of said trouble; and when I had been confined to my room the preceding four days prior to the commencement of the meeting, not able physically considered to preach, I was unable to get to the place. However, God, who comforteth those that are cast down, enabled me to reach the place; and lo! when I arrived, there were Elders Rowe and Parrish, also a licentiate, and O, what a soul-stirring and comforting time! Paul certainly could not have been more comforted while in Macedonia at the coming of Titus. I almost forgot my affliction, and my soul seemed to mount up as on eagle's wings, while Elder Rowe seemed as it were to break and give to each the bread of life, the true bread, which, if a man eat thereof, he shall not die; and I could see many of the dear saints, who, I think, were feasting upon the fat things of the gospel, and in their countenances visibly expressed, "Lord, remove give us this bread."

I must close this article. I may have something more to say in the future in reference to Elder Rowe's late visit to this section, and hope he may visit us again soon, and my prayer is, the Lord prosper his journey wherever he may go preaching the kingdom of God and healing the sick.

Elder Respass, if agreeable, publish this and the obituary notice in the same issue, and oblige yours, as I hope, in the kingdom and patience of Christ,

E. J. WILLIAMS.

GRAHAM, GEORGIA, January 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—The MESSENGER comes regularly, and is a welcome visitor in my family. We enjoy it very much. Your and Bro. Fitchell's editorials, and his Letters to Children, are highly appreciated by us. I called in my two little boys and read the Children's Letter to them, and told them a good man in Alabama wrote it to them. And the many consoling letters of correspondents from different sections are a feast to a poor, unworthy worm of the earth, as I am. Elder J. C. Denton, of Texas, has fully given my feelings in regard to imperfections. He tells

it for me when he says he can't preach a sermon, or write an article on a religious subject, that does not give him more or less shame. I love him, and the many I read after; and were it not for the comfort I receive from the dear saints in their expressions on that subject, I should despair. I see a letter from Brother Lively that is good and consoling; but in the *Pathway*, I can't exactly follow him in saying that the Ministry ought to be exempt from labor only for their health. I don't feel that way about it. I know the churches ought not to burden their pastors—and they do wrong when they do it. It is not common for a minister to have the care of more than four churches; and I am of opinion that he should have a farm, or some other proper employment, if he is unable to live without it. What he lacks should be supplied to him by the churches, and they are very much out of their duty if they do not. That was the way the Primitive Baptists acted thirty-five or forty years ago, when I first noticed them. I saw their preacher come to the church in a suit made by his wife, and riding a pony horse, with his saddlebags; and after attending his meeting, he went home to work. What he needed more than he earned by his labor, the Deacons found out about it and supplied it. The Deacons also visited the poor of the church, whose needs were generally attended to by the church, and there was union and fellowship; for if I have read right, the word teaches equality, and that is my experience. I see no cause to abandon my farm. It is true, I have not as large a field of labor as some other brethren, and can be at home more, and when at home am engaged for the support of my family. I feel it my duty to do so, and feel as much relieved as in the discharge of a religious duty. It is my desire not to be chargeable to any, and feel so unworthy even of a small gift, much less to claim a living by it. The scripture teaches that it is more blessed to give than to receive; and also to work, that we may not lack, and have to give to them unable to work. I am very poor, and have not been able to give much; but have felt so pleasantly when I could help those in distress, as I ever have under any other circumstances! I have only given my feelings and understanding of the duty of the church to the pastor.

Yours in hope,

JOHN W. LOARD.

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## OBITUARIES.

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### JULIA JACKS.

This is to notify the relatives and friends of JULIA JACKS that she has departed this life. She was the daughter of W. A. and Virginia Carr, and wife of Mr. J. Jacks. She was born in Calloway county, Ky., January 17th, 1862 and died in Rockwall county, Texas, March 9th, 1883; aged 21 years, 1 month and 22 days. She was confined to her bed about eight months before she died, but in all her afflictions she was seldom heard to murmur or complain. She seemed to be resigned to the will of the Lord. She professed a hope in Jesus about three years before she died. She said before she died that she "had rather stay here, but if it was the Lord's will she was willing to go." We believe from the evidence that she gave before her departure that the Lord had indeed and in truth regenerated her soul, that she is now at rest, and that her soul or spirit has gone to join that happy company that has long gone before, and is there around the throne singing the praise of God and the Lamb in that bright world above, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. Farewell!

F. P. CHANDLER.

*Rockwall Co., Texas.*

## JOHN STRICKLAND

Was born March 9th, 1827, and departed this life December 29th, 1882, after much suffering, having been prostrate some three weeks with what his attending physician called white swelling. He was married to Jincy Alderman, April 22d, 1847, and at his death left ten living children—three sons and seven daughters, five of the daughters married. He obtained a hope in Christ of the pardon of his sins in the date of 1864, and was received into the fellowship of Bethel church, Brooks county, Ga., and was baptized by Elder H. C. Tucker the first Sunday in March, 1880, and was indeed a vigilant, interesting and consistent member, desiring and looking after the health and prosperity of the church. And though I lived twenty miles away, he so repeatedly called for me in his sickness and asked had I come. The family sent for me. I went and spent two nights with him, and at his request engaged in prayer at his bedside, and now regret I did not endeavor to preach, which he also requested, but felt at the time the nature of circumstances forbid it. He desired much to talk on the goodness of God, but was too feeble. He was very much resigned to the will of God. He said to me on parting with him he would be glad to live and serve the Lord more, but if otherwise directed, he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" But, alas, my dear niece, he is gone, is done with the troubles and suffering here, and no doubt you feel as the poet has described:

My head and stay is taken away,  
 And I am left alone;  
 My husband dear, who was so near,  
 Is taken away and gone.

But I hope and pray God to give you grace to bear you up in this heart-rending and trying scene. I know you have lost a good companion, your children a good father, the church a good and prominent member, the neighborhood and citizens a good friend, and the county a good citizen. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

*Afton, Ga., March 20, 1883.*

E. J. WILLIAMS.

## JOSA MOTLEY.

Brother JOSA MOTLEY was born February 17th, 1829, in Troup county, Ga., and departed this life January 16th, 1883, in Eastland county, Texas. He joined the Missionary Baptist Church in his seventeenth year, and married Martha J. Thomas, October 26th, 1848. Josa Motley was a son of John and Jane Motley, of Troup county, Ga. Martha J. Motley, the wife of Josa Motley, is a daughter of J. R. and Rebecca Thomas. Brother Motley joined the Primitive Baptist Church at County Line Church, of Troup county, Ga., in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and was baptized by Elder Burson, and moved to Eastland county, Texas, in 1871. I made the acquaintance of Brother Motley six years ago, and found him to be a consistent Baptist. I visited his neighborhood for two years. I went there in September, four years ago, with Elder D. P. Thomas to organize a church, and finding Brother Motley's family and the entire neighborhood sick, we failed to organize the church, and on account of the feeble health of Sister Motley, Brother Motley

was kept very close at home for the last five years of his life, for which cause he was debarred from church privileges. He said to his wife a short time before he died that he would sell out and move near the place I live, especially for church privileges. Brother Motley died as he lived in the faith of God's elect. I was called on the third Sunday of April, 1883, to pay to the memory of Brother Motley the last tribute of respect, using for a text Rev. xiv. 12, 13.

J. H. MILLER.

MRS. MARY SMITH AND JOHN W. SMITH.

Mrs. MARY SMITH, consort of Mr. James Smith, of Houston county, Ga., was born on the 4th of January, 1822, and died 2d day of February, 1883; aged 61 years and 26 days.

All through life she sustained a reputation noted for many noble traits and great purity of character. She was a lady against whom the tongue of evil never found occasion to utter a sentence. Kind and benevolent in her nature, she was beloved and respected by all who knew her. She was the idol of her household—an affectionate wife and a kind mother. In July, 1867, she professed faith in Christ, and united with the Primitive Baptist church at Fellowship, where she remained a consistent and acceptable member, leading the life of a devoted Christian to the day of her death.

On the 16th day of April, just two months and fourteen days from the date of her death, her eldest son, Mr. JOHN W. SMITH, died of heart disease; aged 38 years, 1 month and 8 days. He leaves a wife and four little children to mourn the untimely loss of an affectionate husband and kind father. Like his mother, John was beloved and respected by all who knew him. Although he never made an open confession of faith, the fortitude with which he bore up under his severe afflictions, which lasted nearly three years, together with his implicit obedience to the heavenly mandate, gave unmistakable evidence of his acceptance at the right hand of Jehovah. He quietly folded his arms in death and the soul and body separated without a murmur or struggle.

*Houston Co., Ga., April 18, 1883.*

A FRIEND.

ELISABETH A. GASSETT.

By request, I pen a brief notice of the death of Sister ELISABETH A. GASSETT, who departed this life at her home in Taylor County, Ga., on the 25th of January, 1883; aged 64 years, 5 months and 24 days. She was born in Pitt county, N. C., August 1st, 1818; was the daughter of George and Mary Bland; joined the church at seventeen years of age; married Charles M. Gassett, date not known to the writer; settled in Taylor county, Ga., about the year 1846, and united with Prosperity Church by letter July 19th, 1851. Her husband dying not many years thereafter, she became sole manager and director of her family affairs, having six children in her charge and under her care, who are now grown up and most of them married. Sister Gassett, though compelled to labor under many disadvantages in this life, gave great proof of her faith in Christ by her regular attendance at appointed times of worship, never neglecting her monthly meetings without special cause. She was also careful to meet all her financial obligations without

omplaint or murmuring at a widow's hard lot in life ; regarding her Saviour's teaching, "Beware of covetousness," as a precept to be heeded, the true observance of which always brings peace to the saint. She died of dyspepsia, from which disease she suffered for some months ; but her patience was equal to her suffering, and by the strength of that faith which overcomes the world and giveth victory to the saints, she passed away in peace. May the blessing of a merciful God attend and comfort her bereaved family.

*Butler, Ga.*

B. STEWART.

MRS. MARY E. LUNSFORD.

*Dear Editors:*—By request of the bereaved husband, Mr. A. B. Lunsford, send you notice of the sad death of his dear companion, Sister MARY E. LUNSFORD, which occurred about sunset on the evening of the 27th of March. She and her youngest daughter, Maud, were on a visit to our family, and on returning home in a buggy with their son, McLeroy, her husband and little son, Clarence, met them at the plantation gate, where her husband got in the buggy, and driving on, the right wheels passing over a root in a sink, one leaf of the hindmost spring of the buggy broke, throwing him out, the wheels rolling over him, bruising his face and shoulder slightly. Maud, seated between them, fell over on the singletree, when the mule got frightened and ran away. The mother, reaching for her little daughter, at a short curve was thrown out against a small pine tree, crushing her right shoulder and causing death in ten or fifteen minutes. A few feet farther on, Maud was picked up, in rear of the ruins of the buggy that was carried against a tree, with a very light bruise only—a narrow escape from death. Their near neighbors carried the corpse into the house, followed by the heart-broken husband and five of the youngest children. By request of the dear family, Elders J. G. Ewanks and William Adams preached on the most solemn occasion, using the text, 1 Cor. xv. 54 : "Death is swallowed up in victory." After which her remains were laid in the family graveyard, attended by the heart-stricken family, one brother, three sisters, relatives, including a large number of neighbors and friends.

Our dear sister's maiden name was Marks. She was born in this county June 22nd, 1833, and was married November 24th, 1853 ; leaving eight children (four sons and four daughters) and six little grandchildren. She joined Jarris Spring Church, August 20th, 1870, and was baptized the next day by Elder Isaac Hanby, with my companion, her sister in the flesh ; and lived an exemplary member until called from us to enjoy the full fruition of her dear Saviour's presence, where there is no pain, no doubts and fears, troubles and cares of mortal life. A kind neighbor, devoted wife, and tender mother. In her afflictions a short time since, she expressed to me a desire to die, and of her hope in Jesus the Saviour of sinners, feeling assured that the Lord would take care of her dear family. May He who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, heal the broken-hearted husband and motherless children, in my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Dearest sister, thou hast left us,  
Here thy loss we deeply feel ;  
But 'tis God that hath bereft us—  
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet again we hope to meet thee,  
When the day of life is fled ;  
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee,  
Where no farewell tear is shed.

Your brother in sorrow,  
*Starrsville, Ga., April 9, 1883.*

J. J. ADAMS.

## WILLIAM WASHINGTON MURRAY.

WILLIAM WASHINGTON MURRAY was born November 24th, 1850, and died of swamp fever in the 33rd year of his age. He was born in Union Parish, La., and lived here till his death. In 1870 he was married to Miss E. A. Calkins, whom, with four children, he leaves to mourn their loss of a kind husband and father. Mr. Murray never united with the church, but the writer entertains a belief that he would have done so had he lived. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, but believed that all who had been called would manifest the same by a christian deportment, which he was zealous to do, both in word and in life. The community in which he lived misses him as a useful citizen. But we hope our loss is his eternal gain. We would say a few words of comfort to his mourning wife and children, but know that the Lord can only comfort those that mourn indeed, and apply the promises of his blessed gospel to the broken-hearted.

*Farmerville, La., April 19, 1883.*

HENRY ARCHER.

## HENRY AND HOMER WHITE.

HENRY and HOMER WHITE, infant twin sons of Rufus and Amanda White, were born February 24th, 1882, and departed this life as follows: Homer on the 21st of January, 1883, age 10 months and 27 days; Henry on the 19th of February, 1883, age 11 months and 25 days. How true the words of the poet:

“So fades the lovely blooming flower,  
Frail, smiling solace of an hour;  
So soon our transient comforts fly,  
And pleasures only bloom to die.”

Though side by side little Henry and Homer are sleeping, yet they shall awake; for says the Saviour, “Our friend, Lazarus, sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” “And there shall be no more death.” “I am the resurrection and the life.” Yours in hope, G. W. W.

## LINWOOD EDWARDS.

Died, in Jones county, Ga., March 26th, 1883, LINWOOD, son of Mrs. A. M. and James Edwards, age 5 years and 5 months; after seven months suffering. The father's idol, the mother's hope, and the family's pet. Weep not, ye parents, for your lovely boy; commit your troubles to the King of heaven; he will right all your trials, redress all your grievances, and shield you forever. We live in a world of sorrow; without sorrow we could not be fitted for death, and without death we could never be born into the glory of immortality. Jesus said, “Suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Farewell, dear Linwood! to mortal sight  
Thy lovely cheek no more may bloom;  
No more thy smiles inspire delight—  
For thou art garnered in the tomb.

But recently, thine eyes were bright  
As rays that fringe the early cloud;  
Now, closed to life, to love, to light—  
Wrapped in the winding-sheet and shroud.

W. G. K.

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Macon, Atlanta and Albany, Ga.**

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There is not one case in a thousand that fails to benefit, and the suffering public knew one-half as much about the Medicine as we do, they would not hesitate to give it thorough trial.

Some may think it too highly endorsed by us, but we are willing and do stake our reputation (which is good) on it being the best THROAT AND LUNG MEDICINE in the market.

[Signed]  
**LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR**

Vol. 5.

No. 7.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

**J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.**

Brethren wishing to communicate with **ELD. MITCHELL**, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the **GOSPEL MESSENGER** to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

**JULY, 1883.**

*All Letters, Remittances and Communications, should be addressed to J. R. RESPESS, Butler, Ga.*

*Money should be sent by Money Order or Registered Letter.*

*Be certain to write names and post-offices plainly.*

*Subscribers not receiving the Messenger should notify us.*

*Any one sending us Five Dollars for five new subscribers, shall have one copy of the Messenger for one year free.*

J. RHODES BROWNE, Pres't.

Wm. C. COART, Secretary

# THE GEORGIA HOME INSURANCE CO.

COLUMBUS, GA.

ORGANIZED 1859.



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Agents at all Cities, Towns and Villages in the Southern States.

## ELDER M. F. STUBBS' APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord's will, he expects to be at Union on Tuesday after the fourth Sunday in July; Wednesday, at Salem; Thursday, at Mt Carmel; Friday, Saturday and Sunday, at Trinity, the General Meeting. Also, expects to preach on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, at some of the Manifesto Churches. Brother Dukes will arrange the appointments at the Manifesto Churches for Brother Stubbs.

## The Regular Primitive Baptist Association

Will convene with Zion Church, eight miles northeast of Wortham, Freestone County, Texas, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in July. Elder J. T. Seely, and others, in Wortham, will be prepared to entertain brethren and friends. Those coming by Railroad will be expected in Wortham on Thursday.

J. C. D.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 7.

BUTLER, GA., JULY, 1883.

Vol. 5.

REISTERSTOWN, MD., May 15, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—The teachings of the apostles are, that there is a variety of gifts bestowed upon the church for mutual comfort, and growth in grace and knowledge and love. These gifts are enumerated, Eph. iv. 11, as “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.” That is, he has committed unto men these varieties of gifts, which constitute them what they are, and make them, each in his place, useful to the church. These gifts are enumerated again, Rom. xii. 6–8, as prophesy, ministering, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and shewing mercy. Again they are mentioned, 1 Cor. xii. 28–31, as “first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers; after that, miracles; then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” To men called of God to be saints, and in themselves destitute of any spiritual power or gift, has God given these gifts for use. None of them are to be regarded lightly, or to be neglected in the house of God. These gifts were bestowed upon the church for her good in the very beginning of the gospel. If needful then, they most certainly are no less so now. One is no more needful than another. If the body is to be healthy and well developed, every nerve and bone and muscle and sinew, must be called into exercise. Not one can safely be neglected. That the apostles, when setting in order the churches, put all these gifts to use, and enjoined upon all, to see that none were idle, is evident, from what we are told of the practice of the churches. That the practice was, for ALL to take a share—for instance, in public worship—is evident from the caution

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of the apostles, for the churches to avoid confusion in their meetings, by one only speaking at a time, 1 Cor. xiv. 30; also, from the language, verse 26th, "EVERY ONE hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." The apostle, also, would guard against the danger of the churches neglecting these gifts, and would stir them up to their duty in this matter by exhortations not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, Heb. x. 25.

2nd. The reason why I have called attention to this is, that it has been the case among most of our churches, that nearly every gift has been neglected, save the one gift of preaching. No meetings are held for the special use of these varieties of gifts among the churches; and if a brother has desired to speak and testify of the goodness of God on his behalf, at once the idea of preaching is thrown out, and the poor, timid man, who feels NO CALL to preach, but DOES FEEL a call to testify of what he has seen and heard, among his brethren, is frightened into silence, lest it should be said, "Brother so-and-so wants to preach." Now, brethren, there is utterly a fault among us in this respect. We unduly exalt the gift of preaching, to the exclusion of other gifts. In former days, "they that feared the Lord spake often ONE to ANOTHER." In the early Baptist churches of this country, "*Conference day*" was looked forward to as a day of really greater importance than the meeting on Sunday. And on "*Conference day*" no preaching was expected or desired, but the members generally each contributed his or her mite to the general treasury of joy and comfort which was experienced. I remember times of that kind that were sweeter seasons to me than any preaching I ever heard. In such meetings all varieties of gifts can be useful. One can tell of his present experience of joy or heaviness. Another can tell of something which he has seen and felt in the past. Another can speak of a view of some scripture which has been very precious to him. Another can bring a hymn as his or her experience, either to be read or sung. Another can interpret a text that has been revealed to him.

and so each one is of use, and the store-house is full, and God blesses that meeting with his presence.

3rd. Such exercises are mutually profitable to all. It is profitable for the pastor. If brethren will allow me, I will in this speak of myself. How many times have I gone to our evening meetings and church meetings hungry for some word from a brother or sister, feeling as I did, cold and empty and barren! And I have labored on in the exercises of the hour, wishing that some dear brother would say one word of comfort and cheer. They would say, "We want to hear, and you must speak." They forgot that I wanted to hear something, too. I wanted to know whether we were one in experience; whether my preaching was the feeling of their hearts; and I had a real hunger of soul to gain some testimony that it was so. I can recall seasons in my early ministry, when I was among churches which held such meetings, when, by the testimony of many, I was comforted above measure, and strengthened to preach with greater confidence the next day. So such meetings would be profitable to every pastor, and brethren would find his preaching richer and more suited to their need, and so the profit would return to the souls of the brethren themselves. Again, such meetings would be mutually profitable to all the brethren. A brother has a word within him burning like fire in the bones, and he longs to speak, and the speaking will refresh his soul, and there will be profit to himself. And some hungry soul will gather a crumb from your hymn, psalm, text, experience, exhortation, or interpretation, which crumb the Lord has so blessed and magnified that it will satisfy all his need. And from that other, as he testifies to the comfort and instruction which he has received, you also will gain a blessing. We may say that each number of the MESSENGER constitutes a conference meeting. I contribute something, and a dozen others contribute something. If my words do one soul any good through the blessing of God, on the other hand I have got instruction and comfort from the rest, and so all have been benefited. The difference is, that

in writing we are not face to face, while in the conference room we are, and this is so much the better.

4th. The benefits of such meetings are manifold. They make brethren to be better acquainted with each other in the Lord. They draw the hearts of brethren closer to one another. Paul had enjoyed such sweet communion with the church at Ephesus, that when they were about to part, they fell on his neck and kissed him, and wept because they should see his face no more. How closely their intercourse had united their hearts! These meetings are profitable for instruction, for comfort, for admonition. They serve to encourage, to strengthen, and to stir up the forgetful to a loving remembrance of their Saviour, of each other, of the salvation which they have felt, and of the obligations which they are under to honor and glorify God. Brethren who have thus met, bringing each his tithes into the store-house, have often found such a blessing poured out that there did not seem to be room to contain it. God owns and blesses such humble and childlike obedience to his word, while they who neglect his commandments bring leanness and dearth into their own souls. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it."—Prov. xi. 24–26. O, brother! has God given you one word, and do you withhold it? Be admonished; you are not only robbing your brethren, but you are wronging your own soul. Bring to his house the tithe of that which God has given you, and prove the Lord, as he has said, Mal. iii. 10. It would be good, and a blessing would be found in it, if every church, large or small, living compactly or scattered, would meet in such meetings often, and speak one to another of the things of God. Try it, my brethren, and see if it be not so.

5th. I desire to speak of some things which may occur as objections in the minds of some. One says, "Is it not more

profitable to have a good sermon, when the pastor is present? Does it not seem like a waste of time for brethren to be heard, who can say but little?" I answer most emphatically, No! else God has bestowed a waste of gift upon his church, and the apostles were grievously mistaken. Another says, "Will not this tend to introduce confusion by reason of brethren who are not wise bringing in novel ideas?" &c. I reply, Not a bit more danger than there is of the introduction of such things in the preaching of the word. And besides, if God has commanded it, can we not trust him to guard well his church? A third good brother is afraid that such meetings will resemble too much, Methodist class-meetings. Let that brother consider that this would stop all preaching, and praying, and alms-giving,—for the Methodists do all these things likewise. No! no! my brother, the fault is not in the act of preaching, nor in even the class or conference meeting, but in what is said there. Another dear, humble brother says, "I should like to hear my brothers and sisters, but I could say nothing to profit, myself." My brother, watch, lest the real feeling of your heart be this, "If I could say as much as the rest, I would gladly speak"; lest you be not satisfied with what God gives you to say, because it is little. This would be but fleshly pride, and must be crucified. Can you not bring a psalm, or a hymn, as your contribution to the general stock? Can you not say as much as this, "I am a poor sinner and nothing at all, but Jesus Christ is all and in all"? Can you not tell of some hour of darkness or trouble out of which the Lord delivered you safely? How such a narration, though broken and imperfect, might cheer some fainting soul!

Finally, brethren, let us beware of despising the day of small things. If a brother can bring but little, let us remember that it is what God has given him. Much of the flesh, I fear, too often is found in this desire to hear great sermons, eloquent sermons, well delivered sermons. The natural ear may be pleased when there is nothing to feed the soul. And the bread of heaven may be given in abundance when the natural ear may find nothing to delight it. Let us look for

the true bread from heaven. We may find it in some feeble brother's broken prayer or exhortation,—in the hymn or text he brings,—more than in the most eloquent of preaching.

I have written earnestly, brethren. I have long felt deeply about this matter. May the churches generally be led to think about it. And be not HEARERS of the word only, but be DOERS of it. As ever, I remain your brother in the gospel,

F. A. CHICK.

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ST. ELMO, ALABAMA, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—Some of the dear brethren desiring to see something of my experience and call to the ministry, in the pages of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, I now write you a scrap of what I feel have been the dealings of God's Spirit with me, which has proved the power over me in bringing me where I now am. "By the grace of God I am what I am." An outline of the exercises and travails of my mind in spiritual matters was published October 1st, 1882.

As to a call to the work of the gospel ministry, that is a point I have evaded as much as possible, for fear I might say something unlawful, or that would cause some to think more of me than they ought. In my examination to ordination I have only given an outline as to my calling; and if I would attempt to give in detail the dealings of God with me, I should come very far short, for they are multitudinous in number, and in diversity of ways; sometimes in love and mercy, and sometimes, seemingly, in wrath and judgment. He led me about and instructed me. As to my call to the ministry, I can't really separate it from what I hope to be my experience of grace; for it seemed to be the burden of my soul. Although I did not, as Paul, hear an audible voice, yet there was a voice with my conviction that was irresistible, and that was what caused the burden and severe travail of soul. I resorted to every means imaginable to release myself from the burden, but could not. I plead ignorance, but it was of no use; unworthiness, but it availed nothing; throwing myse

into the most wicked society, it amounted to nothing. I even tried to be an infidel! But God forbade it. He sent his Son to manifest himself *to* me, and *in* me, with such irresistible light, that I was struck low. "Who art thou, Lord?" A sweet voice whispered, "It is Jesus." O my soul! what transporting views did then present themselves to me! The lightnings of the Almighty had been flashing around me for years, as it were, bringing to remembrance things that had transpired from my infancy unto middle age, showing me the goodness and mercy of God; but I had trampled it all under foot. While I was kept under the momentary influence of these lightnings, there was something in me which I could not understand. I was sometimes praying and sometimes preaching. It seemed unavoidable. I could not by any means get away from these lightnings (or convictions.) Finally I joined the Missionary Baptists; soon I was licensed to speak in public; still I felt my inability to preach, being so illiterate and unworthy, but that something kept preaching in me. Often, when I would be sitting quietly, my mind would be carried away in raptures of delight; it might be called meditation, but I call it preaching, for I feel that it is preaching or teaching by the Spirit of God. In process of time I was ordained and set apart to the full work of the ministry. My mind seemed to be opened that I might understand the scriptures, but the preaching was the same; and if there is any difference in my holding forth now, I don't know it, any more than I have a better knowledge of the scriptures. Often, when I have been lying upon my bed at night, I have been so impressed with thoughts so affecting to my mind, I have gotten up, lighted my lamp, and penned them down. So by the dealings of God with me in these manifestations, I was impressed that it was the calling of God that I should preach, or rather should be a servant in the work of the gospel; and being a servant, I could only do the work that I was bidden. I could testify only to the things that I had seen and heard, spiritually speaking. This strict rule caused a difference between myself and the people that I was living with; conse-

quently, a war was waged against me. I held strongly to the doctrine of salvation by grace, which is unconditional election, predestination, and final perseverance of the saints to glory. I tried very hard to live with that people, and did for some years; but the Lord did not intend for Israel to remain always in Babylon. Neither was it his will that I should remain always in the Missionary denomination. I even tried to force a rest to myself, but found none. Sometimes it seemed the Lord was with me in meetings and blessed the people, and we would rejoice together; but soon the impressions would be gone. Finally I became dissatisfied, for "how can two walk together except they be agreed?" I was called to a church of some notoriety, in 1879. I told the brethren that I could not serve them unless they would adopt a certain resolution, That we would not fellowship any person or church that was not of our faith and practice. They hesitated, but finally adopted it, at the next yearly meeting. I was unanimously called again for another year; but they had failed to carry out their resolution which they had adopted; and there being churches in the same Association that did not wash feet, and some members believed in open communion, and some preachers denied the doctrine of election, while the Articles of Faith in their minutes set it forth. So my dissatisfaction grew worse and worse; but I went on through the year, until the next yearly meeting. During this time it became evident to my mind, that it was the Lord's will, I should be *his* servant. I had received such testimony that I could not resist; and here I was placed in a strait. I felt that it was laid upon me to preach the gospel of Christ, and not the gospel of man. To remain with this people in peace, I should have to conform to their rule, which I looked upon as confusion. And the scriptures teach us that God is not the author of confusion. Where should I go? There were no Primitive Baptists in this section of country. I wrote to an Old church, where I came from, in Pike county, Ala., inquiring what to do; got no answer, but my letter returned. I labored and toiled along till the yearly meeting, which was the communion season. It

was settled in my mind what I would do, that day, by the help of God. And I know that my trust was in him. I had prayed with tears streaming from my eyes to the Lord to lead me in the right way. I was under a heavy cloud; fears and trembling compassed me about. I was long ago convinced that I was in error, but how to get out I could not tell; and the greatest of my troubles was self-condemnation, holding the truth of God in unrighteousness; not only walking in error, but leading others in the same way. Often it was my cry, "Lord, what shall I do?" The time came for me to preach and administer the sacrament. I rose up before a large congregation,—tried to worship God in spirit and in truth,—tried to honor his reverend name in word and demonstration of the Spirit. I read the words of Paul as recorded in Acts: "I take you to record this day, I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." With a few brief reflections over the two past years, I said: "Brethren, there is the bread and the wine in order for your communion. I cannot lay my hands upon it. That is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, given to his church, and I don't consider that I belong to his church. When I was baptized it was only into a Missionary society. I am not authorized to lay my hands on that sacred institution. I don't feel authorized, nor shall I ever occupy this sacred position again under the profession of a Missionary Baptist preacher." I now leaped into an unknown future, to myself; but, trusting to my heavenly Master, there was a swift messenger sent (Providence.) In three days I learned where there was a preacher and a people, but the distance was somewhat in the way, it being 150 miles, and no means of going. But "He that doeth all things well" had hold of the helm and directed according to his own will. Just five weeks from the day of my separation from the tents of Babylon, I was baptized into the Primitive Church, which was the fourth Sunday in September, 1881. In November following I was ordained, and am yet, as I hope, preaching that same gospel; or, as I trust, Christ Jesus is, by his Spirit, preaching through me, the same gospel which he preached

in person when he was here in the flesh. I could tell you many things which have been confirmatory in the witness I have received, sealing the work upon my mind. And since becoming a member of the Old Primitive Church, the witness is stronger than ever; it seems that peace runs like a river through my soul; yea, while there is much outward affliction, there is an inward peace that passeth all understanding.

Beloved, I don't want to weary you, but of these things I must speak freely. "Freely ye have received; freely give." The first mountain I found, called the Lord's house, burned with the fire of persecution. But this mountain, which is Mount Zion, is spread with abundance of fat things, of wine well refined on the lees. "Praise ye the Lord! praise ye the Lord! O give thanks unto the Lord! for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever."

Brethren, this poor scribble is in your hands; do with it as you think best. May the Lord bless you!

J. R. S. BULLARD.

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### IN CREATION.

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God, having created the earth and all its appendages, and thereby making everything ready for occupancy, said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."—Gen. i. 26. In what this image consists, I am not fully prepared to say. We are taught, however, that he was a good, natural man; as such, adapted to an earthly paradise. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (not *lives*, as some say), "and man became a living soul."—Gen. ii. 7. The constituent elements of this man are body, soul and spirit. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam: and he slept. And he took one of his ribs, of which he made a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my

bones, and flesh of my flesh : therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”—Gen. ii. 21–25. The principles or qualities imparted, and the union formed between the man and his wife, happily adapted them to the position assigned them in the scale of being, as the seminal head of all human existence, and governor in the empire of earth ; so when God created Adam, he created his race in him in seed, and treasured in him life and all its attendant blessings to that end. We notice that there are blessings promised Adam that were not to be enjoyed in the garden, nor by himself in person (read 1st and 2nd chapters of Genesis), but by his race ; which race never would have been developed in the garden, as Adam never knew his wife in that sense till after the fall. “And God put the man in the garden of Eden to keep it, and to dress it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. ii. 15–17. We find Adam thus embodying such principles and sustaining such relations as to constitute him a fit person to represent his posterity ; as, between him and them, there is a two-fold relation—he sustaining a federal relation to them as their representative, and they sustaining a natural relation to him as his descendants—a relation well adapted to bring about the state of things existing between God as a sovereign, and his creatures as rebels against him ; for the law being given to Adam in person, and to his race in him, its violation involved him and them alike in guilt and condemnation. There has been much said about Adam’s ability to stand and liability to fall. I cannot think God was experimenting with his creature, man ; as he gave him such powers and qualities, and surrounded him with such circumstances as led to transgression ; and, as he created all things for his pleasure (Rev. iv. 11), he must assign them their place, and dispose of them in such a way as to accomplish his pleasure. He pro-

nounced everything good that he had made; good, I suppose, in its place. The reflecting mind will inquire, why God gave Adam a law, when He knew as well before as after transgression what would be the result; why prepare the garden, with its delicious fruits and beautiful scenery, with the tree of knowledge of good and evil; why did he form such a union between the man and his wife that nothing but death could sever it; why make the serpent more subtle than any beast of the field, and suffer him to enter the garden and beguile the woman—said to be the weaker vessel; why did all these circumstances co-operate and conspire to the violation of God's law by man, and thereby involve himself and race in guilt and condemnation? The most important circumstance in this connection is the union between the man and his wife; she was taken from his side; was recognized by him as being part of himself; a close union, indeed (the very foundation of civil society and human happiness in all the relations of human existence), in view of which, we can but admire the wisdom and goodness of God. Whatever ability Adam had, he lost, when overcome by surrounding circumstances. So, in this whole matter, God acted in his independent character, as an absolute Sovereign; as, "He giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13. All this transaction seems to link in, and form part of, God's plan of universal government in the accomplishment of his purpose in creation. Adam's act in violating law did not make sin, but manifested it; as it is reasonable to suppose he acted from principle, or motive, as the cause of the action. As to the death Adam died, there are different opinions. I have no doubt he died the death, and at the time, in the sense intended. We know the relation between the Creator and the creature is changed, so far as the creature is concerned; he has forfeited and lost his right to the blessings of an earthly paradise, and his union and communion with his Creator; the man has become so vitiated in all his parts, that the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it (Isa. i. 5, 6.) In his human nature the seeds

of death are sown, and so interwoven in all his ligaments that when he begins to live he begins to die; the scene changes, the earth is cursed, the man is cursed, and his race cursed in him; he is driven from the garden, the place of his abode, into the large domain of earth to grapple with his circumstances. Here a field opens for the full development of all his powers, physical and mental; here we behold the wisdom of God in adapting man to his circumstances—for, between him and them, there is perfect agreement. God having decreed that man should eat bread by the sweat of his face, he labors and toils; his physical powers are strengthened, his mental powers are improved, his capacity for enjoyment is enlarged, he is fitted for society, he progresses in all the accomplishments of earthly magnificence, he revels in the luxuries of nature, and in that sense is happy; yet, in his very best estate, is altogether vanity. He needs other motives and other lights than those furnished by nature, to aspire after and behold God and his works in their glory and grandeur. May the good Lord open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things out of his law!

Yours in hope,

JAMES WAGNER.

[Continued.]

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LIBERTY HILL, TEXAS, May 3, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—I have received up to date three numbers of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, the contents of which has been truly interesting to me. I am pleased to see that most of the correspondents are a unit upon the cardinal points of the gospel; but I see some things that trouble me, and which I would be glad if our ministers would leave off. I speak in reference to the practice of a presbytery in the ordination of ministers, of having one of their number to specially examine the subject for ordination before laying on of hands and prayer. We have a King who reigns in righteousness (Christ) and Princes to rule in judgment (the Church), and we should be careful lest we lord it over the Church. Our Saviour expressly tells us, "On this rock I will build my

church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Directions: Let them first be proven; and who is authorized to prove them but the Church, which is the sovereign, and the presbytery, but the servants or subjects of the Church? If the presbytery have the right to examine and prove the qualifications of the subjects, they have the right to reject, of course, and which, if done, transfers the authority from the Church to the clergy. This will do for Protestants, Missionaries, coercionists, hirelings, etc., but not for Primitive Baptists, in my opinion. If I am wrong, please pardon and correct me, so that I may feel right on that subject. When I see such displays of power by my brethren and set forth in our periodicals, and by those we should take as fathers in the ministry, it gives me ground to fear that other usages contrary to the gospel rules might be practiced.

I have been associated with the Primitive Baptists in this part of Texas only about four years, and find the mooted points of doctrine that have given such heartfelt trouble giving way, so that we stand now united in the main, and have had pleasant and harmonious meetings and Associations, and many additions. We find one occasionally manifesting fears in matters they do not understand for want of proper explanation given on the subject, especially on the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, eternal children, union, etc., but upon which, when properly explained, all are agreed. I desire to see the Primitive Baptists a unit on the cardinal points of the gospel. I am 74 years old, and have been in my weak way, contending for the faith many years; have seen many "ups and downs," comforts and conflicts, but the storm will soon be over with me. At times my mind is deeply impressed with a desire to give a few of my thoughts upon the signs of these times, but find so much testimony superior to mine that I shrink lest I darken counsel.

May the Lord aid you in your efforts to impart knowledge in that cause, which alone can give lasting peace and happiness in this world and the world to come, is the desire of your unworthy brother in gospel bonds.

Farewell,

E. C. MAULDIN.

MARION, UNION PARISH, LA., April 14, 1882.

It has been my desire for several years to tell the people of God what the Lord in his goodness and mercy has done for poor me—how he has led me through many wicked places. As I have a dear sister in the Spirit, who lives near me, who is a constant reader of the *Gospel Standard*, England, in which I see so many good experiences, I feel I want to tell mine, although told therein far better than I can relate it. I can say they have experienced what I feel. Now, by the help of God, I will try, hoping he will strengthen my effort.

From childhood I was constrained, from some cause, I know not what, to fear God in a childlike manner, or rather in a serious manner, knowing nothing of an experience of grace. At this early period of childhood my older sister and myself were let go to a protracted meeting, at which time several children and myself joined the church; on our return home my sister remarked, "Mary has joined the church;" my mother replied, "I am afraid Mary does not know what she is doing," which words sank into my mind so that I never forgot them. Many years passed, and when engaged in sinning I would think, "I am a member of the church; I ought not to do this or that"; trying to work out my own salvation in a childlike manner. Eventually the church ceased to have any restraining influence, and I grew a more hardened sinner. My parents died and I went to live with an uncle and aunt. I had grown to womanhood so that I began to notice closely the meaning of what people would say. My aunt was an old sister in the Spirit, and her kind and gentle manner of reproof and admonishing me did me no good. She would talk, and tell me of my sinful ways and state, but I thought little of it. I would attend protracted meetings, and seeing the people enjoying religion I was desirous of joining them; but being convinced there should be a change, and as I could not witness to any, I was at a loss what to tell or relate as an experience of grace. My friend would say, "Go and join, you cannot go in a better time." But now, when I look back, I feel it was God alone who kept and delivered me from

the sin I so wickedly would have rushed into, and feel to thank and adore His gracious providence. I began to think now seriously as to what an experience of grace was, and to notice that those who joined had but little to tell. Solemn thoughts would crowd themselves upon me, notwithstanding I did all in my power to resist them.

About this time my uncle moved to Arkansas, where I was almost entirely cut off from the society of young people; a fortunate circumstance, no doubt, as I was left to the society of my gentle old aunt and Bible, which I then began to read, but it was a sealed book to me. Still I would read, thinking I would find something to divert my mind from loneliness; but in vain I tried to become interested, and as I could not understand I would give it up for weeks and months, not thinking much about it. By this time an older sister married, and I went to live with her and her husband. She was a sister in the Spirit, and would now and then speak words that would fasten on my mind. Finally the good Lord's time rolled round to show me the dark place I was in. I began to feel myself a miserable sinner. It so impressed itself I found it impossible to throw it off, though I made several attempts to do so. I resumed the reading of my Bible, but found it still a sealed book, though I continued to read it in secret, thinking every one knew my feelings, which I wished to conceal. I thought if I could throw off these feelings as I once did, I would give the last thing I possessed, but I could not get to that place. I continued to grow worse in my own estimation, and found it impossible to do anything good. I felt utterly lost and undone. When in my room at night I would read my Bible and a great many hymns to see if I could find something to suit my case. I found two songs that I shed tears over. I would turn leaf after leaf and search for something to satisfy me, but could not find it. At last one night I awoke in a fright, having dreamed that a bright light was hovering around me. I could not sleep, but lay and trembled the rest of the night. Then I began to think what I would do. I knew there was something coming over me

had never felt before. I thought I was going crazy. I could not forget that light. I would try every way I could, and try to enjoy my little sins again, but could not; neither could I get away from them. In this way I lived for some time, trying to love the world as I once did, but something told me I could not. I would sometimes think if I could tell my sister what I was feeling, she could tell me what was the matter; but when I would get where she was, I could not open my mouth. I would think then of some friend I could talk to, but my heart would fail me. I knew I must have a friend; so I began to try to pray, and was ashamed of that. I would crawl up behind my bed at night, where I knew I was not seen; but I felt I had not prayed when I tried, feeling I had done no good. I went on in this way for several months, reading my Bible and hymns to see if I could find peace, but only felt I grew worse. One day my sister was away from the house, and I was left to take care of the children; my heart was so full of grief I could not stay at the house contented; so I thought I would go to my sister and see if that great load would not leave me. I went to her, but could not stay. I walked around and said a few words, and it appeared my load was heavier; so I went to the house and fell down and tried to pray to be saved, but could find no relief. I would sit up at night and read, until I thought my sister and brother were watching me. I was so afraid they would find something was troubling me, and I could not tell them; so I would go to bed and try to pray to God to forgive my many sins, for by this time I began to see all was sin that was in me. I would lie and tremble very nearly all night, for I could not sleep. I lived on in this way for some time, feeling I was lost, and these dreadful thoughts only caused me to fall on my knees the oftener and pray to God to save me from all sin, although I felt I could never be forgiven. At last one night after going up behind my bed and asking the Lord to have mercy on me, a sinner, I came out still feeling that burden of sin, and went to my bed still asking for mercy, and when I laid my head on my pillow I burst into tears, when it ap-

peared all I could do, all I could think, was, "Bless God! bless God!" I would not speak, for fear I was mistaken. I felt greatly relieved, and wanted to live for Jesus, who had done so much for me. I felt as though I had gone through a storm and was enjoying a calm, satisfied peace. But, alas! doubts arose, and I began to search my Bible and other means of grace, as I supposed them to be, to see if I was not mistaken. This was in 1870, and now twelve years have passed, and I still have my doubts as to whether a work of grace was ever begun in my heart. If so, I must trace it back to what I have related as the beginning of my christian experience. My walk has been so un-Christ-like I fear to claim one. I lived six years before offering myself for membership. When I did go, the congregation was gathered at the water for baptism. Brother Archer was giving out one of my favorite hymns:

"Lord, in humble, sweet submission"—

I hesitated until they began to sing:

"Is there here a weeping Mary,  
Waiting near the Saviour's tomb,—  
Heavy-laden, sick and weary,  
Crying, "O that I could come!"

I felt constrained to offer myself. I did so, and was received. My desire is to live with the people of God, but I feel myself the least among them all. I cannot describe my unworthiness. My mind is carried back to my old songs—one in particular:

"O, sir, I would see Jesus!"

This is what I have to say about my hope of salvation, and I know it was God alone that caused me to take up the cross and follow him. I feel encouraged to think the work of grace has been begun in my heart; and if so, He will perfect it for His own name's sake, notwithstanding my exceeding sinfulness and being unworthy of the least of all His blessings.

MARY SIMS.

Elder T. K. Pursley, of Andersonville, Ga., departed this life 17th of May, in his 73rd year.

Also, Sister Bentley, wife of Elder Samuel Bentley, of Butler, Ga., departed this life 26th May, after a long illness.

WATERLOO, IOWA, March, 1883.

*Dear Brother True:*—I was most happy indeed to get your last letter; though there seemed a sadness in it. But, my brother, I hope and believe you can say with Paul: "Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: *and I was delivered* out of the mouth of the LION; and the Lord SHALL deliver me from *every* evil work, and will *preserve* me unto his heavenly kingdom." This being the case, what is there to fear? For as long as "the Lord God is a sun and shield," and "will withhold *no* good thing from those who walk uprightly," his children have nothing to fear, but can join with David and say: "*He* only is my Rock and my salvation: He is my defence. I shall not be moved." These trying scenes are undoubtedly for some wise purpose; though, at the time, it is grievous to be borne, and our cry is, "O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?" But afterwards we find—

"Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face."

I think I can speak from experience. I have seen the time when everything seemed dark; when there seemed no light, and every way seemed to be hedged up, till I saw Christ as the *only* way. One evening (there being company), I left the room and went up to my own room, and there, in bitterness of heart and extreme soul anguish, cried to God that if there was any mercy in store for poor, perishing sinners, any compassion in Christ for rebels deserving his fury and indignation, he would then show pity on a poor, miserable outcast—one who had broken his laws and lightly trodden under foot his commandments. I then went to bed, but not to sleep—sleep seemed driven from my eyes, and slumber from my eyelids. Then, in the north-west corner of the room, I saw the cross reared and the blessed Lamb of God thereon. O, I never can forget the sight! I sank into a deep slumber, and woke not till the morning. My only excuse for leaving so abruptly the

evening before was, "I was not very well"; and indeed I was not, for it seemed I was nigh unto death. But there was balm in Gilead—there was a Physician there; yes, the Great Physician; one who heals all maladies by the word of his power; and the blessed recipients of his grace find peace and joy in believing. But, alas!

"Where is the blessedness I knew  
When first I saw the Lord?  
Where is the soul-refreshing view  
Of Jesus and his word?"

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!  
How sweet their memory *still!*  
But *now* I find an aching void  
The world can *never* fill."

O, Brother True, how *often* I have thought of your words: "My dear child, this frame of mind will not always last; the cloud *will* come," &c. The many times I have felt the chilling effects of this "cloud," obscuring the sun and shutting out its warmth, are innumerable. It would be easier by far to enumerate the times I have enjoyed its rays. The following lines were written when under this "cloud":

When harassed with evils that torture the soul,  
And under its weight well nigh die;  
When billows of trouble doth over me roll,  
And tempests are gathering high;

When day after day brings with it new grief,  
And wave after wave dashes high;  
And no earthly power can bring us relief—  
No earthly comforter nigh;

To the cross of my Saviour I fly in distress,  
And prostrate before him I fall—  
My sins and my follies to him I confess,  
And own him my Lord and my all.

All earthly possessions I gladly resign  
To the keeping of Jesus, my Friend;  
Knowing in the hot crucible gold is refined,  
I'll love him and trust to the end.

Then draw me, dear Jesus, to thy wounded side;  
O, shelter me under the cross!  
That I in the arms of thy love may abide,  
And count all earth's treasures but dross.

My mind at present is enveloped in a thick, dense cloud. I presume I ought not to try to write. You will see by the contents of this that I am dull and listless. You said you had sent my letter to Georgia for publication in the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and begged my pardon for doing so. I *really* do not see your object in so doing, but if ever *one word* from my pen is the means of raising the drooping spirits of one of God's dear children, I am sure I should esteem it as a *high honor*, and would *try* to give God the glory, and also *try* to thank Him for taking such a poor, *rusty tool* into His service. I have never seen the GOSPEL MESSENGER; if you have a spare copy will you send me one, please; for which favor I shall feel ever so much obliged to you.

SARAH A. BLAKE.

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CRESWELL, LANE CO., OREGON, March 19, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I see in the April number of the MESSENGER, a request by Bro. E. Chisenhall for your views on 2 Pet. iii. 8; and you say, "Will some brother write on the above." The scripture referred to reads as follows: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

I wish it borne in mind, that in attempting to open a few thoughts on the above scripture, I claim no superior ability, but to the contrary, my inability to do the subject justice; yet I feel a burden resting upon me to feed the sheep. The apostle Peter would impress the idea on the minds of his beloved brethren, that a thing has not to take place for the Lord to know it, or to make it sure of fulfillment; for it is said in another place, that all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do; and I would say, to make the matter plain, that it is one eternal *now*, with Him; He has declared that he is God, and besides him there is none else; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel *shall*

stand, and I *will* do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, and a man to execute my counsel from a far country." Again, we find it written by Isaiah, more than seven hundred years before the coming of the Saviour, that "Unto us a child *is* born; unto us a son *is* given," &c. Again, in Isa. liii.: "Surely he *hath* borne our griefs and *carried* our sorrows: but he *was* wounded for our transgressions; he *was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him, and with his *stripes* we *are* healed." The quotations are too numerous, bearing on this point, for a communication. We are led, then, to the conclusion that what our God purposes is sure, and the fulfillment thereof certain, whether it be revealed a thousand years or one day beforehand. Taking this view of the great Jehovah, the christian's hope is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth to that within the veil, whither their forerunner hath entered.

Now, my dear brother, do we not see at once that the purposes of God were all established in his eternal mind before the foundation of the world, in regard to the salvation of his people, and made sure in the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son? and in that covenant he made a promise of eternal life, which is referred to in Titus i. 2, as follows: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world was." Then I will say, all whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world, are as sure of the inheritance as though they were now in possession of it; for Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved* in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Then the christian's hope rests on a sure foundation; the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

If we took an Arminian view of God, we could not believe that one day is with him as a thousand years, or a thousand years as one day; for if he purposed to do something a thousand years hence, something might turn up that would frustrate his purpose; but it is not so with our God, for Peter goes on in the next verse to say, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness; but is toward long suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"—not as the Arminians quote, that all should turn from their evil ways and live. Then, in the language above quoted, I will say, He is not slack concerning his promises, but will fulfil them according to his own good pleasure. The children of God may get impatient about a promise being fulfilled, and might undertake to assist in bringing the promise to fulfillment; but the result would be the same as in the case of old Sarah and Abraham in hurrying up the birth of the promised heir, or trying to do so.

My dear brother, and all who may read this, I will say, let us be assured that what God has promised he will fulfil in his own good time, though it might be thousands of years hence.

Yours in love,

DANIEL BRIDGES.

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FOUNTAIN HEAD, TENN., April 24, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I see in the MESSENGER a short history of the Sulphur Springs Church, furnished by Bro. J. W. Stowers, which puts me in the notion to write a little about the first Baptist church that was constituted in Sumner county, Tenn., called "West Station Camp." At what time it was constituted I know not. The church I belong to was constituted out of it, and is called "East Station Camp"; nor do I know when it was constituted, but we have authentic record on our church book that it was an acting church in 1802. My first acquaintance with West Station Camp, Elder William Fuqua was their pastor. It was a large and prosperous church. Elder Fuqua died, and Elder Joseph Pitt became their pastor, and was also a member of the same

church. He remained their pastor until an unfortunate difficulty took place, that split the church, when Elder Pitt and part of the church withdrew, and were constituted into a church called Friendship, which is now a prosperous church. Elder Pitt still lives, but is too old and feeble to preach much; and Elder James W. Reddick supplies the church, but refuses to take the pastorate during Elder Pitt's life. This split reduced old West Station Camp to few in numbers, and it has never been a large church since. After the split the old church called Elder Robert Norvell, who served them several years, until he embraced the Two Seeds, Non-Resurrection doctrine, when they dismissed him. They then called the unworthy writer, who served them as long as he was able to go about and preach—being now in his 90th year of life, and very feeble. They then called Elder J. W. Reddick, who is now their pastor. The church is a strong church, though the membership is not numerous, but able and highly respectable.

M. HODGES.

Dear Brother, I see you are overrun with communications. If you see cause to publish this, you may take it like going to mill, when its turn comes.

M. H.

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FLAT SHOALS, GA., April 21, 1883.

*Brother Respass*:—The apostle advised his brethren to let brotherly love continue. All he said was for their good. Love was an abiding principle with each of them; not that they were to seek after and obtain it, but it was a principle implanted within them by their Father. They were brethren, begotten by the same Father, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; their mother is from above (New Jerusalem); they are of heavenly origin, living by the same life their Saviour lived; begotten by love, it becomes their life. It is pure, gentle, and easy to be entreated. The apostle would have them let it continue. It is the fulfilling of the law, which is good, and worketh no ill to his neighbor; is in all goodness and righteousness; arms them with faith,

and hope, and joy in the Holy Ghost. With them he can put to flight the armies of the aliens, and overcome the world. It is the strongest evidence of their reconciliation with their Father; unites them as one, and shuts the mouths of their enemies.

G. W. HEAD.

Remembering all the way the Lord has led me.

*Dear Brethren and Sisters* :—I remember the night when I first felt to be a sinner; and the words of my mother as she talked to me of Jesus and the Resurrection. I remember my sadness and burning tears, and how her words seemed to come in the power of conviction. Those years in the wilderness and solitary way, wherein I was hungry, thirsty and naked, and had no hand to minister to my wants, I remember; and the sleepless nights and fearfulness of soul, my earnest pleadings for mercy and searchings for rest; the many times I desired the Lord and sought him in prayer, withdrawing to solitude, humbling myself with my face to the dust, though not a word could I utter, the power to speak being taken away. Then my impressions to preach, and my earnest cries to the Lord to take them away; and all my unworthiness, unfitness, rebellion and stubbornness; my groans and tears, sleepless hours; and how my appetite failed me, and the weary tossing from side to side as I pondered the solemn work in my mind. I remember the first time I tried to preach, and the mortification I felt, and the conclusion that I would never try again; and now, as long as I have been trying to preach, I have been trying to quit. My down-sittings and up-risings, my goings forth and conflicts, and beside the common cares of life, there cometh daily upon me the care of the churches. And I remember how the Lord has talked to me by the way, and showed me his covenant, and the way of salvation. How unbounded his mercy and great his goodness! I do not forget how I wished that I had never been born, or had died when I was young, feeling that I had nothing to look for nor hope for but darkness and keen despair. How fearful,

and yet how blessed! I was brought to my wits' end; my soul fainted in me; and O, the radiant brightness of the coming of the messenger of peace to deliver me from the land of darkness and the region and shadow of death, giving me liberty and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! I remember how the blind eye was opened and the deaf ear unstopped, the lame could leap as the hart and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness waters had broken out and streams in the desert, so that the voice of the psalmist came to me: "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men! for he satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." And the prayerful and fearful consideration of going to the church, and how I besought the Lord to decide the doubtful case; and when I went with all my trembling, there was something inexpressibly good to me; and how the precious brethren welcomed me to that desired rest! Then the solicitude and humble, anxious inquiry I made of the Lord when we met for baptism, and the unction of the Spirit, as if saying to me, This is the way, walk ye in it; and the newness of life I felt, do I remember; the easy breast and peace of mind, and that I should never sin again. O, that fullness!

Dear saints, I have written to you in love, and yet in fear and weakness. May we each seek one another's good and edification in the Lord, ministering our gifts as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and may we have the mind of Christ, and glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are his! The things that are lovely, honest, of good report—think on these things, and the God of peace shall be with you. May He guide our wandering feet in the strait and narrow way, giving us a spirit of supplication one for another!

In hope and love,

A. W. PATTERSON.

*Bloodworth, Ga.*

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THERE were some typographical errors in our last editorial but it matters not now.—R.

ALBANY, MO., June 1, 1883.

*Eds. Gospel Messenger:—Dear Brethren:—*I have promptings to write to you, and by your permission, to the dear saints among whom the MESSENGER circulates. I am conscious of my unworthiness to claim relationship with the people of God, yet it has been my happy privilege to be identified with that people for twenty-three years. To recount, minutely, all the dealings of the Lord with me, a poor sinner, would, no doubt, be too tedious for your readers. But that the subjects of grace ought to record the mercies of their Lord, and speak often one to another, and thus show forth his praise who has called them out of darkness into light, and clothed them with the garment of salvation; and with them the foot-prints of the Spirit remain as unfaded leaves of memory.

The subject of this narrative was born in Hancock county, Ohio, November 18th, 1841. My father and mother were both members of the Old Baptist Church before my birth. From my earliest recollection I had serious reflections and inquiring thoughts of the future; but nothing worthy of note occurred until I was in my tenth year. Father was ploughing corn, and I and my oldest brother were following with the hoes. The day was clear and pleasant, when suddenly, with such awful and overwhelming power, was I arrested with the words, "You must die!" "you are going to die!" To my mind, it seems that these words were spoken audibly (but I do not claim they were.) My inmost being was aroused; and alarmed, I dropped my hoe and ran to my father and told him I was going to die! With a kind voice he said to me, "I reckon not; you may be sick; you can go to the house." This I did, and as soon as I saw my mother I said to her and my aunt that was with her, "Mother, I am going to die!" My aunt replied, "I guess not, Isaiah; you are too bad a boy to die." O my soul! I cannot describe my feelings at that moment. It seemed that all the corruptions of my fallen nature stood between me and my God. To die unprepared was awful, and the thought crushed me to despair. I will say here

that I was as well bodily at that time as I ever was, and to my best recollection I had never used profane language or been engaged in outbreaking practices. But woe was me! for I was undone and unsaved. These impressions measurably wore off, yet leaving me in a restless condition, craving and desiring I scarcely knew what. With childlike thoughts I desired to become good, reaching out after and supplicating for mercy. Thus was I led along, not knowing whither—sometimes resting in a Pharisaical idea that my prayers were efficacious, then to discover that I was wholly destitute of power to approach that state of perfection in which alone I was conscious there was peace. I was careful to conceal from my parents and others the state of my mind. When I became careless or lifeless in my supposed religious duties, such as prayers at regular times, or careful watch over my words or acts, I would be aroused again with terrible thoughts of a Judgment to come. I believed that God was good, holy and righteous, and I felt that I needed all of this—for I possessed none within myself. I began to see more and more of my imperfections, and realized that even my prayers did not avail. Gradually I was sinking down! down! down! O God, be merciful! was my only plea. I could not see how I ever could be saved—so sinful, so wretched, so undone. All that I could do or say was, "Lord, save, or I perish!" I now was in my fifteenth year. I had noticed that my father took much comfort in reading the Bible. I resorted to its sacred pages, but alas! there was nothing there for me. The promises and rich provisions were not for such as I. Lost forever! seemed to be all that was in store for me. Condemnation was written in the law—no comfort from it could I draw. I sought to be alone. In the groves would I ramble, and there plead for or seek God for mercy. The rustle of a leaf would startle me, and O, the anguish of soul I cannot describe! I gave up all as lost, fully thinking that God could not remain just and save such as I. Once more must I plead for mercy. The family was all gone from home, and I was alone. I took down the Bible to read once more. Just what occurred then,

and there, I cannot describe—prostrate on the floor I fell, as if sinking in despair—lost and forever undone seemed to be my portion. O God, have mercy upon me! I do not say that the appearance of natural things was changed, but to me I feel to say that the clouds were driven from my sky; my sorrow and distress was succeeded by joy and peace.

There was a light, but not that which can be seen by mortal eyes, the power and ecstasy of which, only can be experienced by the redeemed. Peace was mine. Joy filled my soul, and I felt like praising God, from whom the blessings of salvation flowed to one so needy, so destitute, so sinful. In this sweet peace, I was permitted to rest for a season. I was left to wonder and adore. Little by little was I led into the glorious plan of life and salvation. Yes, Grace, free Grace, from first to last, had won my soul and held it fast. I was made to desire God's mercies to continue with me; to expect him to complete what he had so wonderfully wrought, or, in other words, hope in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. In so great and sublime a view of our interest in him we sweetly traveled on, feeling free from sin, at peace, and, for a time, permitted to draw water out of the well of salvation. Here I will close, and if I can be assured that it would tend to comfort any of the dear saints, and the editors so permit, I may resume, at some future time, my narrative; if not, all is well.

Yours in deep afflictions,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

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WHAT powerful constraints does our God lay upon us to seek his friendship! "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It would be better for us to leave all behind, than that He should leave us behind. It is not the brightest star that can constitute day, when the sun is set; nor the thickest cloud that can make a night, if it be risen.

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READER, every step you take to Christ, is a step toward heaven; and every step you take from him, is a mortal step towards hell.

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors.

## VISIT TO GEORGIA AND TENNESSEE.

However much brethren and friends among whom we travel and preach may desire to hear from us and learn of our health, strength, and other incidents of our journey, we have never yet felt competent to know exactly what to write, nor what to leave out. To give a full and detailed account of all the incidents of a fifteen or twenty days' tour, and mention the names of all the persons to whom one is introduced, and by whom he is conveyed along, and with whom he tarries for a night, or for—"dinner," would require more time and labor in keeping a journal than we have thought to be necessary, or consistent with the "one thing needful," of preaching Christ and him crucified, to the people. And besides this, if such a detailed account should be of any interest, much of it would be rather more local than general, and thereby deprive the readers generally of that kind of reading in which they would be most benefited and interested.

Under considerable bodily sufferings and much more mental agony than we shall ever be able to describe, we left our humble home, three miles from Opelika, Ala., April 13th, for Atlanta, Ga., to have our eye examined by a skillful optician; and as Elder J. G. Eubanks, pastor of the Primitive Church in Atlanta, and Deacon J. C. Armstead had previously been informed of our expected arrival, they were in readiness to take us by the hand before we stepped from the car, and to render us every assistance and attention that we so much felt at that time to need. The cheerful, loving and cordial manner in which this attention was given, greatly softened our hard heart, and brought tears of gratitude to God from our eyes. We felt, as we often have, amidst dark and trying prospects, that surely the Lord is caring for us, even in the furnace of trial. After a little rest, we were accompanied by Elder Eubanks to Dr. Calhoun's office, and being informed that nothing

short of the surgical knife would be available for our eye, the next day was set for the work. It was Saturday, the regular church meeting, but the brethren readily excused Elder Eubanks from attending the meeting, and even advised that he stay with us until the painful and bloody work should be over. This assurance of love and sympathy was greatly to our comfort, and enabled us to bear more cheerfully that which had befallen us. We were kindly cared for at night by Deacon Armstead and family, and the next night by Deacon G. F. Glazenor, who requested that we make his house our principal home during our stay in the city.

Sunday, April 15th, we met a goodly number of persons, who assembled for worship in a plain, unostentatious manner. Very soon we were cheered with delightful vocal music going up from many pleasant voices, singing, as we felt and thought at the time, "with the spirit, and with the understanding also"; "making melody in their hearts unto the Lord." Being a little revived in spirit, we yielded to the request of brethren to speak to them in the order of preaching; and we had some reason to believe, from what we saw, heard and felt before we left the city, that our feeble services were not in vain in the Lord. We were introduced to quite a number of brethren, sisters and friends, whose names we cannot now remember; and after preaching, by special request, we dined near by with Bro. R. McCord, having the pleasant company of brethren Eubanks, Jordan, Smith and others. But as Elder Eubanks had to return to his home, near Social Circle, fifty miles distant, our pleasant interview had to cease, and each in turn retire to fill his respective arrangements. We returned to Brother Glazenor's, and there remained till April 17th, when we returned home and attended a three days meeting at Mount Olive, Lee county, Ala.

But as we wrote a short account while in Atlanta, of the occasion of our visit there, which appears in the June number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, we will simply say here that our stay there, from the 26th of April to May 2nd, was made as pleasant by beloved brethren, sisters and friends as the cir-

cumstances attending our condition would admit. We hope never to be so ungrateful as not to appreciate the kind attention given us by Brother Glazenor and family, with whom we lodged mostly during our stay in Atlanta. Nor would we forget Elder W. H. Morgan and family, brethren McCord, Armstead, Smith, Ellis, and also an aged brother, Smythe, all of whom gave us kind attention during our stay in the city. We could but think, that in the midst of deepest trials, our God manifests his sustaining love and makes the hot, fiery furnace itself an occasion for showing forth his sovereign grace.

Saturday, April 27th, Brother Glazenor kindly conveyed us along Peachtree street for near two miles to the residence of Elder Morgan, where we tarried for an hour or two talking over certain incidents and things which occurred near thirty years before, when we had tarried a night with him in Meriwether county, Ga.

On Sunday, Elder Morgan had appointment for preaching in Atlanta, and as he was not well, we preached again to the people; after which we tarried for the afternoon and night with Brother McCord and his pleasant family.

Wednesday, May 2nd, we were joined by Elder J. S. Baxley, of Notasulga, Ala.; and proceeding to Dr. Calhoun's office, instructions were given as to the treatment of our eye during the intended preaching tour; and about 2:30 P. M., we were seated on the car for Acworth, Ga., where we arrived at about 4 P. M., and had a kind reception at the comfortable residence of our aged Bro. and Sister Awtry. Here also we met Elder I. N. Moon, and brethren O. M. Dodgen, H. Mitchell (our kinsman), Sister L. M. McDaniel, and others whose names we do not remember. A comfortable house belonging to the Campbellites being kindly tendered the brethren, we soon repaired to it, and listened to a short but very comforting discourse from Elder J. S. Baxley. The weather being warm, and our eye somewhat painful, we did not rest well during the night.

Thursday, May 3rd, at 11 o'clock A. M., we were met by a nice congregation at the same place, and we endeavored to speak to them in the name of the Lord according to the ability

given us. Services being closed, we stopped for a few minutes with Dr. Smith, and after dining with Brother Awtry and resting a little, we took our leave of the brethren, sisters and friends at 4 P. M., and proceeded onward to Tennessee, at about the rate of thirty miles per hour, arriving at Decherd at 11 o'clock in the night. We were met here and cordially received by Elder James Wagner, who conducted us to his country home, a mile or so off, and about midnight we retired for rest, but such was our nervous condition we could sleep but little.

Next day, Friday, May 4th, in company with Eld. Wagner, who remained with us through the whole tour, we went on the cars to Fayetteville, Tenn., forty miles, where we were kindly cared for by Elders J. W. Holman and J. G. Woods during our stay in the place.

Saturday, May 5th, we met a large congregation at Buck Eye, and were introduced to quite a number whom we had never before seen in the flesh, among whom were Elders E. W. Walker, J. J. Short, and an aged minister, A. Brown, who also continued with us nine days. Elder Baxley preached quite an interesting and instructive discourse; and as we were quite feeble and suffering, we simply concluded with a few remarks; after which the church, with a large number of visiting brethren and sisters, engaged together in Communion and Feet Washing. A solemn and sacred reverence seemed to pervade the meeting; and to see about seventy persons, whom God had separated from the world by his grace, bow at one another's feet in obedience to the command and example of Him who is "meek and lowly in heart," was indeed to us a lovely sight; and for a little while we felt like saying, "Lord, it is good for us to be here," notwithstanding all our sufferings and infirmities.

After the services closed at the meeting-house we were conveyed to Bro. John Warden's, and remaining there for dinner, we had opportunity of a brief conversation with his poor, afflicted daughter, who has for many months been confined to her bed. She is also a beloved sister in Christ, and

we greatly sympathize with her in her afflictions, and pray God that she may be comforted and restored to health, if it be his holy will. We tarried for the night with Bro. D. Warden.

Sunday, May 6th, at 10 o'clock A. M., preaching services commenced, but the capacity of the house, though large, not being sufficient to seat more than two-thirds of the congregation, we found it impossible in our feeble condition, to be as well composed in speaking as we could have desired. The congregation, however, was as orderly and composed as any congregation possibly could have been under similar circumstances. At this meeting we were much delighted and interested with the remarks of Elders Brown and Woods. This church at Buck Eye is under the pastoral charge of Elder Woods, who is greatly devoted to the cause of Christ and faithful to the charge committed unto him. His remarks in the close were pointed and forcible. In company with many others we dined with Mr. Joel G. Pitts, and then returned to Fayetteville; and as the first Monday of each month is always a public day at the Court House, no appointment had been made for us on that day. We remained in town with Elder Holman and Woods, having also the company of Elds. Brown, Wagner, Walker, Short, and brethren Warden, Fergerson and Rout. In the afternoon Brother Rout took us to his house and kindly entertained us till

Tuesday, May 8th. We were conveyed by our dear, aged brother, Elder Holman, to the church at Pleasant Grove, which church is under the pastoral care of Elder Woods. Though a week-day appointment, the house was about full, several of whom had come from far. We were feeling miserably bad, and much overcome by the "heat of the day." Bro. Baxley preached a very short discourse, with not much light nor liberty; and we followed about in the same way. Elders Wagner, Holman and Woods, however, spoke briefly, with considerable feeling, and much to the edification of the attentive audience; and though we spoke but about thirty minutes, and felt to be so oppressed and feeble, with but little

light or liberty of speech, Eld. Holman and Woods expressed themselves as much interested and instructed—especially on one point we feebly referred to, respecting the nature and results of an Atonement for sin. At this meeting we met with an aged minister, Elder Henderson, as well as many other brethren whom we had not before seen. We dined with Col. Harris, after which Brother Holman conveyed us on through town some few miles to the pleasant home of Bro. J. Roach, who kindly cared for us during the night; and next day—

Wednesday, May 9th—Brother Bateman conveyed us to Mount Moriah, stopping on the way to see an afflicted brother, whose name we have forgotten. At this meeting we first met Elder J. E. Frost and his wife, Sister Frost; also Eld. Johnson. The meeting was pleasant. In the afternoon we were conveyed by Brother Hix and Brother Farrer to Bro. J. Shofner's for dinner; after which we proceeded onward for twelve miles over some very rough road, till at length, much fatigued and worn down, we arrived at Bro. J. F. Farrer's to tarry for the night.

Thursday, May 10th, we met a large congregation and were blessed with more strength of body and fruitfulness of mind in preaching than we had been at any previous appointment in Tennessee. Elder Baxley also spoke much to the point and unto edification. This church is under the pastoral charge of Elder F. E. Lacy, who was present at this meeting and closed the services. We were truly glad again to see him, as he had been at our humble home in Alabama last fall. It seemed like meeting an old acquaintance in a strange land. We were again cheered with the presence of Elder Frost and some of his nice family of children, who seemed anxious to make our acquaintance, as we also were to make theirs. While we are always glad to become acquainted with the families of any of our brethren, it is especially so, and with a peculiar interest, that we seek the acquaintance of the families of our beloved preaching brethren. A faithful minister's wife and children have trials, difficulties and privations often unknown to other families, and less allowance is made for any seeming

delinquency or defect which others are always ready to see among them.

After services we were conveyed by Bro. W. W. Shofner to Sister Reagor's, with whom we had been invited, with many others also, to dine; and in the afternoon, passing for several miles over fertile hills and valleys, we reached the pleasant home of Brother Shofner, much fatigued. We were, however, cheered with the kind attention of the family, and the agreeable company and conversation of Elders Wagner, Brown and Lacy, and Brother Hix.

Friday, May 11th, our little company set out for the church at Bethlehem—some in carriages and some on horseback—and proceeding over a rough, hilly country of fertile lands over the "green pastures" of which roamed and fed flocks of sheep and cattle, herds of swine, and occasionally a nice lot of young mules and colts, we at length arrived at the residence of our esteemed old friend, W. C. Germany, with whom we had been acquainted many years ago in Chambers county, Ala. We had baptized Sister Germany many years ago, and we were truly glad, after many days' travel, to meet with those who had been acquainted with us in the early days of our ministry.

After resting a few minutes we went to the meeting-house (Bethlehem), and were soon introduced by the pastor of the church, Elder F. E. Lacy, to many brethren, sisters and friends. This church, as we were told, is in quite a prosperous and healthy condition; and truly we had good evidence of it when we saw the orderly and timely attendance of the members and congregation in the house, with one united and harmonious voice, singing the praises of God. We were much fatigued, and felt but little like preaching, yet we were delighted with the singing; and after preaching a little, and hearing a few concluding remarks by Elders Brown and Lacy, we returned to dine with Mr. Germany. Elder Wagner was not well, but after resting a little we were conveyed with him to the depot at Haley, paid our fare to Decherd, twenty-four

miles, where we arrived a little after dark, and soon found ourselves again with the family of Elder Wagner.

Saturday, May 12th, in company with Elder Wagner and family, we proceeded to Wagner's Creek Church, where we met and made the acquaintance of many with whom we had not met at any previous appointment. The day was pleasant, and Elder Baxley preached, and we followed. In company with Elders Brown, Wagner, and brethren Wilkinson, Robertson, Mason and others, we tarried for the night with Bro. S. West.

Sunday, May 13th, met again at Bethlehem, and by 11 A. M. the house was about filled to its utmost capacity. There were several visitors from sister churches present, and much interest was manifested by the audience to hear the preaching of the word. It was our last preaching appointment in Tennessee, and thanks be unto the Lord, we had some feeling sense of the blessed light and liberty of his Holy Spirit to enable his children to speak and hear in his name! But the time of parting had come, and soon we bid adieu to those among whom we had so pleasantly associated, having but little hope that we should ever again see each other's faces in the flesh. And we confess, that notwithstanding our anxiety to return to the quiet repose of home, we felt some reluctance to part with many of our kindred in Christ, who had so kindly cared for us during our visit among them.

After dining with Brother West, we accompanied Elder Wagner and family to their home; having also the company of Brother Wilkinson and daughter. Brother Wagner was not well, but made arrangements for our being conveyed to Decherd; and,

Monday, May 14th, before the rising of the sun, we were seated in the car, and passing through Chattanooga and Atlanta, in about thirteen hours we were in Opelika, Ala., a distance of 320 miles. Elder Baxley went on twenty miles further to Notasulga, Ala.

Next day—Tuesday, May 15th—in the afternoon we arrived home, finding our family about as well as when we left them,

feeling desirous to say in our heart, "What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us?" When we first authorized preaching appointments to be made for us in Georgia and Tennessee, it was even then with much fear and trembling, feeling that our health and strength would not be sufficient; but we did not then know how much more crippled we should have to go, nor how much hotter the furnace of trial had to be, nor how fully our God should manifest his grace in sustaining us in the midst of it.

In looking calmly over the whole tour, if there is one solitary incident connected with it in which we can or do glory after the flesh, we confess that we are so blind as not to see it and so dead as not to feel it in that way. We have much to mortify us. Truly we felt as expressed by the psalmist: "He weakened *my* strength in the way."—Psalms cii. 23. Or, as saith the apostle of Christ: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in *my* infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong."—2 Cor. xii. 5-10.

In giving the foregoing somewhat lengthy sketch we have had to trust much to our memory. It is, therefore, very imperfect and defective. But if anything is omitted that should have been mentioned, or anything written that ought to have been omitted, we hope the reader will have grace to make all due allowance. Since our arrival home we have attended the monthly meeting of Mount Gilead, twenty miles distant; and now at this writing (May 22nd) we feel much let down, having severe cold, bad cough and sore throat. In conclusion we say to you, brethren and sisters in Christ: "Be of good comfort; be of one mind; live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." M.

## ST. SIMON'S ISLAND.

St. Simon's is an island on the coast of Georgia, about twelve miles by boat from Brunswick. There are four Primitive Baptists on the island; and, perhaps, of whites and blacks, a thousand others. When Sister Childs and her daughter, Sister Jennie Childs, moved there, we promised to make them a visit and try to preach to them. And it was impressed upon our mind to do so, which we did, leaving home on Wednesday before 3rd Sunday in May. The oak is on this island under which John Wesley preached the first Methodist sermon ever preached on it. There is a meeting-house on the island—a very nice one—in which all denominations may have preaching, and in which we preached the first Primitive Baptist sermon ever preached on the island.

But we did not set out to write an article on the island, or of our visit there, but upon the destitute condition of many of our brethren and sisters—deprived of the association of their brethren and of the preached word. We felt it, upon our visit to St. Simon's. Sister Jennie Childs could hardly enjoy the visit of ourself and wife for thinking of the time when we should leave, and when the time came, it seemed that she could hardly bear it. Because they love the church, and to live away from it, is a deprivation of which the world—and even a worldly-minded Baptist—knows little or nothing. It matters not if it be said, Why do people move to a place where they can't hear preaching? It is enough, that many, who fear and love God, are in such places, and are suffering there, and are not ministered to. It is true, they get the GOSPEL MESSENGER, but that is nothing to the word preached, though even it is a great comfort to them. But many of our brethren and sisters in destitute places are unable to take it, and we are too thoughtless or selfish to send it to them. Would it not be a good thing to send it to all such brethren? And our traveling ministers, who are going from church to church—churches with regular supply of preaching—would it not be a good thing for them to hunt out such destitute

places and preach to them? They would appreciate it. As for our own part, we would be willing to aid ministers with such impressions in any way we could. But says some brother at ease, If they go there, let them suffer; or, If they go there, God knows it, and he will comfort them. That is true; it was true that the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell amongst thieves, who beat him, stripped him, and left him half dead; it was true that a good man ministered to him, whilst the Levite and priest, the morally clean,—the strict, correct, prudent and Pharisaical,—passed by him, destitute of sympathy, and rendering no aid. The Samaritan went to him, and took his condition upon himself, not stopping to theorize of how he got into that condition, and how God would eventually deliver him, but went to work himself, by the Lord in him, to deliver him; and he was delivered, to the glory of God. Thus God works; working in his people to will and do, of his good pleasure.

There are sometimes famines in Ireland and elsewhere, and we assist in sending them bread; and when we know our brethren are destitute of the preached gospel, is it not a good work to help them all we can? It is more to them than merely literal bread and meat. When Agabus signified by the Spirit (Acts xi.) that there should be a great dearth throughout the world,—and which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar,—the disciples, every man according to his ability, sent relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea, by Barnabas and Saul. God works in this way. There is too much theorizing about abstractions that are unprofitable, and too little attention given to the simple things of the gospel of Christ. May the Lord turn our captivity, and teach us his will!

Bad health has prevented further writing in this issue.—R.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God, prepared an ark; by which he condemned the world.” Noah’s believing set him to prosecute his building. Thus the sanctified Christian judges the world—both by his faith and his practice.

## LETTERS OF DISMISSION.

We were privileged some time ago to be at a Church Conference where two members were received into fellowship by letter from a sister church of the same faith and order. After a unanimous vote of the church for their reception, the esteemed and faithful pastor said: "I see nothing wrong about the letter, but I see it is dated *four years* back, and I do not think it is right for members to obtain Letters of Dismissal from a church to unite with some other church of like faith and order, and then put such letters in their trunk. They ought to go at once and put their letters in with the nearest church to them."

We heartily endorse what our brother has said upon this subject, by saying, that if they do not offer their letters to the nearest church, they should at least go to the one most accessible to them, and to the one that can be best acquainted with the every-day practical life of its members.

When letters of dismissal are not at once offered to some church, the holders of them, in some cases, seem to think they are to a great extent relieved of the duties and responsibilities of other members of the church. This very thing is of itself sowing to the flesh, and evinces a spirit of conformity to the world, which, sooner or later, will bring its corrupt fruits. No church can consistently grant to her members certificates of exoneration from the responsibilities of membership; and whenever a letter of dismissal is used in that way by its *holder*, the object of granting it by the church is perverted.

A letter of dismissal in full fellowship is a kind of *passport* from one church to another of like faith and order, and if not obtained and used for that purpose, there is something wrong, for which the member should be held accountable. One holding a letter, is as fully responsible and amenable to the church granting said letter, as though he had not obtained it; but if it is not used for the purpose for which it was given by the church, then it should be called in, if not voluntarily returned by the holder of it.—M.

## TO CHILDREN.

*Dear Children:*—Did you ever think of the great blessing which the Creator has bestowed upon you, in giving you eyes to see and ears to hear? What a dreary world this would be to you if you were deprived, as some few are, of seeing or hearing!

Some of you are, no doubt, much delighted at times with the beauties of nature or of art; but what would those beauties be to you if you could not see? You might hear people talking ever so much about a beautiful flower, a handsome person, a nice bird, or describing the general appearance of things, but such descriptions would have no meaning to you if you had always been deprived of the sense of sight.

Every season of the year has its beauties, and almost every day is unfolding to us something lovely in the workings of nature. Even the cold winter brings that which is beautiful and lovely to the eye. The earth, in cold climates, is covered with snow, and the ice sparkles in the sun like diamonds. How beautiful to look upon mountains, hills, houses and trees covered with snow! But there soon comes another season we call *spring*; and, sure enough, it is "*spring*." The snow is melting, and water is running from mountains, hills, trees and houses as though there was a real "*spring*" of water everywhere. Soon, too, there is another kind of *spring*; the grass, weeds, herbs and flowers *spring* forth from their wintry prison, looking mild, tender and lovely. But O, dear child, would there be anything beautiful or lovely to you in all these things without sight? Can you not have compassion and pity upon poor blind people? Winter, spring or summer has no beauties to them. Bad as this may be considered, there is also another thing still worse, if possible, which persons born blind are deprived of, to which we will now very briefly call your attention.

People who are born blind, and remain so, are not only deprived of seeing a great many beautiful things, but they are also deprived of the power of thinking on a great many

things that those who can see think about. We have a great many thoughts, and some of them very pleasant ones, too, derived from our sense of sight. But a blind person who never did see anything, has never, in all his life, had even one thought that is derived from sight. You may talk to him about colors—such as blue, red, green, dark or pink—but not one thought can he have as to what you mean by these words.

Now, dear children, can you not see that eye-sight is a most wonderful blessing which God has given to his creatures, whether to men, women and children, or to birds and beasts? We cannot well appreciate this great blessing to us till we are about to be deprived of it. If one has ever seen the light, or had good eye-sight, and then begin to get blind, as many old people do, then they begin to know what a blessing the Lord has suffered them to have in giving them eyes to behold his handiwork.

But, before closing this article, we will call your attention to another kind of blindness, still worse than any natural blindness of which we have been speaking. To be blinded by sin and by Satan is to be blind in mind and heart. One thus blind (and all people in nature are so), cannot see any of the spiritual beauties of the gospel, nor has he ever had one thought which is derived from spiritual sight. This is "gross darkness," but men know it not. Dear children, do any of you feel to be blind as to your salvation? Remember, "The Lord openeth the blind eyes."—M.

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### WHO SENT IT?

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A card has just come to hand (May 16th, 1883), in the following style: "W. M. Mitchell—I sent to you some time ago for the MESSENGER, and have never got a single one. I would be glad you would send it on."

No doubt but the writer of the above is very lavish of abuse and complaint against us for not sending the MESSENGER, but as the above note is without date of time or place,

and has no signature to it, we cannot possibly know where nor to whom to send. The editors of the GOSPEL MESSENGER make it an invariable rule to attend promptly, and at once, to all orders respecting the MESSENGER, and if any fail to get the paper the fault is not with us. Every one who writes us on business should be careful to give his or her name, as well as the date, the post-office, county and State from which he writes. If remittance is made for one or more, no matter how often the address has been given before, it should always accompany the remittance. We would gladly send the MESSENGER, on our published terms, to the writer of the above note, if he or any one else will tell us to whom or where to send it. The postal card was mailed April 23rd, 1883, at Purley, Texas. Who sent it?—EDS.

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### IN MY NAME.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—Mat. xviii. 20.

Possibly but few of us have given as much importance to what is implied in the scriptures by being gathered together in the Name of Christ, as its merits demand. It is true, that in the most ordinary sense of a name, it is nothing more than a distinguishing term to distinguish one person or thing from another. But it also signifies power, authority and character; and when *Name* is applied to God, or Christ, it is not simply a distinguishing term, but it represents his attributes and perfections, as in Exodus xxxiii. 19, where it is written: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee; and I will proclaim the *Name* of the Lord before thee." The Name of the Lord also represents his word and worship, as well as all that pertain to his will and purpose in the eternal salvation and glorification of his people. Paul was a chosen vessel to "bear the Name of the Lord before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."—Acts ix. 15. He was to represent His holy character, preach His gospel, and be obedient to all things required of him, as every gospel minister and every

private christian should be in his particular sphere and calling, according to that which the Lord has required of him.

The Name of Christ signifies his authority, character, power and dignity. It presents to us his word and blessed gospel, as well as all that lawfully pertain to the profession of it. His honor, glory and perfections are embraced in his Name. In point of dignity, honor, power and glory, it is a "Name that is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Eph. i. 21. It is a mighty Name, a glorious Name, a holy Name, at which, and to which, "every knee shall bow"; that is, shall be in subordination, inferiority, and entire subjection to his supreme dominion, authority and control in his kingdom. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We may therefore see at once by a little reflection and meditation upon the subject, that there is a vast importance to be attached to the idea of being gathered together in the Name of Jesus, although there may be but "two or three" in number. If his Name, authority, character and Spirit have gathered them together, he is there himself. His honor, his word, his ordinances and laws are there represented, respected and maintained.

There is evidently so much importance attached to the Name of the Lord and of Christ, that there is nothing can be regarded as right in worship, nor acceptable to God, unless it is done in his Name. Our own poor, polluted name, authority or character, cannot give us acceptance with God. If our services are acceptable and right in the sight of God, we must meditate in his Name; think upon and in his Name; pray, through faith in his Name; sing in his Name; preach in his Name; be "gathered together in his Name"; hear in his Name; rejoice in his Name; and observe, maintain and administer the laws and ordinances of the gospel, in the Name, by the authority, and in the Spirit and character of Christ. "The Name of the God of Jacob defend thee."—Psalms xx. 1. The wisdom, love, righteousness, power and grace of God, is the protection and defence of his people.—M.

## EARLY PEACHES.

To-day, May 25th, a basket of nice peaches came to us eighty miles by Express, from the orchard of our dear brother and fellow laborer, Elder J. R. Respass, of Butler, Ga. They arrived in good time and all right, and were much appreciated and enjoyed by the family and friends who partook with us of the "First Ripe Peaches" for this season. The peaches are of excellent flavor, and look as though they would have kept well for several days to come.

We hope our dear brother and his family may find the gathering and shipping of this delicious fruit, not only a means of breaking the dull monotony attending the ordinary cares of life, but also a pleasant and profitable employment. And should they ever feel as though it would add to their enjoyment to stir up within us a grateful remembrance of the past, *another* such "Basket of Fruit" would certainly be a good reminder. Accept our thanks.—M.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENN., May 7, 1883.

*Very Dear Brother Respass* :—We sent our children to Winchester to school some time in last January, and their mother went to our daughter on her sick bed with measles, about the last of March; a few days later she sent a telegram for me, and going, the day after I got there our son took the measles, and we remained with them, and had all of the medical aid there was in the town, and did all we could, but in spite of all we poor feeble creatures could do, we had to stand by the bedside and see our darling daughter expire, 14th of April, 4 o'clock P. M.; also our dear son expire, 15th of April, 4 o'clock A. M., just twelve hours apart.

O, my dear brother, how can we live without them, being all that we had! O, brother, it was the most heart-rending scene I ever witnessed! Our hearts are broken all to pieces. Dear brother, pray for me and my wife, for she seems like she will go wild with grief. O, brother, I want to be submissive to the will of the Lord, but it is so hard to give my darling children up! My love to you, my dear brother.

WILLIAM B. OWEN.

ADAIRSVILLE, GA., April 28, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I receive much comfort from your writings, for it seems evident that we are brethren, at least in afflictions. Can it be

that the Lord chasteneth so heavily those that he loves so dearly? is often a question with me. But again, when I think of myself as a poor sinner, I can say, It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed. And again, I can see a cause of your grief and sorrow. "For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Also knowing that tribulations worketh patience. So when the Master prepares a beam for the building of mercy, it answers well the place for which it is supplied. Paul says: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me."

May the Lord bless you and yours!

F. M. CASEY.

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BROWNSBORO, ALA., May 8, 1883.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell*:—I hope the next time you visit this part of the country, that God will order your steps into this neighborhood, and that I shall yet be permitted to see your face and hear your voice proclaiming the gospel of peace. I hope the dear Lord has given you much union and communion with your kindred in Christ in Tennessee, and that you will have many pleasant things to meditate upon when you get home.

I love the GOSPEL MESSENGER very dearly, and enjoy your Letters to Children very much. May the Lord spare you long to fill your place in its columns! With christian love to you, and many wishes for your safe return home, I remain your sister in Christ,

SUE LAWLER.

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BLOOMINGDALE, ALA., May 7, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell*:—I expected to have seen you at the Union Meeting at Macedonia, but was disappointed. We had a very pleasant meeting, and I was glad that so many brethren whom we believe can preach the gospel, visited us. We had a good meeting at Mount Pisgah at our regular meeting time—1st Sunday and Saturday. I baptized a dear brother and sister there on Sunday morning. Come and preach for us again through this section. We much desire to see you here once more. I would like to have your views respecting the "earth and heaven" that the angels were to gather the Elect from.

Yours in love,

J. T. SATTERWHITE.

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SNOW HILL, ALA., April 4, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell*:—I was much interested and pleased with your views in last MESSENGER concerning the support of the ministry. It is a subject that deeply concerns me, at times, and this causes me to read everything I see on that subject with peculiar interest. Secular pursuits—especially *three* at once—which have been on my hands ever since before I commenced preaching, and the work of the ministry, do not go very well together. There is much conflict between them, and the result is bad for the churches and bad for the ministry. It seems like serving two masters and making a very bad out at it. I could write much upon it, but it might not be profitable.

I am, unworthily, yours, &c.

J. H. PURIFOY.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, ALA., March, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—I am almost totally blind; can just see to get about like a man with good sight would by dim moonlight. Can recognize no one only by their voice. I went to Dr. Calhoun, in Atlanta, about eighteen months ago. He gave me encouragement of relief after waiting the proper time. O, my dear brethren, you cannot tell the comfort I lose by not being able to read the good papers that come to my humble cabin! But, thank the Lord, I can sometimes get the children to read for me! Please find enclosed subscription price for the GOSPEL MESSENGER. May the Good Lord bless you! Remember the poor old blind brother at a throne of grace.

W. E. FREEMAN.

ALBANY, MISSOURI, June, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—Since the death of my dear companion, I see but little comfort outside of my little hope in Christ. O, what a friend we have in Jesus! how precious he is when we can feel him near in time of trouble! I am trying to keep my little family together, and we are doing our own house work, having the care in and out upon me. I am thus often brought low down. Surely that power that supports poor mortals under such trials is supernatural—is of God. Pray for me and mine when the Lord favors you.

Your brother in hope,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

ROBERSONVILLE, MARTIN COUNTY, N. C.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I see a request that writers would give the condition of the churches in their various sections; and I, for one, would be glad to see that done. If I have any hope of realizing a better world than this, I received it in 1849; from which time until now, I have been a constant reader of my Bible and religious periodicals, and a strict observer of the religious world. I sometimes hope that the Lord has given me the light of his truth, so that I can discern between the righteous and the wicked; and with thirty to thirty-five years' experience of "ups and downs" in this sinful world, I can say to-day that my christian enjoyment has been in obedience to my God—in letting this sinful world go. I am one who believes that the time is not far distant in which there will be a sifting in the churches; and not far ahead, when Baptists will be tried in soul. If not deceived, I love truth, justice and mercy; so that when I give my hand to my brother I want my heart to go with it, and the same with him when he gives me his hand. I am 64 years old, and afflicted, and know I can't stay much longer here, and would be glad to leave this land in as good a condition as when I came into it—though I have but little hope of such a thing.

Brother Respass, it has been on my mind for ten or fifteen years to write out my experience, and also my travails for thirty-five years, if I was competent to do so. I feel like it would be consoling to some poor, tempest-tossed child of God. I have no fear of death, but am I prepared for eternal life? and I can only say that I hope I am. I fear you will not be able to read this, as I have never had any advantages of education. I want all God's people to remember poor, unworthy me. Your unworthy brother, if I may say so,

HENRY B. ROBERSON.

## OBITUARIES.

## NANCY WILKINSON.

Our dear sister, NANCY WILKINSON, the subject of this notice, was born June 9th, 1820; joined the Primitive Baptists on the 4th Saturday in April, 1839; was baptized the next day by Elder John P. Walker in the fellowship of Boiling Fork Church, Franklin county, Tenn.; married William C. Wilkinson, July 21st, 1842, and soon after moved her membership to Elk River Church, Coffee county, Tenn., of which she was a consistent and beloved member till death ended her earthly pilgrimage, June 5th, 1882, being 62 years old, less four days. I attended her burial, and there witnessed the esteem and appreciation of her many virtues, by a numerous concourse of neighbors, friends and relatives, among whom were her husband, four daughters, and five sons. May her mantle fall upon her daughters! In the death of Sister Wilkinson the church has lost a faithful and consistent member, her husband a loving and obedient wife, her children a kind and dutiful parent, society an ornament, to all of which the writer is a witness; having tried to serve said church for the last twenty-five years, I have had frequent opportunities of witnessing the generosity, hospitality and kindness of our dear sister. Indeed, she seemed as gifted in arranging for the entertainment of her brethren and friends, so as to make everything pleasant and agreeable, as any person I ever saw. Our dear sister always filled her seat at the meetings when able, and was much edified in hearing the pure gospel preached, of which she was a competent judge. I visited our sister frequently while confined in her last sickness; she was always calm and quiet, expressing her confidence in the Lord. Peace to her ashes till the resurrection!

*Decherd, Tenn.*

JAMES WAGNER.

## MOSES MADEN.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!

Brother MOSES MADEN died 5th of February, 1883, in the 75th year of his age; was born, February 5th, 1808, in Laurens District, South Carolina, and moved from there to Louisiana about the time he was grown; was married to Miss Nerva Mabry the 16th of April, 1837, and remained in Louisiana all the balance of his life. In 1878 he came to our church, Antioch, and related his experience of grace, and was received in the church in full fellowship, and his baptism was deferred to our next meeting, when his companion came with him to our church, related her christian experience, was received into the fellowship of the church, and was baptized by the writer on the 2nd Sabbath in June, 1878, and remained very much devoted to the cause of Christ, and died in the triumph of a living faith in the blessed Jesus, admonishing his children to follow his footsteps and not to grieve after him.

Brother Maden leaves his aged companion and five children to mourn the loss of a kind husband, a kind father, and the church has lost a devoted member. Our sister sent for the poor, unworthy writer to meet at the burial ground at Terryville, where I met a goodly number of his connections, neighbors and friends, and spoke to them of the departed brother amidst

sorrowing friends. There we laid in the grave the body of our departed brother, to remain until the morning of the resurrection, when these vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of the Son of God. But none feel the loss of our dear brother as much as our sister. But we do not mourn as those who have no hope, but wait with pleasing hope to meet our dear brother where parting will be known no more; where the wicked will cease to trouble, and the weary will be at rest.

*Arcadia, La.*

H. B. HOWARD.

MRS. ESTHER ANN CATHERINE MILLER.

Mrs. E. A. C. MILLER, widow of G. W. Miller, died at her residence near Hurricane Springs, Franklin county, Tenn., of consumption, after an illness of over twelve months, 1st April, 1883, in the 45th year of her age. She was a daughter of Alldridge Brown, and born 2nd February, 1839. She was the mother of three children, and was left a widow by the death of her husband four years ago 28th last June, her babe being only twelve days old at his death. Her oldest child died before his father. About twelve years before her death she professed a hope, but owing to her fears of unfitness, she never joined the church. In the forepart of last winter she became willing to join the church, but being too feeble and hoping to become stronger, she put it off until spring, saying that "water would not save her if she died." She lived as consistent a christian in every other respect as any one I ever saw, I think. She was a dutiful daughter, a good wife, and affectionate mother. She has left two little boys, entire orphans, a number of relatives and friends, to mourn her death; but we believe that she has gained by death and entered into eternal rest; so that we mourn not as those who have no hope. On Monday morning before she died—the next Sunday night—having lost hope of recovery, she bade us all farewell, and giving me her hand, she threw her other arm around my neck, saying, "I am almost gone, and hope that we will all meet in heaven." She gave directions about her shroud and burial and that she wished her funeral preached before she was taken out of the house. She retained her mind, and died on Sunday night about 12 o'clock, without a struggle or frown, having borne her afflictions throughout her sickness with great patience.

ALLDRIDGE BROWN.

*Tulahoma, Tenn., May 1, 1883.*

Brethren Editors—Indulge me in a word relative to myself. My troubles have been great, yet the Lord has been abundant in goodness to me; but I have been a disobedient servant, if one at all, so that I have thought I ought to be the most thankful creature that ever lived. It seems like the chastisements I have received should have reconciled me to the will of God in his providences, but I feel within me a disposition to murmur. I had a good wife, whom I idolized, and God took her from me, and seven of twelve children, the last of whom was my daughter above mentioned. I am now in my 78th year, and why it is that He is keeping me here I cannot tell, unless it be that He has a work for me to do and is preparing me in taking from me the cares of this world. I have been trying in my weakness to preach nearly fifty years, but have had a large family to care for. My mind has been a little time to travel and preach, and I now feel to follow my mind. Brethren, pray for me.

A. BROWN.

## ELISABETH D. BOWEN.

My wife, ELISABETH D. BOWEN, was the daughter of James J. and Nancy Davis, and was born in Henry county, Ga., 21st May, 1833, and departed this life 26th February, 1875. We were married September 10th, 1857, and she joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Macedonia, Lee county, Ga., 23rd July, 1864, and she, her father and mother, all died, belonging to the same church; and though I have been a bad man the most of my life, I would be so glad if I could spend the balance of my time as those three did. Brother Respass, I can look back to those days; and O how happy I was! but I did not know it. If it was possible—which it is not—for one to be a natural christian, she would be that one, for she had no faults nor enemies. I remember before I went to the war, one day, that a cow got into the field, and I could not get her out, which made me curse the cow, and my dear wife followed me, begging me not to curse; and when I went to the war, her petitions went with me through the war. I came home on furlough in the meantime, and she would kneel at my bedside in the late hours of the night, and pray for me; and I do trust that her prayers were of the Spirit, and that God has answered them. In all her afflictions on her death-bed she was patient, and would talk with a smile on her face when her body was in great pain; and one time, with the face seemingly of an angel, she said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." She asked me what I would do with the children when she was gone, and I told her I would keep them together as long as I could get bread for them to eat; and by the help of God, I have done so. Brother Respass, I do know that if ever any poor, afflicted creature both in soul and body has been blessed, that I have been, to be spared to live to work for my children. My wife had five children living at her death, the youngest of whom died in August after her death; and it seemed to me then that my troubles increased, and I have been in darkness ever since.

Brother Respass, I do not publish this obituary to benefit my departed wife, but for her children, and those that the Lord has loved with an everlasting love. Pray for me.

LUMPKIN BOWEN.

*Dawson, Ga., April, 1883.*

## MRS. SALINA C. MOORE.

Died, of paralysis, in Chambers county, Ala., March 29th, 1883, Sister SALINA C. MOORE, in the 74th year of her age. She was the daughter of William C. and Sarah Humphries, and was married to Leroy W. Moore in 1824; joined the Baptist Church in 1828, at Fishing Creek Church, in Baldwin county, Ga., and was baptized by *Edward Brantly*.

Sister Moore was truly a Baptist from principle, and like many of her age, she had to pass through the trying ordeal of a separation among the Baptists on the modern Mission question; but through the abounding grace of God, she did not hesitate to maintain her position with the Old Order of Baptists, remaining steadfast in the doctrine and order of the gospel till her death.

Up to the time of the death of her husband (Bro. L. W. Moore), which occurred some eighteen years ago, the family was in easy circumstances, and

none were more delighted and ready to accommodate and care for the poor, way-worn ministers and church members than they were. But the war and its consequences, death and bereavements, left the poor widow but little of this world's goods; and, in fact, we suppose that before her death she had absolutely nothing, save as her children ministered unto her necessities. Yet, until age and disease had weakened, and to some extent impaired her mind, she was generally exceedingly cheerful. None seemed to enjoy social religious conversation better than she did, nor to brighten up in countenance more under the preaching of good, wholesome gospel doctrine. But, poor old pilgrim! she is now at rest, leaving for a little while in this world, quite a numerous family of children and grandchildren. As we are not sufficiently informed respecting her last days, nor of her burial, we forbear to say anything further than that we learn the dear old sister and mother in Israel became very helpless and dependent, needing the kind and constant attention of friends and kindred, like a little infant. Her membership was with the church at Hephzibah, Lee county, Ala.—M.

#### JOHN M. CALDWELL

Died, of croup, 1st October, 1882, after only three hours' suffering; aged 8 years. Thus God in his providence, sent a hasty messenger for the first-born and beloved son of Bro. Elijah and Sister Sarah Caldwell. But, beloved, cease to mourn for your dead, remembering that they will die no more; that death hath no more dominion over them. All their enemies are subdued, and there will be no more suffering and sorrow for them. Jesus, who blessed little children, saying, "Suffer them to come unto me," hath reigned to put all enemies under his feet; and he being excepted, they are excepted in him as the beloved, and do reign with him as kings and priests unto God forever and ever. Also,

#### JOHN P. CALDWELL,

Infant son of Bro. Hamilton and Sister Lucinda Caldwell, died suddenly, without a moment's warning, January 16th, 1883; aged 9 months. Dear brother and sister, we can say nothing that will cause you to forget or cease to cherish the infant smiles of your beloved babe; yet the fleeting moments of time will soon pass away, and ere long your tears will be stayed, and your aching hearts will cease to throb for little "Johnny," and your weeping will be for yourselves and your living children. May the Lord reconcile you to every dispensation of his providence! The little babe is gone to rest and reign with its Saviour forever.

F. M. CASEY.

*Adairsville, Ga., April 28, 1883.*

#### JOHN SKINNER.

Died, June 3rd, at his residence near Opelika, Ala., Deacon JOHN SKINNER, in the 91st year of his age. He has long been a member of the Missionary Baptist denomination. He died quietly. Have not time now to say more.

*June 6, 1883.*

M.

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Vol. 5.

No. 8.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

**J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.**

Brethren wishing to communicate with **ELD. MITCHELL**, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the **GOSPEL MESSENGER** to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

AUGUST, 1883.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 8. BUTLER, GA., AUGUST, 1883. Vol. 5.

“OUGHT PEOPLE TO STAY OUT OF THE CHURCH A GOOD WHILE AFTER THEY RECEIVE A HOPE?”

*Dear Brethren:*—Some two or three years since, I found out one day, that one of whom I had not known before, was rejoicing in hope of life through Christ; and in a few days after, I went to visit and talk with her. Prior to this, I had been but little acquainted with her, as she was of a retiring disposition, though I had often visited her aged parents, who were members of the church at Black Rock. All her early life she had felt no interest in the meetings nor in the preaching. When I visited her she told me that it had been nearly a year since she had first felt that she was a sinner before God, and for about six months previous to our conversation she had rejoiced in a hope in Christ. Our talk was long and delightful to us both, for she was rejoicing in hope, and also that now she could speak of it; and I was rejoicing over another lost sheep found. At length, after telling over all the way in which she had been led, and of her present joy, she said: “*Ought people to stay out of the church a good while after they receive a hope?*” “Why, Carrie,” I said, “what put that question in your head?” “Why,” she said, “I was talking with mother about it, the other day, and she said that people generally did wait a good while; and I felt that if I ought to do so, I did not see how I could, for I want to be there so badly.” “Well,” I said, “Carrie, if you feel that way, the sooner you come the better.” And it was my privilege to baptize this willing convert a few weeks later.

Now, brethren, of course I have not told this incident merely for the sake of telling it, but as a kind of text for what I want to say in this letter.

1st. There is always danger, when we set ourselves to oppose a wrong, that we shall imperceptibly go into the opposite extreme, and so do wrong ourselves. Such is the weakness of our imperfect nature, that in opposing those who do too much or more than is enjoined in the word, we do too little or less than it enjoins. This, I fear, has been true in our dealing with those who are lingering around the fold, desiring to come in, and yet timid and fearful and needing encouragement. There is in the religious world a lust of numbers, and a tendency to well nigh remove every safeguard, and throw the doors wide open, so that men, unrenewed and graceless, upon the merest profession could come in. Besides, the whole effort is to get men to make a profession and come into the church. This had become largely true among Baptists before the separation. Disgusted with such disregard of the plainest scripture rules, we withdrew, and set ourselves to oppose it. In this we did righteously. But it was easy to go to the opposite extreme, and say that it was wrong to encourage a child of God—to exhort him or her to be obedient to God. Out of this tendency arose such wicked advice as is contained in the following expressions: "Do not come as long as you can stay away." "Don't come to the church as long as you can help it." "The Lord will make you come when he gets ready." "I had rather preach two people out of the church, than one in," &c., &c. And it was through the influence of this kind of teaching that the aged sister referred to above said to her daughter what is recorded at the head of this article. Now, extremes will never do; and it is to call attention to this extreme, and to warn brethren against it, that I write this communication.

2nd. To thus advise the subjects of divine grace, the children of God, the servants of Christ, is to deny the commandment of their heavenly Father. The commandment of God goes out to, and embraces every one of his children. It is

summed up, first, in this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, with all thy heart, with all thy strength." Deut. vi. 5; Luke x. 27. And the test is this: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."—John xiv. 15. As servants of God, it is our duty to preach and enforce this law of Zion as earnestly as possible upon all the subjects of grace. To teach otherwise, is to deny the word of the Lord and to dishonor his name. If God has said to those who love him, "Be obedient," who are we that we should say, "Do not obey as long as you can help it"? The first and indispensable duty of every one who has a hope in Christ, is, to confess and follow Him. "As we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we are to walk in him."—Col. ii. 6. If we have Christ's salvation within our hearts, we are to live it out day by day (Phil. ii. 12, 13.)

3rd. Why should we make a distinction in our preaching to the children of God? Why not preach to those who have not yet begun to be obedient, just as we do to those in the church who may be doing wrong? If one is a member of the church, we do not hesitate to exhort him to be obedient to God in all things, and to fill his place in the church. Why should we not thus exhort the children who have never yet confessed Him before men? We do not say to those in the church, "Do not obey as long as you can help it; the Lord will compel you to obey when he gets ready." And it would not be true, but false, if we did say it. God does not compel the obedience of his children in any such way. The obedience is a willing obedience (1 Chron. xxviii. 9; 2 Cor. viii. 12.) Neither is it true that He bids us wait till we are driven into the confession of His name, at the first. The first step in the way of obedience is not different from those that follow it. Wherein does it so differ that we have warrant to say of the first, "Do not obey as long as you can help it," while all the rest of the way we exhort to obedience? I feel anxious for all the children of God to walk in the truth, to their own comfort and joy (2 John 4th ver.; 3 John 4th ver.)

4th. The children of God who are without, are timid and

trembling. There are stones enough in their way, without our seeking to add to the number. It is our business to gather them out, and to make the paths straight, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way (Isa. lxii. 10; Heb. xii. 13.) There are discouragements enough arising out of a knowledge of sin, a feeling of unworthiness, and a fear of unfitness, without our saying, "Don't come as long as you can help it." The road is rugged enough to their feet, without our making it harder. There are hindrances enough, without our putting the bars up, and driving in the pins, and saying, "We will not help you remove them; but if you want to come in bad enough to pull out the pins and let the bars down, then we will welcome you." No! no! my brethren; rather let us say, "Come in, thou blessed of my Father."—Mat. xxv. 34. Come in, thou trembling child; here is light, shelter and warmth for thee; come and welcome.

5th. I know there is in the minds of many good and faithful brethren a fear of the gathering in of some who have no real, vital change, and this makes them fear to encourage anybody to obey the Lord. But why should there be any more danger of getting in more than the Lord wills shall come in, than of not as many coming in as he wills? We seem to be very much afraid that some people will get in who ought not; why not be equally fearful that some will stay out who ought not? God rules in one case just as much as in the other. One is no more an extreme than the other. While we should guard well the gates of Zion, yet let us also be found faithfully exhorting the children of God that they obey him. Let us not leave the people under the impression that God wants them to be disobedient as long as they can; that it does not matter whether those who with the heart believe unto righteousness, make confession with their mouth unto salvation or not (Rom. x. 10.) Above all things, let us urge upon the little children that they walk in the truth (2 John 4th ver.; 3 John 4th ver.) I believe it is with me an ardent desire that all the children of God should run in the way of his commandments, when he enlarges their heart (Psa. cxix. 32.)

6th. Where is there an instance in all the New Testament in which a single true believer was told to wait even for a day before confessing Christ? I will mention the leper in Mark, 1st chapter, Lydia, the jailor, the eunuch, and Paul himself, and then the great multitude at the Day of Pentecost, as cases in point where there was no delay. As soon as they believed, they were baptized and added to the church. Is there one instance to the contrary? To teach delay, is an invention of men. To delay, is to confer with flesh and blood. To obey at once, is to be like Paul, who did not confer with flesh and blood, but was at once obedient to the heavenly vision (Acts xxvi. 19.) In every case where men believed in Jesus and confessed him, they were baptized at once. Is it anywhere said in the Bible, "Don't come as long as you can help it"? "Stay away as long as you can"? What warrant have we, then, for so teaching?

7th. There is danger out of the fold. Shall we say to the lambs, "Stay out where the wolves are; don't come in until the cold has chilled you, and the howl of the wolf has well nigh paralyzed you with fear"? God forbid! If this has been our teaching, what a fearful responsibility we have taken upon ourselves! If the roaring lion has devoured one little lamb whom we have told to stay out as long as it could,—devoured it, in the sense that this little one has been led astray, and entrapped in error, and entangled in the meshes of Antichrist, are we not guilty? Are our hands clear of their blood? (Ezek. xxxiii. 6.) What a fearful thought for me, for us all, my brethren!

8th. I will close by speaking of what was once said, most impressively, at the water's side, by Elder P. Hartwell, now gone to his home, upon the occasion of a baptism at Southampton, Penn. He said: "I see standing about me those who love the Lord, who have not yet confessed him in this ordinance. Some would say to you, 'Stay away as long as you can; don't come as long as you can help it.' But dare I say this to you? Suppose I should go into your houses, and should begin to say to your children, either the older or the

younger, 'Now, don't you obey your father as long as you can help it; he will make you obey when he gets ready.' What would you think of me? Would you not say, 'Leave the house, and never come back again until you can teach my children differently'? If you did not say this, it is what you ought to say. Now, shall I say this to the children of God? No!—As your brother who loves you and loves the honor of God, I say to you, be obedient to your heavenly Father, and obey at once all of his commands."

This language of Elder Hartwell impressed me deeply. It was spoken in his old age, after many years of faithful labor in his Master's cause. Brethren, receive these words as coming neither from him nor me, but as the word and will of God.

As ever, your brother in hope,  
*Reisterstown, Md.* F. A. CHICK.

SPRINGTOWN, PARKER CO., TEXAS, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass:—Dear Brother:—*I thought I would give a short sketch of my travails in my past life, although I feel my weakness and unworthiness; but if the Lord will help me, I will do the best I can.

When a boy I was afraid I would die before I was grown, and when I heard of a death I felt badly. I hated the thought of leaving my friends, but I did not think much about my condition after death. I thought religion was all a whim, or imagination, although my parents were Baptists. At the age of seventeen I began to study about my condition, and thought maybe I was wrong about there being no punishment after death; and it pestered my mind very much; so that once, while going around the field, something caused me to stop and gaze at the sun, and then my attention was drawn on to the trees. I stood beholding for some time, and then and there I was convinced that there was a Supreme Being, who had all power both in heaven and in earth. I then thought I would try to do better, and I began to make promises, when my mind became more reconciled; but when I would do some-

thing wrong, I would think of my promises to do better. I went on in that condition for some time, and then concluded if I would attend preaching, and quit all my bad habits, I would be all right; so I went, and was attending a big meeting, where there was a right smart stir—there being several mourners. One day I was standing on the outside of the congregation, looking on to see how many were going to the mourners' bench, and while standing there I heard something say, "You ought to be there," as if some one spoke to me; and I turned to see, but there was no one behind me. I was forced to take my seat. I felt so badly I thought I would leave the house, but seeing no way to get out, I kept my seat. There was a heavy weight upon me. I began to make excuses. I thought I wasn't fit to be there. I could get no relief, but grew worse. At last I promised the Lord if I heard the same words again, I would go; and that seemed to give me some relief. The next day I went to preaching, and when the mourners were called, I took the same position next to the wall, and got up on a bench to see how many were going, when the same words came to me—"You ought to be there." I then thought of my promise to God; and now what shall I do? for the weight was heavier than before, and I felt that I wasn't fit to be there. It seemed that all the excuses I could make did no good, but I only got worse. I felt my knees were failing me. I thought if I didn't go I would be lying to God; and that would never do. So I made an effort to go, but didn't get all the way. I fell prostrate on the floor; it seemed that my load was so heavy I could not stand up under it. I tried to pray, but it did no good. I continued going while the meeting lasted, and when it broke up I was no better. I felt that I was surely the worst sinner in the world. I went home with a heavy heart, and I would try secret prayer, but got no relief. I would go to the field thinking maybe the Lord would hear my prayer there, but when I would try to pray, it seemed that my prayer would not reach above my head. I remained in this condition for some length of time, and thought I had done all I could do; that surely

my day of grace had passed, and there was no mercy at all for me; for I could not see how God could pardon such a sinner as I, although I craved it. So, one day, I thought I would go to the thicket once more and try to pray. When I got there, I was afraid some one would see me, but I ventured on my knees and tried to pray; but, as before, the sound didn't seem to rise above my head. I felt like I had committed a sin in that prayer, and concluded I would not attempt it again, for my day of grace was sinned away; and that I would take my fill of sin, as there was no mercy for me. As I went to the house I got on the fence and was lamenting my sad condition, when these words came to my mind, "He that holdeth out to the end, shall be saved." There was a feeling I can't express. I returned to the same place, and I would try once more to pray, and if the Lord sends me to hell, I will go praying. I believed it would be just if the Lord should damn my soul; for it seemed to me that every sin I had ever committed in my life stood like mountains before me. I would have exchanged my condition with the dumb brutes; but I had a soul to be saved or lost. I attended a meeting that lasted a week, and went to the mourners' bench all the time, but grew worse instead of better; for I couldn't see how God could be merciful to such a sinner as I was. O, my soul seemed to be sinking down beneath the frowns of a sin-avenging God! I thought I was going to hell, and was bidding my friends farewell, though I plead for mercy: "Lord, save, or I perish!" Here is a space I can never tell anything about; and, brethren, right there I have thought I died to sin and was made alive to righteousness; for I had got to where I thought, if I gave one more step, I was gone forever. I thought I saw a great gulf, and just as I stopped to look, I saw a right-hand road, and one standing just on the other side of the gulf, and I thought it was Jesus, and he said to me, "Give me your hand." I reached him my hand, and I thought it was no trouble to get over. I felt so light—my load was gone, and I felt rejoicing in my soul. But I kept silent. I thought I would tell no one for fear I was mistaken, and it

was but a little while until I began to doubt; the more I thought about it the worse I felt. I prayed for my load to come back, that I might see how it left me, but I could not mourn one bit. I was in these doubts several days; so, one day, I went to the woods and prayed to the Lord to give me another evidence if I was not deceived, and while I was praying there was a light shone around me. I can't express my feelings; my soul was full of joy. I thought I would never doubt again; but doubts came, and I have never been so but what they would come at times ever since.

I must come to a close. I may in the future tell something of my travails since I joined the church. Now, if you think this is worthy of the press, it is your privilege to publish it; if not, throw it aside, and it will all be well. Pray for me.

Your brother,

A. SELVIDGE.

### GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

Thou, even thou, art Lord alone: thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth and all things that are therein; the seas and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshipeth thee.—Nehemiah ix. 6.

Having said something in former articles about the attributes of God as manifested in Creation, in continuance I will say something about the same in connection with his Providence, or government of his creatures; and as I regard this a matter of the utmost importance, I wish to enlarge somewhat upon it. By Providence, I understand the conduct or direction, control or government, of the universe by such laws, or upon such principles, as an Infinite God has seen fit to employ; for it was not only necessary he should create the world and properly adjust it in all its parts, but by sustaining such mutual relation to each other as in their motions would tend to the preservation of the whole. It is said in the above quoted scripture that God preserves all his creatures; their preservation is the result of a special providence in all the affairs of this life, with all the events and circumstances attending it to the end of time; so that whatever transpires in

time must be the result of previous arrangement. To my mind this is inevitable. Take, for instance, some complicated machinery: the architect proposes an end; in his mind he entertains his plan in all its parts; with his hands he executes the intention of his mind; he properly adjusts them in their composition, assigns each its place, applies locomotion—all work harmoniously; the desired end is attained. Are there any so stupid as to say any part of the system could be dispensed with and the result be the same? People are disposed to think it is not consonant with the character of God to take care of what they consider small affairs. This they do, I suppose, for the ostensible purpose of honoring him; but, in my opinion, they dishonor him, not considering that a great many small and minute affairs make up a sum of great consequence, and that in order to take care of the whole, every part must be attended to; thus, under the specious plea of honoring God, they dishonor him. It is an aspersion upon him to suppose he created anything for which he had no use; and if creation was easy, to govern cannot be hard. Such notions are the result of misconceptions of the God of heaven, for in his creatures there are no distinctions; all beings are equally—that is, infinitely—inferior to him; and the uniform doctrine of the scriptures is that nothing happens without God—that nothing is too great for his control or management, or too small for his care and inspection. “He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?”—Dan. iv. 35. Further to evince the creative power and preserving care of God over his creatures, I will refer to scripture teaching on that subject: “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?”—Isa. xl. 12. “I have made the earth, and created man upon it. I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.”—Isa. xlv. 12. “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath

created these things, that bringeth out their host by number : he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power ; not one faileth.”—Isa. xl. 26. “He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven.”—Job xxviii. 24. In all this we are taught that God by his wisdom and power framed the universe in view of its preservation, and as he has been lavish in giving it variety and consistency, the same appears in its preservation. In the last clause of the text heading this article, it is said : “And the host of heaven worshipeth thee.” The Psalmist says : “All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee ; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.”—Psa. cxlv. 10, 11.

The sentiment and truth of the above texts are beautifully illustrated in the early experience of the Lord’s people, and in order to favorably impress the mind, I will appeal to it, when oppressed and burdened with a sense of guilt and condemnation ; when, from a feeling sense of your condition, you could say with Jacob of old : “These things are against me.” But when the Lord *revealed* himself to you in his glorious character as a loving Saviour, notwithstanding the magnitude of your sins, with all their aggravations, then you realized the truth and fitness of the texts quoted ; when all nature, animate and inanimate, united in ascriptions of praise to a triune God.

If not deceived, your unworthy servant well remembers the time, though in his youthful days, when he felt to be in perfect harmony with his Sovereign ; when all nature seemed to be animated and engaged in praising God ; the sun shone brighter, the birds sang sweeter, the trees of the field seemed to clap their hands for joy. All this beauty, grandeur and harmony exists in the works of God as much one time as another, which his creatures behold and realize when revealed to them. An overruling and a special Providence in all the affairs of this life, embraced by an unwavering faith, is the one thing needful to all the heirs of promise, as nothing short of this will give repose and tranquility to the mind, animate

our hopes, remove our fears, give satisfaction in the enjoyments of life, or minister consolation under its adversities. To realize that he is ever faithful and active in the interest and behalf of his poor, suffering saints; that his eyes are over them, and his ears are open to their prayers; that he will never leave nor forsake them. As it requires a happy combination of circumstances, in harmony with the state of the mind, in order to the happiness of his children, he works all things after the counsel of his own will. The words "accident" and "chance" should never be found in the vocabulary of the child of God; it manifests both infidelity and rebellion against our Sovereign. Though in the affairs of this life we behold apparent confusion and disorder, not so, however, with God. "He sitteth upon the flood; he maketh the wrath of man to praise him, as he maketh the hail and rain obey his word; he does as seemeth him good, in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places," under a sense of which the way-worn pilgrim breaks forth in the following strain: "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."—Prov. xvi. 9. How the Lord governs and controls his creatures, even in their thoughts, meditations and reasonings, when at the same time they seem to act with perfect freedom, is a mysterious subject, yet true; as it is said: "Thy judgments are a great deep."

Though we know not the manner in which God intervenes in all his works, in the natural and moral world, for the accomplishment of his purpose in creation, yet we know he does, if Divine Providence be true. The belief of this has been a comfort and solace to the saints of God from the very dawn of creation to the present time. Job, the tried servant of God, was in darkness at times. He sought the Lord on the right hand and on the left, and found him not. He consoled, himself, however, with the thought that "He knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." "Doth not he see my way, and count all my

steps?"—Job xxxi. 4. What faith! what resignation! May the Lord give his children faith.

Read the 139th Psalm and behold the providence of God.

*Decherd, Tenn., May 15, 1883.*

JAMES WAGNER.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.—Luke xi. 4.

As Jesus was praying in a certain place, one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." As he saw the Master praying, he fondly wished he could pray like him, but felt he did not know how; and wishing to be learned, said, "Lord, teach us how to pray." This wish may arise in the heart of every child of God. We may wish we knew how to pray, because prayer is enjoined upon believers; but we may but faintly realize what it is to learn to pray—to be taught of God to pray. "After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father, who art in heaven." This is a sweet, confiding prayer—feeling that he is our Father and we are his children; a sweet communion indeed, when, by the Spirit of his Son shed forth in our hearts, we can say, "Abba, Father." What a sense of love and peace when we first begin to feel that it is ours to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven;" a view is given us of his glorious kingdom when we can say, "Thy kingdom come;" a spirit of resignation is ours when we can say, "Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth;" we begin to hunger after holiness and righteousness when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread;" realizing, according to his own word, that he is the bread of life that came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die. Daily would we partake of it; every day we need it to keep our fainting hope alive. We realize our sins and transgressions when we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive every one that is indebted unto us;" but the dark hour of temptation and evil we must feel when we are taught to say, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;" and the reason why we ask these things of him is because, "Thine is the kingdom, the power,

and the glory, forever. Amen." To whom else can we go in such full confidence of faith, knowing that the kingdom is his, with every blessing that needy ones can ask? He only hath the word of life; he only hath the power. None can deliver out of his hand, yet he is able to deliver us from all the power of the enemy; and he knoweth how to deliver the righteous out of temptation, for he was tempted in all points, as we are, yet without sin; wherefore he knoweth how to succor them that are tempted—yet without sin! O, could we but say this! Who of all the frail race of mortals can say it? Although there is a blessing for the man that endureth temptation, for "When he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to them that love him;" "Behold, we count them happy that endure;" and we are also told to "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers (different) temptations; for the trial of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire." The trial of your faith is, then, what these temptations are for, and how precious it is! The more we are tried, the less faith we have in ourselves; the more we can see how weak and helpless we are; how we sin and fall with every temptation. And our faith grows stronger in Him who is the perfect pattern—who endured all—yet without sin; feeling that in Him alone is deliverance from sin. James tells us that God tempteth no man, neither can he be tempted with evil; yet I think the Word reads that God did tempt (the same as try) Abraham in the offering up of his son Isaac, yet still Abraham believed God, accounting that he was able to raise him from the dead. His faith was not shaken, though it was tried by such a fiery trial, meaning the same as of which Peter speaks when he says the trial of your faith is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire; though now if needs be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also

with exceeding joy; and we are to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire—wanting nothing. Often have I felt to ask, “When will this be? Will it ever be with me until that which is perfect is come? When have I ever had patience in the least thing?” The trial only shows how little I have, and how much I have need of it; every trial, every temptation, only reveals to me how far I come from the perfect pattern (and gives me a greater longing to be like Him), for His work is perfect. And we may be complete in Him, but how frail in ourselves, and in how many ways does the tempter come to us! What we once thought were noble aspirations, great thoughts indeed, we afterwards find to be only the allurements of the enemy, beguiling us from the lowly path of truth. I feel sometimes that all the temptations with which the devil tempted the Master he brings upon us, his children. He was tempted in all points as we are, so we are tempted in these points, too. If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread. Although we are told that he had fasted forty days, and was an hungered and had need of bread—nor do we doubt that he could, if he would, have made the stones bread—yet he endured the temptation without sin; he would not gratify the tempter to do as he would have him do. But how is it with us, when he begins to say to us, Why don't you do better if you are a child of God? If you are really one of God's elect, you should do great and extraordinary things. Do we answer him as the Master did, telling him what is written concerning the matter, or do we not worry almost to death for fear we are not children of God, because we cannot do about as the tempter tells us we should? And we try with all our might, until we find the more we struggle the more we are entangled in the snare. In the next temptation the wily tempter was careful also to say, it is written, after he had set him upon a pinnacle of the temple (the same “if” again), “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down

from thence: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Do not often the children of God feel that even the scriptures are against them! showing them how exceeding sinful they are, and we forget for a moment that it is also written that he hath given us exceeding great and precious promises; or we may be tempted to do presumptuously because we are his, and of his special care, which we are told he will have for us, so that we can afford to be reckless. And again, the allurements of this world; how large the tempter can make them look to us; how pleasant and how much to be desired; we may as well have its pleasures as not; if we really are children of God, it will be all well with us at the last; all of which is contrary to the teaching of the Lord, who said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; ye cannot serve God and mammon. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." We know that in ourselves we cannot overcome these temptations.

But here's our point of rest,  
 Though hard the battle seem,  
 Our Captain stood the fiery test,  
 And we shall stand through him.

And he hath promised us that there shall no temptation befall you but such as ye shall be able to bear, for he will also, with the temptation, make a way of escape, so ye may be able to bear it. He will make the way, and do we not often try to make the way ourselves, turning every way before we begin to cry unto him, who is our leader and deliverer from every snare; and in sorrow and in trial we learn to pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; and this agrees with the prayer of the Saviour for those he left here in the world: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil;" and in his hour of anguish in the garden, when he found them sleeping, he said unto them, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

KATE SWARTOUT.

*Kelly's Corners, Mich., 1883.*

ARGYLE, TEXAS, NOV. 16, 1882.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell:—Beloved in the Lord:—*I feel inclined to pen a few lines to you, though in weakness, fear and trembling. I trust that the love of God has been shed abroad in my heart, enabling me to see and know things with regard to myself and my God and his worship that I did not once see nor know.

It is, therefore, because of this great love with which God loved his people, even when they were dead in sins, that I now write unto you, a beloved brother and father in Israel. Your brief letter to me was very comforting and instructive, and caused me to think of the many published letters that I had read from your pen many years ago, and O how precious they were then and yet are to me, though I lost most of my old papers, containing your letters, by our move from Mississippi to Texas.

We are, indeed, strangers in the flesh to each other, but in spirit we are children of the same family, redeemed by the same precious Christ, and taught by the same one Spirit to know that salvation is of the Lord. I will now say to you that myself and others from Concord Church, in Mississippi, are here without letters of dismissal, though the church and its members are all in good standing; but by reason of death and removals, for three years we were unable to keep house, and met once to dissolve. But our highly esteemed brother, B. F. Griffin, thought the church could be sustained, and our aged brother, B. F. Sanders, readily agreed with him, and so the church was not dissolved, nor is not yet. Last summer there were one old blind brother and one beloved sister still there, and these are all who are left of that church. I have been thus particular to state these facts that you may know something of our condition as being here without letters.

We have found some beloved brethren and sisters in Texas, but no church nor meeting-house near us. There are also many "new things" to me, among Baptists claiming to be of the Old order, here in Texas. Some preach that there is no resurrection, and others the "Two Seed Doctrine." We

have been waiting, hoping and praying that our gracious Lord would lead us in the right way. Dear Brother Mitchell, we are very poor in regard to both temporal and spiritual things, yet we desire to live and walk in the truth, and if such Elders as yourself, E. A. Meadors or others of our acquaintance were here to watch over us, and go in and out before us, we would not feel so lonely nor so timid. We have heard with joy that a young licentiate preacher, by the name of Jeter, is coming from your country to this, and we hope that he is one who is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and that the Lord will make him a comfort and a blessing to the little ones here. We hope he may be sent of the Lord.

I trust that this scribble will find you and your family well. I have been coughing up blood, and my failing health is a warning to me that my stay in this mortal state is now but short. Pray for me, that I may be reconciled to my Father's will, and when the death summons comes that I may be ready in mind and soul to go. My husband and son are also much afflicted. Remember us at a throne of grace, and may the God of all grace comfort and bless you and yours in everything.

JANE Y. HARMON.

We are truly glad once more to have a few lines from our aged Sister Harmon, whose kind letters in years past were often a comfort to us, and many others also.—M.

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NEWBORN, GA., June 2, 1883.

*Brother Respass*.—As I see in the June number of the MESSENGER that Brother Meeks, of Coffee county, Ga., requests you to write on Rev. ii. 4, 5, and as soon as I read the piece I looked it up in the Testament, with no intention of ever writing on it myself, but the subject seemed to have fastened itself on my mind, and for the life of me I cannot get rid of it; hence, to try to relieve my mind of the subject, is my only apology for writing these lines to you. Rev. ii. 4, 5, reads: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because

thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." We find, by reading the preceding verses, this was addressed to the angel of the church of Ephesus. The angel, to our mind, represents the minister, and the candlestick the church, and the important lesson, or at least some of the precious truths we should learn from it, is that the person that John saw was none else than the Son of God, our blessed Saviour, and he has the minister in his right hand, hence he alone can call and qualify his ministers; for he was in the midst of the seven candlesticks when John saw him. And we believe he is yet in the midst of his church and people, and will call and qualify his angels or ministers as the candlestick or church has need for them. But it also teaches us, we think, that though they may be ministers of his own sending, yet they are, like the rest of the members, liable to err, and prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward.

The only fault with the angel of the church of Ephesus seems to be "He had left his first love." We know there are those who have a way of spelling *left* LOST, but my old Bible spells it *left*. We think the first love of not only the minister, but of every child of God, is Christ the Saviour, and he teaches that if "We love him, we will keep his commandments." How was it with each one of us in the days of our first love, when we felt it our duty to go and talk to the church; did not each member appear lovely, and we ourselves did not feel worthy a place with them? But, to our astonishment, they received us, and for a time, perhaps, nothing but a Providential cause would hinder us from meeting with the church. But how often now are we ready on our meeting days to lay aside everything and go to meeting? If we, as church members or ministers, see that we do not act as we did soon after we professed to be dead to the world—yes, dead and buried and arisen to newness of life—we evidently

hear the sentence ringing in our ears, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee."

I will close, as I have fears that my writing is all of the flesh; and, if so, vanity. Your editorial in the last number of the MESSENGER, Brother Respass, on "The Lame at the Gate," was a crumb for me.

Yours, truly,

JOHN D. CURTIS.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell:—My Beloved Brother:—*It is with pleasure that I seat myself to drop you a few lines in answer to your card from Atlanta, which I received the last of April. I was glad to hear from you, though sorry to hear of the affliction of your eye. Had I received your card a few hours sooner, we should have solicited you to have come down to Conyers and preach at the church in that place. Elder Isaac Hamby expressed a great desire to see you and hear you preach, as did other brethren.

The GOSPEL MESSENGER comes regularly, richly laden with matter of much interest and importance. I am truly glad to see it have such a wide circulation, and each succeeding number seems to be better, if possible. May the good Lord guide those that write in the future as in the past, and I believe, and feel assured, that the MESSENGER will prove a blessing indeed to the poor and afflicted children of God. And inasmuch as I do not, nor never have, felt able to write anything for our periodicals, I do not claim any space in the much-esteemed MESSENGER; but, so far as I have the ability, I will get all the subscribers I can.

I was pleased truly with your views on the "Impotent Man at the Pool," published a year ago, and your article on "Ministerial Support," with the two extremes so ably set forth. May you, Brother Mitchell and Brother Respass, long be spared to wield the sword of the Spirit, and may God bless you and yours is our sincere desire.

J. B. KEEN.

*Panola, Ga., June 4, 1883.*

P. S.—We had a pleasant meeting at our church, including the first Sunday instant. We received two members by letter, and two at our meeting last month. Elder I. Hamby is our pastor. On last Sunday his text was, "Declare his doings among the people." His discourse was truly interesting, and was one of his ablest efforts.

Our Association, the Yellow River, convenes with the church at Camp Creek this year, Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September. The church is situated six miles north from Stone Mountain, which is the nearest point of the railroad, and is fourteen miles from Atlanta. Brother Mitchell, can you come to see us? There is none other I would be better pleased to meet, and I know the brethren would appreciate it so much.

I hope you will excuse me, and pardon the long delay in writing you, hoping you have, ere this, wholly recovered from your affliction of the eye. Now, Bro. M., I wish to make one request of you, if it could meet your approval and consent, to have your christian experience and call to the work of the ministry republished in the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I once had it filed away, but when my house was ransacked by the Federal soldiers they destroyed it. I learn that it has been republished in another paper, but I have not seen it.

Now, if you wish to publish any part of this letter, it is, of course, wholly optionary with yourself, not that I desire it.

Yours,

J. B. KEEN.

We feel some hesitancy, dear brother, in consenting to this request, as we have doubts of its propriety in our present relation to the GOSPEL MESSENGER. We will, however, try to give it prayerful thought.—M.

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IN the MESSENGER for July, page 337, where it reads, "Sunday, May 13th, met again at Bethlehem," it should be "met again at *Wagner's Creek Church*."—M.

## SENT BY ELDER RITTENHOUSE.

Ye angels, who mortals attend,  
 And minister comfort in woe,  
 Come listen, ye heavenly friends,  
 My happier story to know.  
     I sing of a theme most sublime,  
     No sorrow my song can control,—  
     I sing of the rapturous time,  
     When Jesus spoke peace to my soul.

When guilt my poor heart did assail,  
 Because I had wandered from God,  
 I strove my sad case to bewail,—  
 My sins were a cumbersome load.  
     O Saviour, have mercy! I cried,  
     O, pardon a wretch that's so vile!  
     Then quickly his blood was applied,  
     And Jesus spoke peace to my soul.

My guilt, like the cloud of the morn,  
 Was chased in a moment away;  
 The joy of my soul, newly born,  
 Increased like the dawning of day.  
     My Saviour's redeemed me from sin,—  
     He saves not in part, but in whole,—  
     He writes his salvation within,  
     For, O, he spake peace to my soul!

I now am so blest with his love,  
 I covet not earth's greatest store;  
 He visits me oft from above,—  
 I have him, and want nothing more.  
     Resigned to his pleasure I'd live,  
     Till time's latest circle shall roll;  
     His utmost salvation receive,—  
     For, O, he spake peace to my soul!

Nor Satan, nor sin, can dismay,—  
 No danger my soul can affright,—  
 While onward to mansions of day,  
 I go in Immanuel's might.  
     Though earth in convulsions should rend,  
     From the centre quite through to each pole,  
     I'll smile,—for I'm sure of a Friend,  
     Since Jesus spake peace to my soul.

Ye angels, who wait while I sing,  
 And patiently hear my glad song,  
 Come, bear me to Jesus my King,  
 To join with the heavenly throng.  
 'Tis there I'll eternally feast  
 On joys that enrapture the whole;  
 All heaven would welcome the guest,  
 Since Jesus spake peace to my soul.

Farewell to earth's glittering toys!  
 Farewell to my friends and my foes!  
 I haste from these scenes to the skies,  
 Where pleasure eternally flows.  
 He bids me leave all for his sake,—  
 I'll run till I reach the blest goal;  
 Then me to his arms he will take,—  
 O, then he'll speak peace to my soul!

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DUNLAPSVILLE, IND., April, 1883.

*Beloved Elders:*—I am persuaded that things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven, and the coming of the Lord Jesus, and John the messenger of Jesus, as recorded in the scriptures of eternal truth, are so glorious and full of consolation to the people of God, that I, with my hand upon the record of the word of the Lord, and a heart filled to overflowing with the testimony of the Lord Jesus, and by the light of the Holy Spirit and fear of the Lord, may, with full purpose of heart, write to the comfort and up-building of the household of faith.

The gospel, or word of the Lord, according to St. Luke, is full and comprehensive, and in the beginning of which he says: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me, also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed."

It is great consolation to me to read and meditate on such

glorious, positive testimony. Now, having had this perfect understanding, he goes on and gives the glorious testimony in full, of the conception and birth of John, the prophet of the Lord, and also of the conception and birth of the holy child Jesus. I do like to read his testimony of the angel of the Lord that appeared to Zacharias, the father of John, and to the Virgin Mary, the woman of whom the Lord Jesus was born; how the angel said to Zacharias, when he was troubled and fear fell upon him: "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife, Elisabeth, shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth, for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall be turned to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." And Zacharias said unto the angel: "Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years." And the angel, answering, said unto him: "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." "They were both righteous before God, walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; and they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren." After the vision in the temple, and when the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife, Elisabeth, conceived, and hid herself five months, saying: "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from

God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said: "Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women!" And when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

I. HILL.

[Continued.]

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RANGER, EASTLAND CO., TEXAS, May 29, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—By request of the brethren of Bethel Church, Stephens county, this State, I will try to give you a short sketch of our Union Meeting, which convened the second Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in May. The ministers present were Elders T. A. Waldrip, D. W. Russell, J. S. Meeks, W. L. Biggs, and the writer, and all preached with the power and demonstration of the Spirit, except myself. It was a union meeting indeed. The churches were all represented. On Sunday we commemorated the death and sufferings of Christ; after which, we united in washing the saints' feet. O, it was a lovely sight, indeed, to see the old greyheaded fathers and mothers in Israel, on their knees at each other's feet, following the example of their blessed Master. We had a large and attentive congregation all the time, and whilst some mocked, there were many weeping in the congregation. After getting through the Ordinance we had a recess, dinner being on the ground; and after all had been served, I was reminded of the fragments that were gathered up after Jesus had fed the multitude. We then repaired to the house, had services by the writer and brother T. A. Waldrip—Bro. Waldrip preaching with good liberty, seemingly to the edification and comfort of the dear saints. The services were closed by the pastor, D. W. Russell. The closing service that evening was the crowning point: a young sister, Tomkins, came up, telling what the Lord had done for her; upon being asked if she wished to be baptized at the next meeting, her

reply was, "In the morning," and we agreed to meet next morning, and have preaching again. We met quite a large crowd, had services again by the writer and Brother Waldrip, with the usual good feeling and interest among the brethren and the entire congregation; after which, we met at the water, where Brother Russell opened the door of the church, when another young sister, Williams, came forward. She was the great-great-granddaughter of Elder Steele, of Simpson county, Kentucky, who was pastor of Sulphur Springs Church for thirty years. Old Sister Tomkins, a granddaughter of Elder Steele, is a member of this church, and attended meeting every day; and, though feeble in health, she is strong in the faith of our Lord and Master, and seemed to enjoy a feast of soul during the entire meeting. I write this for the benefit of old brethren and sisters that may be living in Kentucky, that they may know that our dear old sister has been sustained even down to old age by Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

"How loth we were to leave the place  
Where Jesus showed his smiling face!"

I will add that there has been nine accessions to the church since July. The church was constituted seven years ago by Elders D. P. Thomas and Nathan Morris, and there has been a steady growth and ingathering all the time. The late D. P. Thomas was pastor until two years ago. Since that time Elder D. W. Russell has had the care of the church, and both were highly esteemed by the brethren and sisters, for the "work's sake."

Well, enough in regard to our meeting. I wish to say to you that the GOSPEL MESSENGER comes regularly, and, O, what a comfort to me to read the communications from the dear saints scattered abroad; to know that there are so many contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. What a blessing is such a medium of correspondence to us in this "far West," where there are but very few young "Gifts," and but few of us old greyheaded soldiers that are nearly worn out, as we hope, in our Master's service! The letters of

Elders Wagner, Frost, Stephens, Woods, old brethren whom I once lived amongst in Tennessee twenty-nine years ago; the Lord only knows what a comfort they were to me. Write on, brethren, and may the Lord sustain you in your declining years; and, brethren, pray for the poor worm of the dust. Dear Brother Holman, I am still of the same belief, still advocating the same doctrine that I did thirty odd years ago in the struggle with the "Parker two seed" and Non-Resurrection doctrine. I still contend for the resurrection of both the just and the unjust—that the bodies of the dead saints will be fashioned after the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. I will now close. I hope to be able to send you several subscribers for your GOSPEL MESSENGER soon. I will write as often as I think I can interest the saints of God. I think some time in the future I will write my experience and call to the ministry, if I have any.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. H. MILLER.

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NEAR STONE MOUNTAIN, GA., June 2, 1883.

*Brother Respass:*—I will write a little to let you and the brethren generally hear from some of our churches in the Yellow River Association through the MESSENGER. We are all at peace so far as I know, and having some very pleasant meetings, especially through May, as that is our Communion time.

I was at Nancy's Creek the 1st Saturday and Sunday, and met Elders J. M. Jordan and W. H. Morgan, and a goodly number of visiting brethren and sisters, with a large, orderly congregation, and all seemed to be interested and considerable feeling manifested. On Sunday, after preaching by the writer, followed by Brother Morgan, the church went into Communion and washed each other's feet, and all seemed to enjoy it, and realize the fulfillment of the scripture where it is said, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount on wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and walk and not faint."

And on the 2nd I was at Hardeman's Church, Elder E. Webb, pastor. There we also had a very pleasant meeting. The writer tried to preach *Jesus* to the people both days, and had some evidence that the Lord was with me; then went into Communion and Feet Washing again, while a good congregation looked on with much feeling manifest.

3rd. At Bethlehem, where we again met Elders Webb and Morgan, and W. H. Gullledge, their pastor. On Saturday, after preaching by Elder Webb, followed by the writer, they went into Conference, and after the usual business, liberated Bro. E. T. Jackson to exercise his gift wherever his lot is cast. On Sunday, Elder Morgan preached an able sermon—stood nearly two hours—and, we hope, to good effect. Here, again, the church and visiting brethren and sisters, of which there was a goodly number, Communed and Washed Feet in the presence of a good and orderly congregation, with much feeling manifested.

4th. We met at Fellowship on Saturday. Met Elders Webb, J. T. Jordan, their pastor, and W. H. Gullledge, again, and after preaching by Elder Jordan, and prayer by Deacon Hudson, went into Conference. After the usual business, and in response to the call of the church, the above elders, with the writer, met to set apart Bro. William Cochran to the office of deacon; and after examining the church by her mouth (Deacon F. M. Jordan), in regard to his qualifications, by Elder Jordan, the Presbytery being satisfied, Brother Cochran was examined on the articles of faith by Elder Gullledge, and found sound, proceeded to set him apart by laying on of hand by the Presbytery. Prayer by Elder Webb; Charge by the writer. Then the Presbytery gave Brother Cochran the right hand of fellowship, followed by the church and all the brethren present. J. T. Jordan, Moderator; W. B. Cook, Clerk *pro tem*.

On Sunday, met at 10 o'clock a very large concourse of people assembled. Bro. E. T. Jackson preached an interesting sermon, followed by Brother Jordan, our pastor, ably. Afterward went into Communion and Feet Washing again,

and about seventy-five or eighty saints washed feet, and it was a season of rejoicing with us. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and may we all endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

JOHN H. COOK.

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"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber," &c.—John x.

We are informed in verse 6 of this chapter, that when Jesus had spoken this parable the Jews understood him not. No doubt those Jews that heard, but understood not, were as intelligent as the most of mankind now. Those only understood him to whom it was given (Matt. xiii. 2), neither can any understand now but by this same power, for the world to-day by wisdom knows not God. He that enters not in by the door is no other than the old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.—Eph. iv. 23. He possesses not one grain of faith, but a great deal of presumption, that springs out of his own or some one else's "think so" about him. Thousands, yea millions, are building their hopes of a blessed hereafter upon what some one has said or written. Thus the old man climbs over the wall. He that can exercise faith at his will has not a faith of God's own giving; he may love a false Christ, but never the Saviour of sinners; he may hope to be saved, but he never rejoices in hope of the glory of God. O, reader! did you never fear that perhaps you were only a nominal professor, sporting yourself with your own deceivings, while you feast with the people of God?—2 Peter ii. 13. Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for what a man soweth that shall he also reap; if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.—Gal. vi. 7, 8. The flesh can only produce presumption, and is denominated, in God's Word, a faith that stands in the wisdom of men, and is opposed to that faith that stands in the power of God.—1 Cor. ii. 5. The hypocrite's hope may buoy him up for a time, but in the end will make him ashamed. The sorrow of the world works death. Many of God's ministers, no doubt in the honesty of their hearts, having a desire to comfort God's little ones, have said things more calculated to build them up in presumption than to give true consolation. However, for a time the child of God may be deceived in these things; he really can feast upon no other testimony than from God's own mouth. None can teach like God. Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? While we would not mark out a path for God to walk in, let us endeavor to walk in the one he has marked out.

"Vain is all our best devotion,  
If on false foundation built;  
True religion's more than notion—  
Something must be known and felt."

We may not have the gift of those bright visions and revelations that the prophets and apostles had in their day, nor would such great gifts be any evidence to us that we were God's children. Balaam prophesied truth; Saul was found among the prophets; Ahithophel spoke as the oracles of God; Judas was numbered with the twelve, and no doubt performed miracles.—Num. xxiv.; 1 Sam. x. 6-11; 2 Sam. xvi. 23. Who dare say these men were saved? We may possess the best of gifts, and yet the evidence of God's love in the soul can excel them all.—1 Cor. xii. 31. Jesus says twice in this chapter that he is the door, and he also says that he is the shepherd, and the shepherd enters in by the door. He being both door and shepherd, must enter in by himself. These were riddles the Jews could not solve, because they had not ploughed with God's heifer.—Judges xiv. 18. The sheep are that portion of Adam's lost and ruined race that were eternally sheep in the mind or purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and whom he predestinated unto the adoption of children, and because they are children by predestination he sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.—Eph. iii. 11, i. 5; Gal. iv. 6. Previous to the coming of this Spirit, they were, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. They are also called the new man, created after God in righteousness and true holiness. He is a new man when he has been renewed in the spirit of his mind, and in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. That knowledge consists in knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.—John xvii. 2; 1 John v. 20. He being created renewed or adopted into the family of God, he is thus manifested as a sheep, and not as a goat, and can now serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; delights in the law of God after the inner man, and with the mind serves the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin; and so with the flesh does many things which he in mind disallows. This changed heart is the door also, for it is Christ formed in him, the hope of glory. The sheepfold is the place where the sheep are secure from the ravages of the world, the flesh and the devil. They were eternally secure in God's purpose, but are not at all times in themselves possessed of a knowledge of this to their own personal satisfaction. This brings about perseverance, on their part, to obtain this fact from God himself, who alone can reveal it.

All that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to Jesus Christ, and he that cometh Christ will in nowise cast out. This revelation from the Father consists in more than a mere enlightenment of the mind, or having a taste of the heavenly gift, or being made a partaker of the Holy Ghost, or tasting the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. It is a drinking the blood and eating the flesh of the Son of God; it is hearing, seeing and handling the Word of Life, for the new man must have faculties as well as the old. The great trouble is, when we mistake the old man for the new. Our arch-adversary can get up some close counterfeits, and we would do well to beware of them. The old man

only has a presumption or faith that may remove mountains and dares to intrude into those things which he hath not seen. True faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and is found only in the new man; it is known by always being accompanied by hope and love; it trusts patiently in God, yet will not take things upon mere trust; will take no denial from God, but night and day pants after God like the wounded hart after the water brook. Presumption cannot dare to wait God's time, but, like the covetous, unprincipled wretch he is, must and will have gain, though it comes unjustly. Faith considers the saying of the wise man, "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him."—Prov. xxviii. 22. The old man is a thief, and he only comes to steal, kill and destroy. Christ came that his sheep might have life abundantly, and because they have life is why they hunger and thirst after Him who is the bread of life. But hungering and thirsting does not satisfy them; they want to be filled with Him who is all the fullness of God. Christ is the door. When he knocks for admittance that anxious, supplicating heart, which is the porter, admits him and so sups with him and he with us. Sometimes he knocks and we have put off our coat of imputed righteousness as far as we understand, and know not again how to put it on, as the poet says:

" 'Tis of one piece and wove throughout,  
So curious wove that none  
Can dress up in this seamless coat  
Till Jesus puts it on."

Sometimes we have washed our feet in the basin of self-righteousness, and we don't like to defile our feet by a sight of our corrupt, fallen condition in our federal head, and unless we do, Jesus cannot be received as a Saviour; then he withdraws; then, O, how our souls fail! We seek him, but find him not; we call but he gives us no answer. Then we go about inquiring of every one we meet, where can we find him. And these unfaithful watchmen wound us with the clubs of presumption and carnal security.

HENRY ARCHER.

*Farmerville, La., June, 1883.*

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*Dear Brethren:*—A short time since I returned from an extensive tour through Brooks and Thomas counties, a portion of South Florida, and thence to Bulloch, Bryan, and Emanuel counties of this State. I met many precious brethren and sisters all along my entire trip; and had evidences that my visit was of the Lord. It would be too lengthy for me to undertake to individualize on a trip of fifteen hundred miles. In Brooks county I met for the first time Elders Parrish and Williams; to know them is but to love them. They met me as brethren should meet. Aged ministers of Christ, whose career has been faithful and whose end is not far off; may God grant them his peace through their declivity and meet with them in the valley and shadow of death! I also there met

Licentiate Aaron Parrish and J. C. Rogers, together with two or three others, whose names I have forgotten, as I only had with them a passing acquaintance. The former two, however, carried me to their pleasant homes, where they and their families did all they could to make my stay pleasant. They are both faithful and devoted to their Master's cause, and stand high in the affections of their brethren at home, and are ripening in their Master's service. May God bless them!

From thence I went to South Florida, up the St. Johns 220 miles, to see a sister in the flesh, and I hope also in the Spirit. She and her husband have attached themselves to the Missionaries, in whose house of worship, by appointment, I tried to preach, and did so, I verily believe in the use and not abuse of the gospel. After which the good-bye was taken with sister, perhaps for the last time in this life.

From thence I went to Bryan county, of this State, where I was met by Elder Grant and Deacon I. C. Hancock, of my own section, and also by that man of God, Elder Temples, of the Upper Canoochee. Here I wish to say that none but those who have realized it know the strength that an accompanying deacon or brother gives to a traveling minister; for they feel that they have a witness from home of their standing with their own brethren, and is to the preacher in the hour of his preaching a great stay to lean upon. I do hope our brethren in the future will follow this example of Deacon Hancock and go with their preaching brethren wherever they feel it is their duty unto their God to go. Brother Grant's preaching was with great demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The brethren followed him from four to five days all the way through. There is a great mystery in this man's call in connection with my father. Some time, if the Lord is willing, I will write it out. And there is something strange some way with this immediate tour. We tried to preach ten days, and that, too, in the very busiest season of the year, and do not think that I misstate when I say that our congregations were from 250 to 500 daily. And these aged brethren and sisters, together with younger ones, came so far and went with us so long and were so good and kind; and then we had such good meetings, the like of which I never expect to see again. And that man of God, Elder Temples, went with us the whole way, except two days of his own meeting, or rather appointment; and he, too, was so kind to us that it all combined makes a strangeness that I do not understand even after I have gotten home. We were also met by Elder Stubbs, a man whom I have never told good-bye since our acquaintance without shedding tears. A bound boy until he was twenty-one years old, without any advantages in this life, and yet with a gift in the gospel that holds any auditory he rises before, when his God is with him. He was with us five days, and carried us to his home, where we met his devoted wife and lovely children, and an acquaintance with whom but makes you love Elder Stubbs the more. He carried us among his brethren and to his churches in charge, and with them at home he stands as a minister of Christ should stand, and that is it

their affections. Only but his God and mine knows how my heart goes out for him. There we also met and formed the acquaintance of Elder Smith. He was with us at two of his churches, whose brotherly love and warm reception tied our hearts to him with the chord of life and the hope of eternity. He, too, stands high as any man in the bosom of his brethren. May God bless all those people with whom I have been, with continued meekness and humility and crown their life and death with his presence, I believe I can say is my desire.

Now, Brother John, in conclusion I wish to state that before you started the MESSENGER you had a conversation with me about it. (You may have forgotten it.) In it you told me that you had made it a subject of prayer; that you felt impressed that way; but under no circumstances would engage in it if you felt or knew it was not of the Lord. I gave you poor encouragement; but I can now encourage you, my brother. Wherever I went I could hear our precious brethren and sisters speak of the joy the MESSENGER gave them, and thought I could see the good of it in binding us closer and closer together in time, and forming a more cordial union of brotherly love and sisterly affection in speaking with each other as we do from so many points, that I now hope and believe that the Lord is in it. And I hope that our ministers every where will do all they can for it; and that the Lord will spare yours and Elder Mitchell's lives long on earth thereby to feed the church of God.

Yours in brotherly love,

Thomaston, Ga., June 24, 1883.

WILDE C. CLEVELAND.

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## EDITORIAL.

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J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

### VISIT TO SNOW HILL, ALA.

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In compliance with the urgent request of Elder J. H. Purifoy, we were permitted to attend a meeting at Snow Hill, Wilcox county, Ala., on the 2nd Sunday in June and Saturday before. It was our first personal acquaintance with Elder Purifoy, and our first visit to any church in that part of Alabama, though not more than 180 miles by railroad from us. On our way to and from Snow Hill, we stopped awhile at Montgomery and Selma, and crossed the Alabama River four times.

Some thirty or forty years ago, Primitive Baptists were quite numerous and seemingly prosperous in that part of the

State; but becoming entangled with the doctrines, commandments and institutions of men, some of the churches, and many of the members, lost their identity as Baptists of Primitive faith and order. Others were much discouraged, or so badly crippled as scarcely to be able to walk in the strait and narrow way of christian obedience. At Snow Hill especially they lost, not only their identity as a visible church organization, but also their house in which they had been wont to assemble for worship.

Some eight or ten years ago, the Lord was pleased to stir up the spirit of Elder Purifoy to "see and ask for the old paths," and to "walk therein." The burden of the word of the Lord was upon him, and he could not throw it off. A few others were under similar influence, and the result was a church was soon organized. Still another difficulty had to be met and overcome: they had no house that they could claim exclusively as their own, in which they could meet for worship. The numerical strength of the church is very small, only seven or eight members, and only two of those able, financially, to do much towards procuring a house.

But when the hand and counsel of the Lord is in any work, it matters not how dark the prospect, nor how many seeming difficulties get in the way to try the faith of his people. The work must go on, the clouds must disperse, and the difficulties all give way in due time.

Elder Purifoy speaks of some very peculiar exercises of mind in reference to building a Meeting-House for the use of the little church at Snow Hill. He says it was somewhat like the exercises and burden of heart which he felt when he was first being brought out into the ministry. It became a subject of continual thought, supplication and prayer to God. And when he told others about it, as did Nehemiah of old, "they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work."—Neh. ii. 18. A beautiful building site was soon procured; at a heavy cost, however. But the Lord gave them favor in the sight of "those without," so

that many contributed liberally until about two-thirds of the money necessary was made up.

The building is well constructed, and of good material, and the work well executed, presenting a neat and substantial finish, with good sash, lights and blinds. The house is paid for, but in doing this, near one-third of the entire cost was advanced from the personal funds of Elder Purifoy, which, he says, he is not able to spare without serious detriment to his personal interests. Appeals have been made through the GOSPEL MESSENGER and other papers for help, but very little has been received. We do think, if the brethren and friends abroad knew all the circumstances and peculiar surroundings, they would not hesitate to contribute something to relieve our brethren there, to some extent, of the financial embarrassment incurred in building a suitable Meeting-House, in which the church could quietly assemble for the worship of the Living God.

Should any feel disposed to contribute anything, address J. H. Purifoy, Snow Hill, Wilcox county, Ala. Or, if more convenient for any to send to us, we will cheerfully comply with their instructions, and see that their liberality is forwarded to Elder Purifoy.—M.

### OLIVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

The first session of the Olive Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Union, Russell county, Alabama, about fifteen miles south of Salem, and twenty-four miles west of Columbus, Georgia, commencing on *Friday* before the third Sunday in October, 1883. As this item failed to appear in the minutes of the meeting at which this appointment was made, it will be important that brethren and friends preserve this notice, and remember that it is much desired that as many as possible from other Associations visit the above little Association at the time set.—M.

## FINAL PERSEVERANCE:

GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—Please give your views on John x. 12; and, also, on Ephesians iv. 26.

Yours in Christ,

R. N. BATTEN.

John x. 12, reads: "But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep."

There is no doctrine in all the Book of God more comforting to christians than that of their final perseverance or preservation. Indeed, it is the foundation of their hope, which to remove is to take away their all and leave them a prey to despair. To teach a child of God that he can fall and be finally lost, is to teach him that he will do it or has done it; because he knows by bitter experience, "by the wormwood and the gall," that if his final salvation depends upon his own power or goodness, that he is lost, to all intents and purposes. The bare suggestion that it may be true is calculated at times to fill the christian with unspeakable horror. Christ taught no such doctrine, but on the contrary the doctrine of comfort—as different from the doctrine of apostasy as light from darkness. He is the God of all comfort, and Father of mercies (2 Cor. i.) How many thousands and millions of God's children have been comforted by the inspired words of the prophet, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God: speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned," &c. (Isa. xl.), will never be known in this time world. The people of God are a "feeble folk," and can barely live with all the comfort they can get; and do not need to be scared to death, but rather to be freed from their fears. The doctrine of comfort and cheer is taught them by their Saviour in this chapter. They are spoken of as his sheep, and himself as their Good Shepherd; one who is by no means like the hireling, who will fly from the sheep when danger arises, but

who will give his life for them; so that there is no possibility of the flock of his care being destroyed by the devil as long as he has power to save them. He would teach them, therefore, to have strong confidence in his love for them and his power to protect and defend them. The Psalmist (Psa. xxiii.) in the same confidence sang of the Lord as his Shepherd, saying: "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want." He had seen natural sheep neglected and deserted by hirelings, and how they sickened and died for lack of attention and proper food and water, and oftentimes left a prey to be devoured by wolves and other wild beasts; and having been taught that he was as helpless as a natural sheep to provide for and protect himself against Satan and the powers of evil, he rejoiced that the LORD was his Shepherd, because He would not leave him to perish and be destroyed by Satan. David keeping his father's flock in the wilderness, surrounded by lions and bears, represents Christ keeping his spiritual flock in this world of sin, surrounded by Satan and all his fiery darts and mighty hosts, against which they, as poor, feeble sheep, have no might nor power. And David lost not the lamb of his flock that was seized by the lion and bear; nor did he fly from them, but rescued the lamb from the paw of the bear and the paw of the lion. This a hireling would not and could not have done; nor was it expected of him, because the sheep "were not his own"; or if it was expected, it was a vain expectation—as vain as if we expected any man to save us, or to save ourselves. He was only related to them as a mere hireling, destitute of any sense of love and responsibility to nerve his heart to do and die for them. David could not have appeared before his father with joy had the lion and bear prevailed against him in the destruction of the lamb, but would, like Judah, when he became surety for the safe return of Benjamin, "have borne the blame forever" had he returned without him (Gen. xlv.) It would have been too awful to contemplate a moment had Christ failed in delivering the Church from the power of Satan. He could not have ascended to heaven into the presence of the Eternal Father; and it would be equally

as awful to suppose that after he had, by his mighty power, delivered the Church, that he should be foiled by Satan and lose them. But as Hosea (xii.) says: By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved; teaching that the same power was necessary to preserve the Church that was necessary to deliver her. Paul was comforted, and left his inspired words for our comfort; writing to Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 18), saying, And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory forever and forever. Some brethren have thought the wolf caught the hireling; but it was the sheep the wolf was after, and that he caught; but they were natural sheep; but Satan, the spiritual wolf, cannot catch the spiritual sheep, because Christ is their Shepherd, and not a hireling who will fly, but give His life in their defence. The sheep of Christ are safe, and they ever feel the need of Christ—and that is a sign they have his presence.

Ephesians iv. 26, reads: "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Of course the apostle does not mean to teach that we ought to get angry, but that if we do, that we should not sin. As, if we get angry enough to kill a man, we should not do it; or, if we get angry enough to do evil for evil, we should not do it. We may get mad with a brother, and seek to injure him with our tongue—which is a sin. We may have cause for anger, but we should not sin; we should not talk to his injury. And this is true in regard to all men; we should do all men justice from love of right itself. With the Jews the going down of the sun had something significant in it. Some unclean were clean after sundown; it was the time that every laborer must receive his penny or pay for his day's work; the time when the gates of the city were closed and opened again at sun-up; the time succeeded by darkness, wherein all the beasts of the forests creep forth (Psa. civ.) But we suppose that it was only meant to teach that anger should not be harbored in the bosom, but be cast out with all speed. And there is no reason in the world why a sinner who has been forgiven

ten thousand talents by his divine Lord, should not forgive the little penny that others may owe him. Anger does no good, but will breed if it lies long in the bosom; and murder, slander and many other fruits of evil may be generated by it; therefore, it should be put out at once. It only rests in the bosom of fools, says the wise Preacher (Eccles. vii. 9.) A great many think it a sign of strength to retain anger, and of weakness to turn quickly from it; but in truth, it is a weakness to retain it, cherishing and "nursing wrath to keep it warm."—R.

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### TO CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—Again we make our monthly visit to you, with a short letter, hoping to find you all well, cheerful and happy. Children are, generally, very comfortable and cheerful when they have good health and are doing nothing wrong. But when they are naughty and doing something they ought not, they cannot be very happy; and besides this, something bad is very apt to come upon them.

In this letter we want to tell you of the way a few bad city children treated a faithful servant of the Lord, a great many years ago, and also tell you what happened to some of these bad children. This good man's name was Elisha, and he was a prophet of the Lord, and was taught and instructed by the Spirit of God to do and speak things that were right. He was on a journey going up to a city called Bethel, and "as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children *out of the city*, and mocked him; and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head! go up, thou bald head!" You will find this written in the 2nd chapter of the Second Book of Kings, and 23rd verse.

Now, do you not think this was very bad conduct for children who had been raised in a city to treat a good and innocent man in that way? No doubt they thought to have a little fun, and may not have once thought what a bad thing they were doing to be making fun of one of the prophets of

the Lord. They had been raised in a city, and had good opportunity for learning better manners and better morals than to be taunting and insulting a traveler on his journey. It may have been, however, that the parents of these bad children were somewhat to blame for letting them roam out in the country without going with them to see they should do right. And besides this, they may have talked and laughed in a light way before the children about this prophet, and the children being ever ready to follow bad examples, may have thought it would be talking somewhat as their parents had done for them to insult and taunt the man on his journey.

The Lord's prophets told the people the truth, and told them of their evil ways, and very often the people hated them for it, and would talk about them in the hearing of little children; so that the children soon had their little minds corrupted and filled with prejudice against the truth and against the man of God who was faithful to speak the truth. No wonder then, that little children who were under this kind of home and city influence, should think they were doing something smart to have a little fun by giving a nickname to this poor man and saying to him, "Go up, thou bald head! go up, thou bald head!" Sometimes, even in this day, we hear of children speaking very lightly of, and giving nicknames to persons, and, perhaps, they have learned it from their parents.

But now we want to tell you what a horrid thing soon came upon *forty-two* of these bad children for their bad conduct to this good man. When the prophet heard their taunts and insults the Spirit of the Lord moved him to pronounce the curse of the Lord upon them. It is said that "he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them." What a horrid sight that was—to see so many little children torn to pieces by wild and savage beasts! But this was the *curse* the Lord put upon these children, and upon their parents, for not teaching their children better morals and better manners than to be insulting travelers. And then it was, perhaps, wrong in the parents to

have given so much latitude to these children to go into the country in such a large crowd unless the father or mother had gone with them to see that no evil should befall them. The wise man Solomon tells us that "A child *left* to himself, bringeth his mother to shame."—Prov. xxix. 15. What a burning shame fathers and mothers sometimes feel for the bad conduct of their children! And there is not only shame, but often *guilt* also, because they have let their children recklessly have their own way. Children have been left to themselves until they have brought ruin on themselves, as well as shame and agony upon their father and mother. What a dreadful distress it was to the parents of these poor, unfortunate and bad children to see "forty-two" of them weltering in their blood in one pile! All torn to pieces! Some with their little heads crushed and their brains running out; others with their bowels torn out, or their arms and legs broken.

Dear children, can you imagine how mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers and other kindred gathered around these mangled children? Can you imagine the shrieks and screams of heart-broken mothers as they looked upon the shattered and lifeless remains of their neglected children? What a horrid picture! It is too horrid to think of, and yet all this often comes upon bad children—upon children whose parents have suffered them to have their own way too much when they were little, and when it was most important they should have been restrained and governed. You should never think hard of your father or mother when they do not allow you to have your own way. Nor should you set up an argument with them any further than for them to know the facts of the case, whatever it may be. Nor should you ever begin to *whine* and *cry* when they forbid or command you to do anything. God has given you, as children, to them, and laid the responsibility upon them, and not on any Society, to care for you; and made it your duty to honor, respect and obey your father and mother, "that it may be well with you."

A short time ago we noticed in some paper an account given of a Picnic somewhere not far from Atlanta, Ga., and

there was an aged negro, who had been much crippled and deformed by disease, riding quietly along on a little donkey, as he had been in the habit of doing, when some boys concluded to frighten the donkey and have a little fun. They did so, and the poor old colored man, who was carrying a little trade to market for an honest living, was so badly hurt that he died from the effects of it.

Beloved children, we must now close this letter, but not without saying again that we feel much interest for you, and do hope that none of our young readers will ever be guilty of such bad conduct as we have spoken of in the above letter.—M.

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#### BENEFACTION.

We are in receipt of two sacks of excellent flour, sent us from the mills of our esteemed friend, W. C. Germany, of Tennessee. His mills are favorably located on Duck River, near Wartrace and Haley, on the railroad, and those who favor him with their patronage may confidently expect fair dealing, just weights, and good flour.—M.

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THERE is an article or two in this issue in small type by mistake. We are trying to arrange to have all except obituaries in large type. Notice the number of pages up to and including this issue—408 for eight numbers—over 51 pages a number. This is, no doubt, the cheapest magazine published in the United States, this size and quality being often from two to three dollars a year. Brethren, are there no poor brethren and sisters who are unable to take it in your vicinity, who would like to do so; and can't you send it to them, especially where they can't get to meeting? May the Lord incline your hearts to assist all such cases with spiritual comfort in this way.

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WE notice that Elder Lester, of Virginia, is now associated with Elder Gold in the editorial department of *Zion's Landmark*.

## FAITH TRAINING COLLEGE.

But few of our readers are aware that among the many modern improvements and inventions of men in religious matters that any such institution as "Faith Training College" had been established in the United States. But such is the fact, and the institution now opens its session in Boston, Massachusetts, for its eighth year.

The October number for 1882 of a monthly publication, sent forth from Boston, is now before us, containing the above announcement, and also stating that the "design of the college is to train for christian work such consecrated men and women as are unable to pursue an extended and thorough course of theological study in the various denominational seminaries, but are desirous of *fitting themselves* for the *highest efficiency* in the widening fields of lay activity which the Head of the Church is wonderfully opening in our age, such as Sunday-school instruction, Christian Association work, Bible Exposition, Lay Preaching, Lay Evangelism, Home and Foreign Missionary labor," etc.

Notwithstanding the above Institution claims to train men and women into a higher degree of faith than generally falls to the lot of believers in Christ, it is nevertheless the most infidel document that we remember to have noticed in the name of christianity at any time of our life. "Faith Training"—indeed! But what kind of faith is it? Not that which is of God, nor that which is in him, but to *train* those who "desire to *fit themselves*" for the "highest efficiency" which they blasphemously say the "Head of the Church is wonderfully opening in our age, *such* as Sunday-schools," etc. Here is a virtual acknowledgment that the "Head of the Church" omitted to open up or leave any such record in the New Testament, and that they now have a much later account of Him in this new revelation in which He has *wonderfully* unfolded in our age, this widening field of labor. But we do not wish to consume time nor space by lengthy remarks. *Faith Training College* has a Faculty and "Board

of Instruction," as follows: "Charles Cullis, M. D., President and Professor of Christian Work; Rev. A. B. Earle, D. D., Professor of Revival Work; Rev. Wm. McDonald, Professor of Christian Life; Rev. C. W. Emerson, Professor of Elocution; D. W. Woodvine, M. D., Professor of Natural Theology; Captain R. Kelso Carter, Professor of Sacred Astronomy; B. B. Scott, Professor of Bible Study."

Those who have no confidence in God to "fit" them for the *highest* efficiency in modern missionary work, can, if they wish, be *trained* in the above named college to *fit themselves* for that kind of service, free of charge on our part for the above notice.—M.

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### PREDESTINATION.

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To predestinate, is to appoint or ordain anything by an unalterable purpose. It is to fix, settle or predetermine any thing in mind before we act. The Eternal, Self-Existent God is the only Being in existence who can predestinate or purpose anything beforehand, with absolute certainty of its coming to pass.

It is true, that all the works, business and professions of sane and rational men are predicated upon, and flow out from a previous purpose or predestination; but as man is but a weak and limited creature in either knowledge or power, his purposes and predestination, however firmly fixed and decreed in his own mind, are liable to fail. Their final accomplishment often depends upon so many little intervening circumstances and events which were not foreknown, or if known, or even supposed to occur, he could not remove them, nor make them contribute anything to the accomplishment of his purposes. Every sane man, however, is, to the extent of his ability, an every-day, practical predestinarian. It enters into every business profession, and there could be neither order nor hope of success in anything without it. The farmer, the merchant, the lawyer and the doctor, all proceed upon this

principle of predestination in the first incipency, as well as in the whole progress of their business.

But while nothing is done by sane men for which they are justly held accountable in human law, unless it has first been purposed or predetermined in their own mind, yet predestination should not be considered apart from either election or foreknowledge. If the farmer predetermines in his mind to cultivate one hundred acres of land next year, he does it with a knowledge, to some extent, of all that is necessary for that purpose. He chooses so to do, and the material and method by which it is to be done. He intends, predetermines or predestinates in perfect harmony with his choice and knowledge. He chooses, fixes, settles and determines in mind how many acres to put in small grain, such as wheat, oats, rye, or barley; how many in corn, cotton or potatoes. He also sees, knows, chooses and predestinates the number of hands, mules, farming implements, forage, and other expenses necessary. Should a man commence farming, or any other business, without this principle of predestination entering into every department of his business, from the first conception of it to its ultimate end, then he is just that far deficient in the most important item for success. And besides this, he exposes himself to be ridiculed and laughed to scorn by all who pass along and see what a blunder he has made by proceeding without predestination, election or knowledge.

Christ taught the important necessity of predestination and election entering into a man's business success when He said: "Which of you, *intending* to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest, haply, after he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish."—Luke xiv. 29.

Predestination puts people to work instead of keeping them from it, or making them careless about whether they do it or not, as some people seem to think it does. You pass along and see a man engaged daily at hard work, or having hands

engaged under his supervision and control; *there* you see practical predestination. That work was predestinated to be done as a necessary part of the final result. If the final end is determined, all the means by which that end is to be attained are determined and made sure also, as far as the ability of poor, finite man can make them.

So well established is this principle of predestination among men, that even if a man should kill half a dozen men in one day, and it could be proven that he did not intend it,—did not predetermine in his own mind to do so,—he would not be regarded as criminal. Intention, design, malice, or forethought must be clearly proven; else no indictment for murder can be sustained.

If, therefore, predestination enters into every rational act of created intelligence, surely we ought to admit that the Great Fountain and Source of all intelligence does not act without it.

When we look abroad at the natural creation,—the heavens and the earth and all that in them is,—and consider how wisely everything is adapted to a certain use, and see such harmony, beauty, and mutual dependence of one thing upon another, we are bound to conclude that some infinitely wise and intelligent Being did purpose, design and predetermine all these things before they were created or brought into manifest existence. That God did design and predestinate to create this earth is evident from the fact that the earth is here. And we need no better evidence that the Lord hath purposed and predestinated to do a thing, than to know he hath done that thing. And to say, or suppose, that the infinitely wise God hath ever done anything in creation, providence or grace, or suffered anything to be done that he did not first design or purpose, would be a reflection too degrading to cast upon the God of all the earth.

But when we see such harmony and adaptation in the creation of natural things,—the sun, moon and stars moving along by such permanent and fixed laws, and the earth, with its teeming millions, being sustained and reproduced by such regular and uniform laws as God has established,—shall we

suppose that the eternal salvation of sinners is left uncertain? Has the God of all grace left that uncertain which is most important of all his works? Is the salvation of sinners left to the choice of wicked men and devils? The emphatic expression so oft repeated in the scriptures that "Salvation is of the Lord," shows conclusively that he not only purposed and designed their salvation, but that he executes and fulfils it. How else could salvation be of the Lord unless he did the work?

In considering the subject of salvation we should remember that God is a God of *work* as well as purpose. His works are but the development and manifestation of his predestination. Thus the apostle speaks of it: "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who *worketh* all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. To obtain a heavenly inheritance in Jesus, apart from the purpose and predestination of God, is utterly impossible; and to have any realizing sense or experimental knowledge of this inheritance, apart from the *work* of God, is equally impossible. "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent." "Our faith and hope and every grace" is wrought in us by the effectual working of his "mighty power, which he wrought in Jesus when he raised him from the dead." In the great covenant of redemption, it is said, "All things are ordered and sure." Nothing is sure when man has a part to do to make it so. The "*sure* mercies of David," which are promised to the heirs of promise, depend for their certainty, not upon what man shall do, but upon what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done. "He verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who, *by him*, do believe in God, that raised him from the dead." "Whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the First Born among many brethren."—Rom. viii.

Our limited time and space forbid writing more on this subject at present.—M.

## TO AGED MINISTERS.

We suggest to our readers generally, and to our Aged Ministers specially, the propriety and utility of a brief synopsis of the life of our Aged Ministers who have been in the ministry *twenty years* and upward, to be published in the pages of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and that such synopses embrace—

*First.* The date, State or country where each was born, the name of parents, and whether both or either of them lived till you were 21 years old, and what were your advantages or disadvantages in a temporal sense. This not to exceed 16 lines.

*Second.* State, as nearly as you can, at what age you first became seriously concerned about salvation, and the date of your deliverance, and where and with what church you were first received into fellowship, and by whom you were baptized. Include this in not more than 20 lines.

*Third.* State at what time your mind first became weighted about preaching, and name some of the brethren or sisters who were present when you took your first text, and when and at what church and by whom as Presbytery were you ordained, and what church and at what date was your pastoral services called for and obtained. Embrace this synopsis in not more than 24 lines.

*Fourth.* State whether you are married or ever have been, the number of your family, how many deaths, how many now living, and such other circumstances and things as not to exceed 30 lines.

It will be seen by the above suggestions that the highest limits of the aggregated four Items would not exceed ninety lines, which would be less than three pages of foolscap paper. Of course, we do not propose that each should follow the precise order and speak only of those precise points which we present in these four Items. We have given these rather as indicating some things which might be necessary to place in such numerical order as to make them of easy reference in the future, should they ever be needed by the future historian.

We suggest that the preliminary to such brief autobiographical sketch be very short, and that everything be written in a plain, bold hand; and be sure that all proper names of persons and places be spelled correctly.

If our brethren approve the above, we hope to hear from our aged ministers soon, and in such regular succession that

one or two such sketches may appear in each number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER. To insure speedy insertion, the sketch must be short, as we can only give a very limited space to that kind of reading.—M.

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### SHAMEFUL AND HORRID.

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The Montgomery (Ala.) *Daily Advertiser* of June 10th, commenting, editorially, upon the "Savage Element in Our Nature," says that "recently, in the enlightened State of New York, there was an exhibition of evil that could hardly have been exceeded. Two of the students of a theological institution, located in the little village of Hamilton, incurred the ill-will of the others, and it was determined that the offenders should be hanged. The two unfortunates were captured and taken to another village, where a hall had been secured for the occasion, and the account says: 'They arrived at their destination about midnight, and immediately took charge of Felt Hall. Two barrels had been prepared for the occasion. Sharpened nails had been driven into them from the outside, so that they protruded nearly an inch on the interior. The two victims were placed in these barrels, after the gags had been removed from their mouths. The barrels were then headed up. The floor of the hall was wet and a small fire built in the centre. The barrels were then rolled from one end of the hall to the other, and several times around and over the fire. Revolvers were fired and firecrackers exploded. When the townspeople attempted to interfere they were driven off by the mob of students, who were so indignant at the attempted interference with their sport that they broke all the street lamps, and did much other damage to the property.'

Of the real facts of the case we know nothing further than what we have given above from the *Advertiser*; and though we have never had any confidence whatever in the ability of any humanly devised Theological Institution to prepare men to "save souls," as they claim, nor "to bring men to Christ,"

yet we do hope for the sake of American civilization, for the sake of humanity, and especially for the sake of the fair name of christianity, that there is some mistake about this matter. We do hope that in this boasted nineteenth century of civilization and piety that no such foul deed has ever been done, as is ascribed to these young theological students in the great State of New York.—M.

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WE had a gracious revival at our little church in Butler, at our meeting on third Sunday in June. Three joined and were baptized, amongst whom was our daughter, Minnie, now and since Mrs. McDowell, of Barnesville, Georgia. Also our niece, Irene Respass, and Col. M. G. Bayne, of Fort Valley, Georgia. May the Lord keep them all humble and make them useful.

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ELDERS DAMERON, of North Carolina, Bartley, of Indiana, and Greenwood, of North Carolina, are expected at the next session of the Upatoie Association, to be held in two miles of Butler, Georgia, on Tuesday after the first Sunday in September next. There is a universal desire in this country to hear Elder Greenwood preach.

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ELDER SIKES baptized several in the last few months at New Hope Church, in this county; and Elder Story baptized one at Pleasant Hill and one at Fellowship Church, both in Houston county, Georgia.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

BREMOND, TEXAS, June 11, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I want to say to you that I very highly appreciate the GOSPEL MESSENGER; and my humble prayer to God is that you and dear Brother Mitchell may be long spared to send forth your very instructive and edifying editorials and communications. I want to relate how I came to send the enclosed dollar for the MESSENGER. I made an appeal for help for our worthy pastor, Elder J. C. Denton, and succeeded to some extent; and notifying Elder D., asked him how I should remit it

to him (he lives forty-five miles distant), telling him by whom it was contributed; and he answered, returning thanks, and said send it all but that dollar, and do as you please with it, only don't send it to me. And believing I could do no better with it than have the MESSENGER sent for it to this worthy old sister, I thus send it.

Affectionately, your brother,

W. G. YELVERTON.

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BENTON COUNTY, ARK., June 11, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*—(if one so unworthy should thus address you):—The MESSENGER comes regularly, for which I am thankful, for it is the most preaching I hear. I am so frail that I can't go to meeting, and when I do, I can't hear much of what the preacher says; but I can read the MESSENGER, and it is a source of great comfort to me—so much so, that I can't tell you how highly I appreciate the blessing it seems to be to me. I am doing all I can for it. Dear brother, enclosed you will find one dollar to pay for the MESSENGER one year for Elder M. N. Casebier, Seligman, Mo., a precious old brother brought to poverty as to this world's goods by sickness and the loss of his dear companion. He has desired it, but has been unable to pay for it; and he does not know that he will get it. Dear brethren, I want you to remember me at all times in your prayers, for I am nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity; yet I have a little hope, that I would not exchange for all this world.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM FORD.

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BOWIE, TEXAS, June 11, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—Do you think that a man could evade a call to the ministry sixteen years? Answer through the MESSENGER.

Your unworthy brother, saved by grace, if saved at all,

W. J. BRISCOE.

Dear Brother—We hope some brother who has been disobedient sixteen years will write you about it, or to us. There are many, no doubt, who have been disobedient sixteen years, and more; at whose hearts Christ has knocked, and who have refused to open to him, and have thereby lost the supping or feast promised them. Dear brother, if you are the one, let us advise you to take up your cross at once, and experience for yourself that not one word of all His good promises will fail you; that His yoke is easy and burden light, and find rest to your soul.—R.

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RAMAH, ALA., May 28, 1883.

I have a desire to visit my native place—Upson county, Georgia—and as my husband proffers to go with me this fall, he asked me to find out when and where he could meet most of the brethren, as he is unacquainted with my relatives out there. I hope Uncle Samuel Bentley or some of my relatives will respond. I have been to Troy, Alabama, recently, and found my mother in low health, but hope she will get up again, but fear

she will never be well again in this life. She talked to a part of the brethren and sisters of Beulah Church on Saturday evening last, which seemed to relieve her mind greatly. I think that her troubles were a great part of her afflictions. I feel to thank God for his Spirit manifested in the precious few gathered around her bedside to hear her talk and talk with her. Pray for us all. I love the GOSPEL MESSENGER and intend to exert myself in its behalf.

Your little sister,

L. E. SELLERS.

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BIG SANDY, TEXAS, May 31, 1883.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell* :—*Very Dear Brother* :—I wrote you last week, sending *five* new subscribers and remittance for one brother who had been taking it before, making *Six Dollars* in all, which I hope you have received before now. [It came all right.—ED.] I will endeavor to work for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, believing I will be doing a “good work.” I like it, and do not see why other brethren should not. You are aware, however, that some good brethren are, at times, a little strange in their ways. I may, at some future time, write something to the saints scattered abroad, for the pages of the MESSENGER. May the blessings of heaven richly abound to you and yours, my much esteemed brothers.

JEFF. STRINGER.

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COON HOUSE, ALA., May 19, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—I receive the GOSPEL MESSENGER regularly, and am well pleased with it, and would have remitted sooner, but did not have the money. I receive a great deal of information, as well as solid comfort, from the MESSENGER. I feel a great concern for your welfare. When at the General Meeting, I heard a letter read, stating “that Elder Mitchell had a painful operation performed on his right eye.” I hope that ere this you are entirely recovered, and are able to continue your labor of love, both from the pulpit and with your able pen. I would be so glad if you could take another “Social Visit” among the churches, and that you could come as far as Mount Carmel. Could you not come to our Annual Meeting in July? Christian regards to all the household of faith.

WILLIAM R. AVERY.

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GAP STORE, VA., June 15, 1883.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell* :—*Dear Brother in the Lord* :—I feel thankful that I am much improved from what I was when I last wrote you, though I am still unable to walk. Dear brother, I feel desirous to give a few words of encouragement about the GOSPEL MESSENGER, if I knew what to say. Surely, Brother Respass and yourself have been prepared of the Lord for this important work which He has given you. The Editorials are sound and very instructive; the Correspondence, also, is a manifestation of that law which God has written in the heart and mind of his people. Elder Rowe’s articles, though short, are a whole garment, without folds or wrappers. Hoping that you are still blessed with a good supply of the “Hidden Manna,” I subscribe myself yours in the bonds and afflictions of the gospel,

J. HANKINS.

SPRINGTOWN, TEXAS, June 18, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I send you this letter [not space in this issue for it; will be published] from a dear brother who has written me some very comforting letters since you published the little I wrote to you. I asked him to write his Experience for the MESSENGER, and he sent it to me to do as I pleased with it. I have also received letters from others, who were strangers in the flesh, and some assistance, which was a help in time of need, though very unexpected. I wish to thank you for the continuance of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and hope that the Good Lord will bless you in your labors of love.

MARY SELVIDGE.

We think we feel thankful that the dear brethren remembered Sister Selvidge and aided her in a time of need and sorrow, even by writing her letters of consolation, and in a more substantial way, when able. The Primitive Baptists are the best people in the world, and we wish that we loved them as we ought to, and as they are worthy to be loved.—R.

BUTLER COUNTY, ALA., June 10, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—This is the day of our meeting at Black Rock Church, of Conecuh River Association, Alabama, but the weather is so bad that I don't think we shall be able to meet. We are at peace as a church, but have to lament a cold state. We have the gospel preached monthly by Elder B. A. Walker, of Rutledge, Ala. At our last meeting, one month ago, we had Brother Jones, of Tennessee, with us; and the dear brother was full of the Holy Ghost, declaring the whole counsel of God, which seemed to be highly entertaining to the dear children, and there was also some manifestation of the Spirit in the congregation. This dear brother, having been bereaved of his wife and lovely daughter, seemed to have been greatly borne down under the loss, but only to be drawn nearer to Jesus. May the Lord bless him in his basket and his store whilst he lives. Brother Mitchell, cannot you or Brother Respass come through this section? We are glad to have the brethren visit us and break the bread of life to us. My love to all the children of God.

Your unworthy brother,

T. E. HARRISON.

COVINGTON, TENN., June 21, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—I send you some subscribers I have gotten for you in this section. The MESSENGER was unknown here till I came down. I expect to remain here until perhaps the middle of August, and the probability is that I shall get you more subscribers when the brethren get to see the MESSENGER. I find good Baptists in West Tennessee, and they have but few preachers; and that is one reason why I am anxious that they should have the MESSENGER. The Baptists are, however, in a somewhat cold state here as elsewhere, and in all places where iniquity abounds the love of some, at least, will wax cold.

Yours in the love of the truth,

ALDRIDGE BROWN.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—Our church is in a prosperous condition, if we are not mistaken. A few of us met last Sunday, at 3 o'clock P. M., and held a sort of prayer meeting. After singing two good old songs, Bro. Brown went forward, read a chapter in Isaiah, gave a good talk, which was very consoling to us little ones. I then read part of 14th and 15th chapters of John, and talked a little; after which Brother Clark led in prayer, in great humility. Brother Jarrell followed—melted down, and much under the influence of the Holy Ghost. In truth, all seemed to be of one mind, and much feeling was manifested. I love these family meetings. Our next meeting is our yearly, and we want you to come—[Sorry I could not, but had another appointment before I got Brother Clark's letter.—R.] May the Lord bless you and Brother Mitchell in the good work of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, so that it may be circulated far and wide, is my humble desire. I hope I am your brother in Christ,

*Macon, Ga.*

L. D. JOHNSON.

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## OBITUARIES.

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### MRS. MARTHA FOLKS.

Died, at the residence of her son, in Lee county, Ala., Sister MARTHA FOLKS, March 17th, 1883; in the 72nd year of her age. Her youthful days were spent in Anson county, North Carolina, and there she first united with the Baptists, before the division. In 1834 she moved to Stewart county, Ga., and was married to Mr. John Folks in 1837; but in 1864 she was left a widow with four children—two sons and two daughters—and her oldest son marrying soon after, her youngest son, then in his fourteenth year, endeavored to care for and support his bereaved and affectionate mother. She was a consistent and orderly Primitive Baptist in all the trials and conflicts of life, and though almost entirely helpless for four years before her death, she was enabled to bear her affliction with great resignation, patience and fortitude; and in her last painful struggles she said she was passing her last deep waters of affliction, and expressed a desire to be let go as quietly as possible. Thus she fell asleep sweetly in Jesus. All who knew her could sympathize with her in her sufferings, and regard her with love and admiration. May the God of all grace bind up the broken hearts of the bereaved ones, and give them sustaining grace through life, and at last save them in heaven, is the desire of the unworthy writer. [Poetry omitted for want of space.—Ed.]

*Opelika, Ala., June 4, 1883.*

FANNIE L. PICKARD.

### SARAH FRANCES GRESHAM.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—By request of the bereaved husband, and our highly esteemed brother in the Lord, G. W. Gresham, deacon of Ebenezer Church, I send you a notice of the death of his dear companion, SARAH FRANCES GRESHAM, who departed this life June 9th, 1883, at her home in Meriwether county, Ga., and was buried in the church graveyard at Ebenezer meeting-house. There being a few very appropriate remarks made at the

grave by Elder S. Maxwell to a large congregation of relatives, and brethren and sisters and friends, that mourn their loss, but the dear, departed sister's gain. For she gave on her death bed unmistakable evidence of her acceptance with God her Saviour into that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, there to dwell in perpetual happiness, in the full enjoyment of the happiness and love of her spiritual Husband, Jesus Christ the Lord.

The deceased was a daughter of the late Deacon John Snelson: was born in Meriwether county, Ga., September, 1835; was twice married; was married to her last husband August 4th, 1858, by whom she had eight children, some of whom still live. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Ebenezer, near where she lived, September, 1871, and was baptized by Elder David Caldwell. While she lived, and until a few months before her death, she was prompt to attend to the duties that she had vowed to perform as a member of the church and a christian. Though of a frail constitution, she was ever ready and willing to do what she could in the service of her King. The writer of this notice was often cheered and comforted by her presence at meeting, and the unmistakable evidence of her appreciation of the truth of sovereign grace that he was trying to hold forth as the plan for the salvation of sinners. Often she from her affliction (which was that dreadful and wasting disease, consumption) was too weak to go to the church; by her request, we tried to preach at her house for her special benefit, and which she seemed to greatly enjoy, expressing much comfort. She seemed to be conscious for some time before her death that it was a question of time with her; that it would not be long before she would have to leave this world; and her great desire, as she expressed herself to me the last time I saw her—which was three weeks before she died—was that she might have grace to die upon. We felt confident she would, and tried to comfort her with the thought that as her days demand, so should her strength be. Her desire was granted, for I was told by a sister that was with her the evening before she died that night, in response to the question if she wanted anything, she said, "She wanted a quiet room, that she might die and be at rest." I was told that she quietly folded her hands across her breast and died as one going to sleep—rational to the last.

We would say to the bereaved husband and children, to weep not as those that have no hope. Dear husband, your wife is gone to that rest that remains to the people of God! Weep not, children; "mother" cannot come back to you, but may you be prepared by the same Spirit that prepared her for heaven and happiness, to meet her there! Try to perpetuate her memory by following her example in all your relations in life, that it may be well with you in this life. May this dispensation of God's providence be sanctified to the good of all the sorrowing ones, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

*Griffin, Ga., June 18, 1883.*

T. Z. HEAD.

#### ANNIE LUPHELIA NORRIS.

Died, at Columbiana, Ala., February 23rd, 1883, with typhoid fever, ANNIE LUPHELIA, youngest daughter of H. M. and Alice E. Norris; aged 3 years and 10 days.

Death has touched the tender flower,

But we must say, 'Tis right!

It was in the morning hour

When Annie's spirit took its flight.

*Columbiana, Ala., June 20, 1883.*

HER COUSIN.

## MISS ELLA B. MAYNARD.

Miss ELLA B. MAYNARD departed this life near Powersville, Ga., on August 13th, 1882. For some time previous to her death her general health began to fail, and she sought relief in the genial climate of Florida, where her fond expectations were not realized. She returned home to calmly endure the dispensations of Providence. Meekly and quietly she bore herself up against the slow waste of life. When darkness first fell upon her outer being a serene light irradiated her inner life. Though never attaching herself to the church, yet her daily walk and conversation were such as became a member of the Church of Christ. She delighted in instructing little children.

“Her peaceful death proclaimed the truth,  
None die too soon who live for heaven.”

Then mother, sisters and brother,  
“Wherefore weep  
O'er those who sleep?  
Their precious dust the Lord will keep  
Till he appear  
In glory here  
The harvest of the world to reap.”

W.

## SIMON ROYAL.

By request, it becomes my sad duty to send to you for publication in the MESSENGER, the obituary of my dear father, SIMON ROYAL, who departed this life November 24th, 1882; being 76 years, 6 months and 13 days old. He leaves an aged companion and four children to mourn their loss; but we feel to sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe our great loss is his eternal gain. The Lord has been good to us in sparing to us a kind and lovely father so long, and a kind and loving husband to the desolate and lonely wife. He is gone to reap his reward, and if we are prepared by divine grace we will ere long go to him in that home of the blest, where sin and sorrow can never come. He was born in Samson county, North Carolina, May 6th, 1806. He was a kind and indulgent father, a good husband, and fair in all his dealings with his fellow man; his house was a home for his brethren, and also for the poor, wayfaring ones in their afflictions. Many have been cared for and nursed tenderly in their afflictions, and died in his house. He had been a Primitive Baptist for several years; was a close attendant on his meetings and loved to go off on visits to the brethren and sisters at their meetings, and enjoyed them very much. It seemed to me, the day after his death, that he was not dead, but gone to meeting, and delighting himself,

“Where congregations ne'er break up,  
And Sabbaths never end.”

He was blessed abundantly in his afflictions; he was permitted to get up and eat his meals, but could not go to his table but few times; he was calm and quiet, not seeming to suffer a great deal. I never heard a murmur from his lips in his afflictions, and he was not given to murmur in health. When the summons came, he was prepared to meet it. A few minutes before his death, mamma asked him, What time he reckoned it was? He said, “I don't know. I hear the chickens crowing.” He then turned over, placed his feet folded his hands, closed his eyes, without a struggle, and fell asleep in Jesus and crossed over the stream; and we have a glorious hope that he has reached the bright coast, with songs and everlasting joys upon his head, and sighing and sorrow has forever fled away.

MARY A. SHUFFIELD.

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- "Cured my wife of Bronchitis when every thing else failed." N. C. MUNROE.
- "It is helping me very much." JAS. G. GARDNER.
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- "Has greatly benefited my son." Mrs. E. J. WILLIAMS.

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Some may think it too highly endorsed by us, but we are willing and do stake our reputation (which is good) on it being the best THROAT AND LUNG MEDICINE in the market.

[Signed]  
LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR

THE T. C. HATHI COLLECTION  
Mrs Lucy Dixon

Vol. 5.

No. 9.

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.

Brethren wishing to communicate with ELD. MITCHELL, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the GOSPEL MESSENGER to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

SEPTEMBER, 1883.

*All Letters, Remittances and Communications, should be addressed to J. R. RESPESS, Butler, Ga.*

*Money should be sent by Money Order or Registered Letter.*

*Be certain to write names and post-offices plainly.*

*Subscribers not receiving the Messenger should notify us.*

*Any one sending us Five Dollars for five new subscribers, shall have one copy of the Messenger for one year free.*

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Wm. C. COART, Secretar

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## APPOINTMENTS.

THE NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene on the Lord willing, with the Church at Hillabahatchie, Heard county, Georgia, eight miles north of Rock Mills, on Saturday before the Sabbath in October, 1883.

## Naaman, the Syrian.

The seventh thousand of this discourse is now out and ready at 10 cents single copy, or \$1.00 per dozen; and gratis to every new subscriber to the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and also to any subscriber who will send us one new one; and gratis to all Primitive Baptist ministers and poor widows or brethren.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 9. BUTLER, GA., SEPTEMBER, 1883. Vol. 5.

SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE BY ELD. J. E. FROST,  
MADE AT SHOFNER MEETING HOUSE ON THOMP-  
SON'S CREEK, TENN., ON 5TH SUNDAY, JANUARY,  
1882.

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.—1 Thess. i. 5.

In calling your attention to these words of the apostle Paul, we would remind you of his words in his letter to Timothy, his son in the gospel, declaring by divine authority that All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.—2 Tim. iii. 17. I understand by this that the apostle teaches that all the writers, both in the Old and New Testaments, were under the influence and direction of God's Spirit, and were, as such, inspired, writing as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In the quotation from 2 Tim. iii. 17, are four points presented, viz.: doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness; and perhaps we might say a fifth proposition, embracing them all, All scripture is given by inspiration of God, &c. And so with the text under consideration; there are four specifications, so to speak, plainly presented, each demanding consideration. The first is a negative one, showing how the gospel did *not* come to the Thessalonians; and the other three are positive, showing how it did come. And it is in words so plain by this inspired man of God that they should neither be misunderstood nor misconstrued. (1) For our gospel came not unto

you in *word only*, (2) but also in *power*, (3) and in the Holy Ghost, (4) and in much assurance; and we therefore believing it to be true, wish so to declare it to others, that as the writers of the scriptures were under the direction of the Holy Spirit as they wrote, that the reader and hearer, in order to a correct understanding thereof, must, of necessity, be guided by the same Spirit; without which the gospel comes in word only. The scripture teaches us elsewhere, "That the wisdom of man is foolishness with God; that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Thus God teaches us that man, by his mere human intellect, is unable to grasp and understand divine or spiritual things; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep (hidden) things of God. Thus we are taught by the word of inspiration, man's inability; that by his natural powers he cannot comprehend spiritual things, but that God must reveal them by his Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity; for there are three Persons in the Godhead, each one a substantial Person in unity. There are three that bare record in heaven: the Father, the Word (which was made flesh), and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; that is to say, as man by his natural vision cannot see a spirit, so by his natural spirit he cannot behold spiritual things. It is a fearful delusion to believe that man by his natural powers is able to comprehend spiritual things and things hidden from nature. The apostle teaches: "For what man knoweth the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."—1 Cor. ii. 11. As it is by the spirit of man that we know the things of man, so it is equally clear that it is by the Spirit of God that we receive and understand the things of God. We are further taught by the Lord through the apostle, That the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually

discerned. "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Thus the faithful and unpretending gospel minister declares the simple truths of the gospel of the Son of God, trusting in the unseen hand of a merciful God to make the application to the heart and conscience of the hearer, that it may come to them in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; and we may, at first thought, conclude this to be against the poor sinner,—but far from it,—because when we remember that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, and that salvation was provided for the lost sinner; not for those who know the way, but for them out of the way and lost. Not a single poor sinner who shall ever realize in this life that he is lost, shall fail to realize Christ as his Saviour; so that the sooner he feels this to be his sad condition experimentally, the sooner he will be able to understand how the gospel comes not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, to shed abroad the love of God in his heart, bringing his conscience to the sweet assurance of hope. The sinner does not, whilst in a state of darkness, understand that he is *now* lost; but thinks there is a chance for him to be lost in the far future, but not that he is already lost and in the condition described in the words of inspiration: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the mind of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, who is in the image of God, should shine unto them.—2 Cor. iv. 4. When the gospel comes to them as it did to those at Thessalonica, the blindness will be removed from the mind, and they will be able to see themselves in a lost and ruined condition, which will inevitably lead to a godly sorrow for sin, which will lead to repentance unto salvation. You will please bear in mind that it is the god of this world that has

blinded the mind of them which believe not; not that the God of heaven, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; not the God of salvation; no! but the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience (even now at this time), among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.—Eph. ii. 2, 3. And though we may conclude this, all to be against us, and that it leaves the poor sinner to perish forever in his sins, failing to remember that the Son of man came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; but when the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, then the poor sinner can say of a truth, that the remedy provided by the good and gracious God is every way equal to the emergency. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.—Heb. iv. 12. When God formed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, man became a living soul; and as blood is the life of the body, so spirit is the life of the inner life, for there is an outward and inward man; blood is the life of the outer and spirit the inward man. Yea, as blood animates the body, likewise does the spirit animate the soul. Whilst the sinner is under the control of the prince of the power of the air, he is led by the god of this world, walking according to the prince of the power of the air, and is considered as being dead and under its power, from which nothing short of the power of the Spirit, as proclaimed in the gospel by the faithful gospel minister, as he comes preaching Jesus Christ the Lord, can deliver him. Jesus declares in his word I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly; and as Paul determined not to know anything in salvation saving Jesus Christ and him crucified, C that all who claim to be Christ's ministers might be like

mind! coming in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Jesus Christ, preach Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life, for he only is able to give life to the poor sinner, that he may see, hear and understand. "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." That there is a faith that stands in the power of man we do not question, and that it is the act of the creature we will concede, but such a faith is not the faith of God's elect, the faith giving assurance of eternal life; it is not the faith which secures peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fruit of the Spirit, and which works by love, and is the inward emotion of the soul animated by the Spirit of Jesus and freed from the evil influence of the prince of the power of the air. And God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith; for it is God that purifies the heart. Such is the case in every instance with those to whom the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, &c.

The first account we have of this world's existence, it was in total darkness, and without form and void; "and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the waters; and God said, Let there be light, and there was light." So it is with the poor sinner who is blinded by the god of this world; the powers of sin cover him up in its dark waters; but glory be to God for his grace! the Spirit of God moves upon the depths of the sinner's heart, and he is aroused to see and feel his awful condition, and cries out in alarm, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? God be merciful to me, a sinner! Dear congregation, I remember well the cryings and feelings of one poor sinner more than forty years ago; and blessed be His holy name! I still remember the time of great joy when God, for Christ's sake, spake peace to my soul! And now may the Spirit of God dwell in your hearts, that the gospel may be to you, all it was to the Thessalonians, and save us all in glory, for Christ's sake!

“A LETTER ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG BROTHER  
WHOSE MIND IS LED TOWARD THE MINISTRY  
OF THE WORD.”

*My Dear Brother in Christ:*—Since I have learned that your mind has been led to contemplate the ministry of the word with desire, I have had it in my mind to write to you, or to talk with you face to face; but as the opportunity for the latter may not occur for a long time, if ever, I avail myself of the present means of communication. Not having seen you, I do not know all the peculiar trials, hopes, desires, doubts and fears, which may possess you in regard to this matter; but yet I believe that in a general way I know what these may be, well enough to, at least, enable me to say to you some things which will be appropriate to your condition of mind. We are informed by an inspired apostle that “he who desireth the office of a bishop, desireth a good work.”—1 Tim. iii. 1. And we are also informed that special qualifications are needful for this office (see 1 Tim. iii.; and Titus i.) It should be, my dear brother, the desire of every child of God to bear testimony at all times, in public and in private, with whatever of ability he possesses, to the power, love and grace of God. But while this desire ought to fill all our hearts, and I believe is felt, more or less, by every believer, yet this, in itself, does not constitute a call to the special ministry of the word. No doubt many a young convert, whose heart has been filled with rejoicing and love, has felt that the highest and most exalted privilege on earth, to him, would be to proclaim from the housetop the wonderful riches of the gospel now revealed to him. But this desire, in itself, is not an evidence of a call to preach the gospel. No doubt you have been much perplexed in your own mind as to whether you are called to preach at all; and if so, as to how you shall conduct yourself in this matter.

And, first, my brother, I will speak of some things which seem to me essential to this heavenly calling. First among them is this: that we “HAVE A MESSAGE TO DELIVER.” We are not to be like Ahimaaz, who ran, but really had no mes-

sage, and could only say that he had seen a great tumult, but had no definite idea of what it meant; but like Cushi, we are to have a fact to tell. And in our case, also, it is the message that the King's Son is dead (but in a different sense from Absalom), and that he is alive again. The gospel is a statement of facts,—certain definite, well proven facts,—and to preach the gospel is not to say any and everything that may occur to the mind, but to state these truths, which the Bible declares, and which in our experience we have seen and felt. You must, then, feel, my brother, that there is certain truth clear in your mind, which you are to deliver. A mere wild rant of words, without order or method, is not of the Lord, and is not preaching the gospel. Have you seen, tasted and handled the truth of salvation by grace? and does your soul burn to declare what has been thus revealed to you? This is one evidence of a call to preach. Another evidence is the earnest, burning, consuming desire to declare the truth, to make it the one business of your life to hold forth the word of life; such a heart-consuming desire as makes you feel that "woe is unto you if you preach not the gospel."—1 Cor. ix. 16. If one is truly called to the ministry, there is no longer room for a choice in the matter. He simply must preach. He can do nothing but preach. The voice is behind him all the time, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it."—Isa. xxx. 21. And this desire will be such that the called servant will not be satisfied with devoting a couple of hours a week to this work, but every day and every hour, in the pulpit and out of it, he will feel that he must speak forth the riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Another evidence is that such an one will feel a great anxiety for the church of God, and for the welfare of every child of God. He will find a spirit within him to watch for the good of all who love God, and a great delight when he gains evidence that any are being led into the truth. As a father feels toward his children, so will he feel for the little children in grace, and so will seek every opportunity to speak to them a word of advice, comfort, encouragement and admonition, as each one may seem to require.

Every one who loves God ought to feel this, of which I have just spoken; but it is sure that you are not called to preach, if this feeling be absent. Again, the spirit which calls a man to preach is not a fighting spirit. It is a spirit to feed, and not to kill. It is not a right feeling when a man just simply feels that he wants to argue and contend against opposers of the truth, but the right spirit is to desire first of all to feed the sheep, and to shoot at the wolves only when we must. It is bad policy to fight the wolves so long and so intently as to let the sheep grow lean and starve. They might as well be eaten up of the wolves as to die of slow starvation. The servants of God are not to fight through love of fighting, but through love of the sheep. By all means keep the enemy at bay, but be sure to feed the flock.

One of the necessary qualifications of the ministry is the ability to speak with understanding. Of this your brethren can judge better than you can do yourself. It is certain that God has never called a deaf and dumb man to preach. It is equally certain that he has not called me or you to preach in a language which we do not understand. He has not called me to preach to the English in the German tongue; nor to the French in the English tongue. If I am called to preach to the French, I must become master of the French tongue, to enable me to preach so that they can understand. So I must have the power of speaking with precision and clearness in my own mother tongue, or else I shall darken counsel with words which convey no meaning, but are mere sounds. See how clearly and tersely the Bible, which is God's word to man, is written. Every word and every sentence tells. The words are not jumbled together, but each has its own place and its own meaning. If we would be acceptable preachers of the word, there must be some ability to use words in accordance with their meaning. I have heard men speak, my dear brother, for half an hour, and at the end no man knew what had been said. It had been words, words, and nothing but words. If you, then, enter into the public ministry of the word, be sure to make it a study to know the meaning and

uses of words, and to use them correctly. But, my dear brother, having said this much about the evidences of a call to preach, you will want me to say something about the course of conduct which it is best for you to pursue. I think, my brother, that perhaps I can advise you in this as well by narrating a portion of my own experience, as in any way.

From the first of my experience of a hope in Christ, I felt a desire to speak, everywhere, of the things which I loved, and I was accustomed to do so in public and in private. This I did without thinking of calling it preaching myself, or that any one else would so look upon it. I must also say that it seemed to me, before I was even a member of the church at all, that the most blessed work in all the world would be to preach the glad tidings of salvation. I felt that it was a precious privilege to speak to any who would hear what I had come to know and love. This was my privilege and duty. And it is the privilege and duty of *all* who love God. This, however, I did not think of calling by the name of preaching. I went on in this way for two or three years and was satisfied. To speak in the name of Christ was enough. I did not feel to be anxious as to what name my gift of speaking should be called. I was never worried about another thing—and that was, what the church should think of my gift. I never felt uneasy but that the church would give me the proper place. If I had a gift to preach, I was sure the brethren would see it as soon as God intended that they should. I did not fear but that I should be rated at my full value in every way. I did not feel to say at any time, "I will not preach." I did feel very unworthy, and very poor, and ignorant; but I also believed that it was my place to submit myself to the Lord, and that he could and would prepare me for whatever place he designed me to fill. I was anxious to be just what, and go just where and when, the dear Lord would have me. I believed his church was the judge. I was satisfied to go on as I was going, and leave the result in the hands of my brethren, as they, being led by the Spirit, should judge to be right. And so I went on speaking whenever the opportunity was

given, ashamed of myself often, but still willing to be in my place and to do my best, for several months. At the end of that time I was going away from the bounds of the church where I was a member, and they gave me a license, *not to preach*, but it read in this way: "Whereas our brother, FARRIS A. CHICK, is a member of this church, in good standing, and of good moral character, and we believe possesses a useful gift. This is to give him liberty, so far as the church is concerned, to use that gift wherever it may be desired." I then went on speaking for more than two years, until the church called for my ordination. There had been a full and frank understanding between me and the church before they called for the Council to meet. I was not surprised when it came. I was satisfied to wait till they were ready to call for it, and I was willing to bow to their will when they judged the time had come. I was no more a preacher afterwards than before. I did not devote myself any more to the work afterwards than before, because it had been the one business and the one desire of my heart before to speak of the word of the Lord.

Now, my brother, in looking back over all this, I think my course was right. I would not seek to make myself a pattern, but this would be my advice to you: Speak anywhere and everywhere that the opportunity is given you. This is always your privilege. But do not be worried about how the church regards your gift. They will find out soon enough what your gift is. Wait for her to take all the steps toward your advancement in the ministry. If the Lord has called you to preach, the best evidence is that you do preach, and this the church will see. You need not be careful about it. Even if a few friends flatter you, do not heed them. Even if they should say that the church is too slow in your case, do not believe them, but be sure that no blame attaches to you if you do not run faster than your brethren. You will have trials enough, and doubts and fears enough, and difficulties enough arising out of your own inward conflicts. You will feel, if God has called you to the ministry, very unfit for the work, and this will make you hesitate. And these things

you will feel all your life long. Of another thing, my young brother, be assured, viz.: that if God has not called you to this work, there is no profit to you or to others in entering upon it; and, besides, there is room enough for you to be useful in some other way. Pray God to guide you and show you the way, so that you may neither run too fast nor too slow. And I will join in this prayer to God for you also, as He may enable me, day by day.

I purpose to write you soon with reference to the duty of a minister and pastor of churches.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope,

Reisterstown, Md., July 18, 1883.

F. A. CHICK.

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### EXPERIENCE.

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*Dear Sister Mary:*—Having some time since promised you that I would, perhaps, at some future time write some of (as I sometimes hope) the dealings of the Lord with me, I now do so. I was born and raised in the State of Indiana, near Indianapolis. My parents belonged to the Primitive Baptists. Their house was ever a place of entertainment for ministers or brethren and sisters of their faith and order, and at such entertainments the subject of religion was generally the all-important subject of conversation. From my earliest recollection I felt interested in listening (one great reason, perhaps, was that I had great faith in the honesty, candor and true christianity of father and mother; therefore had great respect for and faith in all whom they called brother and sister). Therefore I thought all of their conversation, with regard to doctrine or experience, was true. Still I thought they had but little zeal for so good and great a cause as they represented it. But that when I became a Christian (as I expected to when I became older), I expected the Lord would miraculously and wonderfully impress my mind; that the change would be so instantaneous that I would be enabled and caused to make such a display of the power of the love and grace of God that none could doubt the reality of my conversion, all

of which would be for the reason that I expected, when I thought it necessary to become religious, that I would go to work in honesty of heart and full determination of mind that when I would offer my petitions in this way the Lord would be sure to hear and grant my request. So time passed until I was fourteen or fifteen years old, when some of my associates near my age joined the church by experience and were baptized, which seemed forcibly to impress the subject of the necessity of my becoming religious and joining the church upon my mind; for, if it was right and necessary for others of my age, it was for me; besides, I could see there was danger in delay, as death seemed to have no respect for young nor old. So I fully made up my mind to commence the work, and that I should work so honestly and zealously that it would be short and thorough. I recollect, as if it was but yesterday, the first prayer I attempted to offer; tried to bow down humbly before the Lord, but my voice seemed to sound so strange it almost frightened me; my words seemed to die on my lips. I became confused, and hastily arose from my position. After arising, it seemed to be manifest to me that I was an awful sinner; that being such, had committed a great sin in attempting to pray to the Lord, who was all-wise, holy and just, and that could not look upon sin with the least degree of allowance; therefore had committed the greatest sin of my life. Yet it seemed impressed on my mind to bow down again and ask forgiveness for attempting to pray, but it seemed that it would only be adding sin to sin. So then I concluded that I would not attempt to pray any more, but would live right—that is, try to live soberly, righteously and godly, for which the Lord would grant me evidence of pardon and acceptance with him. But being naturally of a social and lively disposition, when I got out into young company forgot all my religious promises and vows, and seemed to be entirely captivated with frivolous amusement and fun, as it was termed; but when again to myself, I would remember my resolutions, which I had so soon broken; again I resolved to be more careful next time, but with the same success. So

then, as I thought, to put a double guard over myself, I promised, before my Creator, by all that was good or bad, that I would not be guilty of levity and foolishness again. But it seemed at the first opportunity I had been as guilty as before. Then, O wretched me! I was only adding sin to sin, and making my case more aggravated, for I had now not only felt and seen the necessity of serving the Lord in deed and in truth, but in my every effort had failed, and had finally falsified my word and had become a perjurer before him. I then felt that eternal punishment and banishment from His presence was only justice to me.

O! where can I go, or whither flee,  
To release from justice due to me?

My case seemed to have become an outside one, for in all my attempts to do better (and I thought I had tried honestly and with all my ability) I had been getting worse. O, none but those that have been brought to this *point* can realize the feelings and distress that I was in! How, sometimes, I would wish I never had been born, or that I was like the little birds or some of the insect tribes, which seemed happy and joyful, and that had no souls that would exist forever in punishment. But the solemn and terrible truth stared me in the face.

If my soul was sent to hell,  
God's righteous law approves it well.

In this condition I would feel willing to do or be anything that would ameliorate my condition. If I could have honestly felt that the practices and doctrines of the Campbellites, Methodists, or any other of the popular denominations could have benefited me, I should at once have joined them. But I did not feel fit to belong to any society professing christianity, and did not feel like acting the hypocrite. Thus for some years I groped along, often secretly reading the Bible, but finding no comfort in it, but, to the contrary, it declared he that sinneth shall die. Although feeling and seeming to realize that I was the character addressed, yet the desire and prayer of my heart was: Lord, if it could be possible that mercy could be extended to such a sinner as I, O that thou

wouldst manifest it to me. While in this condition I was married, and emigrated to Illinois, and settled on the place where I now am writing. After I had settled here, there were several Baptists here who had come from Indiana with Letters of Dismission from churches there, so they were constituted into a church in 1855. In August, 1856, as one or two had joined by experience at the meeting before (the church having no pastor or ordained minister to attend to the ordinance of baptism they had sent to Indiana for a preacher), and after preaching on Saturday an opportunity was offered to any who felt a desire to offer themselves to the church. Some two or three came forward, and during the time they were telling how the Lord had led them along my heart seemed to melt within me, and I unavoidably burst into tears, and left the congregation so as not to be noticed. From that time it seemed to be the greatest blessing that I enjoyed to be permitted to acknowledge my sins, and to plead and beg for mercy; yet I felt in justice He would not hear. Yet I felt impelled to plead, I so much desired to be a Christian, and felt that the Baptist Church was the true Church, for I had tried every means and power I possessed, and all had failed; and, like Jonah, had to acknowledge that salvation was of the Lord, though I had no evidence that I should ever possess it. All this time I had never hinted to any one of my troubles of mind; now I felt anxious to talk to some one about my condition. So I obtained a chance to talk to one of the members of the Baptist church, and he gave me such encouragement, affirming it was the work of the Lord, and that when he began a work he would complete it; affirming that my exercises of mind had been similar to the experiences of all the children of God. I went home so elated in feelings, and felt so overjoyed that I told my father and mother that I guessed I was an Old Baptist too. But in the morning I recollected that I had had no evidence that my sins had been forgiven, so down I went into the valley of despondency, with regret and sorrow that I ever had said anything about my troubles, which from this circumstance, or at least from this time, seemed to be

greater, until one morning I started to a neighbor's on an errand; had gone but a little way before something, as distinct as a voice, said unto me, "I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." All at once there seemed to be a great calm; my troubles were gone; I felt that I could claim Jesus as my Saviour; that in all my distresses the Lord had been with me, and I knew it not; that indeed he had led the blind in a way he knew not, and in paths he had not trod, and finally had made darkness light before him, and rough places smooth; he had also taken me up out of an horrible pit and had established my going; had also put a new song in my mouth, even thanks and praise to his name. So in October, 1855, I went before the Hickory Creek Church, and related some, as I hoped, of the Lord's dealings with me, and was received; and in November was baptized, with several others, by Elder A. B. Nay, of Indiana.

Now, dear sister, I have tried to tell you some of the ways, I sometimes hope, the good Lord has led me, and at other times I fear it is all imagination, with no reality; thus—

Sometimes I go in mourning down Babylon's cold stream;  
Sometimes my Lord's religion appears to be my theme.

I send you this as detailing the substance of my reason of a hope in Christ, though it often appears to me very little to trust in, but it is all I have.

Your brother in hope. Farewell.

I. B. PARR.

*To Mary Selvidge.*

APRIL 24TH.—I commenced writing the foregoing Sunday morning, but company came in and I did not complete it until this evening.

I was glad to get your letter, and especially your experience of deliverance from the bondage of sin and death, and being made free through the love, mercy and efficacious blood of Christ, in whom only you have hope, through his name. To me to read of the travels of the people of God, of their discovery of their bondage under sin, of their sorrows, prayers

and tears, and finally, of their sweet and glorious deliverance from sin, is of great interest.

If what I have written will be of any interest or comfort to you, or any one else, do not thank me for it.

I. B. PARR.

*Hunt City, Illinois, April, 1883.*

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STATE ROAD, DEL., July, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—In writing to you on one occasion which you will recollect, I spoke of instances in the gathering in of the Lord's people in this section of country, when we have felt constrained to say, "It is the Lord's doing," &c. It is our faith and our profession, that it is always his work to gather in his people, but in some cases his hand and his power are more clearly made to appear than in others. One such instance I propose to make the subject of this letter.

Some few years ago I met an appointment in the week-time on the afternoon of a gloomy November day, where, although there was a comfortable meeting-house, there was no organized church. We had quite a company together, and went through with the exercises, and dismissed. As I passed out at the door, two girls, who appeared to have been waiting for the purpose, spoke to me—one introducing the other. They were both strangers to me, and were evidently young—having the appearance of school children. The one introduced was there from twenty miles' distance, and as soon as she could get about it, asked me earnestly to come to a place which she named, to preach. She said, "We are none of us members, but we always go when there is preaching there, if we know it. There has not been preaching there in a good while, and I thought I would like you to come soon, if you could." The place named was an Old Baptist meeting-house, small, and rather dilapidated—and of late, apparently forsaken. Such a request coming to me from this young girl was a strange thing to me then, and it is as strange yet. When I put up for the night, I made inquiry if any one could tell me anything of

those young people who had made bold to make such a request of me. I was informed that the one who had spoken of a visit and preaching was spending a few days in the neighborhood, and had been at the time with a party of young ladies at a quilting. As the people were passing, she ascertained that they were going to a Baptist meeting, and she proposed at once to go. As might be expected, she was met with jeers and ridicule. It was a mile and a half through forest and sand, and she was there a stranger. Spits of snow were falling, and the prospect was to have to walk. She asked for company, and when refused, quietly told them that she was going, and asked for her things. Thus, without a word of encouragement or sympathy from any one, she had gone alone and on foot to a strange place to hear Baptist preaching. Such were the circumstances that led to the introduction mentioned above. I learned, moreover, that her parents were Episcopalians, and that there was no Baptist influence in the family. It so turned out that I did not go—and I have not been there yet. You will blame me—and I have not ceased to blame myself, and to wonder at it that I did not make some arrangement to go.

Several months afterward, as I was on the cars going to a yearly meeting, I met the same girl again, trying to make her way to the meeting. She inquired of me something about the way, and then said, "You don't know me." I had forgotten her, although I well remembered the circumstance. She told me that her brother had driven fifteen miles to bring her to the train, and that the place where she was going would be all strange to her. During the many tedious months that had passed since the preaching first mentioned, no opportunity had offered to hear a gospel sermon,—to see the face of a gospel minister,—or to get a word of encouragement or comfort from any one. It would be difficult to conceive of a darker and more trying time than she has been passing through. The *Signs*, and other experimental papers—and even our hymn books—were either unknown or inaccessible. Nothing but the Bible and the Mercy Seat. But to these there seems to

have been continual resort. This last interview led to conversation, and afterward to some correspondence. She had long been inquiring the way to Zion, and was now desirous and anxious to enter her courts. That was had in view, it seems, in the first request; that is, it was her wish to walk in the ordinance of Baptism and be admitted to the fellowship of the Church. The place to which her mind seemed to be first led, as I said before, was a neglected place; offering no encouragement to a young believer, who wants to enjoy church privileges and the companionship of the saints. Still it was nearer than any others. There were no officers, and would probably not be any Communion. Preaching very seldom, if at all. A less determined spirit would certainly have been disheartened. These obstacles seemed to have no effect to dampen the ardor of our devoted "Ruth," in her earnest desire to enter the land of Israel, and find a home among the people of God.

For the reasons given above, I did not encourage an arrangement at the old neglected meeting-house; but, instead thereof, suggested that, if she felt so inclined, she come to a church that I named, which I was then regularly serving. She promptly complied with this suggestion, and on our next meeting day, which was a week day, set out to find the place. Though of a very youthful appearance—she was at this time, I believe, about sixteen—she had set out, accompanied by an older sister, to find a strange place, many miles from her home, and where, except my own, there would not be one face that she had ever before seen. Can anything be conceived more trying? Without the sympathy or encouragement of even her own parents; without personal acquaintance with a single Baptist member, or knowledge of their order, she is going to ask a place among them. She has never seen a candidate examined, to know what questions will be asked or what answers will be expected; she has never witnessed a baptism—not had opportunity to know what attention or assistance she might expect or receive, away, as she was, among strangers. The gates were open, for to such they are

never shut. She has entered in through the gates into the city. I learned from her that she had heard a Baptist sermon when at the age of about twelve or thirteen years; since that time there had been no other preaching for her. In her own intense simplicity she says, in a letter afterwards written to me: "I was very young, it is true, but it seemed the Lord had come to me and opened my ears, and given me an understanding."

The Lord declares that he brings his daughters from the ends of the earth, and brings them *with singing unto Zion*. Whose doings was all this? Whose work ever produced fruit like unto this fruit? It is not for me to measure that joy that is tasted when the bitterness is all past. I cannot attempt to describe the comfort and peace enjoyed after passing through such conflicts. I believe that they are intensified, and that there are richer depths of joy reached after such long and weary months of darkness and sorrow have been passed through. I have spoken mainly of what has been worked out, but it will be for her to tell the better and more interesting story herself, of all the travel and sorrow of those years in the wilderness. There is, I cannot doubt, a story to tell of unknown and unpitied loneliness, darkness and sense of desolation, during many months, that she may yet be fit to tell herself, as no one else can. There are also measures of joy and songs of deliverance that it would be presumptuous in me to attempt to tell for another.

Not always, but quite frequently, our young sister gets to meet with us. She occupies a high place in the affections and gospel fellowship of the members with whom she is united. It is said, "When the Lord builds up Zion, he will appear in his glory."

I have not given names, as they would not be known to but very few of your readers. E. RITTENHOUSE.

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All those who are conformed to the image of the Redeemer, are as willing to be ruled by Christ as they are to be esteemed by him. He that deems his yoke heavy, will not find his yoke easy.

SHELBYVILLE, TENN., July 6, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—Of course you and Brother Respe do not necessarily endorse every sentiment of every communication published in the GOSPEL MESSENGER. But you wish no controversial articles in it, and sometimes very erroneous views of the Scriptures may be presented, causing some who are "not of us" to err in judgment with regard to our teachings.

To be a Primitive Baptist, is to believe the Scriptures and to obey our Lord. If Paul was a Primitive Baptist, he was one by revelation of Jesus Christ; and if any man has saving knowledge of Christ, he is taught by the Spirit of God.—1 Cor. ii.

Now the Lord, by his Spirit, taught the Apostle Paul that "Sin is the transgression of the law;" and also that "Where there is no law there is no transgression." It is evident therefore, that where is no transgression there is no sin. The apostle affirms that sin was in the world from Adam to Moses (Rom. v. 14), and proves it by the universal prevalence of death. He showed that this universal prevalence of sin and death was the necessary consequence of Adam's sin. The main argument of the apostle in this connection, in 5th chapter of Romans, is to show that salvation is by grace, and not by works; and that the heavenly family are made righteous by inheritance from the Lord Jesus, as the human family are made sinners by the first man, Adam.

The law, as given by Moses, was subsequent to the universal prevalence of sin and death, and was not given to enable man to obtain eternal life by obedience to its precepts but to show the abounding of sin. "Until the law, sin was in the world." Some say that sin was in the world before transgression, and before there was any law given to transgress. I write not because you do not know, but to call attention to what I conceive to be error. Now, Bro. M., if Adam was not able to stand, was he responsible or reprehensible for falling? I hardly think this a senseless question but very pertinent. He may not have been able of himself

no more than we are able of ourselves, to do anything; but for all that he was without sin until he violated God's law.

Every one grants that the serpent was a sinner before the Adamic law was given. But I cannot grasp the idea, nor have I any desire to do it, that sin existed in an undeveloped form, in embryonic state, prior to Adam's offense. "Where there is no law there is no transgression," and consequently no sin. But as by the single offense of one man, Adam, sin hath advanced over the human race, reigning unto death, even so doth grace much more abound and reign through righteousness unto life eternal by Jesus Christ our Lord.

F. E. LACY.

Doubtless the remarks of Elder Lacy have been called forth by a sentence or two in Elder Wagner's article in July number, and on pages 311 and 312, of the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

These beloved brethren are on good terms with each other, and have traveled and preached much together; and whatever difference there may be in their views on the points indicated in their respective letters, these views have, doubtless, been repeatedly presented, both from the pulpit and in private interviews with each other. If, therefore, they have not been able to "see eye to eye" with those opportunities, it is not likely that the result would be bettered if discussed in the pages of the GOSPEL MESSENGER. The points of difference have puzzled the ablest minds, and been much discussed for ages past; but still the contest goes on with each succeeding generation with as much *vim* as though it was a question but newly sprung. We do not propose in this short note to enter much into the discussion of the points of dispute, but we insist that brethren, who write upon this or any other subject, avoid vain, speculative reasoning which cannot be clearly sustained by the word of the Lord. That word clearly sustains the point that "God rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." His decrees and purposes are unalterable, and while he doeth all his pleasure, it is in such a way as not to conflict with himself,

his word, nor his law, nor to destroy the accountability of man. "He is not a God that hath *pleasure* in wickedness." Psa. v. 4. "Thou *hatest* all workers of iniquity."—Psa. v. Whatever, therefore, be the surroundings which "*led*" to Adam's sin, God cannot justly be said to take "pleasure" in sin. "Far be it from God that he should do wickedness!" Job xxxiv. 10. Nor are we able as yet to see with Elder Wagner when he says, on page 312, that "Adam's *act* in violating law did not make sin, but manifested it." This may appear to be good reasoning, but the Scriptures teach that sin is the transgression of law. Neither can we see with Elder Lacy, when he says, "Every one grants that the serpent was a sinner before the Adamic law was given." The introduction of sin into the world is ascribed to *man*, and not to God nor the devil. "By *one man* sin entered the world," and not by one devil, nor by one God.—Rom. v. 12. "By the offense of one (man) many were *made* sinners." This shows how sinners are made.—M.

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SOCIETY HILL, MACON CO., ALA., March 17, 1853.

*My Dear Brother Mitchell:*—I take my pen to address you a few lines, that you may know some of my feelings since I left you and my brethren at Brother Taylor's.

On my way home, my friend, Mr. Kelly, and myself conversed quite freely, but occasionally my mind was very much distressed. When I got to myself, and began to meditate darkness and horror seized upon my mind. I arrived at home, and when supper was prepared I had no appetite to eat. I went to bed, and my troubles grew worse and worse until I broke out in bitter lamentation, and the water ran from my eyes until my pillow was wet with tears. My wife inquiring the cause of my distress, I told her that I feared that I had done the cause of my blessed Master an injury, for I had undertaken to speak publicly in his name, but had surely failed. I thought I could see in my mind where I had been, and I saw that the subject was an extensive field.

out in my conception I had cleared up no point, consequently I thought I had committed a great sin in trying to speak. My mind continued in much trouble until Monday evening, when I became somewhat relieved by the following scripture being applied to my comfort, for which I have reason to thank God: "Let not your heart be troubled," &c. I believe that Christ verified his promise, for I felt that his word was applied to my poor, troubled soul, and my troubles began to abate. I was made to speak out and say, Thank God! thank God! though my mind is not yet entirely satisfied. And now, Brother Mitchell, if ever you have been in that condition, do tell me, and pray for me; tell all my dear brethren and sisters to pray for me, for I am sure none can feel like poor me, unless they have been there. If I have done wrong, it is of the head, and not of the heart, if I know myself. I know that the Church is the judge of this thing. Be plain and speak out, for it would greatly relieve me. I am not clear through what I wish to write, but being somewhat interrupted, I must close. Write upon the reception of this. Done in great haste. Yours forever, in christian love and bonds,

H. M. HIGGIMBOTHIM.

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OPELIKA, ALA., March 24, 1853.

*Very Dear and Well Beloved Brother Higgimbothim:*—Yours of the 17th instant, has been received, and I now avail myself of this moment to comply with your request by writing to you. I scarcely know how to express myself, to convey an idea to you of my feelings when I read your letter. I will say, however, that I was both sorry and glad. Taking your distresses abstractly and separately into consideration, I was sorry; but on the other hand, when I reflect that this is the gracious dealings of God with you, to impart an important lesson of humility to you, by showing you more and more of your own nothingness, and of the great responsibility resting upon him whom God calls to speak in His holy name, I cannot but be glad. You have but just taken the yoke of Christ upon you in obedience, as I fully believe, to his divine com-

mand, and you are now beginning to learn lessons in this important work which you never knew before; lessons which man cannot impart unto you; and as he who teaches and instructs you is "meek and lowly in heart," you may expect that meekness and humility will be the first and continual lesson that he will give you.

As to your effort in speaking publicly in the name of your Lord and Master, at the time you have referred to, I think you said nothing but what the oracles of God do fully justify, and this, my brother, is what God requires. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth;" and the reason assigned for this is "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. iv. 11. Those who speak from the ability which their learning in the schools of men has given them, know nothing of these trying scenes which are so common with all the ministers of Christ, and consequently their ministry cannot be said to be to the glory of God, through Jesus Christ, but they speak for their own glory; as Christ has said, "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory."—John vii. 18.

You, my brother, have evidence of God's approval in this very effort about which you seem to have been so much distressed, by the word of Christ being applied to your relief. "Let not your heart be troubled." Christ has promised not to leave his people comfortless, and you see that he made good his promise to you in the very hour of need, when you were best prepared to appreciate its value. I know that I am but poorly qualified, in my feeble state of health, to give instruction to any of God's dear children, and especially to one who is so much my senior in years as you are; but as you have asked me if I have ever been in such condition as you speak of, I feel bound to give you a candid answer. Before my present afflictions of body came upon me, I labored in the ministry about seven years,\* and if there is anything

\*It had then been ten years since I had commenced preaching, but for three years had not been able to preach by reason of affliction.

W. M. M.

familiar to me, and of which I still have a feeling remembrance, it is that very kind of trouble of which you speak.

Often, indeed, have I tried to preach, and afterwards it would appear to me that I had spoken to the injury of the cause of Christ, and had mortified the feelings of his saints, and I would feel like I wanted to exile myself, and go from all human society, where I might weep and mourn and bewail my sad condition. My mind has often become so dark, and I have had such a feeling sense of my ignorance of divine things, that I have thought of all human beings I was the most deplorably ignorant. At other times I have arisen to address a congregation, and after reading my text my mind would be so beclouded and confused that I could scarcely look up, and when I would try to say anything it would be in such an awkward manner that I have wanted to leave the house, and in this condition I have often been compelled to sit down in less than fifteen minutes. Language is inadequate to the task of describing the troubles of my soul, my groaning, and my tears in reference to these things. Numbers of times I have felt fully determined that I would never again try to preach, because I saw I could not do it. But I could not keep this poor fleshly determination, for the hand of my God was upon me, and his word would become like a burning fire within me, that I could not withhold to speak. When I commenced laboring in the ministry, I was comparatively young, and only been a church member about *eleven months*. Such has been the providence of God with me, that I was seldom thrown in company with any of his ministers; and, like you, I have often wished to know if they had such trials. I cannot tell, I can only say to you, that such is a short sketch of some of my trials. It is no mark of wisdom, however, to try ourselves by ourselves, but let us, rather, try ourselves by the word of God.

When Moses was called to lead Israel out of Egypt, he said he was "slow of speech" and could not go; David, at one time, said, "I am a worm, and no man;" and Jeremiah said, "I am a child, and cannot speak;" and Paul said, "Who is

sufficient for these things?" and tells us that our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.

From all this testimony, I conclude that God tries all his ministers, and shows them their nothingness, that they may trust in him. Therefore, my brother, "Count it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try *you* as though some strange thing had *happened* unto you, for the *same* afflictions are accomplished by your brethren, which are in the world." 1 Pet. iv. 12, and v. 9.

I am unable to write more now. May the Lord be with thee. Come to our next meeting.

Yours, &c.,

W. M. MITCHELL.

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*Editors Gospel Messenger:*—While I must write you on business, I have thought it not amiss, perhaps, and more especially so as I found an impression, to write the thoughts presented, and if thought by you appropriate, place them before your readers. I suppose the cause of the thoughts and impressions was the communication of Bro. F. A. Chick, in last Number, upon the various gifts and the manner of their manifestation. For some time past I have not been, as I once was, exercised in mind by weighty and abiding impressions, and consequently felt assured that to exercise, or endeavor so to do, as formerly, would be equal to an expression of independence of the Holy Ghost; and to myself would be little, if any, short of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. I was in this condition when Brother Rowe made his visit amongst us. I sought comfort from him, or at least something that would enable me, with assurance, to determine the course proper for me to pursue, but in vain, although he advised the same as I felt, viz.: without impressions not to venture; and so, notwithstanding the entreaty of brethren, I continued to refuse to do so—resolved if impressions never returned never to try to preach. But the time has again come; impression and responsibility again felt; and the direction of my exercise is

in exact agreement with the communication referred to; and now, brethren, examine, and see if your mind is also, more than usual, exercised upon the hurtful consequences of tradition, for it is to my mind clear that this is the cause of the faint and weakly condition of the churches. If your mind is thus exercised, is it not clear that this is a required duty? and since the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, may we not, with bold assurance, press forward in discharge of the same, gathering therefrom that it is the Lord's set time to visit his people? While faith is strong, and consequent exercise of mind is healthy, the danger from tradition and commandments of men is little, simply because men in the exercise of their gift feel for their impressions, and their minds are exercised upon the trial of the same. By comparing with the more sure word of prophecy (instruction), the Spirit's leading about, or experience to the Spirit's testimony with their spirit, so confirms them that usages or commandments of men have little or no effect. In the retrospect of the history of Primitive Baptists, we see men of influence among us fearful of the exercise of these gifts, with which the Church is, when in exercise, so richly fed, simply for the reason that to their mind these, in exercise, would make us resemble others; and so thus men of influence, although afraid of error, have gone into error themselves and have led the church into the same. Now, brethren, do any of you feel that into this prison we have been cast, and that at the last the Lord has sent his angel (ministering spirit) and opened the prison doors, and, as anciently, said, "Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life?" If so, it seems to me that, with the grace of assurance for our strength, we should press toward the mark, for, most evidently to my mind, your prize is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (God manifested). The word of this life, animating the beloved Paul, comes to us in this shape: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation?" This is spoken of angels; and the word of this life also says of the government of the

Kingdom of heaven, set up, that "Jesus Christ received commandment of God, and he sent and signified it to his servant John by his angels." This is the way, then, that revelation once was made to John. If, after the pattern of John, we be disciples and also ministers, after the same manner we must receive commandment, for if a change has hitherto been manifested, or is now, upon examination, the word of this life being our light, it will be found that the change has taken place in ourselves; then, if the commandment of Jesus is thus ministered (by impression), and effect produced by Spirit upon spirit, then having them thus manifested, and assurance (faith) strong enough to keep them, the word of this life for it, it will manifest itself to us, and both He and the Father will make their abode with us. Is not this our promised Land indeed, a rest yet remaining to the people of God? But they to whom it was first preached entered not in, because of unbelief. Is there an evil heart of unbelief in any of us? Do any doubt of this manner of ministration? If so, how was it with us when the Law, that efficient schoolmaster, first began his course of instruction? You, perhaps, had it imprinted on your memory, but otherwise than by recalling that memory was insensible to it. But how different when the messenger of a better covenant engraved it upon fleshly tables of the heart! I imagine I can see your expressions of agony because of a sensible guilt, before a stranger to; and on, step by step, you were led into the manner of your Captain in transmitting his orders, taking care that you shall so sensibly feel them that there can be no mistake, and just now, while in the anguish of guilt, you would fain get release through forgetfulness; but no forgetfulness there. It is ordered in all things, and sure. But alas! a little further on I seem to hear something of this kind: If I only knew the Lord's will concerning me; if assured that he required this or that of me, though it should cost me never so much, I would do it; but, as I do not know it, and if I should do it the people would say thus and so of me, I will therefore wait for a further testimony. Now for your strength. Suppose you and I

exercise together a little, and see if we cannot discover what light there is shining in darkness, and darkness comprehending it not. There is honesty indeed in that expression of yours, "If you only knew the Lord's will," &c., you feel that no sacrifice would be too great. But what's the matter? That wicked and adulterous generation that seeketh for a sign is present, viz., the flesh. If you, with a fleshly ear, could hear, or with carnal eye could see, all would be well; but the word of this life has declared that no sign of this sort shall be given—only that power shall appear that appeared in poor old Jonah; that power that will produce conviction and lead to repentance (turning away), for to this end is he exalted, "To give repentance to Israel."

Then what was that which so firmly fixed the law in your mind? was it signs? nay, it was deeply sensible impression, that in its scrutiny separated joints and marrow—yea, even discovered the thoughts and intents of my heart. Then, if this be truly so, are you not being brought into fellowship with James, who says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth"? Then, if this be true, and it is beginning to appear that this impression, because of its sensibility, so different from the sight of the eye or hearing of the ear, bears testimony of itself that it is a ministration from that Blessed character who was sent into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, and that ministration is of itself no less than a ministration of himself (Saviour), how awfully hurtful to me, how heart-sickening the thought, that I even once had a disposition to confer with flesh and blood! how well prepared is such a mind to pray! being first filled with thanksgiving for the glory of God thus shed abroad in his heart, and then filled with a strong and deeply sensible desire to be saved from self, lest its blinding consequences lead again into darkness—yea, Egyptian darkness—darkness that may be felt.

Thus, my brethren and sisters, is my understanding of the ministration of angels; also the manner in which gifts are ministered; in short, it is the manner of dealing with by that unction which we receive from on high, which guideth us so

securely from all dangers, which ministereth to us so abundantly the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.) If you find fellowship in the same experience, my brother or sister, whoever you be or wherever you are, if liberated from prison, you, like our beloved (though never seen) Bro. F. A. Chick, are ready and willing in anywise to go, stand and speak in the Temple to the people all the words of this life, exercising in precise agreement with impressions; and thus each of the many members of the one body, by that which every joint supplieth, being joined together and compacted according to that effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Then, brethren, let us not walk as other Gentiles, in the vanity of our minds. Thus having our understanding darkened, being alienated from this life of God through ignorance that is in us; for those who thus work have a hardness of heart that renders them past feeling; consequently they have given themselves to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. You who have learned Christ (anointed and been taught by him as the truth is in *Jesus—salvation*), that ye put off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lust, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. May the God of all grace bless you all. Amen.

B. L. LANDERS.

*Emmet, Ark., June 28, 1883.*

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The resolutions of a Christian are like the water of a fountain that flows of itself, but the resolutions of a sinner resemble the water of a pit which must be forced up by artificial engines. Some never form resolutions, but under heavy afflictions; such are like goats, which never yield any milk till they are stung; or like children under the rod, full of promises, but empty of performances.

*My Very Dear Brethren and Sisters in Bonds and Afflictions:*—I do not attempt to address you these few words because I feel strong “in the faith once delivered to the saints,” but because of very great weakness spiritually. Evidently the world, the flesh and the devil often has a strong grip on those who would follow the meek and lowly Saviour, and count all things but loss that they might win him, and be found in peace with him. But how lifeless! How dead, indeed, to spiritual things we are at times! and how we sometimes weep, because we cannot weep for spiritual joy as we did in times gone by, but still not forgotten.

“What peaceful hours I once have known !  
 How sweet their memory still !  
 But they have left an aching void  
 This world can never fill.”

How often I try, of late, to revert to some of these blessed times of “peace that passeth all understanding” for an assurance of hope, but the spiritual man being weak and faint, is unable to appropriate them for his comfort. It is said, that as truly as winter is necessary in the natural kingdom, so is a withdrawal of the Saviour’s presence for a season from his people necessary to their spiritual growth.

We often forget that our salvation is first for the glory of a mighty and a sovereign God, and in his being glorified we are greatly blessed and benefited, and we are liable to forget, also, that “In his wisdom we were chosen in the furnace of affliction, and that they that will live godly in this world shall suffer persecution.” I believe the persecution here mentioned does not refer altogether to that persecution that is from without, but also from within—our own sinfulness; our own degradation in the sight of a holy and just God; for surely our own sinful nature (the Adam man) is the saint’s greatest tormentor. We often forget, too, that notwithstanding we have been changed—born again—and new creatures in Christ, still we are the same weak, helpless, sinful creatures, so far as the natural man is concerned, as when we had

no change of heart. We are of the earth, earthy; having the same fleshly desires—our sensual appetites coming on us at times with a force hard, to say the least, to be repelled; we are so weak that if the Lord does not hold us up we will fall as soon as the unregenerate, for we are the same as to nature. We may think we have disabused our minds of any “confidence in the flesh,” but we have not; we are mistaken if we think so. Our trials in this life are very numerous. God’s people are continually, almost, in trouble, and it should be so according to his word. The saint’s life is evidently a warfare. If you remember, the land of Canaan was not freed entirely of the enemy of the Israelites, the type of God’s spiritual people. The Lord said to Joshua, “Slay them not, lest my people forget.” So to-day God’s true and tried people rightfully have a thorn in the flesh—they are beset with many troubles and trials, each one having his own peculiar trouble; but if he is a saint it is truly for his own good. My distresses keep me constantly trying to pray to God for deliverance. I try to trust him for help in temporal as well as in spiritual distresses, and I greatly fear, at times, that my anxiety for temporal deliverance is too great—greater than for spiritual comfort—while my better judgment is that the spiritual welfare of God’s children cannot be brought down so low as to compare with the physical wants of this life.

I try to pray that I may be less concerned about temporal wants, and much more concerned for the spiritual welfare of myself, together with all God’s true Israel. O, that the Holy Spirit would indite in the hearts of God’s people an earnest heartfelt prayer, and cry to God for the comfort and building up of Zion!

May the good Lord bless you, my dear brethren Mitchell and Respass, and make you very useful to his cause and the comfort of his afflicted people, and may you be happy in the being useful.

Your unworthy brother,

*Middleton, Ky.*

J. W. STOWERS.

CARROLLTON, GA., July 17, 1883.

*Dear Editors of the Messenger, and Beloved Readers of the same:*—I wish to call your attention to the first piece in the July number of the MESSENGER, written by Brother Chick, of Maryland, on the various gifts bestowed upon the Church. I must here say, it, to me, is the master-piece I have ever seen published in any periodical upon this important point of the practical duties of the dear saints. And I do want to thank God for putting it in the heart of Brother Chick to write; for I have long felt there was a great lack among us in our duties, and have urged the brethren of my charge to return to their former practice of meeting together, and singing and praying with and for each other. But, as a general rule, the brethren wait for the minister to do all the praying, and almost all the worship; for the members in this country hardly ever get inside of the house until the minister gets there; and if he fails to come they soon get very restless and begin to say, If he don't soon come, I am going home; and soon break off, without further ceremony. And it is frequently the case that men, set apart for the office of deacons in these restless assemblages, do just as though God had to be worshiped through the preacher. And he, poor man! having to travel ten or fifteen miles off the first morning of the meeting, being so financially oppressed that he could not spare time to make part of the distance the evening before. After he is met by the common salutations, the conversation turns to things of time and sense; and he, though worn out in body and weak in mind, has to invite the members into the house (with but few exceptions.) How can any man preach under such circumstances? O, brethren, think of it! think that your poor preacher needs some encouragement, and when you go to the place appointed for worship, go in the house and try to think on the Name of the Lord, if you can do no more, leaving your worldly pursuits behind, as much as possible; and if you can sing, sing one of Zion's songs; it will cheer all who may come, and greatly encourage your pastor! O, how my poor heart has, a few times, been made to leap when I would get in

hearing of the meeting place and hear the brethren singing! And, dear brethren, if your pastor should fail to meet with you, lay this proud world with all of its jeers aside, and try to ask God to continue his mercies and favors toward you, and in your petitions don't forget your poor servant, who very often is found tied where two ways meet, and is not able to get loose. On such occasions don't begin to excuse yourselves by saying, "I can't pray"; had you not better say, "I won't try"? for where is a Primitive Baptist indeed, that has not prayed in the lowest stoop of humility and besought the Lord for his mercies? and if he has hearkened and heard it, will he not now hear, though it be in broken accents? will his Spirit not intercede for you? The apostles said, "We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." You have that Spirit, if you are his child; for if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you are none of his. I don't believe there is a child of God but what should, when circumstances require it, bow in humble obedience before his Maker, and adore his great Name, and beseech his mercies; for he says he will be sought unto for his mercies.

We are often complaining of the coldness of our churches, and who, I ask, is to blame for it? I conclude the church only, for there are various duties pointed out in the article I have called your attention to, of which we are heedless. The laity of the church has concluded there is nothing for them to do but go to meeting, and if the preacher is there, listen to him, and go home about their worldly affairs. Brethren, think seriously; is not this the cause of so much worldly-mindedness among us? Suppose the brethren were to know that it would be expected for each one to take some part of the services on meeting days, would not our minds be more engaged in this matter than they are under the present management? I don't wish to be understood to say that every member should pray on every meeting day, but they should in some way, according to the measure of the gift, worship that good God and our Saviour who has done so much for us, remem-

ering, when there was neither eye to pity nor arm to save, he espoused our cause and took us up out of a horrible pit, placing our feet upon a firm foundation, and putting a new song in our mouths, even praise to his name. Let us praise him in obedience, if nothing else. O Lord, give us strength!

GEORGE M. HOLCOMBE.

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## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

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### WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Bro. J. J. Adams, of Dawson, Ga., in requesting us to write upon the above text, says he has "heard preaching and private conversation from various brethren upon it, but it never yet has been explained to him what salvation is here spoken of, nor the work to be done to work it out." Possibly our brother may find the same difficulty respecting what we may write upon the text, but still we proceed according to our limited opportunity and ability, to examine the subject a little.

In the first place, let it be distinctly noted that this text, as well as the whole epistle from which it is taken, is addressed to the saints and people of God. And in harmony with this, the very first clause of the text is, "Wherefore, my *beloved*." The inspired man of God, speaking by the special promptings of the Spirit of God, never addressed the ungodly and unbelieving world as "Beloved" brethren in the Lord. And to how conclusively that the salvation mentioned in the text, and to be worked out, is not applicable to those who are dead in sins, the holy Apostle goes on further to say of those addressed that they had "always obeyed." Have unregenerate sinners *always* obeyed the gospel? We know they have not. This salvation, therefore, which is to be worked out, is to be

done by those who are "Beloved of God," and who had been obedient Christians from the "first day" of their christian profession up to the time the Apostle wrote to them.

Where is the church that can present a better record than this? "Ye have *always*"—ever since you have been a church—"obeyed." This manifestation of spiritual love called forth thankful gratitude to God for it. "I thank my God (says the Apostle) for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now."—Phil. i. 5. "Ye have always obeyed," from the first day of your fellowship in the gospel till this day; and as they had done this in his presence, when he exhorted, instructed and preached to them, it would be much more necessary that they should do the same in his absence.

"As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence, work out *your own* salvation with fear and trembling."

It will be clearly seen that the salvation to be worked out is that salvation which they already had. "Work out *your own* salvation." Suppose it should be said to a man, "Work out *your own* garden," when indeed he had none? Could he work out that he did not have? Can anything be developed or made manifest that does not exist? A corrupt tree brings corrupt fruit because the principle of corruption is in the tree before; and a good tree brings good fruit for the same reason. That is, "worked out," or manifested by the fruit which was first in the tree. So those who believe in Jesus to the saving of the soul, are to work out their *own* salvation; that is, they are to manifest without, that which God has wrought for them within. This they do by their obedience to all the duties of Christians and church members. They work out, or outwardly manifest their own deliverance, which they have experienced, because "it is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

To tell the wicked, profligate sinner that God is working in him both to will and to do, would be to represent God as the Author and Finisher of all man's wickedness. If it was possible for any theory that man ever preached to represent God

as the "Author of sin," this theory certainly would do it. What does the ungodly and wicked sinner *will*—and what does he *do*? His mind is enmity against God, and he proves it conclusively "by wicked works" (Col. i. 21.) He is "vain in his imaginations," and "his foolish heart is darkened." He changes "the truth of God into a lie, and worships and serves the creature more than the Creator." In short, "he is *filled* with all unrighteousness"; there is nothing else in him, and nothing else can be worked out (Rom. i. 25-29.)

Now, shall we say that God is working *in* such a character "both to will and to do"? Does the Spirit of God working in a man make him "vain in his imagination"? Does it lead him to pervert the word of the Lord and change the meaning of it so as to make that which is true appear as a lie? When God is *working* in a man "both to will and to do," is that man then so "filled with all unrighteousness" that he manifests nothing else? (Rom. i. 25-29.)

It is very manifest to any careful observer that the text at the head of this article applies exclusively to those who are born of the Spirit. They are represented as lively or living material in God's building, and can therefore work the works of faith and labor of love. God writes his law in their heart, and puts it in their mind, and thereby works in them the desire to do what he has commanded them, and what his law requires of them. They are to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; that is, they are to practically develope that salvation or deliverance which they have experienced, by "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and by living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus ii. 12.)

This is what the grace of God teaches the "heirs of salvation," and this is what "God worketh in them both to will and to do," that they may thereby "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter ii. 9.)

Whether we have explained what salvation is spoken of in the text, or the work to be done to work it out, or not, we

cannot tell; but we say to Brother Adams, and to all others that, in our view of the subject, the whole practical life of an obedient, pious and orderly walking Christian, is working out or manifesting that salvation which is of God. If we claim to have a hope of salvation from sin, we must show our faith and hope by such works as correspond with these heavenly graces of the Spirit. If we claim to have "passed from death unto life," and to be "dead indeed unto sin," we cannot show forth this great change in our condition by living practically in sin and transgression. "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" We cannot live in the practical enjoyment of sin, because we are dead to it. Sin is not our element. Nor do we feel as though we would desire to continue in sin that grace should abound more and more in our salvation or deliverance from sin.

And now, Brother Adams, as to what are the works to be done to work out or manifest that salvation which God hath wrought for his people, we should think it would not be very difficult for them to ascertain when the Lord is working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They have the teaching of his Spirit within them, and the letter of his word in the scriptures to guide them as to the particular duties and the manner of performing them. Christians are the "workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath before ordained that they should walk in them." By the scriptures, which God hath given by inspiration, the "man of God is thoroughly furnished unto *all* good works." These are the works to be done, to work out and show forth your *own* salvation, which you have experienced. "Show forth his salvation from day to day." That salvation which God has wrought for you, and which you have felt and enjoyed, is your *own* salvation.—M.

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A LETTER written the MESSENGER by Bro. W. G. and Sister S. E. Taylor, of a visit to the brethren in South Carolina, was overlooked and mislaid in the fire last winter, and has not since been found, as were many other letters. Hope brethren will bear with us on this account, as we could not help such things.—ED.

## NO BALM IN GILEAD.

Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?—Jer. viii. 22.

By request of a brother in Atlanta, Ga., we offer a few thoughts on the above text, with a hope that some other brother may have clearer light to write more satisfactorily upon it. Balm is a light, resinous gum, extracted from the Balm Tree, and that of Gilead was regarded as far superior to any other, though the tree grew elsewhere. This balm, or gum, was an article of trade, and the Ishmaelites, to whom Joseph was sold, as they came down from Gilead had with them "spices, balm and myrrh," going down to Egypt.—Gen. xxxvii. 25. This gum from the Balm Tree was regarded as very precious for its preserving properties, and for healing the bites and stings of venomous beasts or poisonous serpents; and for this reason, perhaps, many have regarded it as representing Christ in the above text. To us, however, it seems more in harmony with the connection in which it stands to regard it as a kind of rebuke given to the erring people of God, who had forsaken his laws and ordinances, and were walking after their own ways. Their sinful departure from the Lord, and trusting in other gods, had brought them into great distress, such as never would have befallen them in obedience. Sometimes in their distress they would call upon the Lord for deliverance, like many sinful persons now do, while yet they hold to their idolatrous practices and false systems.

But the Lord is not pleased to deliver his children from distresses which their own folly has brought upon them, until they shall see the vanity of all their idolatrous worship and fully realize the need of the Lord's help. Sometimes men will call, formally, upon the Lord for help in a sudden emergency of distress, while yet they do not feel like giving up many of their vain and false practices, inventions and human institutions which he has commanded that they "Touch not, taste not, nor handle not." They seem as though they were

determined to "serve God and mammon" at the same time. They call upon the Lord in distress, but still worship the work of their own hands and "serve the gods of the land." They seem to think that their half-way, mock service will be acceptable to God and bring them deliverance. But often the Lord is pleased to rebuke them for their folly, and refer them to the gods they had chosen to worship. "Let them deliver you." "Go and cry unto the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." Judges x. 14.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" When the Lord's people become carnal, and are looking too much to earthly means and measures, or are bent on having their own way about things, they are sometimes left to have it, that it may be a chastisement and scourge to them for their folly. They look for deliverance from their trouble, but no deliverance comes. Like Israel of old, they may say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" from our distress. Their vain trust is called to mind. "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" "Why, then, are you not restored to a healthy condition?" How often have the Lord's children found, to their sorrow, that in all their most cherished plans for bringing about a healthy condition of things in the church, that the "Wound is incurable; there is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up; thou hast *no healing* medicines; all thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not." "Why criest thou for thine affliction? Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins are increased *I have done these things* unto thee."—Jer. xxx. 12.

No earthly means nor measures, based upon the wisdom of men, will ever bring health nor pure gospel peace and fellowship in a church that has gone astray or done wrong. Nor will any carnal measures of individual members ever restore them to health when they have done wrong. They must be made to see and feel that there is no *balm* in this earthly Gilead, nor *no physician* there.

How often is it the case that trouble gets into a church, and it spreads until the distress is very great. Some one member or more appear to take a very active part in everything from the start. They labor, dictate and advise how to settle the trouble, but every effort made upon their suggestions brings greater trouble. They seem to be much troubled, and no doubt they are. They express great desire for peace, unity, love and fellowship in the church, and no doubt they want it, but they want it in their own way and on their own plan. But when their plan is adopted, the result is that everything is in a worse condition again than it was before. God will not give his glory to another. Trouble in churches cannot be settled so long as any plan is followed which would give glory and honor to man. There is no balm, no healing medicine in this earthly Gilead, of trusting in man. God alone can bring health and restore peace, and then it will be done according to his word and Spirit, so that "No flesh shall glory in his presence."—M.

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WARTRACE, TENN., July 17, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Does God use the preached gospel and literal word as means to convert men and women? If so, what part do they perform in it? But if not, what does the preaching of the gospel and written word accomplish? By answering the above you will greatly oblige your brother in hope,

JOHN B. BRAMBLETT.

Brother Henecey, of Monroe county, Ga., also asks us to write upon the same subject, which we now do, but with great distrust of our ability to make it clear, as it has been written upon time and again, but is still an unsettled question in the minds of some of God's people.

1st. Does God use the preached gospel and written word as means of converting people? to which we answer that he does, but not, perhaps, in the sense meant by Brother Bramblett. Brother Bramblett means, we suppose, to ask if God uses preaching to quicken sinners; and in that sense we would

answer that, in our opinion, he does not. But as to conversion, Peter was converted after he was a believer. In Luke xxii. 32, Jesus said to him: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter was overconfident in his own strength, not knowing how weak he would become in the hour of trial, when left to himself; and was by the trial converted from self-confidence and self-dependence, realizing that he could do nothing without Christ. James teaches (James v. 19) the same principle of conversion, saying: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." This is spoken in reference to believers; and perhaps many of you have seen examples of such conversions, where brethren and believers got into error, either in faith or practice, and were brought back by entreaty, admonition and instruction. Aquila and Priscilla converted Apollos, a preacher, instructing him in the way of the Lord more perfectly. Many a soul has been saved from death,—not eternal death, but death to the enjoyments and privileges of christianity,—by preaching the gospel, and even by counsel, admonition and instruction given by those not preachers. Many believers have been saved by timely admonition from conduct that would have disgraced them and reproached Christ. Paul instructed Timothy (1 Tim. iv. 16), saying: "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." Meaning, not that he should save himself and his hearers, eternally, but save them from error and disorder. As to their eternal salvation, that was wrought out by Christ; but their present salvation—a very great one, indeed—and one which if we neglect, we shall not escape tribulation and dreadful suffering. This salvation we are to work out with fear and trembling, God working in us by his Spirit and word, both preached and written.

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The main design of preaching is, as we understand it, expressed by the apostle in Eph. iv. 11, 12: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." And what for? "For," he says, "the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Also, in 1 Cor. xii. 28, he says: "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, government, diversities of tongues." The edification of the church is the grand design, not only of preaching the gospel, but of all the gifts bestowed by the Spirit upon the church. But whilst that is true, preaching is not confined exclusively to the church; nor are its salutary effects thereto restricted. Paul preached to Felix and Agrippa, and to the Athenians upon Mars Hill. Felix trembled under his preaching, and Agrippa imagined that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian. So there is a sense in which unregenerated men and women hear, and in which even devils believe and tremble. It is commonly said, one must have life before he can hear—and that is true in a restricted sense. The unregenerate hear, but not in the Spirit—for to do that they must be born of the Spirit. He that hath ears to hear let him hear; all have ears, but not the spiritual ear, and without the spiritual ear, or the Spirit, a man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them; they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. i.) To know the things of God, we must have the Spirit of God; as to know the things of this world, or natural things, we must have natural life, so to know the things of the spiritual world, or the kingdom of God, we must have spiritual life. Knowing them, means more than simple knowledge; it means to love them, in a measure, as we know and love natural things by reason of our natural life. To receive them, means to appropriate them as something adapted to our needs, as we receive and appropriate food as adapted to our natural hunger. Unregenerate men have a knowledge of God, but they know him not in Christ as the Saviour of sinners

worthy of death. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. i.); so they have a knowledge of God, but are destitute of his Spirit. Paul knew God in the law, but not in spirit and in Christ until born again; he saw, but saw wrong, and heard, but heard wrong; so that sinners, in unregeneracy, put right for wrong and wrong for right, and bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. They cannot hear in the Spirit, and therefore believe not in the Spirit, and it is as Christ said: "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep; my sheep hear my voice." John x. Whilst Peter preached upon the day of Pentecost some believed and some believed not—and the same is true until this day. Philip preached to the Eunuch, and he believed; and does not faith come by hearing? It does; but all heard the literal word, and but few believed it, and many rejected it; so that the same word or truth to one was different to the other; but the word was the same to both, but the difference was in the spirit of those that heard: one heard in the spirit, the other in the flesh. So, then, it is not the mere letter of the truth that makes the difference, but the spirit they are in. The Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The one receives the truth because he can't resist it; it is in his heart; the other resists it because he cannot receive it; it is not in his heart; he has no witness of its truth. He that believeth hath the witness in himself. It is as natural for him to receive, as it is to the other to reject it. The Saviour taught these truths in Matt. xiii. 3. The sower sowed, and some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away; and some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them; but other fell on good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty and some thirty-

fold. He explains the parable, saying, When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in the heart. This is the one by the wayside. Felix and Agrippa would, perhaps, be cases in point. The stony ground is one who hears, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for awhile; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. Many followed Christ for awhile, and do even yet, but turned back and went no longer with him; and that is a sign that they are but stony ground hearers, destitute of the true spirit of the word. Job had the root of the matter in him, and did not turn back; neither did the apostles. He that receiveth seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. The young man in Matt. xix. 16, who came and kneeled to Jesus, asking him what to do to inherit eternal life, and who was sad of heart when told, is a case in point. His possessions, which were great, he loved more than he did the truth, and therefore the truth made him sad. But he that received seed into good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it (that is, in the spirit of it), which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth. The same truth is taught by the Saviour, saying, Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. The good ground hearer was not a wayside hearer, a stony ground hearer, nor a thorny ground hearer. Neither of those kind will do; they are all lacking, however near they seem to come. The Eunuch was a good ground hearer; so was Lydia, and many others that might be mentioned, and all and as many as were ordained to eternal life. But the seed sown was the same, and the difference is not therefore to be ascribed to the seed, nor to the sower, but to the preparation of the ground for the reception of the seed. Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase; so, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase (1 Cor. iii.) Some received

Christ with joy, but others, and even a whole city, came out to meet Jesus and besought him that he would depart out of their coasts; because they had lost two thousand swine, and they preferred the swine to him; such was their appetite that they could live on and loved swine's flesh, but not the bread of God, that which made them poorer (Matt. viii.) Besides this, there is something given the church for the multitude (Matt. xiv.) Christ blessed the loaves and fishes and gave to his disciples, and they to the multitude, and they, disciples and all, did eat and were filled; so there are things given us for the world, and such things as the world can eat or partake of, to their benefit; but we are given no spiritual gift to bestow upon the world, because the world cannot receive it. He that is not of God, heareth us not (1 John iv.) If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, &c. (2 Cor. iv. 3.) But we are not to infer that God desired to save them, and was hindered and thwarted in his design by the god of this world, but that it is not the gospel that blinds the minds of men and damns them. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life. Thus the same truth in the letter, preached at the same time by the same minister, has this two-fold effect upon those that hear: to the one it is a comfort, to the other foolishness—unto the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness—but unto them which are called (by the Spirit), both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. i.)

But we are getting tedious, and have hardly touched the subject, and will conclude for the present by saying that preaching neither saves nor damns in an eternal sense, but is rather a proclamation of what Christ has done, why he has done it, and for whom he has done it, and the present and eternal result of his work; so that merely believing, or not believing, has nothing to do with what he has done; but if he has atoned for our sins, we will have in due time the witness of the Spirit of it. We must now stop, having already taken up too much space.—R.

## TO CHILDREN.

*Dear Children:*—Your dear old friend, Elder Mitchell, has, on account of his afflicted eye, been unable to write you a letter this time, and asked me to do it; but my labors have been so abundant that I shall not be able to write you a long letter, or an interesting one.

Children, the Lord has been mindful of you in many ways; he has given you good parents to provide for and instruct you in morality, and to restrain you in wickedness. Ought you not to be thankful to the Lord for such a great favor? Especially when you see many children who have no parents to care for them; or, what is worse, have wicked parents who teach them bad things, and care but little more for them than brute beasts care for their offspring. There are thousands of children in cities who have none to teach them good things, but are left to grow up almost as pigs in the street, and who take to theft, lying and murder almost from their infancy. Is it not awful to think of! But you, dear children, are blessed far above such poor little waifs upon society; you have parents who love you, and whom you are taught to obey. What a blessing it is to be taught obedience in your youth! Your parents can't make you Christians, but they can teach you morality—to tell the truth, to be honest, industrious and virtuous, so that when you get to be men and women, you will be useful members of society. By being obedient to your parents, you will learn to be obedient to the laws of society, and not have to be punished as criminals—to be sent to the chain-gang, and be hanged for murder. You will not learn to be drunkards, and be a disgrace to your parents, and bring them down broken-hearted to the grave, but will honor them—and men will call you blessed. Dear children, I would not disregard the counsel of my dear old father even after I had gotten to be nearly fifty years old, because I knew he would not advise me only in love.

Think of these things, and may God bless you! Parents, carry your children to your meetings every time you can.—R.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We wish to say that all your articles, not lost by the burn or otherwise, will be published, but it may be a long time before some are. Not that the best are always published first, but the subject, length, locality (so as to represent all sections), and preparation, has much to do with it.—ED.

BRYAN, BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS, July 24, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respess:*—I have the money of a few more new subscribers to forward to you, and being under promise to write a letter to my cousin, and as I hope, "brother beloved," Elder A. W. Patterson, of Georgia, giving an account of some of my travels recently, and having also a request from some among whom I have traveled to write for the MESSENGER, I will try now to comply with my promise.

Having agreed to go as a correspondent to the Friendship Association, I not providentially hindered, I left home on the morning of the 1st Sunday in this month for that purpose; attended our own home church meeting that day; heard an able and edifying discourse by Elder Gunter, from the words of Paul, in Ephesians, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." After preaching, we opened the door of the church, and received a brother for baptism; will be baptized at our next meeting. Went from there to Blackjack Grove, four miles east of Hearne, where I tried to preach a night; took the cars next morning at Hearne for Georgetown, Williamson county; went from Georgetown to Bro. T. S. Whiteley's, where I found an appointment waiting me. I tried to preach from the words in 1 John i. 3, but was short in my discourse, having but little liberty.

On Wednesday morning, in company with Brother Whiteley and some others, I started, by private conveyance, for Llano county, where the Association was to be held. At Liberty Hill, which was in our route, I met Elder Robert Baker, whom I had never met before. We dined together, and had some conversation of a pleasant character, but as his condition was such that he could not go to the Association, we could not become so well acquainted as we desired. We stopped with Bro. J. M. Willis that night. Here we met Elder Hester, whom I had not seen before. We were detained at Brother Willis', on account of heavy rains, till Friday morning, which was the day the Association was to meet, and we were now thirty miles from the place of meeting. But the brethren used us. Brother Hester and myself both spoke three times, and Brother Whiteley, who is a deacon, and a very good preacher, too, took part with us. On Friday morning, all appeared gloomy. Though the rain had ceased, the clouds looked threatening, and that black, waxy land is very disagreeable to travel in when wet. The inclination to turn back was very strong with the most of our company. Finally Brother Whiteley suggested that it be left with Brother Hester and myself to say whether to go forward or not. Brother Hester seemed disposed to let

it be with me to say. The responsibility just here was considerable. The roads were heavy with mud, the clouds still low, and the Colorado to cross, and the distance considerable. But I could not feel to turn back. Past experience had taught me that when the Lord would accomplish good through me, as his servant in the gospel, he would also bring me to a deep sense of my own weakness, and of my great dependence upon him to make rough ways smooth, and crooked paths straight, and cause me to feelingly and imploringly cry, "Lord, help me!" So I could but say, "Brother Whiteley, I left home to go to the Association, and I feel that if I turn back it must not be till I can in truth say it is by providential hindrance." He remarked that he had promised me, nearly a year ago, that if I would go he would convey me, if he could; so we would go forward. In a short time we were all on the road, and before 12 o'clock the clouds gave way. We reached the Colorado late in the evening, and crossed it without any trouble. I can scarcely describe my feelings as I crossed that stream. I had long desired to see it, and had long felt that in that romantic country I must one day try, in my poor, weak way, to preach the gospel. We reached the vicinity of the church with which the Association was to convene, and found but one ordained minister there, and he had traveled afoot all day on Thursday in the rain, and had waded the river; but there were enough messengers there to proceed with the business for which they came. I heard some right touching expressions of joy when we arrived among them, and especially from a sister. Elder Woods was Moderator, and Bro. J. R. Clark, Clerk, and the business of the Association, which, as it ought to be, was not much, was attended to in peace; and then came the more interesting part, to me at least. The church there was a newly constituted one, and fifty miles or more, I think, from any other church in the Association, in a newly settled part of the country, worshiping in a log house, which reminded me of houses they worshiped in back in dear old Georgia when I was a little boy; and this church had been trying for a good while to get a presbytery to ordain a couple of young ministers and a deacon, and had become discouraged. So she concluded to have them ordained at this time, and it was desired that I should act with Elders Woods and Hester in the ordination, and after having heard them both preach, and having also tried myself to preach on the subject of the gospel ministry, we proceeded to ordain them; also the brother chosen to the office of deacon. The occasion was one of solemnity and joy. While I cannot say that the duty assigned me, which was to examine them in doctrine, &c., was well performed, owing to my weakness and imperfections, I can say that the ordination prayer by Elder Woods was much to edification, and the charge by Elder Hester, though he seemed desirous of brevity, was far ahead of any sermon I had heard him preach since we had been together. We all were melted, as it were, under it. There seemed to be an outpouring of the Spirit upon us. Some wept aloud for joy. The services being over, we were dismissed.

I felt to be much worn down, physically, from the day's labor, and thought I would not try to preach, or even attend preaching, that night, it having

been published that there would be preaching at the meeting-house. So I went to Bro. Robert Mercer's (one of the young preachers), intending to retire to rest early. But somehow there was a failure in the appointment at the church, and soon Brother Mercer's yard was full, or nearly so, of people and preaching called for. I could but refuse, and so with the brethren Woods and Hester. So it was requested that Brother Clark, who is a deacon, should open services by singing and prayer, and then talk, if he felt to do so. He did so, and to edification. After him, Brother Whiteley was called on, and he arose with the words, "Little children, let no man deceive you. He seemed fearful that some one would be deceived by him, by thinking he was a preacher because he talked in public. He talked much to our edification and instruction for about thirty minutes; and by that time Elder Wood was full, and had only to be asked to talk. He preached about thirty minutes with much feeling, and while he was preaching an affecting scene occurred. Shall I tell it? Yes, but with some reluctance, because of my poor, sinful self being a party to it. I sat in front of him. This was the first time I had heard him preach, and that day was the first time he had ever heard me. We had been kept apart by the acts of Associations and advisory councils. And he fixed his eyes upon me as he talked, and said that he saw the image of Jesus in my face while I preached at the stand that day, and that what I said about the Saviour's promise—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen"—was enough; that it was not ours to wait till we could see that he had gone before us and opened the way; that it is his right and prerogative to give the word of command "Go!" and it is our duty to go. "We walk by faith, and not by sight," had made an impression on his mind, and that he felt to give me his hand; and as he did so he embraced me, and said, "When you go back home, tell your brethren that between you and me there is no difference." I told him I was glad to meet him, and that I felt to believe somebody had been praying for the peace of Zion. I suggested, then, that we had better conclude the services by singing that good old hymn, "What wondrous love is this!" &c. which was done, and as we sang two ladies came weeping, and asked to be remembered in our prayers; and besides them, there were many others that wept, but for joy, I think. The services were concluded by prayer. And let me add, that this meeting was under the moonlight shade of a stately water oak, with a few dead limbs on it, caused by the burning of a house close by it about ten years ago, which was the work of the red men. The blood-thirsty creatures first killed the father in the field, and then killed the mother and the children at the house, and burnt it. How inscrutable is the providence of God! "His ways are past finding out."

On Sunday, we met a large congregation, for that country. Elder Wood preached first, and I followed him. We had a good meeting. I had to bid them farewell after the morning services were over. After I was through with my discourse on Sunday, I found that some half dozen persons, whom I knew and had tried to preach to in Freestone county twelve or thirteen years ago, were in the congregation. Among them was the widow of Elder James Beaver, who assisted in my ordination, and whose Bible Concordance Mrs

Beaver made me a present of after his death. But I would not have recognized these friends if they had not introduced themselves to me. Taking leave of brethren, sisters and friends, nearly all of whom I had never met before, I turned my face homeward, and in due time reached my humble residence, and found the loved ones all well, but I was exhausted and somewhat sick. And I am now just back from our own Association. We had a joyful meeting, though some of our churches failed to represent themselves, and five of our preachers were not present. The Association was held with a church in the extreme northeast boundary of our territory. We had ten preachers present, counting visiting ministers. The congregations were large, and the preaching able and edifying.

J. C. DENTON.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

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DAYTONA, FLA., May, 1883.

*Dear Brothers Respass and Mitchell:*—I would say to you, in behalf of the MESSENGER, that I appreciate the manner in which it is conducted, as well as the rich and instructive editorials, and letters and communications from different parts of the country, bearing witness of the same spirit of the Lord, which teaches every one of his children to know him, whom to know is life eternal. I feel, dear brother, encouraged in the circulation of the MESSENGER, and trust that it may, even during the present year, increase four-fold; and may the gracious Father bless you with all temporal blessings, and sustain you in his glorious work while you live. I would feel at a great loss without the MESSENGER, and hope to subscribe for it as long as I can spare a dollar for it, and I think I will be able as long as I live.

Your unworthy brother,

W. C. BENNETT.

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STANHOPE, N. C., May, 1883.

*Dear Editors:*—I have been behind with my remittance, owing to my infirmity. I have been confined four months with my left eye, and can just see how to read now, though the sight is confused. I have received very number of the MESSENGER, and have them all filed away for future reference. I received No. 5, Vol. 5, yesterday, and was glad you had not stopped it. I am well pleased with the doctrine and views of editors and correspondents. I am not identified with the church, but I hope that I do love the doctrine of election and predestination. [That is good evidence that you are a Christian, and ought to join the church.—R.] In conclusion, I ask your prayers at a throne of grace for me, a sinner, that I may be brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Dear Brother—You are changed; trust in the Lord.]

A. H. DENTON.

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JIMPS, BULLOCH Co., GA., July 9, 1883.

*Dear Brother:*—We have the gospel preached to us monthly, at Deoache's meeting-house, by our beloved brother, Elder A. R. Strickland. We have had several good meetings, with an ingathering of nine members, since November last, by experience and baptism. We have reason

to believe that there are many more to come and tell the church what great things the Lord has done for their poor souls. My dear old father, Elder John G. Williams, is very feeble; he can scarcely get in and out of the house. He is now 74 years old, and says he is thankful that he has his right mind, and that he knows and loves the truth when he hears it preached as well as he ever did, and I am confident he does; and I trust I feel thankful to the Lord that it is no worse with him than it is. My dear old father-in-law, John Deloache, is as well as common, and is now 87 years old, and can get about right nimbly, his dear wife having gone on before him to the eternal home. Dear brethren, we are much pleased with the MESSENGER, and can recommend it to every family in the land, and I will take the privilege of saying that all Primitive Baptist families ought to have it for their own and their children's good. May the Lord bless you in your good work.

Yours in hope,

WM. M. WILLIAMS.

LULING, TEXAS, June 29, 1883.

*Editors Messenger*:—I am ready, at any time, to act as agent for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, for I am fond of reading it, and greatly favor its circulation, and especially in destitute parts of the world, where preaching is scarce.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. M. BAKER.

Thank you, dear brother; and we accept your kind offer to act as agent for us in your section.—Ed.

SARASOTA, FLA., June 18, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I send you \$1.00 for the MESSENGER for my son. He has not yet suffered himself duped by false doctrine, and don't want him to be. Brethren, I would like to say something, but am too much like the poor, lame man at the gate. You will see I have almost no education. I was raised poor, and without parents. The MESSENGER gives me more comfort than anything I meet with. I have to go nearly forty miles to get to a Primitive Baptist meeting-house.

G. J. TATUM, SR.

STATESBORO, GA., July, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I am receiving the MESSENGER regularly, and am glad to think that such a good work is going on in such a wicked land. But I feel condemned when I think of my carelessness and negligence, feeling that I have been very slothful in many things, which gives me trouble at times. I would have done better about the MESSENGER if I had been able, and don't think that I have done as well as I could have done. I want the MESSENGER to come to me as long as I live, it being such a great comfort to me. Please place the enclosed \$1.00 to my credit.

Yours as ever,

D. L. RIGDON.

## ALAPAHA ASSOCIATION.

*Dear Messenger* :—For the benefit of brethren and friends visiting the Alapaha Association, I will say : Those coming on Macon and Brunswick Road will leave the railroad at Graham, when they will be conveyed to the meeting ; and it would be best to be there on Thursday, as trains arrive there 3 p. m., and it is twenty-five miles out to the meeting. If, however, any should reach there on Friday, by previously notifying Bro. J. E. Webb, at Graham, he will have conveyance there for them. The Association convenes on Saturday before 1st Sunday in November next.

M. SIKES, Moderator.

HANNIBAL, MO., July 9, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I enclose herein one dollar (post-office money order), for which please send for one year the GOSPEL MESSENGER to Jacob Varner, Box 60, Hannibal, Mo., P. O.

I learn Mr. Varner is a New School Baptist, and wants to see what we have to say ; says he has heard the others. It may be he desires to “ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.” If so, we hope he will find them, and finding them, he may not be as Israel of old said, “We will not walk therein.”

Our brethren in this locality are living in harmony, but coldness seems to prevail among them ; but few additions ; but we desire to wait upon the Lord for his “set time to favor Zion.” Still it is our privilege to pray that he will revive his work in the hearts of his redeemed children, and that they may “dwell safely *alone*, and be not reckoned among the nations.” The world is full of idolatry, and it is to be feared some of the Lord’s children are being led away from the simplicity of the gospel, and are “turned unto fables.” May the Lord remember them in mercy, and cause them to heed the admonition of his word : “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” The MESSENGER comes regularly and affords much satisfaction. May you, together with Brother Mitchell, be abundantly blessed in your labors for the comfort and edification of the Lord’s “afflicted and poor people” ; and may they remember you in their petitions at the throne of grace, and also endeavor to hold up your hands in your endeavors to serve them. And in conclusion, may the Lord bless his word, and bless his dear people everywhere, and may his ever-blessed Name be glorified. And again I will repeat the words of the apostle John : “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

Your unworthy brother, as I hope, in the fellowship of the gospel,  
W. F. KERCHEVAL.

QUITMAN, GA., July 4, 1883.

*Beloved Brother Respass* :—The smiling face of Jesus is resting over the church where my membership is. Two were baptized on Sunday last, and several more are expected. Love and union abound. The Lord be praised.

Yours in love,  
A. V. SIMMS.

HARMONY, ARKANSAS, May, 1883.

*Dear Brother and Sister Mitchell* :—I have been thinking for some time I would write you, but yesterday morning the mail came and brought me sad news ; so that I felt then I could not write ; but to-day I will try.

I want to tell you that I have had the great privilege of going to meeting twice since we came to Arkansas ; and to me the preaching was like the good news that was brought to Jacob and family when they heard there was corn in Egypt. The first meeting I attended two deacons were ordained, and one member received by experience. The next meeting they received two more by experience and baptism, and also excluded one. Sunday, after the three were baptized, they had preaching ; after which they engaged together in Communion and Feet Washing. As I had not had such an opportunity for many years, I felt much revived. It was truly a feast to me, though most of the time I feel very lonely and sad. I have such a feeling sense of my darkness of mind and entire dependence, that I am like one who has to beg for daily bread. At times, however, I seem to be well supplied, and then I want to run around and tell my friends and neighbors how precious Jesus is to me. I want to tell the dear children of God that the precious things of God, on which they are fed and sustained, were laid up for them in Christ before the world began, and that there is plenty of spiritual food and comfort there for all of them. God has loved them with an everlasting love, and he knows all their needs, and will give them enough, so that they shall never perish. But sometimes I am tempted with the suggestion that I have not received anything, not even so much as a grain of mustard seed. O, would not that be a plenty for me ? If I had faith as a grain of mustard seed many difficulties could be overcome.

I will close lest I weary you. As ever, your sister in Christ,

ELVY MYHAND.

FLOYD COUNTY, GA., June, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell* :—Our church at Silver Creek is in peace, and we have the pastoral services of Elders Johnson and Payne. Very few have been added to the church for some time. Dear brother, we are delighted with the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and we find a few of other religious sects who love to read it also.

Yours in bonds of love,

THOMAS LUMPKIN.

MILLWOOD, TEXAS, June 12, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell* :—I received the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and feel so thankful for it. I can see by it that the dear people of God are not as near driven out of the land as a great many people think they are. I read Sister Elvy Myhand's letter to the church at Mount Olive with tears of joy, and felt so thankful to see that her faith is so strong in her blessed Redeemer, and so unmovable. If I could bear my sorrows and trials as well as Sister Myhand does, I should feel like I was a better woman than I now feel to be. My faith is often tried to the utmost. I am away from all my people, religiously speaking, and often feel so lonely and sorrowful that I am almost ready to give up. You and Sister Mitchell know something of my lonely condition and peculiar surroundings. I humbly desire that you both pray for me and mine.

Yours in the bonds of gospel love,

ELIZABETH McINTOSH.

SNOW HILL, ALA., July 13, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell* :—Have you seen or heard from Elder Lively, whether he could visit this section of country on a preaching tour ? I

had hoped to hear from him before now. If he can come, I will arrange appointments to occupy all the time he can spare among us.

The brethren were all delighted with your visit to us, and all long for you to come again. If you could visit us here three or four times a year, I think you could be of great service to us. Your visit and preaching made a good impression; and it may be that the Lord has a work here for you to do. If that be so, of course no one else can do it. This leaves all well. Your brother in Christ, J. H. PURIFOY.

WARWICK, N. Y., March 30, 1883.

*Elder Mitchell*:—*Dear Brother in Christ*:—Your welcome letter has been received, and read again and again with much interest and pleasure; others, also, have enjoyed it with me. We often think of your pleasant visit among us; it will be seven years next June and July since you were here preaching to us. Time flies away and waits for none of us. It is winging us away to our eternal home, and we shall never be satisfied till we awake in the Redeemer's likeness.

JUNE 12, 1883.—*Dear Elder Mitchell*:—Again I write, and the time seems long since I last wrote you. I am in debt for the last MESSENGER, as the time for which I had paid run out in May. I hope God will pardon me for not remitting sooner. I have been sick, and have also attended two Associations in May and June; so that you may see that my time has been well occupied for the past six weeks. I send \$2.00, one for myself and the other for Sister L. K.

The 29th of May I went to Hopewell, New Jersey, to attend the Delaware River Association. Elder Gold, of North Carolina, preached the first sermon from Heb. iv. 14, 15. In the afternoon, Elder Poulton, of Virginia, preached from Acts v. 32; and Elder Staton from 1 Tim. i. 15. In the evening, Elder Chick preached, but I had gone out in the country for the night and did not hear him. Our church at Warwick is in peace, and all send much christian love to you. Remember me to Sister M. and family. May the Lord sustain and comfort you in your afflictions.

From your unworthy sister in Christ, M. E. SAYER.

## OBITUARIES.

### MRS. ELMIRA WORSHAM.

This dear sister, consort of Mr. Robert Worsham, of Crawford county, Ga., was richly endowed by nature with all those noble traits of character that renders one useful, lovely and attractive. When God planted his love within her soul, she seemed almost perfection. Near thirty years ago, she made a public profession of her faith in Christ, at Mount Carmel Church. So impressive was her narration, and so affecting the scene that ensued, that the unworthy writer remembers it as if only yesterday. The entire church seemed to partake of her love and gratitude, as their hearts swelled and eyes gave vent in a suffusion of tears. Since then her walk and conversation has uniformly displayed that of an humble christian. At different times she has been attacked with sickness, and sometimes severely, but on each and all occasions she manifested a patient and hopeful trust. In health, that same meek and quiet spirit prevailed which shone forth its lustre in her self-sacrificing devotion to her family and friends. Near five years ago she was stricken with disease (the doctors termed it neuralgia), from which she was never to recover. Sometimes she would be better, and her anxious family and inquiring friends would feel flattered and encouraged, but it would be of short duration. It was in the beginning of this long period of affliction that the light emanating from her faith began to brighten, grow, and increase in

brightness until on the evening of the 18th of March, when, in the 57th year of her age, her happy spirit was liberated from all that was mortal and winged its way to that rest that awaits the children of God. It was the writer's agreeable privilege to visit this sweet sister at different stages of her sickness and with great interest I noticed that as the body yielded, her faith strengthened; the summit to which it reached may have been equalled, but never surpassed. From the beginning she was perfectly resigned to her sufferings, she believed it was all necessary, and good, and kind. She would say, "In my ambition for my family's promotion I have oftentimes strayed from God and bless his holy name, he has afflicted me in love, that I may see how good he is!" On one occasion she said to the writer, "My dear sister, while I am so willing to suffer, and feel it was sent on me in love, at times I shrink at the thought of parting from my dear husband and children, and the grave looks cold and unwelcome." When I told her I believed every preparation that was necessary would be given her in ample time, her countenance beamed with hope and pleasure as she replied, "Yes, I believe my blessed Jesus will prepare me for every trial through which he calls me to go." Three months prior to her departure I was again at her bedside. She was suffering in great agony. She extended her hand and said, "My dear sister, I am getting ready to go. I can say it is sweet to be afflicted. Praised, blessed be the name of Jesus! I am so glad you have come to talk to me of him. My dear husband and precious children, and kind neighbors, are all His gifts. He is preparing me to leave them and go to Him. I would not remove this disease and pain if I could, without His holy will." Four days prior to her death she said to me, "My dear sister (you know the meaning of that precious word 'sister' don't you?), I have been praying for a bright passage across the icy stream of death, and it has come in full time. Death has lost his sting, and the grave is robbed of its terrors. I feel now I was too impatient. Tell Brother Cleveland to come to see me Saturday from church; and when you tell him it will be my last night, he will come." When he went to her bedside she stretched out her dying hand and said, "My dear brother, I am so glad to meet you once more. I am now passing through that cold valley of death but not alone. Jesus is with me. I feel his presence." We then began talking of her dear husband, precious children, and a dear old aunt that was with them. Her words would seem to fail to convey her meaning, as she would add, "I wish I could talk to them as I see and feel." Near midnight she called again for Brother Cleveland, and took hold of his hand, and then, as calmly as the rising sun, she said, "My dear brother, I want you to preach my funeral from the text, 'We know, if this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'" He replied, "That is a great, a powerful text, my sister." She said, "Yes, and I am now witnessing its truth and reality. That dear old sister (pointing to Sister Danelly) and I went into the water together, and your dear old father baptized us; that time is fresh in my memory now. She then went on in a strain of love and praise supremely wonderful: she extended her hand to each of her family and bid them "Good bye!" commending them to Christ Jesus the Lord. After that she seemed impatient to go—frequently asking, "How much longer? how much longer?" A few hours before her death, to all appearances her sufferings ended, and she sank peacefully and calmly to sleep, to awake not until the morning of the Resurrection. To her family, friends and neighbors she has left an inheritance. Shall we ever forget, as she struggled and grappled with death, how her love and solicitude ran out for us? Shall we ever cease to remember how unspeakably glorified she appeared in her triumph over all that was mortal? "Though she be dead, yet she speaketh." May the abundant grace of God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, sanctify her noble life, patient sufferings, and holy death, to our good and His glory, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.

EMELINE JORDAN.

*Crawford County, Ga.*

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[Signed]  
LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR

Eld R. Durdan

Vol. 5.

No. 10

*Eld R. Durdan*

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

**J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.**

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OCTOBER, 1883.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 10. BUTLER, GA., OCTOBER, 1883. Vol. 5.

“A LETTER ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG BROTHER,  
WHOSE MIND IS LED TO THE GOSPEL MIN-  
ISTRY.”

[NUMBER TWO.]

*My Dear Brother:*—At the close of my first letter I promised to write you something about the work and calling of the gospel ministry—what are the duties of this calling, &c. I now attempt to fulfil my promise. And,

First, I will say that all that we can know about this, as well as anything else pertaining to the kingdom of our Lord, must be gained from the scriptures. All that I can do in this matter, is to present some reflections upon what they do say, for our mutual instruction and edification, as I trust. Furthermore, while God has called his ministers to occupy different positions, and has given them a diversity of gifts, yet the work of all is practically the same. It all is to preach the gospel (this being understood in its widest sense), and set in order the churches. Thus pastors, teachers, apostles, evangelists, have all the same work in kind, only the one extends over a wider field than the other. So, whether you are called to be a pastor of particular churches, or to the wider field of an evangelist, what you will have to do will be practically the same; and so what I may say will suit in one case as well as the other.

2nd. Let me first call attention to some portions of the scripture bearing upon this matter, and some titles applied to the servants of God in the ministry. In 1 Tim. iii. 1-7, and in Titus i. 6-9 (inclusive), we have a full description of the

character and qualifications of a bishop or pastor of churches. They are to be blameless—not *self-willed*, not soon angry, no given to wine, no striker, not covetous, not a brawler; but, on the other hand, they are to be, a lover of hospitality, a love of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, ruling well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity, and of good report of them who are without. All these things are needful. If any of them be lacking, the pastor's usefulness will be correspondingly injured among his people. Look over the above quotations, and pick them out one by one, and you will see that this is true. How great and important must the work of a bishop be! How solemn the responsibility! How needful that the call should be plainly of God! He that realizes what it is to stand and minister in the sanctuary, and to handle the sacred things of the Lord, will be slow to accept while at the same time he will desire to do his Master's will. The churches, also, will examine well ere they call a man to be their pastor, if they realize the importance of the above qualifications for the work. The gift of talking well, does not in itself, qualify one to be a pastor of churches. Of some man, it has been said, When he is in the pulpit he ought never to come out of it, and when he is out he ought never to go in! If the church and brethren who called for that man's ordination had regarded the solemn nature of the work of the ministry as they should, they would have paid more attention to the description of a bishop—such as God calls—given in Timothy and Titus. It is a sad thing that the slurs spoken of above, can be truthfully said of any professed minister. A consistent, sober life is essential to a pastor of churches. Great preaching gifts, and eloquence of speech, are not to be despised; but a humble, good life is better. By all means, cultivate the power of speech, and strive for a mastery of your own mother tongue, and seek to put away any unpleasantness of language or manner; but, ABOVE ALL, look out for the sober, humble spirit, and consistency of life. Words may please the ear for a time; but it is the manner of life,

that gives a pastor influence among his people, and that gives weight to his words. Paul teaches this in the two epistles named above. So little does he account great preaching gifts, that he does not even mention them—simply saying, “apt to teach.” May these things be impressed, my brother, upon your mind and mine, and upon us all.

3rd. The work of a pastor, or bishop, is thus described in the scriptures: “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs” (John xxi. 15–17.) “Preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark xvi. 15.) “Teach all nations, baptizing them,” &c. (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God,” &c. (Acts xx. 28.) “The elders which are among you, I exhort: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,” &c. (1 Pet. v. 1, 2.) These are some of the directions given in the word to guide us in our ministry, my brother. This is what the apostle calls a good work (1 Tim. iii. 1.) In the quotations which I have thus far made we also see that ministers of the word are also called “bishops,” “pastors,” “shepherds,” and “overseers.” These names all mean something; and, taken in connection with the scriptural directions, imply that the work of a pastor is a very responsible one, indeed. All four of the above named titles imply about the same thing. We may use either word to express the work of a called servant. Jesus is called also a shepherd—“the chief Shepherd,” and “Bishop of our souls.” He is the great Pastor, or Husbandman, of us all. But we are under-shepherds and bishops, and so it is needful that we know what our work is, which we are to do under His direction. If a man is truly called of God, the substance of his duty to the church will be written in his heart, so that the directions given in the word will meet a hearty amen! within him.

4th. A pastor has not done all his duty when he has preached once a month, or once a week, or three times a week, to the people, from the pulpit. This is a part of his duty, but it is very far from being all. This, hard as it seems some-

times, is the simplest and easiest part of his duty. There has been a great mistake in this matter among some. My brother, I would warn you to avoid committing this mistake. Some have seemed to think that it was enough if they preached on Sunday, and that all the time between they need not think of the wants of the church. It mattered but little if they took no time to search the scriptures, or to think over the spiritual needs of the people to whom they preached. Many churches and brethren have looked at it in this same way. You will hear of a minister, "O, he preaches such great sermons! his preaching is so good!" but never a word as to whether he does the rest of a pastor's work. They seem to think that if he preaches on Sunday, no more is required of him. That this should be the feeling in any of the churches, is more the fault of ministers themselves, than of anybody else. And out of this has grown the evil, in too many cases, of muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, upon the ground that it does not take the minister any longer to preach a sermon, than it does the people to hear it,—forgetting that this is but a small part of the pastor's duty,—and that if he really does as he is bidden, "take the oversight of the flock," he will have but little time left for anything else. Always, my brother, insist upon it that the burdens of the gospel are mutual, and that none have a right to say, "No burden rests upon me in helping bear the expenses of the church." Each one, according to his ability, as the Lord has prospered him, is to freely give. I have heard men of means, when called upon for aid in an needful thing, as they gave a "quarter," say, "Here is the widow's mite." It would be good if they could be reminded that the widow's mite was "*all her living.*" But I have been led into a digression. Now to return, let us see what is involved in the pastoral office.

5th. "Taking the oversight of the church, or flock" expresses it all. Disorders will creep in, like little foxes. They are to be detected and cast out. Disorders in practice or false doctrine, alike are hurtful. The pastor is to war against them, proving out of the scriptures that they are evi-

Therefore he must make the Bible his study. This is his chart that shows him where the reefs and shoals are. The sick also are to be visited, and conversed with, and pointed to the Great Physician. Death comes and mourners go about the streets. And they need a cup of cold water. And what can cheer them in their sorrow more than the visit of a faithful, tender, loving pastor, speaking to them of Him who raises the dead? There will be those who are inquiring—who have sorrow because of sin, and who desire to know the truth. A faithful pastor will feel especially drawn towards these lambs of the fold, and will seek them out, and show a tender shepherd's interest in them. He will not feel to say, 'The Lord will see after them, and so I will be careless and not look out for them.' But he will feel that he is to feed THESE, and be an under-shepherd to *these*, as well as to the sheep. I should not think that one was called to the ministry at all, if he did not know what it was to have a tender drawing, that is well nigh irresistible, to hunt up and encourage the little lambs of the fold. We cannot, as pastors, be too tender and gentle and loving toward these weak and timid ones. I know that when preaching, or conversing, I always anxiously watch the faces of the people for signs of interest. And what joy it gives me, when I discover any evidence of hunger for the word, or of gladness in hearing it, upon the face of one, of whom I have not known before! And how glad I am to speak with them about the bread of life—the gospel of our salvation!

Now, my brother, in closing these two letters to you, I feel to say that I have but just glanced at the theme. May God enable you to follow up the subject, and make the word which I have written a profit to you and to me. May God lead you and keep you, and finally save you and all his, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

F. A. CHICK.

---

There never was one who thought he had made a bad market, by selling all for the pearl of great price.

“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

Truly, Saul's religion was very much changed on his trip to Damascus—not that he changed his religion, but that his religion was changed for him. The “holy calling” turned his religion upside down, and floundered the literary champion in the dust. The leader of soldiers now needs to be led, and the fighter against Jesus must now acknowledge him to be the Lord, and ask advice of him. Saul, heretofore, was not only religious himself, but he would see to it that everybody else should be religious, too. That doctrine of Jesus was too dangerous to be tolerated, and Saul was the man to stamp it out. Ah! and there are a number of Sauls now as full of blind zeal and as eager to stamp out the words of Jesus. But this religious bigotry must be clean emptied out of Saul. He was a chosen vessel unto the Lord, hence he must be filled with the wine which Jesus made. All the powers of earth could never have persuaded Saul that salvation was not by works of righteousness which we should do, but one blaze of heavenly light could teach him that he was “some time darkness.” Ah! that holy calling reveals wonderful things. It divides between the living and the dead. But for this, Saul had continued to play havoc with the churches. This occurred ('tis said) in the day of miracles, but no less miracle is accomplished in every sinner saved by grace. The religion in which Saul gloried is as popular now as it was then, and takes the same calling of God to empty it out. When Saul returned to Jerusalem he carried no captives, but had made the remarkable discovery that himself was the chief of sinners. Saul was a much better man, in his own estimation, before that trip to Damascus than he ever was afterward. He never rose above a sinner any more, but his doctrine now changes. No wonder, since he is “now light in the Lord.” But with all of his “much learning” he never could convince the Jews of their error, but the more he insisted on it the more they whipped him. Why? Because his words had no place in them. How silly to think that

much learning" has anything to do in saving souls. A boastful ministry take to themselves the work of saving souls, and glory in what they are doing for the Lord, but Saul learned to glory in what the Lord had done for him.

"Hath saved us." Saved is the opposite of lost, and as Jesus came to save that which was lost, it is evident that his people were lost. "Children of wrath even as others," "Dead in sins," enemies to God; without eyes to see, ears to hear, or heart to understand. Where the absence of these is there cannot be any life. There is a man, but it is the natural man, and "cannot receive spiritual things;" there is a mind, but it is carnal, and is enmity against God. Indeed, "There is no soundness at all in him;" "He takes bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." Then to be saved from sin it requires *new life*. Cultivation only improves the stock cultivated, and never ripens into another stock. Cultivated Adam is the world's religion, and can easily apostatize or fall away, for whatever a man can work out or accumulate he can squander. But true religion grows out of new life; "Born again," "Born of God," and endureth forever, for no man ever destroyed one particle of God's work; hence God's "workmanship created in Christ Jesus" is a fixture, and the apostle thought nothing under the heavens could separate us therefrom. This is being saved, not according to our works, but God's purpose. What else could move in such a matter?

*Repentance is a consequent, and not a condition.* It grows out of God's calling, instead of superinducing it. If salvation was on conditions performed by us, surely it *would* be according to our works. But if created in Christ Jesus, even before the world, surely it was according to God's purpose, and not our works, and "boasting is excluded." "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." God's calling them grows out of his predestination. Israel were his before they were called out of bondage. The calling out grew of that "*Let my people go.*" But Moses must first go down and persuade them to come out, and they must refuse, to show that even God's elect, when left to their own free agency, will override per-

suaſion and abide in ſin forever. The concluſion of the whole matter is, that according to God's own purpoſe and grace "ye are created in Chriſt Jeſus;" according to the fullneſs of the time ye are called to repentance. This is nothing more than quickening into new life, which is oppoſed to ſin and abhors it. A godly ſorrow puts up and repentance flows—ſelf-loathing, ſelf-abhorring, ſelf-abating—groaning to be born into the glorious light and liberty of God's children. Here is the wayside beggar, the leprous Naaman, the blind Bartimeus, the weary needing reſt, the mourner needing comfort, and all theſe needs are ſupplied in Jeſus. Here comes in the gift of faith in Him.

What an opportune time for Jeſus to get himſelf a name! When there is no hand to ſave, "*Made ready for the Lord's*;" "ſaved us." The lame walk, the blind ſee, the lepers are cleaſed, the dead raiſed, and the poor have the goſpel preached. It is a bleſſed thing to be a wayside beggar, "poor in Spirit." To theſe Jeſus came. Theſe are evidence that we are ſaved.

How ſtrange that poverty evidences riches, weakneſs indicates ſtrength, and littleneſs is greatneſs. And as we performed no conditions conducing to our firſt birth, the concluſion is quite reaſonable that we performed none conducing to our ſecond birth. "Saved"—not according to our works but according to His own purpoſe and grace; and yet we have another ſalvation to work out with fear and trembling. Born into God's kingdom, the chriſtian warfare now opens. No ſoldier may ſleep on poſt, nor diſregard the command of his Captain. Be not aſhamed to be ſeen anywhere you ſaw the Lord was, nor to do anything he did. He ſaved and called you. Let Moſes' diſciples follow Moſes, but you follow your Lord. You muſt now be ſaved from falſe teachers, falſe doctrines, *pride*, hypocriſy, &c. Let us, therefore, fear and ſerve God with ſingleneſs of heart. Amen.

*Mc Ville, Ga.*

M. SIKES.

EUREKA SPRINGS, ARK., March, 1883.

“Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”—Matt. xii. “And whosoever speaketh against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him.” And thus Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.” Thus men persecuted Jesus as a man; but they did not have the Holy Ghost, and knew not what they did. But he that knows his Master’s will, and prepares not accordingly, shall be beaten with many stripes; yea, he shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. It shall not be forgiven him; neither in this world (the Jewish world, kingdom—for he that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses), neither in the world to come (gospel kingdom or world, for Jesus had not yet been glorified.) In this gospel world, or the kingdom Jesus appointed unto his disciples, in this kingdom there is a sin unto death; that is, a brother is liable to act so badly as to become dead to the church and the church to him—there being no union or fellowship. Death is a separation. John says, You are not to pray for that; we are to deliver such to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. This is sinning wilfully, and by one who knows or has received the Holy Ghost. But can men who have never received the Holy Ghost, sin against Him? I think not. We may sin against the brethren, and against Christ, and grieve the Holy Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption; yet in all this the Lord’s seal is not broken. For this very creature—Adam man—whether he is disobedient and lives after the flesh unto death, or obedient through the Spirit, alive to duty, with all the rights and privileges in the church, having learned to love purity of life and obedience to God, they shall alike be quickened and delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God.

The children of God, as here expressed, is the spirit of the creature, which was dead to all spiritual knowledge of God, but being quickened by Christ, it partakes of His divine

nature, and sins not; yet there is a carnal spirit in us, which lusteth to envy. Sin remains in us till our body dies. Hence that ye sow is not quickened except it die; so our mortal bodies shall also be quickened and partake of His divine nature—even Jesus, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. May we be found walking in that light, with sustaining grace to shun every appearance of evil, for Jesus' sake.

JACOB CLOUD.

We doubt our beloved brother's exposition of the text, but publish for the consideration of others. He may be right; and knowing him to be an humble servant of Christ Jesus, we give space to his article. We question, also, the correctness of the definition given the "children of God."—ED.

---

CENTREVILLE, OHIO, January 9, 1876.

*Dear Brother Goodson:*—We welcome your paper as a "Messenger of Peace," and think the time long between each number. I do not know that I can write anything that will comfort or even interest the many readers of your paper, but that I shall leave to your judgment. I will try, in my weak manner, to tell you some of my travels since, I trust, I was awakened to a sense of my lost condition.

My parents are Baptists. In their former years they would go far and near to church, and I would generally go with them. When I was about fifteen years of age, I began to realize I was a great sinner. I did not feel as I used to. I felt so condemned—so wretched. I hated myself, and thought every one else did. The church where my parents have their membership is about half a mile from our house, and their regular meeting was on the 4th Saturday and Sunday of every month. I usually went on Sunday. One day, as soon as I got in the house and saw those good old saints that had gathered there to worship God, something seemed to say to me, "This is not the place for such a hell-deserving wretch as you are." I arose and returned home. When mother came home from meeting

she asked me if I was sick. I answered, "Yes." I was heart-sick, but did not want her to know it. I remained in this gloomy, despondent way some two or three years. Elder Samuel Williams was at that time pastor of the church. One night I went to hear him preach. He took for his text, John iii. 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." While he was preaching, I trust, I was enabled to view Christ as my Saviour; but it was but a few moments when I began to think and soliloquize: "Now this is all imagination, something I have learned from hearing my parents and other Baptists talk, having heard it from infancy." I still went to meeting. Now I could enjoy their conversation on religion, but I did not want them to know it. I felt like I wanted to be baptized, but did not feel fit. Some difficulty came up in the church—the members all seemed cold and lifeless. I grew careless about going to meeting, and almost doubted the reality of religion. The church called Elder John A. Thompson for their pastor, whom I liked to hear preach very much, and began to take renewed interest in the meeting, and I would think, If I was only fit, how much I would like to be baptized! Elder Thompson came to our house on Friday before the regular meeting day, on purpose to converse on the subject of religion with a lady that was living with us, and myself. After we got our work done, we went out on the porch, where he and my father were sitting, talking on the subject of religion. Elder Thompson turned to me and said: "What do you think of these things?" I told him I did not know that I could tell him. He said he would like to hear me talk very much, and I told him what I have written above. After I was through, he remarked that I ought to attend church to-morrow, and tell them my hope, and be baptized. I was astonished to think he would advise me to do that. I thought he surely did not know me. I did not sleep much that night. I was in so much trouble, thinking I had deceived him. I did not go forward the next day; the lady living with

us and another one did, and were baptized on Sunday. I felt as the poet has expressed :

“Like one alone I seem to be,—  
O, is there any one like me?”

On Tuesday after the 4th Sunday in August, I went forward to the church, and was received, and baptized by Bro. Thompson; and I have never regretted it. I can always look back to that day with joy; although,

“’Tis seldom I can ever see  
Myself as I would wish to be.  
What I desire I can’t attain—  
From what I hate I can’t refrain.  
So far from God I seem to lie—  
Which often makes me weep and cry.  
I fear at last that I shall fall—  
For if a saint, the least of all.”

Thus I live, hoping for a better life. Pardon me for such a lengthy letter. I did not intend such in the beginning. I ask an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister,

SALLIE J. MCGLADE.

#### REMARKS.

As you see, the above was written some time ago, and speaks for itself, and her who loved the Saviour.

“So here I give  
The gospel of her precious christian life.  
I owe it to herself, and to the world.  
Grateful for all her tender ministry  
In life and death, I bring these lines, written  
In her own words, dewy with my tears,  
And lay them as a tribute of my love,  
Upon the grave that holds her sacred dust.”

HER HUSBAND.

---

The prince of darkness employs the men of the world to draw us from God, and the things of the world to keep us from God. Truly that good was never worth seeking, that is not worth keeping,

BRYAN, BRAZOS CO., TEXAS, January, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Bro. N. M. Yarbrough, of Maysfield, Texas, has written to me as follows :

“I have thought for some time that I would try to write some of the travails of my mind, for your private consideration; and if you think they would be of any interest to any of God’s children, you can send them abroad. It is something that has ‘often caused me anxious thought’; it has been, and is still, a mystery to me; it is something that I cannot account for. The inquiry with me is, Is it possible that one that has been born of the Holy Spirit could have the exercise of mind I have had, and be mistaken in the whole matter? I have often conscientiously believed that it was a work of the Lord. I was made to see and feel my unworthiness to so great a work. I was ignorant, and if left to myself, I never could undertake it. I have been in that condition for several years, and have tried to pray to God earnestly to show me his will in the matter. I have been desirous, if not deceived, to be reconciled to his will. I have tried several times to write on this subject, but I have feared it would be of no interest to any one, and I don’t know yet that it will be of any advantage to any; but at the same time I feel impressed to write it, praying that the Lord will aid me by his Spirit; peradventure it may be of interest to some. I have fully thought that, some day, I would have to preach. This is what has been the cause of my troubles, as stated above. I have often wondered why it was that I could not get rid of the matter, nor go to the work. I have prayed earnestly to the Lord, often, that if it was a work of my own, he would remove it from my mind; and if it was his will that I should preach, to prepare me for the work. I have felt, oftentimes, that I was willing to do anything he required of me; at the same time feeling my unworthiness. I knew that, of myself, I never could speak anything in his dread name that would be profitable to any of God’s children. I looked at my ignorance, and my poor, sinful nature, and wondered how it could be that I should preach. I then remembered that Christ said to his disciples,

'All power is given into my hands, both in heaven and earth go ye therefore,' &c. I fixed it up in my mind this way Brother Denton: that when the Lord's time had fully come I would go to the work—that the Lord would open my eyes to see, and give me a heart to understand, and loose my stammering tongue, and I would preach his word. O, how I can see and feel my imperfections! It might seem to some that I had told a very good ministerial experience. But what I have to say of my present convictions is, that I was deceived in the whole matter. I believe that God has all power, and that he has the right to, and does, call any of his flock that he sees fit to call; and that he qualifies them for the work, and makes them willing in the day of his power. I honestly believe that if I had been a chosen vessel to preach the gospel, he would have given me a revelation of his holy word. But in all my anticipations and expectations in this matter, instead of having a revelation of the holy word of God, it has appeared to be a sealed book to me. And it does appear that *this* is sufficient proof to me that I have caught at the shadow and missed the substance. I surely have been aspiring to something that I have no right to.

"Brother Denton, I will try to tell you how it was with me, and then you can the better judge. It did not seem to be a duty laid or impressed upon me to preach the gospel, but I desired to be a minister of the gospel. Paul says, 'He that desireth the office of a bishop, desireth a good work.' We are poor, fallible creatures, and liable to err. I am, I know. It would be sufficient for me to do what the Lord has required of me, and not aspire to something I have no right to. Years before last the brethren thought they could see that I had a gift, and the church liberated me to exercise it. I thought before that time, that I was perhaps useful to the church. I tried to talk to the brethren, and exhort them to the best of my ability, and I always felt an ease of conscience when I exercised in that way. But, honestly, Brother Denton, I have not since then been of any more service to the church. I have often thought that if the brethren had not liberated me as

they did, I would have been more useful. I have seen a great deal of trouble of mind, as above stated, and have thought I would write it down, to the best of my ability, and let some one else think on it. I hope if I have been wrong, the Lord will look upon me with compassion, and put in the mind of some of his children to teach me my duty more perfectly.

“Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

“N. M. YARBROUGH.”

Brother Yarbrough is a member and a deacon of the church at Maysfield. He is an humble, quiet and unassuming man, possessing the confidence and high esteem of the brethren. He is an afflicted man, and about fifty-three years old. I have frequently heard him talk to the brethren, as he states he did, and have as often been edified, though he spoke tremblingly, and not oratorically. It was “Brother Yarbrough” talking, and such was my confidence in him that his words found a place in my heart. And so with the brethren generally, as their act of liberating him indicated. But he thinks that act of the church was an injury to him. And so it may have been, though I do not say it was. But I have no doubt but that a church may err in laying upon a brother obligations to which he is not equal, under the impression that he should preach, when, perhaps, his gift is nothing more than that of exhortation. I do not know where the practice of “licensing” men to preach originated. Can you tell us, Brother Respass? It seems to me that any brother, feeling an impression to speak to the brethren in the way of encouraging them, or exhorting them, should be allowed to do so. And by thus allowing all to “speak a word”—*compelling* none, however—the church will have the opportunity of ascertaining who have gifts. And when it is seen that a brother has the gifts and qualifications of an Elder, or Bishop, then what? It seems to me that he should be ordained, or set apart to that office and work. But if the New Testament rule is that he shall first serve for a time as a “Licentiate,” then, of course, such should be the case—let him so serve. Bro. Yarbrough may, possibly, have been aspiring to a position in the church

to which God has not called him. No doubt but such has been the case with some; but neither were they, nor those who encouraged them, the better of such unlawful aspirations. But his course has not indicated it. My impression is that he should continue to pray in public, and talk in the way of exhortation; and if it is God's purpose that he shall "preach the word" in the capacity of an Elder, or Bishop, that fact will be demonstrated in due time—"for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." "Let every man stand in his place round about the camp." As "members of the body"—the Church—"and members one of another," it is enough for us to be just what God has made us. We cannot, by taking thought, add one cubit to our stature, nor possess ourselves of one talent more than God has given us. Paul said to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." And so I would say to Brother Yarbrough, and to all others who are exercised in mind as he is.

J. C. DENTON.

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#### POOR AND AFFLICTED.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell:—Beloved in Christ Jesus:—*I wish I could be with you, and have a long social conversation, as we used to have when I lived near you. I then received instruction and comfort from you, and I feel to need and desire to more now than then. But I must content myself by writing and speaking a little about the things pertaining to the kingdom of our God, and of the subjects of that kingdom.

The Lord has always had a people in this world, in a peculiar or special sense, differing from others, even as God makes them to differ by the displays of his grace which he bestows abundantly upon them. This people is poor and afflicted, needy and destitute, of themselves considered; having nothing of their own wherein to trust—having no confidence in the flesh—but they "shall trust in the name of the Lord." If I could, I had rather speak a few words of comfort to this poor and tried people than anything else. Perhaps this is because I feel so often to need comforting myself. It appears that the

poor of the flock have been the special objects of God's protecting care in all ages, and this embraces the whole flock. They are near and dear to him—he carries them even in his bosom, and “under the shadow of his wing,” and “turns his hand upon the *little ones*”

The word of God abounds with promises, to the heirs of promise. And in these promises we should have “strong consolation.” Perhaps but few verses in the Bible contain or embrace more comfort than John xvi. 33. Here we are expressly told that “in the world ye shall have *tribulation*”; and yet “be of good cheer.” It appears that the reason why we should be of good cheer is given in this same verse, both before this expression and after. “In *me* ye have peace”; and “I have overcome the *world*.”

God has chosen his children in a furnace of affliction. They pass through “great tribulation” before reaching the heavenly Jerusalem, and I am glad that it is so; for if it was not, we would not be conformable to the sufferings of Christ. We must have fellowship with his sufferings, if we are partakers of his joys and his glory; and through suffering we are enabled the better to reflect the image of Christ in our practical walk. Paul says, We are troubled on *every* side; perplexed, persecuted, cast down, but not in despair, nor destroyed; “always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the *life* also of Jesus might be made *manifest* in our body, and in our mortal flesh” (2 Cor. iv.) Then “be of good cheer.” “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (trials), knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience, if needs be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.” The trial of your faith is more precious than gold, though it be tried by fire. Then there is a needs be for it. We are thus better prepared to determine whether our faith stands in the wisdom of men or in the power of God. Being oftentimes delivered from these troubles, we feel some assurance that we have that faith that works by love, and that giveth us the victory over the world. Then “be of good cheer,” although at times our way seems hedged up, and the

time looks long and the night dreary; these *light* afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Then, if such good fruit as these are the result of these tribulations, "be of good cheer—bear hardness for a little while, as good soldiers of the cross, knowing that the Captain of our salvation *always* leads to victory, always "overcomes the world." But one says, while in gloom and distress, "I know Jesus overcomes the world—did conquer death, hell and the grave—but what is that to me? I can't do it. I feel that I am brought into captivity to sin and the wicked one." But, ah! dear me! remember that He says, "*In ME ye have peace.*" Those who have these tribulations in this world are the same ones that have peace in Jesus—but not such peace as the world giveth. "I have overcome the world." The saints of the Most High God sustain such a close relationship to their Head and Husband, that his victory is theirs; he overcomes for, and in behalf of, his Bride, the members of his body; and because he lives, they live; "by his stripes they are healed"; his righteousness becomes theirs by imputation, his Father their Father, and he their Elder Brother as well as Husband. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death," and places them under law to Christ. "Be of good cheer." "I have overcome the world" for you. "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you. I will send the Comforter; he shall abide with you, and take of the things that are mine and show them unto you; shall guide you into all truth. Those that persecute you, and even kill you, shall not triumph over you; for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. I am in you by my Spirit; you in me by a living faith; and I in the Father." Then be not afraid, neither let your heart be troubled; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It does seem that we ought to be of good cheer, seeing there are so many exceeding great and precious promises, and He is not slack concerning these promises, but is able also to perform that which he has promised.

We not only have promises, but many instances on record of his sustaining grace under the severest trials. This constitutes a great cloud of witnesses to the truth of his word. Daniel cast into the lions' den was sustained, but his enemies destroyed, because he that was in Daniel had power to control the lions. The three Hebrew Children another instance—though the furnace was unusually hot, it did them no harm, but really good; it burned off their fetters, and thus enabled them to walk in the midst, without the smell of fire on their garments, because Jesus was with them. I have thought we walk in Christ Jesus but little; except when the furnace is hot enough to *burn off the fetters* and clogs that tend to prevent us running the race with *patience* that is set before us. As individuals and as churches we are fettered and bound when in trouble and distress. We cannot sin with impunity. Every transgression shall receive a just recompense of reward. He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he doeth. But the Lord chastens them that he loves. The Lord is like a refiner's fire, and shall sit as a refiner of silver and of gold. Now we know that before the dross can be separated from the gold in many instances, there has first to be a crushing, and always subjected to the fire, before the gold is left unalloyed; so, also, must the sons of Levi be thoroughly purged before they can make an offering in righteousness acceptable to God.

When we consider, further, how Jesus overcome the world in his resurrection from the dead, we have good reason to be of good cheer. By death he destroyed him that had the power of death, and rose a conqueror over all the powers of this world; and that same Spirit that brought again Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, "if so be that Spirit dwell in you." The Head could not be holden of death; the Holy One should not see corruption, nor his soul remain in hell (the grave); neither can death hold his members (his body.) They, too, shall triumph over the last enemy, which is death; and will say, "O death! where is thy sting?" You have no sting; it's taken away. "O grave! where is thy

victory?" You have none; you have to give up your dead. All who sleep in Jesus, when he shall come again with a shout of triumph, shall meet him in the air, and be carried home to glory, and "so shall they ever be with the Lord." This is enough. Then I would say to the young Christian, to the middle aged, and to the old soldier who has fought many a hard battle with Apolyon and his forces, "Be of good cheer." "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men!" "Let all his works, in all places of his dominions, praise the Lord." "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,  
With the great unfit to shine;  
Although the world may think it strange,  
They would not with the world exchange."

If these reflections, imperfectly thrown together, tend to edify any of the poor, the Lord be praised. May the Lord bless you and yours, my dear brother, and "be your guide, even unto death."

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

JOHN N. HURST.

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### SALVATION.

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Is it for me, or some unseen, unfeeling being, that I am unacquainted as to its whereabouts in this world or the world to come? Dear reader, go with me to the Book of God; go with me to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, the rock whence ye were hewn, thence to a throne of grace, and the answer is ready. Salvation is for the man, and I hope that God has and will continue to remember me in mercy, for Jesus' sake. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone in my heart to give me the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, and by this knowledge I am taught the heinous nature of sin, and made to loathe myself in the sight of a pure and holy God,

bringing me low down in the valley of humiliation, where all my judgment and legal hope is taken away, and I fall a victim in the lap of sovereign mercy; and then, to my astonishment and surprise, I go out with joy, and am led forth with peace. The mountains and hills break forth before me into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands. Then I have the light of the knowledge of God's glory, in the face of his Son as my Saviour, and can join with David, saying, Come near, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he has done for my soul: He took my feet from a horrible pit; he placed them upon a rock; he put a new song in my mouth, even praises to God. O, dear child of God! is it not the man who has been thus exercised? Yes, is the inward response of every heaven-born soul. The cause of this response is, they have been taught of the Lord, and great is their peace; the law of God has been put into their minds and written in their hearts; the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them, and they realize that they are saved by grace, for all their works had failed, and God is glorified in their salvation. And all this has come to them, and in them, in consideration of what had been done for them. Well, then, what had been done for them prior to this work mentioned? I will tell some things which had been done, in the covenant of redemption or grace. The Father gave them to the Son in this covenant; the Son is their surety, and all their sins are laid upon him; and in fullness of time this Son was made (born) of a woman; made under the law to redeem them, for they had transgressed in Adam, their father, and were under the law. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and by his stripes we are healed. In all our afflictions he was afflicted. The angel of his presence saved us in his love, and in his pity he redeemed us, and he bare us all the days of old, and to the Cross, and put away our sin by the sacrifice of himself. Then, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more,

being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And after having arisen a victor over death and the grave, he ascended to his Father, and makes intercession for all his people, and as he lives we shall live also. Now, all this has been done, and an application of it to our hearts by the Holy Ghost enables us to say, like Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Then, as we men and women have had so much done for us by the good Lord, and have his precious promise that he will not forsake nor fail us, but will be with us to and through death to comfort and guide us, O, let us adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in all things. The time is short; the place which now knows us will soon know us no more. But though these bodies of ours must soon die, yet ere long they shall be raised incorruptible and carried to eternal glory, where we shall be made kings and priests unto God, and reign with him forever. Blessed God. Through grace the man himself gets to heaven to praise the Eternal God forever.

Bro. Respass, I have written the above for the MESSENGER provided you think it worthy a place in its columns. In it you have my views, in a concise way, on the subject mentioned. May the Lord abundantly bless you in all your labors.

J. S. COLLINS.

*Mt. Alba, Texas, Jan. 27, 1883.*

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Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.—Matt. xviii. 10.

The blessed Saviour, in the chapter above alluded to, gives to his Church a perfect RULE to be governed by, both in private and public offenses. His disciples, at that time, had gotten up a carnal anxiety to know who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, doubtless desiring to be preferred one above another, just as all men do when governed by a fleshly incentive. Great and good men, when exercised by the fleshly mind, have no greater ambition than to excel, or be exalted above others. Being gigantic men in their own

eyes, they expect and claim greater honors; and while exercised by such a spirit, it is insulting to their dignity to tell them that a little child (a believer in Christ), though meager in worldly understanding and poor as to this world's goods, have superior honors to them; and such, no doubt, were the carnal feelings of the disciples at the time they interrogated their Lord as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, because they were expecting for the Lord Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom, over which he would reign as KING, and that they would be preferred one above another in his kingdom; and how gratifying it would have been to their carnal feelings for the dear Lord to have designated the high position each was to fill. But to their great astonishment, instead of saying to them that you are worthy, and have sufficient capacity to occupy an honored position, the one on my right hand and another on my left, &c., He, in a way of stern rebuke for their carnal aspirations, calls a little child to Him, and sets him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." What an example of humility was here taught! and what a striking contrast drawn between the carnally-minded and the humble Christian—the one big in his own eyes, feeling himself meritorious of high preferment, while the other, a little child, perfectly helpless, wanting in ability, and in every sense depending on Christ for life, salvation and every other blessing, being content if he could only receive a few crumbs from his dear Lord's table. The lesson is, without doubt, of the greatest importance to us. It teaches us the impossibility of entering the kingdom of heaven with worldly pomp, or with any carnal ambition to gratify. We must be converted, sufficiently crucified to the world and all self-aggrandizement as to count all things lost for the excellency of Christ, because we cannot properly claim the appellation of little children only when we in heart can of a truth esteem the reproaches of Christ far superior to worldly preferment; and if, indeed, we have been sufficiently killed to the world and its perishing

charms, and have become the dear children of God by regeneration and adoption, what a blessing! What an unspeakable mercy the Lord has bestowed on us! Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God! and if a son of God, then we are heirs, and joint heirs with his Son Jesus Christ, and according to his unfailing promise, we are to appear with him in glory, and be like him; are to bear his glorious image for as we have borne the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. In our text we are commanded to take heed—that is, be careful—that we despise not one of these little ones; a timely warning given us to watchfulness against pandering to our fleshly minds in stirring up malice toward one of God's little children. The blessed Lord certainly had in view, at the time of giving the command, the weakness and treacherousness of the fleshly mind, knowing that his people were still in possession of a carnal nature—subject to wrath, and even hatred, against the most spiritual minded; consequently he gives the kind warning to take heed not to offend one of his little ones, and O how ardently we should labor to obey, so much so as not to give offense to a solitary child of grace. It matters not as to his circumstances in this life, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, we should not offend him, remembering that the Lord has said, "That it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea, than to offend one of his little ones who believed in him." We should always bear in mind, if possible, that such is the endearing relationship between Christ and his people that we cannot offend one of them without offending him; when we persecute and cast their name out as evil, we are doing it unto Christ; we cannot hate one of God's dear children without hating the Lord; when we talk evil of them, we are speaking against the Lord; when we labor to destroy them, we are fighting against the progress of his kingdom, for Christ tells us that, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Every Christian should heed well the command of Jesus, "TO WATCH," and one of the most needful precautions to be observed is the proper bridling of the tongue, that it speak no evil one of another. We are positively commanded not to speak evil one of another, but, to the contrary, to have fervent charity one for another, knowing that charity hides a multitude of faults; we are, indeed, to love one another fervently out of a pure heart, and when thus exercised by the true spirit of charity, we find but little error in our brethren. Under the influence of charity, we realize our own infirmities, but see but little weakness in our brethren, which fully explains to our minds how we can esteem others better than ourselves. And it is an unmistakable truism that when we can see others so much better than ourselves, that we cannot speak evil of them. Instead of having an objection to allege, we are constantly craving to be like them, or as good as we esteem them to be. We would at once cease to be a little child, in the sense of the text, were we to feel that we were superior to our brethren in goodness. All that we can possibly claim, when humbled as a little child, is, that we are less than the least of all saints. Less than the least! How small! How insignificant one must feel in himself to realize that he is less than the least in all his Father's family, and being less than the least, how easy for him to esteem his brethren as being by far his superior; and then how pleasant for him to prefer his brethren to himself. With him it is no longer BIG I and little YOU.

Yes, he is willing to be a doorkeeper in the house of his God; is willing to be counted the very offscouring of the earth for Christ. And truly it may be said of such a people that they are not of the world, but of God, and have entered and are enjoying the blessings of Christ's kingdom, and will soon realize the full fruition of their HOPE. One very prominent reason given in the text why we should not despise one of the Lord's dear children is, "That in heaven THEIR ANGELS do always behold the face of his Father." Mark you the expression THEIR ANGELS,\* showing, beyond a doubt, that

\*We have doubts as to that application, Bro. W.—Ed.

every heaven-born soul has guardian angels who are always beholding the face of their heavenly Father, waiting his command to minister to their relief (for they are ministering spirits), and take vengeance on their enemies.

Affectionately,

A. B. WHATLEY.

Hogansville, Ga., March 25, 1883.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL.

STATE ROAD, DEL., August, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—I understand it to be your desire to have a brief sketch of my life and public labors, from my own pen, for the use of your readers; and if I undertake to comply, I wish it to be with the understanding that I am acting upon your judgment rather than my own.

The old patriarch said his days had been *few and evil*. My days have not yet been half as many as his had been; and as to their being evil, he had seen the ladder with its foot set upon the earth and whose top reached heaven, and had already begun to see the prophetic vision fulfilled.

My story can have but little of interest, or of value, on my part. But I can speak of many things of interest and of importance that have been done for me, and conferred upon me. In the world, I have known something of trials. My parents were both Baptists, and so far as I ever knew, they were both regarded as sound and consistent. They lived to see the division developing, and to show that they were steadfast. The church where they belonged was called Kingwood in Hunterdon county, New Jersey. It was organized July 31st, 1742. In 1835 my father was called away by death. The church had then been in existence nearly a century. Her faith and practice from the first until the present, have been what they are now; formerly designated as Particular Baptist, latterly Old School Baptist. My father was an officer in the church from before my recollection until his death. This event occurred when I was about sixteen years old. Shortly

after his death, the preacher who was serving the church as pastor, and who came there professing to be in entire accord with the church in her faith and practice, suddenly changed front, and began to advocate means, and missions, &c. I speak somewhat particularly of these events, not only because I was eye-witness to them, but that I was about the age to receive life-long impressions from them. The minister, without the consent or even the knowledge of the church, engaged a man, afterwards known as a *revivalist*, that we had never heard of, to come and hold a protracted or revival meeting. This meeting, which was continued in the meeting-house for several weeks, was to all intents a Methodist meeting. Not only was the doctrine of the Methodists maintained and advocated, and their campmeeting and revival practices introduced; but the Baptist doctrine and practice was assailed and ridiculed, and prominent Methodist members came in and took part, and showed their hearty concurrence. The result of this was a number of converts, all of which the church refused to receive; and quite a number of the former members drew out, and uniting with the new converts, went and built for themselves under the name of Missionary Baptists.

The old church, with diminished congregation,—with the tide of popular influence turned strongly against her,—but with her spiritual strength and comfort developed rather than otherwise, continued to spread her table even in the presence of her enemies. After a period of over one hundred and forty years, there she stands upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, continuing in their doctrine and in their fellowship.

It would be hard for any one else to say why I should not have been a convert at the protracted meeting with the rest. I have not been sorry since, that I attended all through night and day for weeks, learning all that could possibly be learned of the art of making converts, and the capacity of men to effect the salvation of their fellow men. It has served as a part of an important schooling, that I trust has not been altogether lost upon me.

About ten years after this sifting of the Kingwood Church I felt drawn towards them, so as ultimately with fear and much misgiving to go to one of their church meetings, and inquire if they thought I could rightfully be admitted to place among them. The church then numbered about one hundred members; and I will not now attempt to tell how loved and revered that church, nor how little and unworthy and unfit I felt for such a place. Elder Gabriel Conklin was at that time pastor, and I may here say that I have always regarded him as among the most eminent and worthy gospel ministers and pastors that I have ever known. The church appeared to be better satisfied with my exercises than I was myself, and voted to receive me. My baptism was at the hands of Elder Conklin, in the year 1847. I remained in the fellowship of that church nearly twelve years, serving them the principal part of the time as Clerk.

A particular account of all my first travel and exercises will not be expected here. Some few things that have had an influence on my after life, I will mention. As I came to know christian people to love them, and to look with longing and earnest desire far above my own depraved and wretched condition to their happy estate, I was conscious of a kind of *ambition* to be (if I could be one at all) a *good* Christian; not a weak, doubting, unworthy mendicant; but one with a bright experience,—not weak, but strong,—not needy and dependent, but filled with joy and peace in believing. I had it all marked out. I did not intend to be satisfied with an experience that did not have certain marks clear and distinct. I knew not that way in which I have been led. I never would have chosen it. To grow weaker instead of stronger,—more and more unworthy, and be the least in my Father's house,—was not as I would have chosen. So have I been mortified and humiliated before God and my brethren. And I know not why I should have been so completely cut off from myself, and from my own wisdom, and led in such an adverse way, unless it was because I had once been so much in sympathy with the convert-making going on at that protracted meeting.

If I had before entertained ambitious sentiments, I was brought low now. I felt to choose for myself a low place, and esteem every other member above myself. Four or five years that followed my admission into the church was marked in my own mind and feelings by an anxious and tender solicitude towards those who were outside the pales of the church. The Redeemer's lambs,—his little ones, that loved him and loved his people,—shut out from the fold. The loneliness, sorrow, and utter desolation of one of these, wandering and crying in the wilderness, with no home or city to dwell in, were things with which I had strangely learned to sympathize. I do not know but what I knew the Lord's people and loved them for some years while shut out from them, as well as I ever have since. But my experience was deficient. I was not satisfied with the evidences I had for myself. I could not expect to be able to satisfy others. It would have been no cross to make a profession. I longed for the time and opportunity to come, but I must have something to profess. It had seemed to me that I yet lacked the one thing needful. No man could help me.

If there has ever been any profit in my labors, or useful service to the churches, it may probably be traced to some of those peculiar features in my early exercises; some wherein all things seemed to be against me. The most earnest efforts of my life,—the most tender sensibilities of my nature,—have been called forth in behalf of the weak and little ones; those who hoped in the divine mercy, who loved the saints, and yet were involved in doubt and obscurity with regard to their experience. I have known no greater joy than that of being serviceable to such. I lost both my parents in my early youth, I being the oldest of a family of orphan children. My father passed away in the beginning of the hardest winter that we have encountered during the present century. In the settlement of his estate, and the guardianship of the younger children—all of which I had charge of—and assisting to sustain a widowed mother throughout the sickness and suffering that followed in the family, I received lessons of instruc-

tion and discipline that are never taught in the schools. I have found myself weeping with those who wept, as well as rejoicing and being exceeding glad when the Ransomed of the Lord have returned and come to Zion.

When I had been united with the church three years and some months, the brethren voted a resolution for me to speak at their meetings and within their bounds. Eighteen months afterward, viz., July 31st, 1852, I was voted and received a written license to preach the gospel when and where there should be a door in Providence opened. I can hardly tell how all this came about. It certainly was contrary to my inclinations and my judgment. I had bad health; a poor, weakly frame; a weak and harsh voice; a very indifferent education; and above all, such an unsatisfactory and trifling experience. In short, I lacked every qualification. I had felt not only to love the church, but to mourn her low estate; and I never could find it in my heart to deny her when she asked for any of my poor services. In the month of April, 1856, the church made arrangements for my ordination. Elders Thos. Barton of the Delaware Association, and D. L. Harding, of the Delaware River, together with the pastor, Elder G. Conklin, constituted the council. In all the action of the church at the several times there was entire concurrence; not a dissenting vote. During the season of 1858 concurrent action was taken on the part of four destitute churches in the State of Delaware and a unanimous call was tendered to me to take the pastoral charge, they agreeing to share the time and labor. I removed the following spring to my present residence. At the end of a quarter of a century I find myself in the same field of labor, no interruption to the arrangement having occurred during that time. Two churches have since been added to my charge. It has been my privilege to wait upon more than one hundred candidates, in the ordinance of baptism. Some have been called away by death; but *they died in faith*. The rest continue in the love, fellowship and confidence of the saints. Of the prosperity of these churches, the increase of their congregations, and of the measure of their fellowship in the Spirit,

It is not my place to speak. I may say that I have not been without fruit in all my labor.

That my course in my public life should have been so smooth, and nothing ever encountered among my brethren to oppose or to discourage, has been matter of astonishment to me. In the enjoyment of a cordial and hearty support, abundant assurances of their love and confidence, their entire unanimity in every action, I may say that the candle of the Lord has shone round about me. Within the garden I have encountered no thorns.

In this sketch I have aimed to confine myself to points of general interest, remembering that your readers, with few exceptions, have no personal knowledge of me. With any and all those who are *going and weeping*, inquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, I still live in abiding sympathy and companionship.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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EQUALITY, ALA., August 8, 1883.

*Elder Wm. Mitchell:—Dear Brother:—*In compliance with our request to aged ministers, I send you the following.

I was born in Barnwell District, S. C., in 1806. My father and mother's names were John and Elizabeth Jowers. My advantages in a temporal sense were very limited. As to education, I never read a lesson in school in my life. My father died when I was seven years old; my mother in 1834. I had thought of death and eternity many times, but never seriously until April, 1828, and on the 5th Sunday in August of the same year, I hope I received a free pardon of all my sins; and on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in September, I went to Rosemary Church, and related what I hope the Lord had done for me, was received into the fellowship of the church, and on the next day was baptized by Elder Darling Peoples. The first impression that I had of a call to the ministry, was as I came out of the water; but on the 5th Sunday in the next May it was more fully revealed to me, that it was my duty to preach the gospel, from the great view I had of the

plan of salvation, through the atoning merits of Jesus. But I rendered every excuse, and resisted it until 1840. Viewing myself so unworthy and so illiterate, I thought it more than I could bear, but all these excuses would not do; the burden grew heavier and heavier, till I got to where it looked to me I could not live and not preach, and could not die to get rid of it. So, on the 1st Sunday in June, 1840, I made the attempt, and took my first text. For fifty minutes I knew nothing—was entirely carried away with what was embodied in the text. My mind was finally caught away from the text by seeing an old sister in front of me in a flood of tears; and looking round, I saw the whole congregation in tears. Right then I took my seat, having more permanent peace and ease of mind than I had in ten years before. This was at Shiloh Church, Randolph county, Alabama. John A. Miller and his wife, Tines Owen and his wife, and many others were present. Some time in the first of the year 1842, Cedron and Liberty Churches both called on Shiloh Church for my ordination, as they wanted my labors; and in spite of all opposition they called a presbytery, which consisted of John M. Duke, Richardson Chandler, and William Morrison, who set me apart to the work of the ministry.

I was married February 14th, 1828. My wife was the mother of three children, two of which were still-born. On the 21st of September, 1831, she died; and, on the 21st of the next June, I married again, a widow with two children. We lived together till she was the mother of nine children, three of which were still-born. In the year 1850 my second wife died. I then married again, and she is the mother of seven children. Out of the nineteen children, twelve are living. One son and two daughters are still living in the house with their mother and myself.

I have embraced the above in as few words as I could make sense. I feel grateful to you, Bro. Mitchell, for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and will send you more subscribers as soon as they can raise the money.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

BENJAMIN JOWERS.

It is now near forty years since we first met with Elder Jowers. He came to the Beulah Association in 1844. As is usual in the South, there was a temporary stand for preaching and "Bush Arbor" in a grove. During the preaching of Elder Jowers much interest was manifested, and there came up a rain so that he spoke of stopping, that the people might get out of the rain. But such was the interest felt and anxiety to hear, that many voices said, "No! no! Go on, go on! If you can stand in the rain to speak, we will stay to hear." And they did stay. Many drew close around the speaker, and were fed, comforted and rejoiced in the Lord greatly. May our dear, faithful old brother be comforted in his old age with the assurance that he has fought a good fight.—M.

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### DEATH.

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What a thought! what a word! none like it in all the vocabularies of earth. The scythe that mows us all down, the overflowing stream that sweeps us all away, the sentence that lays us all low, the hand that dissolves all the relations of earth; separating husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, rulers and subjects, masters and servants, friend and friend—bringing all down on a cold, dead level—leaving all the tribes of earth, through all ages, in mourning over loved ones. Surely, in Adam all die. God has determined that every child of Adam shall feel the sting of death—except Enoch and Elijah, and the living saints on earth when Christ shall come to raise the universal dead, and judge the universal world. To thee, O death, we all must bow! But Christ has gained the victory over thee, and in his own time will destroy thee. What a sermon is in the words, *Christ will destroy death!* To the Christian are there any more such words? If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so they that sleep in Jesus will God also bring with him. Yes, in Christ will all sleeping saints be made alive, and all living

ones be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and ever be with the Lord. And we are to comfort one another with these words. Thus resurrected and changed, the saints in Christ will pass the final judgment forever acquitted, and enter together and forever the kingdom of glory. This is the end of the calling and career of all the children of God. To awake in the likeness of Christ, and to be with him forever satisfied, praising God for undying love, and sovereign, redeeming, victorious grace, which brought them off more than conquerors through every difficulty and over every foe. Dear children of God, as we must all die, and as we shall all rise and meet again to part no more, what difference can it make who of us dies first or lives longest, except to fill our measure in doing God's will here on earth?

Dear brethren Editors, a late sad event in our family has forced us to feel in our soul—the centre of our affections—the weight and importance of the subject which heads this article. This king of terrors has been in our midst, and our youngest son, WILLIAM A. PARKER, is no more. He died of typhoid malarial fever, on the 12th of June last, at the end of only seven days' illness; aged 35 years, 3 months and 5 days. He was attended by two physicians to no effect. His fever never abated. He died unconscious, without a struggle or a groan. It was the sad lot of myself, his aged mother, and others of the family, and a number of friends, to stand by and see him breathe his last. To all the family and a large circle of friends he died much lamented. He was baptized in 1872, and maintained his profession by an upright walk and a godly conversation in the world; so we hope to meet him again where death cannot enter, and parting will be no more. He left a loved and loving wife and an eight-year-old son with us, to mourn the loss of one so loved and so much missed. What a difference between thinking of such an event and having to realize it in the very depths of our affections! We never knew how much we loved our dear "Billy" until we were giving him up, and since. We feel resigned; but being recon-

ciled to God, does not make us either stones or brutes. It is well for us to know grief as well as joy. The day before the death of our dear son, I agonized in prayer to God—even in cries and tears—that, if compatible with His holy will, he might be spared to us; but the will of the Lord is done, the Judge of all the earth has done right. The days of our deep grief are passed away, and a quiet, sweet calm has ensued, and pervades us; and we feel that his loss, and the scenes connected therewith, have been sanctified to our good; for it makes us feel forcibly that the Lord is God, and to realize more fully and directly our entire dependence and weakness. May the dear Lord keep us in the valley of humility, and near the cross, is the humble desire of a way-worn pilgrim.

Dear brethren Editors, while I read the MESSENGER with considerable interest; several reasons conspire to deter me from writing; still I feel to offer this scribble to your discretion. If you find sufficient merit in it, you will give it a place in your columns; otherwise throw it aside. There is much commotion in my mind at times about writing, and I may or may not write again. Of course my time is short.

Affectionately,

C. A. PARKER.

*Mt. Vernon, Texas, August 2, 1883.*

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### EXPERIENCE.

HORN'S CROSS ROADS, MILLER CO., GA., July, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—I have thought for some time to write something for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, of the peculiar manner in which I have been brought along in this vain life. I will begin by saying, I was reared by pious parents, who were connected religiously with a body of people called Free Will Baptists, and the entire section of country in which I was reared were of that order; and I being young, and it being their professed duty to teach others religion, I was very ready to take lessons, and after a few years' teaching on their part, and hard study and trying to obtain it on my part, I reached the point desired. So, upon getting religion, I joined;

it was at a protracted meeting of course, as it is the only suitable time for persons to join who get religion; it was, if I recollect right, in 1850. In a few years after, I married and moved to a new settlement, in which I found no Free Will Baptists in name, but a host of Missionaries and Methodists who preached so nearly the same doctrine that I could not tell the difference; and mentioning my church connection to an old Missionary brother, he told me I could get membership with them; so, presenting myself, I was received, my baptism recognized, and I thought they were very clever people for thus receiving me, a subject of a different kingdom. This was in 1860, when, soon after, I was called off into the war in which I remained until September, 1862, and at the battle of Sharpsburg I received a wound that relieved me of all military duty, and in three or four years after returning home I got able to get about a little from my wound. I was then again thrown into another neighborhood, in which my first brotherhood, the Free Wills, were as plentiful as grasshoppers, and I immediately united with them again; as there was no difference with them and the Missionaries it made no difference with me, with which I lived. I thought that they were all churches of Christ, and that one would do as well as another. In 1866 they decided there was manifest in me a gift, and therefore they called me to the work of the ministry, setting me apart by imposition of hands to the same. I continued with them two or three years, but upon a careful examination, in the meantime, of the scriptures, I decided that the doctrine of apostasy was not therein taught, as held by them; and upon examining the Articles of Faith of my Missionary brethren, I found that they professed to believe in the final perseverance of the saints; whereupon I again united with them, and as with my baptism, so with my ordination by the Free Wills—it was readily received by them. I continued with them, preaching and receiving my salaries, until 1874—living in hatred to the Primitive Baptists and the doctrine of election and predestination; but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith I trust he loved me, even whilst

lead in sins, quickened me with Christ, and opened my blind eyes so that I should see my true condition, which indeed to me was alarming—perhaps more so than with many, for my former religion seemed to condemn me, apart from my other sins. I became now almost a wild man; my temporary peace with my brethren was gone forever, and also with my dear wife and children it seemed to be gone, and nothing but solitude would do me. And I will here remark, that notwithstanding my extreme agony, and repeated efforts in prayer to God to lead me in the right way, I could not help for my life a mental reservation, that when he did impart the knowledge of the truth to me, that it might be according to my old former notions. But, alas! my sorrow grew so great, and my sore so grievously ran in the night, that as one of old, I was made to feel of a truth, “that all thy waves and billows passed over me”; so that in such agony I was made to cry out and say, According to thy will, O Lord, thy way and not mine be done; and when it pleased the Lord, who separated me from my mother’s womb, to reveal Christ in me as an all-sufficient Saviour, my hatred to Primitive Baptists immediately died, as well as to election and predestination, and I found myself in love with them in spite of my former prejudices. I thenceforth in my Missionary pulpits began to preach election and predestination, which caused them to group in the yard after preaching and say, “that is Hardshellism, and it will never do; it will ruin the church.” But these things did not hinder me, but rather inflamed my zeal and love for the truth. And I will here say, that at the time and place I received, as I I trust, a hope in the dear Redeemer, that I then also received a call to the ministry, if I ever received one at all; for it appeared to me that if the whole world was congregated before me, I could tell them the entire plan of salvation, so plain did it seem to me, and so plainly that they could no longer oppose the truth. But I lingered along from 1874 to 1879, in open disobedience, trying to reconcile myself with my baptism, but knowing that I had not been baptized into the church of Christ; but pride would suggest to me that you accept bap-

tism in your heart; but at once the word would sound in my ear, "He that believeth and is baptized," &c.; and without detailing the much anguish of soul whilst this struggle of the flesh was hotly going on with the spirit, though I am sure I shed tears enough to have baptized my poor, sinful body; night after night did mine eyes overflow with tears upon this subject. The trouble was that I had been called a preacher a number of years, and had buried many in the water, and flesh contended a long time for its own; indeed, it never was willing to relinquish its claims until, I trust, the love of God and the grace given me in Christ killed my pride and sweetly forced me in—yea, now have wrought in me to will and do of his own good pleasure. I was thus perfectly content to take up the cross, and bear the persecutions and hard names that a wicked world would bestow upon me. In such a state of submission, on the 3rd Saturday in December, 1879, I was led to meet with the church, Olive Grove, Decatur county, Ga., and after preaching by Elder Peter Everett, I presented myself, and was made welcome to a place in the church, and immediately after conference we went to the water, and I feel until this day that I received at that precious old brother's hand a gospel baptism. I was then, the same day, called to the care of that church, and my ordination called for the next Saturday; and the church at Union, Miller county, Ga., met with a presbytery for that purpose, consisting of Elders Wm. Hubbard, Peter Everett and D. Bartley, when I was called to serve that church, and have in weakness tried in the spirit of love, with much affliction, to serve them to the present time.

Now, Bro. Respass, I never met you but once, and it indeed was a pleasant meeting and a sorrowful parting, but such is our lot here below—to meet and part again.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

J. V. TIPTON.

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Either self must be laid aside, or God will lay us aside. What can any true Israelite behold in this Dagon, that the ark of God should bow before it?

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

## EXPLANATION.

In the September issue of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, page 429, in our hasty remarks appended to Elder Lacy's letter, we used the phrase, "vain, speculative reasoning," in a connection which Elder Wagner thinks the readers of the MESSENGER would construe as intimating that his late published articles were of that character. Nothing could be more foreign from our intention than to insinuate such a thing; for we have expressed more than once, in conversation with brethren, that Elder Wagner's late published articles were deep, instructive, compact, and comprehended much in few words, and are well worthy of being carefully and repeatedly read. They afford a great deal of matter for solid and profitable thought and scriptural investigation. If the Lord has given Elder Wagner or any of His ministers clearer light and better understanding of certain points of gospel doctrine than He has to many others, it is not vain nor speculative, nor is it for the purpose of driving them away from our affection or love. But to the contrary, we should esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake, and for the gift of God that is in them. If any have more given them than others, there is also more required of them, and honor and respect are due them according to the duties and responsibilities which God requires of them.

The apostles of Christ cautioned the church of God and each member thereof, to "Do nothing through strife nor *vain* glory"; and also admonished that, "If any man speak, he speak as the oracles of God." This they did, not because the church at Philippi had done so, or were then, but to warn and caution them against strife or vain glory ever being introduced among them. In this general *cautionary* sense we intended to use the words, "avoid vain, speculative reasoning," and by no means in an offensive sense, or as reflecting upon our brethren. Our want of ability to see with Elder

Wagner in one solitary sentence, which we mentioned on page 430, does not, by any means, justify the conclusion that he is wrong. We regard a free expression and kind interchange of thought among brethren as necessary to unity, strength and growth. The precious gifts which God has given his church is, that, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, they should make increase of the body; not to make more members, but "unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16.

M.

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### SIN.

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Much has been preached, written and *felt*, with regard to sin, and yet the subject is not exhausted. The scriptures plainly assert, that "Sin is the transgression of the law." Wherever there is a law given from either God or man, to man, as a rule by which his practical conduct is to be regulated, the violation of this law by those upon whom it is binding, constitutes sin, and subjects the offender to whatever penalty is affixed in the law for its transgression.

But while the above principle is no doubt well established and understood by our brethren generally, there is another thought comes up at times upon which we are extremely liable to get confused in contemplating. We begin to reason with regard to sin in all its bearings. We know it to be a maxim in law,—and doubtless a good one,—that there is no guilt where one acts without design or intention. This design, purpose, intention, and deliberate forethought to do a certain thing which is criminal and punishable by the law, while it is connected with and goes before the act of transgression as recognizable and punishable by the law, cannot, of *itself*, be regarded as *the* transgression of law without the practical act. Both are coupled together, and both are ascribed to man. We should not lose sight of this important point. "By man came both sin and death." It is all by man, whether we consider the first conception of sin to do a certain thing, or the actual doing of the thing thus conceived. It is by man, and for this

very reason man is accountable. If we were simply to consider the act of man in violating law without intention or motive, we would be at a loss to know how he could be held accountable for his act. And, on the other hand, were we only to consider his motive or design without an act corresponding with the motive, we would be at a loss to know how he could be adjudged as a sinner or transgressor of the law. For want of properly understanding and blending these two points together in the practical transgression of man, brethren often become confused in mind, and even get up at times unpleasant contentions upon the subject.

We hastily present these thoughts for our readers to carefully examine and consider. A kind interchange of thought among brethren upon this and many other points, might be very serviceable, and bring many to see and know that they are not so widely differing in their understanding of things as they may have supposed.—M.

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### TO CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—We are aware that these Letters to you may have too much sameness about them, and become to you as a dull monotony. There is, however, no necessity for this. Had we more ability, and better qualifications for imparting instruction to the young, there certainly is sufficient variety of thought to employ our time and attention for many days and years yet to come. As the youthful mind grows, expands and strengthens, it needs innocent and wholesome variety of thought. It cannot be healthy and strong without it—no more than the body could be healthy and strong without good, nourishing food. For the mind to run too long on one line of thought, or be engaged from day to day exclusively on one subject, is not only monotonous, but injurious; and, in most cases, it is the direct road to insanity.

But perhaps some of you do not know what *monotonous* means. Well, if you do not, it will “break the dull monotony” of thought a little for you to find this out. And as you

may not have a dictionary convenient, nor have any one present to tell you, we will try to explain it to you. Anything, whether reading, writing, public speaking, or private conversation, if continued in one unbroken tone of voice, or the same subject continually repeated, is monotonous. It is the absence of all variety of tone or subject in speaking, reading, or singing. It soon becomes irksome, tedious and unpleasant. You may have heard a person tell something in which you felt considerable interest the first or second time he told it, because it was not only new to you, but it was a proper time and a proper occasion for him to tell it. But suppose you hear him tell the same thing every day at various times for a month or two; it would cease to interest you. It would be monotonous. And still worse, if he tells it in a kind of mumbling tone of voice, with his words all *jumbled* up together in such a way that you could scarcely tell one word from another; this would be a kind of *double* monotony; a monotony of voice and manner, as well as monotony of subject. Have you ever heard any one reading in such a way that you could not tell where a sentence begins nor where it ends? He reads rapidly, but speaks many words so imperfectly, and in such a sing-song way, that you fail to get the sense, or take no interest in what he reads. He neither has emphasis nor cadence of voice. He reads in a very monotonous way.

Some may think these are little things, and so they are; but they are things very important, and the sooner you can know them, the better. We have sent some of you a nice little Testament, and we know, unless attention is given to some of these little things about reading, you cannot read with much interest for yourself, nor for others.

Christ commanded even the unbelieving Jews to "search the scriptures."—John v. 39. To do this, they certainly had first to know how to read. To others he said: "Have ye *never read*, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise"—Matt. xxi. 16. And again: "Did you *never read* in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner"? Thus they were reproved

for having read with so little attention. Again, a very distinguished lawyer is asked the searching question: "How *readest* thou?" It is, therefore, important to know how to read and what you do read.

After reading this, it will break the *monotony* for you to read other letters in the MESSENGER.—M.

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### DESIRING TO SEE THOSE WHOM JESUS HATH RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

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They came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.—John xii. 9.

So it now is with those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. They not only desire to see him, but also to see those of the heirs of promise whom he hath raised from the dead. In their natural state all are dead in sins, and they never get to loving the brotherhood of Jesus until they have "passed from death unto life." Then they are like those Jews who had come together not only to see Jesus, but to see him who had been raised from a state of death and made to sit at meat with the Son of God. It is in this manner Christians are often drawn together for the worship of God, and it is thus they "Lift up the voice together, and together with the voice they sing." They love Jesus, and they love one another. They have all been raised from the dead by the same power, and embraced in the same love, and they desire to see all such as Jesus hath "raised from the dead." They can understand one another, and having been taught of God and learned of the Father, they come unto Jesus their Saviour. They have a like experience of sin, death and deliverance, and can therefore have fellowship one for another—each one relying alone upon the merits of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from sin. They love Lazarus and want to see him, and thus they are drawn together; and until they leave off "their first love," they will not "forsake the assembling of themselves together" for worship, unless providentially hindered. What a blessed thought to be raised from the dead, and come together to par-

take of a gospel feast, and sit at the "table with Jesus and with Lazarus, whom he hath raised from the dead"! Thus "He hath raised us up together," and made us one in him and with him, "and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

We once heard that a certain beloved Elder and gifted minister of Jesus was to be at a certain Association, and as we never had met with him, though greatly desiring to see him, we made considerable effort to attend the same meeting. We were favored to meet with and form a very pleasant and loving acquaintance with the dear brother. During our interview the writer said to him: "It may be that my motive in coming to this Association is not right; for if I had not heard that you were expected to be here, I should not have come." "Well," said he, "suppose you had heard that I was to be at a certain horse race, or bar room, or gambling table, would you have come to see *me*?" "No, no!" was the quick response. We saw it was not the mere person we desired to see, but because he had been raised from the dead, and eat at the same table with Jesus. "Every one that loveth him that begeth, loveth him also that is begotten of him." And it is "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments."—1 John v. 2.

Brotherly love and gospel fellowship continue among brethren and churches in proportion to their steadfastness in the faith, and in proportion to the promptness with which they keep the commandments of God. It is said of the disciples of Jesus in the primitive days of christianity, that such as gladly received the word of the Lord that was *preached* to them, "were baptized, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers."—Acts ii. 42.

Dear brethren and sisters, do you love Jesus? Do you love Lazarus, whom Jesus loved, and whom he raised from the dead? If so, you want to see them and assemble with them.—M.

WE begin in this issue short Biographical sketches of our aged ministers, and have on hand now to be published as space admits, sketches of Elders A. King, Peter Everett, of Georgia, and M. Hodges, of Tennessee; and ask our aged ministers to send us on such sketches at once, that we may have one or more for each issue. Also, we would like to have the pictures of any who feel disposed to allow them to go in to accompany the sketches. Such will please send us a photograph, with their names written in their own hands under, at the bottom.—R.

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OWING to our absence from home to Kentucky, and the Association coming near our home, we have been unable to prepare any editorial for this issue.

We would say to the brethren in Kentucky that we were permitted to get home safely, and found all well. Thanks be unto the Lord!

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WE are informed that Elder Cleveland has baptized some twenty at Emmaus Church, Upson county, Ga., within the last month, and a dozen or more at Sharon. There seems a great work going on in Zion.

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#### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

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WAKETON, TEXAS, August, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—I will write you a few lines. I was sorry to hear of your feeble health. The Lord is carrying on his work here in the far West. Twelve have united with our little church since we came here last winter; five of them by experience and baptism. Three of them came from the Missionary Baptists. Dear Brother Mitchell, we do feel to have been greatly blessed of the Lord to have our lot cast here among so many Primitive Baptists, and where we hear good preaching. The church is blessed with a good pastor.

There are a great many in this country, as well as elsewhere, saying, "Lo, here is Christ, and lo, there!" but we go not after them. I do feel so glad to get the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and thereby hear from so many friends and kindred, and various parts of the world. It brings us good news from a far country. I will close this short note, and hope you will

make due allowance for one so ignorant. My kind christian regards to all the family. Remember me especially to dear old Grandma Taylor.

Your sister, I hope, in Christ,

LOU WRIGHT.

We are truly glad, Sister Wright, that you and Sister Moore are well situated, and to know that the Lord is manifesting his grace and mercy to the church there. Here at Mount Olive, where you were members for many years, we are in peace and love, and four were received at our July meeting; two by letter and two by baptism. We were glad to learn from a former letter that your health is greatly improved. Hope to hear from you again soon.—M.

WALNUT STATION, MISS., August, 1883.

*Editors of Gospel Messenger:—Very Dear Brethren:—*I read your paper regularly, and am much delighted with the doctrine it contains, and the many precious letters of your correspondents. I hope I have been to the same school, and have been taught by the same Great Leader, and as I have so often been refreshed by reading their letters, I will try to write a little, though I am but a feeble writer.

God is the King of righteousness, and a God of love, and all his children are taught to love him, and also, to love one another. He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. He has blessings in store for his dear children in the pathway of obedience, and a chastening rod for them in disobedience. He surely does not cause them to disobey in order that these blessings should be withheld and the rod of chastening used. I will stop writing for the present, but desire at some future time, if the Lord's will, to write you of my experience and call to the ministry.

And now, dear brethren, do with this as you think best. If you see proper to publish it, or any part of it, after correcting, do so; if not, just throw it aside, and all will be right with me.

Yours in brotherly love,

H. T. ROWLAND.

FREDONIA, ALA., July, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell:—*Your note to hand, and request complied with to the best of my ability. Our next meeting at Mount Pisgah, we hope will be one of much interest. It is our yearly meeting. Elder J. T. Satterwhite's wife joined by experience at our last meeting. She was in very feeble health, and, not being able to go out, the church held a conference at Elder Satterwhite's house, to give her an opportunity of relating the dealings of the Lord with her. She is to be baptized at our next meeting.

Very unworthily yours,

W. P. FINLEY.

CLEAR WATER, FLA., June 25, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:—*I desire to say a few things to the dear saints scattered abroad. I know I am ignorant, but seeing the many deluded ways of men it seems rather a task for me to keep silent.

Neither the apostle Paul nor any other was justified before God by legal works, though, like him, they might be blameless in that respect. Yet after one is quickened by the life-giving Spirit of God, he feels to be the chief of sinners, knowing that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. "Ye must be born again," and that "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, that liveth and bideth forever."

We had no agency in bringing about our first and natural birth, and if we cannot do that which is least how shall we do that which is greatest? It is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, and to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and as the Son of the Living God, is to have a knowledge which flesh and blood cannot reveal. This is the exclusive work of the Father in heaven. He has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and besides him there is no God.

Dear brethren and sisters, how thankful we should be that He has given us a good hope through grace! In view of His goodness and mercy, I sometimes feel to say with the Psalmist: "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

I am in poor health, and kept at home most of the time. The GOSPEL MESSENGER is a great comfort to me, as I seldom get to hear any preaching. We would be truly glad if you or any of our preachers could visit us. We have had no preaching here since July, 1881, and we feel to be greatly in need of proper nourishment. It is true that we have plenty of men-made preachers, who, sometimes in their prayers, pray God to quicken and convert sinners, and then, in their preaching, tell sinners they must do the work themselves or it will never be done. There is neither food for the hungry nor gospel instruction in such teaching as that. In conclusion, we ask an interest in the prayers of our brethren.

J. D. McMULLEN.

We do hope that the Lord will put it into the heart of some of our preaching brethren who are sending out appointments to visit and preach to those destitute ones, as well as to those churches which have regular preaching.—M.

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*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—Somehow, since receiving your letter, I have a desire to visit you. For my aged brethren, especially those in the ministry who have been so sustained by the power and grace of a faithful God that they have lived consistent lives as Christians, I have not only a great esteem, but also a tender and affectionate sympathy. When I consider their sincerity in the cause of God—how they have labored with singleness of heart for the welfare of the Church—and then consider that soon, in the regular order of nature, they must be gathered to sleep with their fathers, and be lost to the church militant, I feel peculiarly sad, and mentally inquire, Who will care for the church like they, when they are gone?

I truly desire their blessing, and a double portion of their spirit—the good spirit under which they have lived, and by which their characters have been formed as faithful stewards of the manifold grace of God. Kind regards to Sister Mitchell and the children.

As ever, truly yours,  
West Point, Ga., February 8, 1883.

J. T. BAZEMORE.

RICHLAND, ARK., July 30, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—I think I have reason to rejoice. After receiving a few copies of the GOSPEL MESSENGER I felt, from some cause, deeply impressed to send it to my four married children; and without consulting them, I did so, and had it sent them as a present from me. I felt a fervent and inward prompting to still do more than this—and that is, to pray for them, that the Lord would open their hearts and give them a loving understanding of his holy word. And, dear brethren, I do not know but that I might say that I have already received more than I looked for, somewhat like the church when they were praying for the apostle Peter to be delivered from prison. They were astonished when he was delivered, and for a time neither Peter nor his brethren could believe it was a reality, but thought it a vision only.

A daughter in the far West writes us thus: “*Pa*, you could not have spent a dollar for me which I should have appreciated as much as I do the GOSPEL MESSENGER that you sent me. I read every word of it. I want you and *Ma* to pray for me, and I have no doubt but that you do.”

Dear Bro. Mitchell, I believe you can and do rejoice with me. I have felt a desire to drop in this little to our brethren, through the MESSENGER, but I cannot well do it without help, and if you think proper to put the above in shape for the press you are at liberty to do so, or lay it aside, and all will be right with me. I hope the brethren will feel encouraged in every direction to aid in the usefulness of the good work in which you are engaged.

E. J. DEAN.

*Elder Mitchell:*—*Dear Brother and Father in Israel:*—Will you excuse me for writing you? I fear I might weary you to no profit, knowing that you are getting old, and like some others, you are drawing near the close of your pilgrimage on earth. The memory of such loved ones is dear, though we often feel sad at the thought of giving them up.

I and a few others here do feel to be greatly hungering after the truth of the gospel of the Son of God. We sometimes hear strange things preached, but it is rather a distress than a comfort to us.

In commenting upon the text in Psalms, “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations,” &c., some say “It does not embrace the Adam man in any sense whatever.” I tell you, Bro. Mitchell, that there is no spirit nor life to me in any such preaching. And when I hear it said that the “subjects of the Church of Christ are not visible,” I am again at a loss, and feel much cast down and bewildered. Nor does it

nstruct, edify or comfort me to tell me from the pulpit that "the children of God are no kin to Adam, never have been, nor never will be."

If I know my own heart's desire and prayer, it is that the truth as it is in Jesus might be preached and prevail above all things. Should you notice any part of this, please withhold the name of the writer, as I have no selfish motives nor desire, further than for the good of others who are troubled as well as myself about these things.

Yours in love and fellowship,

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It has often appeared to us that pure gospel preaching ought to be in plainness and simplicity, so that the feeblest child of God could partake of it and feel that he has one common and joint interest with the household of faith. We do not know any other character or person whom God created, except the earthly Adam, whose sin involves all the multiplied millions of his race in the same death. Nor do we know of any other than the "Adam man," for whom Christ died and made an atonement, nor is there any other whom God hath "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." Eternal life existed in Jesus Christ before God made the world, and is manifested in the heirs of promise when they are born of the Spirit.—M.

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#### A WORD FROM THE SOUTH.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I returned home yesterday from a yearly meeting in Brooks county, Ga.; and it was a good meeting and a full one. There were ten corresponding letters (from churches as the custom is), and ten preachers in attendance—five old ones and five recently enlisted in the work. The old ones were Delk, Alderman, Stallings, Massey and the writer; the younger were Simms, Renfroe, Arnold, Parrish and Strawder. We can say of a truth, the Lord is good to Israel; and though our death as a people has long been prophesied by our enemies, yet the Lord continues to give gifts to men and his Church. Bro. R., I am yet too feeble to walk, but am trying to preach Christ to his humble poor.

Yours in love,

ANSEL PARRISH.

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*Dear Brother Respass* :—I drop you a line to let you know how we are getting along at Lower Black Creek, Bryan county, Ga. We have been in a cold, barren condition for several years, having had a great deal of trouble and confusion in our church, but, thanks be unto His blessed name! I think He has cleansed our church and given us joy for ashes. Dear brother, I was at the best meeting the 3rd Saturday and Sunday in this month that I was ever at. There were eight added to our little band, and amongst them my oldest son, Lemuel J. Brannen, who came forward and told the church he was bound to confess, having heard so much of the truth preached. O, it made me think of the Saviour when he was marching into Jerusalem, and some were praising and shouting, and others told the Saviour to stop it; but he told them if he stopped

them the rocks would speak, and I think the same power was amongst us. I never heard greater experiences told than all of them told. There was not a question asked, all being fully satisfied. There have been eleven added to our church the three last meetings, and still there is room.

Dear brother, our pastor this year is that dear man of God, Elder S. M. Anderson, it being over eighty miles from our meeting-house to where he lives, but he attends us monthly. When it goes well with you, remember me.

U. M. BRANNEN.

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RICH CREEK, MARSHALL CO., TENN., August, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—I am afflicted with rheumatism, and cannot get to preaching; have not been since May, and therefore the MESSENGER is a great blessing to have to read. It is a comfort and satisfaction, and I dearly love the experiences of the precious brethren and sisters. Though most of them are strangers to me, yet when I read their letters they do not seem like strangers at all. I send money for another year, and wish I could send you some subscribers, but I am surrounded by all other denominations. There is not a Primitive Baptist close around me, and I cannot get out far from home. Dear brethren, remember me and my family at a throne of grace.

Your poor, unworthy sister, if one at all,

R. I. CHILTON.

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GOSHEN, ARK., August 21, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—Tell that brother in Texas who has been impressed to preach for sixteen years that the Lord has never begun a work and left it unfinished, and if it is of the Lord with him, He is only preparing him for the work whereunto he is called. He that feareth the Lord shall not make haste; others are more forward; but the Lord's people discharge their duties impressed upon them in meekness and fear at the feet of Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Then let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily beguiles, and press forward to the mark of the high calling as it is in Jesus our Lord.

Yours, in hope of eternal love,

T. W. FROST.

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BETHPHAGE, TENN., August 27, 1883.

*Dear Brother:*—I attended Red River Association the 2nd Sunday in this month, and it was a harmonious meeting. The Introductory was by Elder N. B. Jones, followed by Elder M. F. West, of Round Lick Association, and Elder H. Smith, of Original Little River Association. The stand was occupied on Sunday by Elders James D. Jones, of Indiana, and P. M. Lancaster, of Wilson county, Tenn.; and on Monday by Elder M. F. West, of Walnut Shade, Tenn., Elder J. A. Barnfield, of Sequatchie Valley, and myself. Yours in hope,

J. W. REDDICK.

BEAR'S CREEK, TENN., August 8, 1883.

*Very Dear Brother:*—I am much improved in health, for which I hope am thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Remember me kindly to Bro. Rowe. O, how I regretted to part with him at New Hope, but I soon met with Bro. Wagner at Blue Creek, and so on from meeting to meeting, from then till now, one feast after another. O, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless and praise his holy name.

If He his smiling face but hide,  
My soul no comfort has beside.  
Why should my Saviour thus retire?  
Christ is the treasure I desire.

ANDREW WOODS.

—  
CEDAR CREEK, GA., August 17, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—I thought I would (after the business part of my letter) tell you and readers of a meeting at Deloache's Church last Saturday and Sunday. The following elders were present: Elders H. Temples, D. J. Lamb, M. F. Stubbs, J. L. Smith and A. R. Strickland. Elder Lamb preached Saturday—Gal. i. 1—followed by J. L. Smith, after which Elder Temples was called to act as Moderator, and two came forward and related their experience of grace, and were received and baptized by Elder Strickland.

At 11 o'clock Sunday morning, Elder Temples, according to promise, proceeded to preach the funeral of the late lamented Elder J. I. Keel, on the text, For the time of my departure is at hand, &c. This discourse was delivered, we believe, to over a thousand people, amongst whom were shed many tears of both joy and sorrow. He was followed by Elder Lamb, from Psa. viii. 1.

Bro. R., can't you come amongst us, and to our Association, which convenes at Upper Black Creek, twenty miles west of 2½, C. R. R., on Saturday before 2nd Sunday in October next? [Possibly we may come.—R.]

J. R. CALLAWAY.

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ST. ELMO, MOBILE CO., ALA., August 15, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Mitchell and Respass:*—Having to send you another subscriber for the MESSENGER, I give you also a brief account of a recent tour in Baldwin county, Ala. Leaving home Wednesday before the 1st of August, and traveling by train and boat, I at length landed and tarried for the night with a Missionary preacher, and next day was conveyed by W. M. Burk thirty miles. Next day we had meeting at Bro. Rimes', and Saturday at Wolf Creek, where I had been laboring for something over a year. After preaching, according to previous arrangement, a church was constituted, taking the name of New Hope Church, of Primitive Baptist faith and order. After which the church held con-

ference, chose a pastor and one deacon, myself and Bro. Burk officiating in his ordination.

Sunday morning, met at the water, where I baptized two who had been standing over from a previous meeting, after which I again endeavored to preach to a large and attentive audience.

After preaching services were over, the church met for Communion and Feet Washing; and O, what a scene it was for many to look upon! A Primitive Baptist church thus assembled where such a thing had never before been known until recently! The world gazed and wondered.

Monday I was conveyed by Bro. Owen to Bro. Wynn's, where I again tried to preach to the people, and the next day I preached at Mr. Cooper's, after which I returned to Bro. Owen's, and remained till Saturday, when I was conveyed by Bro. Owen to Shell Bank, preaching all night and next day to orderly congregations. May the Lord prosper the work of grace.

On Monday I left Shell Bank on a sail vessel for Mobile, and landing safely, I was soon on board the cars for home. I rejoiced in soul on finding all well, feeling that the Lord had dealt bountifully with his servants.

Dear brethren, please find enclosed names, address and remittance for three subscribers to the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

J. R. S. BULLARD.

Thank you, Bro. Bullard, for your prompt and efficient agency in extending the usefulness of the MESSENGER. For want of space we have had to abridge your letter a little, but think no essential point omitted.—M.

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BYRON, GA., August 22, 1883.

*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—I am greatly pleased with the GOSPEL MESSENGER. It is the best religious paper I ever read, and it is, and will be greatly to the comfort and edification of the Lord's people. Your views on the "Wheat and Tares," and also on "Work Out Your Own Salvation," were very instructive to me. Can you come to Upatoi Association? I desire to see you and hear you preach once more. Could not the GOSPEL MESSENGER be issued twice a month?

Your poor old brother,

A. KING.

By an increased subscription, prompt payments, and a less number of pages each issue, the MESSENGER might be semi-monthly.—M.

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MACON, GA., August 19, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass:*—*Dear Brother:*—I drop you a short letter, thanking you for your discourse on Naaman the Syrian. I have read and re-read it, and without any hesitancy I thank God that he has raised up a servant to show so much light on his written words. It is very consoling indeed to the little ones in Christ to hear or read something that may strengthen and encourage them while here in this body of sinful flesh.

You may not think or imagine the great and lasting good your writings do for the Primitive Baptist cause, which is the cause of Christ; and, my brother, if I may call you such, let me admonish you not to let your pen be idle nor your tongue be still so long as your bodily health may permit you, and I pray God he may give you good health and long life in accordance to the gift he has given you to preach the gospel.

I was out at Shiloh Church last Sunday, and heard old Bro. Bernett, in his usual way, in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. It really seems the Lord has revealed the whole way and plan of salvation to him. The brethren of Shiloh and Bethlehem all seem firm in the faith, and earnestly contending for the same, notwithstanding we are surrounded by many false teachers, who teach for doctrine the commandments of men, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, or true believers in Christ.

Well, I have written more than I thought I would. Hoping to see you soon, I close. May you continue to grow in the grace, knowledge and ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is my humble prayer.

Yours in love and hope,

JOHN F. CLARK.

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LEE COUNTY, ALABAMA, July, 1883.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell:—Dear Father in Israel:—*Ever since I united with the church I have felt exercised in mind to give a reason of my hope in writing to you. I did not see how the Lord's people could fellowship me, with the little I told them and the very imperfect manner in which it was told. I was so desirous to be with the church, that when you asked me to relate the dealings of the Lord with me before I joined the Missionaries, that I could hardly be composed sufficiently to think of many things which I had passed through.

In 1871, I went to school to a Methodist preacher, and about the close of school there was a protracted meeting started, and he and his wife asked me why I did not join their church; said my sisters were members, and that I was a good little girl and ought to join. He told me to seek religion, but as I did not know how any better than to go up to the mourners' bench every time they called for mourners, I tried that, but the last night of the meeting closed and I was still no better. Two weeks after this I went to a Missionary meeting, and being up as a mourner with a schoolmate that joined, and not knowing what an experience was, I answered a few questions which were asked me and joined them. But in 1874, being in much trouble, I would go off to myself and get on my knees and ask the Lord to have mercy on me. But still I continued the next year in the same distress, till one day I was at work alone and singing, when all at once I commenced crying, not knowing what was the matter with me, and feeling like my heart would burst. I fell on my knees to pray, but soon I arose feeling so happy. I desired to tell them at the house how happy I felt; but soon was in doubt. Some time after this I was on my bed sick, and trying to read the New Testament through;

but I did not know it had any spiritual meaning, and thought it very strange the first time I heard any one say it had such a meaning. I was greatly troubled about my having a name in the so-called church, and thought of having my name taken off, but before I did so, it occurred to me that it was not the true church. One night it appeared to me in a kind of visionary way, that I was lying down among some straw, and a voice said, "Arise and go to your Father's house and abide there, for the Father has plenty and to spare! Why sleepest thou here among the dogs?" I awoke, but it forced itself plainly on my mind that I was not in the church. After this I felt a great desire to go to the people whom I so much loved in the truth; but being once deceived and mistaken, I thought I would not now be too hasty. One day, while reclining on my bed, something seemed to say, "Don't you know your Saviour died for you?" It was a very beautiful day, and after awhile my husband came, and I told him I felt very strangely, and also told him of some things which had taken place with me that day, and had frequently said to him that I felt as though I should not live long. I loved to hear the Old Primitive Baptists preach, and went as often as I could, greatly desiring to talk to some of them about my condition and ask them to pray for me. Often I felt too unworthy to get on my knees to ask God's mercy for myself, though it was my continual desire that the Lord would remove my troubles and show me the right way. At one time I told you some of my troubles of mind, but soon after I was sorry I had said anything about it to any one, thinking it might have all been imagination. I was not led in a way I had expected or looked for, but in a way I had not known. Though I had hoped to have brighter evidence, yet when I went to the Primitive Church at Mount Olive it seemed very dim, and even less than many times before.

But, dear brethren and sisters, I am now by the mercy and grace of God, a member among the Primitive Baptists—a people I love, and with whom I feel to be at home. I love to hear from the scattered flock of God, because some of them can tell my own exercises of mind better than I can tell it myself. Once I was in such trouble I could do nothing for near a whole day but cry and pray. These words came to me with comfort:

"In the floods of tribulation,—  
While the billows o'er me roll,—  
Jesus whispers consolation,  
And supports my fainting soul."

EMMA HUNT.

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## OBITUARIES.

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### ELDER JAMES D. TENNISON

Was born April 5th, 1815, and died June 6th, 1883, at his home in Brooks county, Ga. Bro. Tennison was given a hope in the merits and shed blood of our dear Saviour in his youthful days, and was made willing to take up his cross and follow Jesus, and was received into the fellowship of the church in Crawford county, Ga., and baptized by Elder John Bassett, and soon began to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. For the last few years of his

ife he was able to preach but little from hemorrhage of the lungs, though his mind seemed to grow stronger and his faith more confirmed in the doctrine of the Lord Jesus. The unworthy writer was in his company a short time before his death, and he said that he expected the next attack to take him off, which it did; and said when he was gone he wanted me to preach his funeral. He was married to S. Z. Horton in 1838, in Crawford county, Ga., and to them were born ten children, five of whom preceded him to the grave; two sons and three daughters are yet living. We can only say a loving husband and father, a beloved brother, is gone. May the Lord comfort the sorrowing and afflicted widow and children and give them grace to say, The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; and blessed be the name of the Lord!

*Pelham, Ga., August 9, 1883.*

WM. HOLLINGSWORTH.

#### JOHN GREEN.

By request of the bereaved family, I attempt to write the obituary of Bro. JOHN GREEN, Esq., who was born April 9th, 1809, and died of dropsy January 9th, 1883.

A great man is fallen! He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the Jones meeting house, now dissolved, and was baptized by Elder Robert Donaldson at a date unknown to the writer. He was received into the Lake Church, Bulloch county, Ga., by letter, May, 1839, and the same date was elected Church's Clerk, which office he faithfully filled up to May, 1880, when, in consequence of age and infirmities, he was forced to resign. He was a good and generous-hearted Christian—one who never failed to fill his seat at his church meetings unless providentially hindered. His example in that particular is worthy of imitation by all who knew him. He was a noble citizen of his country, a good neighbor, a kind father, and an affectionate husband. Though a great sufferer a long time from the disease above mentioned, yet he was never heard to murmur or complain of his condition. He was treated by Dr. Green, now of Atlanta, Ga., and was thought by his friends and neighbors to be well for some time. Prior to his death it was the privilege of the writer to visit him several times during his sickness and converse with him upon the great subject of death and his prospects beyond the grave, when he exclaimed, "That he had been ready by grace for forty-some-odd years to go with the Lord when He came for him." It was his desire to pass away without a struggle; so, on Tuesday, 9th of January, 1883, after eating a tolerably hearty breakfast, and apparently as well as usual, he arose from the table and walked directly to the parlor; his wife and two daughters hearing an unusual noise, made by his fall, ran immediately to him, and on their arrival found that he had breathed his last. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord! On Wednesday, the 10th, he was conveyed to the burial ground at the Lake Church, followed by a large concourse of people, where religious services were conducted by the unworthy writer from the 6th chapter of our Lord's gospel by Matthew, 19th, 20th and 21st verses; after which his body was deposited in its last resting place in the tomb, to await the morning of the general resurrection, when all shall be made alive in Christ. But every man in his own order—Christ the

first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. He leaves a dear companion and eight children, four sons and four daughters, with a large circle of grandchildren and relatives, to mourn his loss. May God grant to bless this dispensation of His providence to the good of his children in adding them to the church to imitate the example left them by their father.

*Excelsior, Bulloch Co., Ga.*

M. F. STUBBS.

AMELIA GREEN.

AMELIA GREEN was born September 8th, 1867, of christian parents, who endeavored to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She was married to J. L. Wilson, a son of Jasper Wilson, December 25th, 1881, by Elder M. F. Stubbs. Her father, John Green, a prominent member of the church at Lake meeting house, in said county, died suddenly on the 9th of January last. Amelia Wilson was taken on the 1st Sunday, the 4th of February following, with a congestive chill. The family physician was immediately called, but the disease progressed until Friday night, at 12 o'clock, the 9th of February, when death terminated the reign of sin and all earthly ties. The writer can truly say of her that she bore her affliction with christian patience and fortitude, conscious that she would die from the first of her attack. She requested to be prayed for by christian parents and sorrowing friends around her bedside. Dear brethren and sisters can feel and witness the parent's feelings under such sore trials. I told my daughter on Friday morning that I had endeavored to beseech the Lord to restore her. But thy will, O God, be done! I also said to her that I received an answer in my feelings that her soul was saved. She asked me, "Pa, do you think so?" I replied, "I do believe it." She smiled and said, "God grant it!"

Dear, bereaved mother, brethren and sisters, afflicted companions, relatives and many kind friends, sorrowing in mind, a word of comfort left for you that survive our departed daughter. The spirit that made that body once so lovely and sociable, gave evidence of the glorious reign of grace by singing twelve or fifteen minutes in language and voice far beyond her natural power, and by clapping her hands together.

With a lovely smile all o'er her face,  
That the sting of death did not erase!  
O, the lovely smile Amelia Wilson bore  
The grave has hid,—our eyes will see no more!  
That smile bespoke the joys untold,  
The grave and death can never hold.  
Amelia left a little baby girl three months old,  
As good and lovely as any little baby that e'er had a soul.

Yours in hope,

JASPER WILSON.

*Bulloch Co., Ga., April 9, 1883.*

[Want of space prevents us publishing in this issue, the obituaries of Miss Lovie E. Matthews, John H. Harrison, Beulah Abercrombie, Mrs. Mary E. M. Langley, Newton T. Vining, Mrs. Eliza Proctor, Deacon Benjamin Bagley, and Richard Aldine, little child of J. L. Stephens.]

## APPOINTMENTS.

THE NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Church at Hillabahatchie, Heard county, Georgia, eight miles north of Rock Mills, on Saturday before the 2d Sabbath in October, 1883.

ELDER A. W. PATTERSON, of Georgia, will preach in Texas as follows, the Lord willing: Will attend Providence Association on Sunday in October; and then fill such appointments as Elder J. I. Baker may make for him on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following. Then at Mt. Vernon (Bell county) on 20th and 21st (Saturday and Sunday); at Little Flock, 22nd; at Friendship, 24th; at Pilgrim's Rest, 26th; at Cedar Grove, 27th and 28th (Saturday and Sunday); at Salem (Coryell county), 30th; at Zion (Freestone county) Nov. 2nd; at Oak Grove, 3rd and 4th (Saturday and Sunday); at New Hope, 5th; at Bethlehem (Robertson county), 7th; at New Providence (Milam county) 10th and 11th (Saturday and Sunday); at Ebenezer (Brazos county) 13th; at Little Flock, 15th.

It is my intention to be with Elder Patterson after he reaches Bell county, the Lord permitting.

J. C. DENTON.

Elder Patterson will represent the GOSPEL MESSENGER whilst in Texas.

Appointments for Elders J. W. Basset and Smith, of the Echee-nee Association, to the churches of the Lower Canoochee Association. They will be met at No. 6, C. R. R., at 2 o'clock P. M., on Tuesday after the 4th Sunday in October, 1883. They will preach on Wednesday following at Nevel's Creek, Bulloch county; Thursday, at Upper Lott's Creek; Friday, at Rosemary Hill, Emanuel county; Saturday and 1st Sunday in November, at the Lake, Bulloch county; Monday, rest; Tuesday, at Sunlight, Tattnall county; Wednesday, at Cedar Creek; Thursday, at Anderson's; Friday, at Bay Branch; Saturday, at Beard's Creek; 2nd Sunday, at Bethel, Liberty county; Monday, at Spring Grove, Bryan county; Tuesday, at Ashe's Branch, Bulloch county; Wednesday, at Lower Black Creek, Bryan county; Thursday, at Fellowship, Bulloch county; Friday, at Upper Black Creek; Saturday, at DeLoache's; 3rd Sunday, at Lower Lott's Creek; Monday, at Bethlehem.

They will be dependent for conveyance. If the Lord will, I expect to accompany them on their tour.

M. F. STUBBS.

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[Signed]  
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Eld R. W. Durden

Vol. 5.

No. 11

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

BUTLER, GEORGIA.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Price—One Dollar a Year, in Advance. Single Copy 10 cents.

**J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL, Editors.**

Brethren wishing to communicate with **ELD. MITCHELL**, in asking views on scripture, or in submitting articles written for the **GOSPEL MESSENGER** to his inspection, or in remitting money, will address him at Opelika, Ala.—R.

NOVEMBER, 1883.

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 11. BUTLER, GA., NOVEMBER, 1883. Vol. 5.

## THE LAW.

*Dear Brother Respass:*—I very frequently see in the writings of Old School Baptists, as well as of others, remarks in reference to the giving a law to our first parents, that do not satisfy my mind; as, if what is expressed is correct, there should be more expressed, else a wrong and erroneous idea would be conveyed, and the writer, or speaker, be responsible for darkening counsel.

I have no argument with anybody, and shall make no allusions to what any one has written, but try to offer some reflections upon an important subject for general consideration. Those who speak or write of the law under which our first parents transgressed, seem to have in mind the single precept in regard to the interdicted tree. I do not know, but many have supposed that the single precept was all the law they were under; and if that precept had not been given, they would not have been under law at all, and consequently could not have sinned, and would not have fallen. All this is gratuitous. It was because they were under law that the precept could be given. In the very nature of things, the creature is always under law to his creator. This is a natural, and not an arbitrary, obligation.

The law, in several commandments, was made known to Moses, and through him to the children of Israel. But that did not make it law any more than it was before, neither was the obligation to obey it any more binding than before. Law is the immutable and unalterable principle of right and

justice. It never did require anything but what was right, and that always will and always must be required. No abatement can ever be made. Till heaven and earth pass away not one jot or tittle of the law can ever fail. The obligations of man to his Maker, and to his fellow man, run parallel to his existence, and are alike binding upon every nation and kindred, tongue and people, under the whole heaven, and throughout all time. The apostle inquires why the law was given, and answers that it was that sin might appear, and the offense abound. It was not given to condemn, nor to save, but to show the condemnation and the justice of that condemnation that had already passed upon men. It would be difficult to show how grace should reign through righteousness unto life eternal, without showing first that sin had reigned unto death. The writing of the law upon tables of stone, and giving it in preceptive form to the children of Israel, made them acquainted with its requirements, but it made no difference in the law itself. It added nothing to what was law before, neither did it add anything to its binding force. If man was under obligations to love God and obey Him from his creation, any and all precepts as to what man might eat, and what he might not; when he might labor, and when not; and whom he should reverence and worship, would rightfully follow.

The injunction in regard to eating the forbidden fruit was not the origin of law to God, but the result of it, and in perfect accord with it. Will any one question but what it was wrong and transgression to rob, murder, cheat, lie, or in any way injure another, from the creation? Was it not wrong and sinful to worship images, or in any way deny the true and living God? I understand that the principles of right and wrong have ever been the same, and that they are and must remain immutable. We may say that laws are right because God gave them. It is better to say He gave them because they were right. I understand the apostle to be arguing this very ground in regard to the Gentiles. Though the Gentiles had not received the law written out upon tables,

yet they had a consciousness of right and wrong, and became a law unto themselves; otherwise, if they were not under law to God, they could not have been transgressors. But as death reigned from Adam to Moses (just as much before the giving of the law as afterwards), even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, shows plainly enough that the law had been in force all the time. These things, I think, are all so plain and self-evident that it is only necessary for our attention to be called to them. To suppose that man could never have sinned against his Maker without *a tree of knowledge* and a prohibition concerning it, seems to me like we had never given the subject any thought. We are accustomed to receiving our laws from the hand of legislatures, but all statutory enactments are merely to give force and effect to the law. The law is before all legislation, and before all legislatures. The legislature itself is a creature of law. Men having power, and the control of armies, may enforce their edicts, and compel submission; but they never can make anything law that was not embodied in the law before. If this is doubted, let the Congress of the United States try the experiment. Let them erect a great image, and command the people to fall down and worship it, like Nebuchadnezzar did; or let them pass an ordinance compelling people to give one-tenth of their productions to the Episcopal or to the Catholic churches. People would just laugh at them. They would send other men to Congress, and send them to lunatic asylums. Let the President attempt to execute such laws. Every one knows it could not be done. It is because people are under law, and to just the extent that they are under law that there can be valid legislative enactment. The law is made applicable to cases and circumstances by appropriate legislation. We are not under law to England or Austria. Let the Parliament try, if they will, to pass any edict upon us. They cannot; neither can the Emperor of Germany bind us, or punish us for disobedience to any of his enactments. We are not under law to them. An objection

might arise that a compromise was not proper between the Creator of men and earthly monarchs.

I am merely saying that all nations and people are under law to God; and I might say further, in closing, that although we are redeemed from the curse of the law, and from our legal standing, yet the law itself does not pass away, but must be all fulfilled. The above is respectfully submitted.

*State Road, Del., Sept. 8, 1883.*

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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### “THE MUTUAL RELATION OF A PASTOR AND THE CHURCHES WHICH HE SERVES.”

*Dear Brethren:*—This subject has seemed to me to be of sufficient importance to demand more notice than it has generally received, and so, with your permission, I desire to lay before the readers of the MESSENGER some thoughts upon it.

1st. That there is a mutual relation between a church and its pastor, and that of the closest and most endearing kind the scriptures abundantly show, and every true pastor knows. And while this exists in the highest degree between a church and its stated pastor, it also exists between the brethren in general and all who preach the gospel. This relation is a relation of mutual love.—See Gal. iv. 19; Acts xx. 36–38; John ii. 1. It is a relation of mutual care.—2 Cor. xi. 28. Consider also the whole tone of the Epistle of Paul, and John. Also see Acts xvi. 15; Col. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 7. All that we can know of this relation is what the scriptures declare. And to them we must appeal. If we read the Acts and the Epistles we shall find them filled with references to this important subject. Some of those scriptures I hope to refer to in this article. It is important for the welfare of the kingdom of God here on earth, that pastor and people alike understand something concerning this relation. If the heart of every one be filled with the love of God, and an earnest desire for His honor and glory, that one will want to know, and to do his or her duty in whatever place he or she

has been called to occupy in the church. A prayerful study of scripture teaching becomes us all.

2nd. To support public worship, and to maintain the order of the Lord's house, requires that somebody's time shall be devoted to that end. It was so under the old covenant. The tribe of Levi was set apart for that service. They were thus wholly withdrawn from secular pursuits, and so, that they might be supported temporally while they ministered in the sanctuary, a tenth was required from all the other tribes. This was essential, because the Levite was cut off from all business of whatever kind that he might minister in spiritual things. No special tribe of priests is now set apart to the work of the sanctuary, but here and there and everywhere God calls the learned and the unlearned to labor in his vineyard, to preach the word, to care for the churches. There is no demand of a tenth (or tithe) now, but each, as he purposes in his heart, is to freely give of his substance, that the burden be divided, and an equality be established. The point I wish to make is this, that when one is set apart of God to serve in the sanctuary, and he goes forth attending to his Master's business, he must of necessity neglect his secular affairs, and the relation of this man to the brethren is such that if he devotes all his time to their spiritual interests, they should devote some of their time and substance to his temporal interests. Certainly this is only fair, and at the least honest and equal. There must ever be some expense in building suitable houses for worship or in the renting of rooms for that purpose, in providing the emblems for the Lord's supper, in caring for the poor, in meeting the traveling and living expenses of the pastor. It is not right nor just that the pastor shall bear all this himself. And that church will not prosper that suffers her pastor to do this. I have in mind as I write a brother in the ministry who informs me that he never fills one of his regular appointments except at the sacrifice of from five to seven dollars, and that he does not receive half enough to pay his expenses. Is this right and fair? I appeal to the calm reason of the brethren. Which

of them are willing to sacrifice one quarter of this even once a month to get to meeting? Should they not see to it that at least their brother's loss is reimbursed? If they are poor, so is he. If they labor to live, so does he. If they have families, so has he.

3rd. The pastor of the church is her servant for Christ's sake. 2 Cor. iv. 5. He owes all his duty to God. He is first of all the Lord's servants. He feels himself called of God to this one work. To the Lord he looks for guidance, wisdom, support. He goes forth taking neither purse nor scrip. He is not to pay his own way either upon the road or at the inn. The Lord sends him forth, and to the Lord he looks to provide for him along the way. He is not to be over anxious for his food and raiment. He is to trust God. He is not to go on his way begging for a reward or for a living. His one business is to preach Christ and to care for the churches. When he has done this his conscience is clear. If his way is hedged up temporally like Paul, he must not be above laboring with his own hands and making them minister to his necessities, but like Paul have in view the one business of preaching the gospel as soon as his hands shall be loosed again. Because the churches fail in their duty to him, he is not to fail in his duty to them, or rather if they do not serve God as He has commanded, this is no reason why he should cease to yield obedience. Thus the pastor's duty is to God. He stands or falls to his own Master. On the other hand, the churches owe their duty to God. I have felt like stating it in this way. I owe nothing to the churches. I am God's servant. The churches owe nothing to me. They are God's servants. When their conscience is satisfied that they have done all that God requires, I have nothing further to say. But yet the churches have a duty upon them, and this duty the scriptures make very plain. They make the pastor's duty also very plain, and he should turn to the law of Zion. And so should each and every brother in the church. What has God made *my* duty? should be our question. What then is the duty of a church to her pastor?

4th. In this there has been a going to extremes, I have feared, among us. There is always danger of this. We could but revolt at the modern idea of a salaried ministry, just as a salary would be paid in any other profession or trade, and the result has been that we have seen instances in which churches fairly considered it a sin to give their pastor a temporal support. If a pastor's duty only consisted in holding a meeting on Sunday, then he would consume no more time in this service than the rest. But that church or that pastor that thinks this to be the whole duty of a pastor, have not the slightest conception of the matter. I confess that in the fifteen years in which I have served churches, I have found my hands more than full every day in the week, preaching or visiting or searching the scriptures or writing letters, so that I have had hardly the time to take care of a small garden. But the churches have been ever generous and kind, and most certainly have fulfilled their duty to God in this matter far better than I have been able to fill my place. If we take the word for our guide, we shall avoid extremes and shall find the true path.

5th. Now what do the scriptures teach in this matter? I will proceed to quote some of them, with occasional remarks. When Jesus sent his disciples forth, two and two, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, he told them to take no purse, &c. Matt. x. 9; Luke x. 4. What does this mean if not that those to whom they preached were to provide for them? Read all of 1 Cor. ix. In the 14th verse he says, "That God hath ordained that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." But he says that he has not used this power or right among them in order to stop the mouths of those who sought an occasion against him and the gospel. Still this did not change the law of the kingdom, that they who preached the gospel should live of it, that the ox should not be muzzled, &c. In verse 11th he says plainly, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" As though he would ask which are of the most value, the carnal or spiritual things. In

2 Cor. xi. 7, 8, 9, Paul speaks to this same church, and says that he robbed other churches, in order to preach the gospel to this church freely. The brethren which came from Macedonia, he says, supplied all his need. All the comment I have to make here is that this church of Corinth ought to have been ashamed of themselves that they permitted it to be so. What! let distant churches support the man who was laboring for their benefit! And do not forget the point that Paul's temporal necessities were supplied by his brethren. In 2 Cor. xii. 13, Paul says that the church had lacked none of the signs of an apostle in his ministry, and were behind no other church, except that he had not made himself chargeable to them, and then says "forgive me this wrong." Certainly this implies that he had made himself chargeable to other churches, and that he had wronged the church at Corinth in that he had not done so there. And is it then wronging a church to not be chargeable to them? According to the apostle it is. It is an injury in a two-fold sense. (1) Because it is practically saying that the love of the cause is not in them; and (2) it is teaching them bad habits; and (3) it is robbing them of the joy and blessedness of rendering an acceptable offering unto the Lord. How different the feeling of Lydia when she had received the word! She said to those who preached it, "if ye have judged me to be faithful, come into my house, and abide there," and she *constrained* them".—Acts xvi. 15.

6th. I have quoted these scriptures, and thus briefly commented upon them, in order that we may all be reminded of what are their teachings upon this matter. The sum of it all is this, that we all owe time, talent, wealth, all that we have, to God. We ought to hold it all subject to his bidding. The scriptures teach us how we should use all that we have. It is incumbent upon all to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. If God demands my time, my talents, I am to render them to him. If God demands a portion of the goods which he has bestowed upon me, woe to me if I withhold them. The case stands in this wise. Here is a

company of Christians, all of whom love God, and desire to be his. One of this number is called of God to preach the word. He obeys the call. He preaches, he visits from house to house, he labors all the time. This he does freely. He is the Lord's servant. But straightway his brethren recognize that this is the work God has given him to do. Now the same spirit which calls him to this work moves in their hearts, and they say, "A part of this burden we must bear with him." God has sent him to do us good in spiritual things, and now we will see that he lacks nothing in temporal things. And thus willingly and freely they provide for him in temporal things. How is the heart of that pastor and that people knit together in love? Now this is a fair picture of the case, except that instead of one pastor and one branch of the church, we have many pastors and many branches. Still the principle presented here is the same. It is the spirit of mutual helpfulness that ought to exist in the churches.

7th. While I have thus just touched upon some general principles, of course I do not forget that there are a great variety of special cases which must be considered each by itself. One church is rich and another poor. One pastor is rich and another poor. There may be a rich pastor over a poor church, or a poor pastor over a rich church, or both pastor and church may be poor, or both may be rich. All matters of detail must be left to the enlightened wisdom of the church and pastor concerned. If the spirit of Christ be in the heart, there will not be very much danger of going wrong. *Only let churches remember that it is as much their duty to look out for the temporal interests of their pastor as it is his to look out for their spiritual interests.* If this be kept in view, there will be mutual love and mutual comfort in each other, and we may expect to see peace and prosperity in Zion's borders.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope,

Reisterstown, Md., Sept. 18, 1883.

F. A. CHICK.

BRYAN, TEXAS, August 15, 1883.

*Dear Brother:*—I will give you a brief account of the first protracted meeting I ever took any part in. I had an appointment in Madison Co. for Saturday and Sunday (5th in July), and Deacon Gorbert and other brethren being present, we thought it right to administer the Ordinance of Baptism to any subject of grace desiring it (there being no church of our order in that county.) So after preaching on Saturday, I gave the opportunity to any who felt to give us a reason of the hope that was in them, and a sister came forward. And at the water where we met on Sunday morning, the opportunity being again given, an old brother came forward, and was received. Having baptized these two, we went to the place of meeting, where I tried to preach to a large congregation, but with but little liberty. Preached again at night, and with much better liberty, and more comfort of soul. And another brother gave us his experience, expressing his desire for baptism. We met on Monday morning to baptize him. Had preaching. And a sister came forward and told her experience. We agreed to meet the next day to baptize her. On that evening, another sister told us her experience, and was received for baptism. So we met on Tuesday. Had preaching and baptizing. And a brother told us that he had been made to see it to be his duty to be baptized (having waited long for a brighter hope), and being satisfied with him, we agreed to meet again on Wednesday, which we did. Had preaching, baptized him, took dinner on the ground, and then broke up. And there seemed to be several others that were almost ready to arise and be baptized. But duty required it of me to return home. Bro. Gorbert was with me all the time, and though he is only a deacon, he preaches comfortingly. I have long desired to witness such a meeting as that was, and the Lord brought it to pass.

Let me say that I heartily endorse and recommend the communications of Elder Chick, in the July and August Nos. of the MESSENGER. May the Lord speedily turn away the captivity of Zion!

J. C. DENTON.

P. S.—We expect, the Lord willing, to constitute a church in Madison, where this meeting was held, on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in September. J. C. D.

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### A GOOD LETTER FROM AN AGED SISTER.

RUSSELL COUNTY, ALA., May 16, 1883.

*Dear Brother and Sister Mitchell:*—I take my pen this morning to try to fulfil a promise I made more than a week ago. It is with trembling and darkness I write. Dear, esteemed children of God, you have been informed of my health, and how low I have been; sometimes I have felt that death was on me—a few more breaths, and I would be gone to the spirit world. I did not dread but one thing—that was, the last struggles of *death*. I felt like I wanted to go *home*, to a *sweet rest*. I have no desire to stay here. I wanted to go away from sorrow. I was willing to leave all and go *home*. After a long time of suffering, I felt that if it was the will of God, I would like to stay a little longer with my children; and it pleased God to raise me again, though my health is quite feeble yet.

I have been impressed to write to you for a long time; would almost be in the act of writing, when many things would crowd my mind and I would say I cannot and will not. About ten days ago I was so troubled that I promised, if my life was spared until now, and everything worked well, I would write. Dear children of God, if I do wrong, have pity on me, and pray for me. I have many *fears*, and have been passing a dark and wintry night; trouble and sorrow had near overwhelmed me; the tears ran in trickling drops; all was dark and gloomy, and I still feel sad and lonely, and know not where I am. If in Jesus, all will be well; he is my only hope for life and salvation. As to righteousness, I have none of my own; if Jesus is not my *righteousness*, then I am undone forever.

I read a letter written by Bro. D. I thought it was the best

letter I ever read. I gave it the third reading; it seemed that I could see where I was. I had got to the mountain, where, I thought, if my life was spared to reach, I would rest and find pleasure in this life. But, behold! the mountain was removed; there were no cooling streams, shady bowers, nor flowers to cheer me; all was sorrow and weeping. I was reminded of the words of the blessed Saviour, when he said to his *disciples*: "These things have I said unto you, that in me, ye might have peace; in the world, ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

So, dear children of God, I can say to you that I have had great tribulation, and if any peace, it has been in Jesus; he has been the only sweet "resting place" I have ever found. When weary and ready to give up, to feel the sweet touchings of the ark of safety, O how calm and serene! The soul mounts on *wings of love*, and looks away from all sorrow to the "sweet resting place"—the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! Amidst the darkest night, if you can hear *His* sweet voice say, "Be not afraid; it is I," all fears leave and all is calm and serene. Unto you that believe, He is precious.

Dear children of God, let me tell you some of the things that have been on my mind for the last seven years. I thought I never would, for many reasons: there were so many better than myself, and I could not express my views, but I only want to do something, and when I told my tidings it would be but a great tumult. Examine, and if it is not fit for the building, don't receive it; lay it aside and be sorry for me. Pray for me. I have many, many sorrows, but I love you. God knows my heart. I feel too unworthy to call you brethren; that seems too much for me, a poor wanderer. Let me entreat you to love one another, have charity, be kind and tender-hearted, forgiving, seeking each other's peace; live in the fear of God, owe no man, and, dear brethren, be not forgetful of your poor servant—the minister—that labors for your good; this is the sting with me; I fear I have not done my duty. So let me beg you to do better than I have done.

I have felt that the poor servants were neglected and had many sorrows to bear.

Now, dear brethren, don't be angry with me; it is in tenderness I write, and love for your welfare. If you have done your duty, you have peace and ease that the world cannot give.

Let every one examine himself, and see if there is nothing lacking. I think it is hard for the *servant* to tell of his needs and necessities. I feel that it is the church's duty to see that he and his family are cared for, and when this is done, you have done nothing but your duty, and if neglected, you'll feel it, sooner or later. I don't mean that they be eased and you burdened. A man said in my house a few years ago, rather making light of the Primitive Baptists, that the "Churches did not care for their preachers, and the preachers were such fools they were afraid to tell the church of their needs," and spoke of one precious brother, calling his name, and said he liked to have perished, but he told some of the brethren of his circumstances, and it was laid before the church, and they gave him plenty.

You should search and find out these things, and never have to be told of them. The blessed Saviour told Peter to feed his sheep and lambs; he did not tell him to make sheep and lambs, but to feed them. Then I think it is right for those that are fed, to love and care for the ones that feed them. Dear brethren, you have many good and precious blessings given you. Your lot has been cast in a goodly land, where you could hear the sweet sound of the gospel of the Son of God. You know nothing about being alone, and in a desolate land; it makes the big tear-drops fall, while I think of *my* lot, though I feel that, if I am a child of God, he will give me all that is needful, and never forsake me. He has promised that he would never leave nor forsake his people, but if they forsake his commandments, and transgress his laws, that he will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless, his loving kindness he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness

to fail. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Then it is the will of the Father, that of all he gave him, he should lose nothing, and God is fully able to carry out his own will. I am not like the preacher that told his congregation not long ago, that he thought "God was running a great risk to give a sweet infant babe to an ungodly mother," for I know that it is the power of God unto every one that believes; to the babe and to the mother alike. There is but one way; some say there are many roads to heaven, like going to a city, it matters not which you take, if you aim right you will get there after awhile. It seems that the children of God are blind, and have to be led in the right way, and if not kept by the power of God, will go in forbidden paths; so they need a guide; one that can see, and knows the way.

Dear brethren, you have been so kind and good to receive my name among you. Let me ask *you all* to pray for me, that I might be kept by the power of God.

ELVA MYHAND.

---

WILSON, N. C., July 9, 1883.

*Beloved Brother Respass*:—Having just now returned from Skewarky Church (Elder Silvester Hassell, pastor), I found on my desk a letter, which from the postmark, I at once knew to be from Elder Respass. On opening it and reading the same, I discovered that you had been and are exercised in the same way as your humble servant. And I said to myself, Of whom is the Elder speaking? I opened the Testament and my eyes fell on a passage in John xiii. 25: "He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?" At one glance I viewed my whole life in the description you gave of yourself, and I thought if it had not been for the *great* love of our God to us, his poor and helpless ones, we would have been like Sodom and like unto Gomorrah! But, O, amazing grace! Praise him, O my soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name! He hath dealt bountifully with his own Israel,

and under the severest trials in this sin-stained world he hath kept his loved ones from giving him up, whom their soul loveth: kept them from blaspheming his dear name, or from speaking evil of him. And in substance, God has enabled his Israel, even under the rod of bereavements and smarting trials, under loss upon loss and trial upon trial, to exclaim in their heart: Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. One before us also cried like ourselves: But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh on me. Thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God! If we cannot, because of the darkness of our minds—or if we dare not, claim our sonship but *seldom* (as you say), O, this *seldom*, this little word seldom, is sufficient for us. If ever we have had sufficient light for once, enabled by the Spirit, to feelingly and experimentally cry, “Abba! Father!” our sonship is established in us forever.

Did Jesus once upon me shine—  
Then Jesus is forever mine!

Though I have to walk all the balance of my days in darkness, and mourn sore like a dove, God remains the same. His loving heart is always overflowing with goodness and mercy, which follows us (perhaps for the most part of our life, unseen by us) all the days of our life.

Your cordial invitation to come to your Association, I will commit to the Lord. O, my brother, you struck a cord in my heart, which is vibrating yet, and will, I trust, sweetly and longingly tremble in its place, when you say in your loving letter: “If I knew how to talk so I could get *into* the hearts of God’s people.” I cried, Who is sufficient for these things? I doubt not but what thousands who have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, and as many as have seen your writings, will testify that your sufficiency is of God; who also hath made you an able minister of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit! And, O, how glorious is such a ministration! You are known and read of all living men,—a

living epistle,—and therefore the people of God love you, and in nowise can they despise such servants, or count their poverty in spirit, and their shortcomings, as a small thing; nay, rather we glory in tribulation, knowing that when we feel our weakness we are strong in the Lord. What heavenly instructions did the imprisoned but inspired apostle Paul communicate to the churches! The Lord wrought in him powerfully. God's grace wrought in him mightily. Though in his own feelings he found, that when he would do good, evil was present; though he found a body of death clinging to him, and holding him a captive, sold under sin; yet he had ability given him to cry: "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" Then immediately the word of the everlasting gospel came to him, and in holy wonder he exclaims: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then he goes on triumphantly to declare that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. No charges against them whom God hath justified, and for whom Christ died; no separation possible; no, nothing at all can separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And above all, my beloved brother, we see Jesus. What anguish of soul was his, when for us, he trod the wine-press alone! when for us, he met the armies of aliens—men and devils combined—and, single-handed, conquered them all, though he fell, was cut off, and reckoned among transgressors. His fall was our standing. His death was our life. His resurrection our deliverance, our freedom, our justification. O, the Lamb of God! may we be drawn to him by the Holy Spirit! Our gloom recedes at once when he appears. Our losses and our crosses become light afflictions when compared with the sufferings of the Son of God! We weep sometimes; but, O my brother, what is our weeping to His strong crying and tears! We groan, being burdened; but the Son of God, our beloved Saviour, fell on his face, sweating great drops of blood! O, cease thy murmuring, thou tempest-tossed soul, and look, if you can, toward the spot where Jesus shed his precious blood! Here stay; here gaze until you die. Thou glorious Conqueror, wilt thou

indeed bring thy people with thee, as trophies of thy victory, when thou wilt come again without sin unto salvation? Yea, they shall all be brought to light, as coming out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! Cheer up, my brother; the time is not far distant when God, even our own God, will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Go on, thou herald of the cross, and cry aloud and spare not. Say to Jerusalem: "Behold your God! Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquities are pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

You say you can write nothing to interest me, but you do not know that your letter brought grateful tears of rejoicing to me, and my heart was stirred up for an immediate reply. Thanks, indeed, for your precious letter. I confess, my dearly beloved, I am utterly unworthy of your notice. May the dear Lord shower his blessings upon you, and may you find Jesus, whom your soul loveth, more and more precious. You have had bereavements that almost broke your heart; yet God hath sustained you, and you have been kept in his love. And

He that hath loved you hitherto,  
Will love you all your journey through.

May the Holy Spirit sweetly move upon your heart, and lips, and life, always to speak well of Him who doeth all things well. Now unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in *his own blood*; to him be majesty, glory and dominion forever. Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

B. GREENWOOD.

N. B.—Remember me in your prayers to our God. Remember me in love to the household of faith. Remember me to your own dear family; and to Bro. Mitchell, your associate.

*Myself can never forget you.*

B. G.

BLACK ROCK, BALTIMORE CO., MD., Aug. 1, 1883.

*Elders Respass and Mitchell:—Dear Brethren:—*Through the kindness of our beloved pastor, Eld. F. A. Chick, I have become acquainted with the GOSPEL MESSENGER, with which I am much pleased, and my present intention is to continue to be a subscriber as long as I live, or be blest with the means to pay for the same. I have been for many years and am now taking a periodical that I consider as good a paper as was ever published and scattered abroad amongst the people of God in this our land; yet when I see other publications setting forth and maintaining the same glorious truth of salvation by grace, it seems to me that if poverty was not in the way I would like to take them all.

If you think it would be in any way interesting or profitable to the readers of the MESSENGER, I will give a short history or sketch of the church called Black Rock, in the State of Maryland, about twenty miles north of the city of Baltimore, and being one of the churches composing the Baltimore Association. This church was constituted about the year 1828, by about a dozen brethren and sisters holding letters of dismission from the Patapsco church, about sixteen miles distant. Elder Edward Choate, of the Patapsco church, was chosen pastor, which relation was still held, I think, until his death, which was perhaps about the year 1840. The next pastor was Eld. E. H. Scott, a beloved member of the Black Rock church. I am not certain as to the time of his ordination or call to the pastoral care of the church, but he continued but a few years, being called to the Church triumphant about the year 1844. He was the only member of the church ever set apart to the ministry. After the death of Elder Scott, for about twenty-two or twenty-three years, the church was so fortunate as to have the labors of Elders Bowen, Grafton, W. J. Purington and the late Eld. S. Trott, of Virginia; the latter preaching his last sermon with much warmth and feeling, though in much bodily weakness, in the old stone chapel at Black Rock. The church never had a large membership, yet some things connected with her history has made her name

somewhat familiar both to the old school Baptists and the public generally. Prominently among which was the assembling of a convention in or about the year 1832, which convention of elders and brethren declared non-fellowship for the unscriptural doctrines and practices being then introduced among the Baptist churches of this country. Then came the separation, and for a long time afterwards, and yet in some instances, we hear the old school or Primitive Baptists designated as Black Rock Baptists. About fifteen years ago our present pastor, Eld. F. A. Chick, a dear young brother, not then ordained to the ministry, came from a distant State visiting some of the churches hereabout, and it was so ordered of our Lord and Master, as we feel sure, that an attachment sprang up between the score of old brethren and sisters constituting the then membership, and the "boy preacher," that he was, was invited to remain with them, which he did, being soon set apart by ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry, was chosen pastor of the church, and is still with us, the church at least having no cause to regret the relation. Though the church was then composed of but about twenty members, and they old and well stricken in years, most of whom have gone home—two of the original members of fifty-five years ago still remaining; yet the Lord has added to her numbers by two's and by three's, and sometimes a solitary one, repairing all breaches made by death and doubling her numbers in a few years. We are as firmly united in the bonds of love and christian fellowship as I suppose it is possible for us to be while here in this imperfect state, all contending earnestly for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace alone from first to last. I am pleased to see that the readers of the MESSENGER are being favored with some able communications from our dear brother Chick, and to those who have never heard him preach I would say he is as able in the pulpit, and perhaps more so than with the pen; but no, this is rather personal, in deference to the feelings of our dear brother I will refrain from saying more.

I am very much in favor of a feature of the MESSENGER in

giving an account occasionally of the welfare and prosperity of the little "branches" of the true vine, which has prompted me to write this little sketch, which, if the editors think will be of interest to any of the readers of the MESSENGER, they are at liberty to publish, if not, no harm I hope is done.

Your brother, I hope, JOHN P. KELLEY.

P. S.—I believe, brethren Respass and Mitchell, you have both been with the little church at Black Rock in years gone by. Cannot you visit us again? J. P. K.

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### EXPERIENCE.

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QUITMAN, GA., September 1, 1883.

*Beloved Brother Respass*:—Having received your very kind invitation to write for the MESSENGER, and having as I hope an impression from the Lord, I will try, though in much weakness, to give to your readers an evidence of my little hope in Jesus; yet with the greatest distrust as to my ability to edify the humble children of God. God has blessed some of his dear ones with very bright evidences of a hope in Christ, enabling them to know when and where the Lord commenced this glorious work with them, many evidences of his hot displeasure on account of their sins, and afterwards a wonderful deliverance of their burden, etc.; whilst many others can only say, like the poor blind man, "Whereas, I was once blind, now I see." To this latter class of believers I hope I am included, and should this prove to be of profit to any it will be to them. I was born in this (Brooks) county July 10th, 1860, of God-fearing and God-loving parents of the Primitive Baptist order. Under their very strict and moral household discipline I was reared quietly and undisturbed, and not allowed to disturb others; and to this writing I can say (not boastingly, God forbid) that I was never intoxicated, and never cursed but once that I remember. But now, beloved reader, I would not have you believe that I offer my early pious life and walk as a reason of that blessed hope in Christ.

No! Do not think I intended to convey the idea that I influenced the God of high heaven with morality to confer everlasting benefits upon me. While I hope I feel truly thankful to the Lord that he permitted me to have moral training in my early life, yet if my little hope is not based upon a better foundation than that, I shall at length fall into everlasting perdition and ruin. Yea, if my unworthy name was not embraced in Christ's atonement and Christ's affections ere time rolled from the bosom of eternity, I have no hope that I shall be remembered with the redeemed. But it will be observed that I did not entertain the same opinion of my condition as a sinner then that I now do; for when thoughts of death would arise in my mind, and I would muse over my condition as a sinner, I reasoned thus with myself, "I am a very good boy, I don't swear, I don't drink, I never dance; I am very obedient to pa and ma, and now what more is necessary? I've heard preachers say if we would do our part the Lord would do his, and I've done mine, then why be alarmed? for I've heard church members say things that I wouldn't say; seen them do things that I would not do." From the foregoing my reader will observe that self-righteousness and self-aggrandizement were the sole products of my morality. And though I had parents that would tell me that God did not communicate eternal life to an individual in payment for their "works of righteousness," and though I had often heard God's ministers preach salvation by grace and grace alone, yet with all my soul I could not believe it. Nay, I could not have been persuaded, though one had arose from the dead.—Luke xvi. 31. But time was but for the trial of my strength, and for the development of nobler things; the time was near approaching when I must realize the sad truth that I was a sinner, and a very great one; that all my former righteousness was but "filthy rags." This brings us to my fourteenth year, when one Sunday in the spring of 1874, while listening to Elder Moses Westberry preach, I became seriously alarmed. He was setting forth the true condition of the sinner who is without hope in the world, and

I saw at once that my salvation and my only hope of it was resting upon my good works, and these the Scripture declares were as "filthy rags." I resolved that I would pray, thinking surely

"The Lord would not hear a sinner pray,  
Yet suffer him to die."

I well remember the spot where I first besought the Lord for mercy; I carefully looked all around me, and seeing no one near, I bowed upon my knees in the fence corner, and there with broken accents cried, "O Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner!" I had thought that I would obtain relief in trying to pray, but so far from it that I thought I committed sin in the attempt. O the horror and despair that seized my mind! I would read my Bible, but alas!

"This solemn truth still remained,  
The sinner must be born again,  
Or drink the wrath of God."

Now, reader, you can better imagine the trouble of my languishing soul at this period of my life than I can describe it. The advances of the boasted enlightened age, together with all my prayers and pious life, would not conceal the awful fact that I was a sinner; and this, dear reader, accounts for the reason why I have never identified myself with those people who claim works for salvation. For no poor boy ever worked more faithfully than I. Yet with all that I could do I had to die. Why the Lord would not regard me for my works' sake I can only account for in this, that if I be an heir to grace he had long atored for and wrought out my deliverance for his "own sake." I, even I, am he that bloteth out thy transgressions *for mine own sake*, and will not remember thy sins.—Isaiah xliii. 25. I continued to pray, but found that prayers together with all that I could do were just like me—corrupt and sinful. At length I arrived at the stopping point, and now to throw myself upon the mercies of God was as much as I could do. So, on the second Tuesday night in November, 1874, I retired, little expecting ever to see the dawning of another day; I was certain that the time had come

for me to die, and that eternal ruin was my awful destiny ; but fell asleep and dreamed that I was carried to a place where all the people of the earth were congregated to stand the final test as to whether they should be admitted into rest or not. Now, I saw in my dream or vision that there was a very large building, the outside of which was the ugliest and worst looking place I had ever seen, and there was a very peculiar lock to the door where the people were trying to gain admittance, and many were standing around weeping over their sad fate. But the time came when I was to try for admittance, and when I thought all was a failure there came a very beautiful man from the inside and the door was opened for me, and I was led into the loveliest hall I had ever seen. There were many precious saints, and Jesus in their midst. Thus ended the sweetest dream of my life. When I awoke it was with rejoicing, for all my burden was gone ; all was new, all was peace ; the birds, the trees, yea, even all nature seemed to be praising God. I now thought I would have delightful news for father and mother when they returned home (for they were away at the time) ; but before their return I had decided differently, for my burden was gone and I had nothing but a dream, which I feared was a delusion ; no, it would never do to tell ma and pa that, for they would not believe me, and I did not know the reality of my exercises myself. Howbeit I now felt a sensation which bound my heart in love to all the dear children of God ; I wanted to live with them, but O how unworthy I felt. If I could be least among them it was enough for me, and it is enough to this day. In August, 1875, I was taken sick with a severe attack of bilious fever ; had prompt attention by the family physician, but without avail. One evening while lying in my room with a very hot fever the thought occurred to my mind that the Lord was thus punishing me for disobedience ; I had refused to follow my impression which led me to the family of God, so I then solemnly vowed to the Lord if he would spare me to the next opportunity I would offer to the church. I commenced improving, and was able to have gone to meeting at the next

conference, but now there was a greater obstacle in the way than ever; I was only fifteen years of age, and of course under father's control, and he being ignorant of my impressions (for I had not as yet ever told any one anything either of my little hope or impressions), never offered me the chance to attend meeting on Saturday, which was the only time the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. Now, to go to father and tell him I wished to go to church to offer myself for membership was just that much more than I could do. So the opportunity was gone, and the following week I was ill again, and now if I could express what remorse my poor heart suffered I am sure my reader would never suffer the worldly pursuits of this life to prevent him offering his children a chance to attend church on Saturday as well as any other day. It so turned out that I had bilious fever again in a more dangerous form than ever, and with all the medical assistance that could be had, with a fond and loving mother for a nurse, I grew worse fast. The idea was now suggested that the time of departure out of this world was drawing to hand; for I had vowed to the Lord and had refused to pay. O my soul, with trouble untold I rolled upon my bed honestly believing I should never recover. At last, one evening while all were out of the room, the question was asked, and seemed as if spoken audibly, "If you were spared to see another opportunity would you not offer to the church?" I was glad to say "yes." Like as before, I soon commenced to improve, and was able to go to meeting in October, but as the time drew near I become so weak that it didn't seem possible for me to undergo the trial, and now, too, the same thing was in the way that was in the way before. O, how can I go to pa, he knowing all my meanness and bad conduct, and tell him to let me go to meeting? The task was so heavy I shrank beneath its weight. A third time was it the pleasure of my gracious Lord to afflict me. "Knowing the terror of the Lord," I pause, reader, to "persuade" you, if you have received a hope that God for Christ's sake pardoned your sins, however little that hope may seem, that you take up *your* cross

(for no one can take it for you) and follow Him through "evil as well as good report." Under my severe afflictions and my awful condition, as was pictured out to me, one evening I called pa into my room and told him something, I never have known what, I only remember he left the room crying. Howbeit the opportunity was offered at the next meeting, and I hope I was constrained by the spirit of God to offer to his little band of followers, and was received into their fellowship on Saturday before the third Sunday in November, 1875, and was baptized the following day by Elder Moses Westbery. Here I close, hoping to give to your readers in the MESSENGER (if more mature reflections do not change my mind) some of the exercises of my mind since I united with the church and my present surroundings. As ever, your little brother in tribulation,

A. V. SIMMS.

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EUFULA, ALA., August 26, 1883.

*Dear Brother and Sister Mitchell:—*

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

When I was at your house some years ago, I did not then think it would be the last time. I intended, if permitted once more to attend meeting at Mount Olive, to see you all, but have been disappointed. My health has been poor, and many changes since. There is no church in this town of our order, and therefore I never go. When I was near Troy, Pike county, Ala., I could walk to Beulah Church once a month, and was satisfied to have spent the remainder of my life there. My membership is still there, and I have been back to one meeting since we moved.

Dear Bro. Mitchell, I often think of one text used at the Beulah Association, at Mount Olive, in 1871: "Trust ye in the Lord, forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isa. I often read the chapter.

I still occupy a room in my son's residence—a room

designed for me. As you know, I am very hard of hearing. I often have the Bible in my hand, and trust that the Lord at times gives me a heart to feast and understand spiritual things. I often think of the apostle's saying, "I die daily." A continual sense of sin is death to me.

I remember what you, Sister M., said to me, that "We must walk by faith, not by sight" That is right, and all who walk by faith are evidently walking with God, in the strait and narrow way of love and obedience. My way often seems to be rugged, dark and gloomy, but I well remember that gloomy night when Christ Jesus was revealed to me as the only Saviour of sinners, and took from me that mountain of sin and fear, and said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Happy day, to me, then. The sufferings and death of Christ appeared plainly to me, and I felt that if Jesus had made me free, I was free indeed. But I need His teaching and presence with me all the time, and can have neither light nor inward peace without it.

There is an elderly lady near here that said to me, "God will not ask, when we get to heaven, what denomination we belonged to here." "O, no," said I. "He knows all the members of his body; all that he has bought with his blood; all whom he has redeemed from the curse of the law by being made a curse for them. He will not need to ask questions of those, because he has kept them by his power, and 'Led them in the right way, that they should go to a city of habitation.'"

Dear Brother, I want to hear from those aged sisters, Taylor, Hurst and Puckett. Are they still living in these low grounds of sorrow, as well as myself? I wish to be remembered in love to all the old friends at Mount Olive, and remember me at a throne of grace. This from your sister in adversity,

MARY A. JACKSON.

P. S.—I will write a little more. I am so old and feeble you would hardly know me, but still I work a little, and think I earn what I eat. My son lost all we had by being burnt out in Troy; but, thanks to God, I have not suffered

for food nor clothing. Mr. Jackson, my lamented husband, was one of the first settlers of this section of country before we were married. He laid off the town of Clayton, his old home, in Barbour county, and the old house stands there yet.

Bro. Mitchell, remember me to your son Billie. Tell him I have not forgotten how carefully he drove from Opelika and back to convey me along. Love and kind regards to all the family. I am now 75 years old, and cannot last much longer. Christ is my everlasting hope, therefore I wait for him, and glory in his name.

MRS. M. A. J.

We thank God for such spiritual letters from aged pilgrims, whose journey is nearly over in this mortal life. Those aged sisters, Taylor, Hurst and Puckett, about whom Sister Jackson inquires, are still living, at this writing, Sept. 10th, though none of them able to get out, and Sister Puckett totally blind. Two blind sisters in our church at Mount Olive.—M.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL.

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### ELDER PETER T. EVERITT.

[By request of Bro. Mitchell.]

I was born in Macon county, Ga., October 11th, 1829. My father, Thomas Everitt, and mother, whose maiden name was Jennett Richardson, both lived until I was about 32 years old. My educational advantages were very limited.

I was seriously convicted at about the age of 15; and received a hope at about 16; and a little before the age of 22 years I was received into the fellowship of Poplar Spring (Primitive Baptist) Church, Webster county, Ga., and baptized by Elder Alison Culpepper.

My mind became weighted about preaching when I was 20 years of age, and I commenced at Mount Pisgah, Worth county, Ga.; and I can't be positive whether any other brother was present at the time except Deacon Geo. Truluck, when I took my first text; and Eliza Chestnut was the only

sister I can be certain as present, though there were others doubtless there. My pastoral services were called for by the above named church, of which I was a member; and I was ordained 23rd March, 1861, by Elders E. J. Williams, Warren Dykes and Ansel Parrish. I was married a little after my twenty-third year, and of nine children we have five now living.

P. T. EVERITT.

P. S.—I wrote a few lines for the GOSPEL MESSENGER shortly after my return last year from a tour in the Upatoie and Echeconna Associations, by request of the brethren there, which was never published; and now I wish to say to those precious brethren and sisters, that I can never forget the many kind acts bestowed by them upon my unworthy self; and I desire an interest in the prayers of all the saints.

Farewell.

P. T. E.

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M. HODGES.

In compliance with Bro. Mitchell's request, I will say I was born on the 17th of February, 1794, in Franklin county, Va. Neither my father nor mother were professors of religion at that time, but both afterwards became members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and both died in that fellowship. My father was a deacon. In the year 1812 my father moved to Sumner county, Tenn. I was wild and wayward, but was never in the habit of using profane language. On the 10th of January, 1819, I was moved, and in December, 1822, received a hope in Christ, and my wife the same in January following. We were both baptized by Elder Robert Norvill, in March, 1823. She became the mother of seven children; and died on the 28th of July, 1877. Our oldest and youngest sons are both dead—both leaving families—one in Texas, the other in Kansas.

I had impressions to preach, soon after I had a hope; but feeling that I had no ability, and if I attempted it, I would be a subject to be laughed at, which I was not willing to submit to, and finally went into darkness, coldness and carnally-mindedness. For some years I lived in this backslidden state.

I was aroused, as it were, suddenly, like one out of sleep, to see and feel my awful condition. I truly repented, but it seemed as unavailing as if I was trying to reverse the globe.

I think I went into despair; thought I had committed the unpardonable sin; but, bless God! at a time unexpected, he shed his love abroad in my poor heart. Now I was willing to be laughed at; anything rather than get back in that back-slidden state. I think I would have rather been cut to pieces with a dull axe than gone back. I then made my first attempt, at our own church, to preach, for the church had never taken a charge against me. I thought if they knew me as well as I did myself they would exclude me, though I did not want to be excluded. About twelve months after my first attempt the church called a presbytery and had me ordained. The presbyters were Elders Robert Norvill, Eli Bryant and Benjamin Bailey. I tried to preach as long as I was able; am now very feeble; almost entirely deaf; my memory has failed very much; can scarcely walk alone; but still have hope that God, for Jesus' sake, did give me an evidence of full pardon of all my sins on the 18th day of December, 1822, though I feel I am a poor sinner; but since Christ came into the world to save sinners, I trust I am a saved sinner—saved by grace, without merit on my part.

*Fountain Head, Tenn., Aug. 23, 1883.*

M. HODGES.

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“Pray without ceasing.” We may pray continually, and yet not be continually at prayer. Though the lesson is not always being played, yet it is well to have the instrument in tune.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.” That soul shall have his will of God, who desires nothing but what God wills. Why should our petitions be dying, when our Intercessor ever liveth? Is it of any consequence, how often we carry our empty vessels to such a well?

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

### TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.

Brother T. A. Simmons, of Alabama, writes that he is requested by another party to ask us to write upon the last clause of the following text :

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.—Heb. ii. 9.

As to the phrase, "taste death for every man," Universalists and Conditionalists have been perfectly agreed that it sets forth a universal atonement for all Adam's race. But while they agree that the law and justice of God have been fully satisfied by the suffering and death of Christ, they are as far apart as the east is from the west as to the saving efficacy and final result of the Atonement. Both agree that the atonement for sin is made alike for all mankind; but the Universalist says and believes that it has saving virtue in it, of itself, sufficient to secure the final and eternal salvation of all for whom such atonement is made. But the Conditionalist, or Arminian, says, in substance, that the Atonement, of itself considered, has no saving virtue in it unless the poor, helpless and ungodly sinner, to whom it is offered, chooses to give it virtue by accepting the conditions of salvation which are offered him in the gospel.

According to the theory of the Conditionalist, the sinful and fallen race of Adam, though "*without* strength and dead in sins," are supposed to be able to accept or reject what they call the "conditions of salvation." If any accept, then the atonement has saving virtue for them; but if they reject, then there is no virtue in it to remove or overcome their stubborn will. It will therefore be seen, according to this very popular theory, that the man's turning-point of salvation rests with the polluted sinner. It could not, therefore, justly be said that

“salvation is of the Lord,” if the principal ingredient to secure that salvation is of man.

If all that God has done, and all that Christ has suffered, and all that the Holy Ghost has done and will do, has no saving virtue to save a sinner until he puts in the single ingredient of his depraved will to give virtue to the work of God, then it must be that all the glory of salvation is due to man, and not to God. This would contradict the Bible and all christian experience. It contradicts that clause in the above text which affirms, that “for the suffering of death,” Jesus is “*crowned* with glory and honor.” Where is the “*crown of glory and honor,*” if the design of his suffering is defeated? If the act of the sinner gives efficacy to the atonement, and without which it could have no virtue, then it is the sinner that is “crowned” with the chief glory and honor of the great work of salvation, and not Christ. If what Christ hath done proves a failure unless the sinner makes it a success, then it could not be truthfully written that Christ Jesus hath in all things the pre-eminence. The sinner would, on this theory, be pre-eminent above Christ, because all that the Lord has done is a failure till virtue is given it by the act of the sinner!

From the days of the apostles till now, both men and devils have been engaged in perverting the word of God. They determine its sense and meaning more from the sound of some word or phrase, than by the connection in which it stands. The devil could quote scripture to Christ, but his perverted application would argue that even Christ might “do evil that good may come.” The apostle spoke of some who troubled the churches of Galatia, and perverted the gospel of Christ; and, also, of some who “wrested the scriptures to their own destruction.” To “wrest” is to twist, turn or misapply the scriptures, by taking a text, word or phrase from its proper connection and applying it to the support of some false theory.

There is no question but that the phrase “every man,” in the above text, has a meaning; but we have no idea that it refers to every man of Adam’s race. It does, however, as in many other places, refer to every man under consideration—

every man for whom Christ tasted death—no more nor no less. God commanded that every man-child should be circumcised, but this included none but Abraham's household, or those under consideration. Hezekiah prayed that "The good Lord pardon *every* one," but this included none but those Israelites who had eat the Passover unlawfully.

Christ taught that "Every one that asketh receiveth," and yet we know it is also written that some even of God's people, "Ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, that they may consume it upon their lusts."—Matt. vii. 8; and James iv. 2.

Christ also taught that "*Every man* who hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John vi. 45. "Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice."—John xviii. 37.

We have introduced the above texts to show that in our interpretations of scripture we should be governed by the connection of the text, and not simply by the sound of a word, or by any phrase detached from its immediate connection.

In the connection of the text which we are considering, in Hebrews, the two distinct Headships of Adam and Christ are set forth. It is shown that in the natural and earthly creation and government, that Adam was "made a little lower than the angels," and that God crowned him with glory and honor by "setting him over the work of His hands." He put all things in subjection under his feet, leaving nothing so far as pertained to Adam's particular sphere and authority "that is not put under him." But the "world to come," spoken of in this connection, is not put in subjection to neither the earthly Adam nor to angels. There is another glorious *Head*—even Jesus—who is "Head over all things to his Church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all."—Eph i. 23.

As Adam represented the "every man" in the natural creation and government, so Christ Jesus was made a "little lower than the angels" as the Son of Man, that he might be capacitated to suffer death for all whom he represented as Surety, and thus by the grace of God taste death for every

man of them. He tasted death for every man whom he represented in the atonement made for sin. He bore their sins in his own body on the tree, and by his stripes they are healed. The very object for which he came into the world was to save his people from their sins. He tasted death for every man of them, and says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." I give unto them "eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." They are the gift of God the Father to him in the great covenant of redemption, and he affirms that the "Father which gave them to him is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of his Father's hand."—John x. 28. These are the people for whom Christ died. It was purely and wholly by the "grace of God that he should taste death for every man" of them; for it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many *sons* unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will declare my name among *my* brethren."

Cannot the reader see that those for whom Christ tasted death, and every man of them, are so identified with him and he with them, that he calls them "sons" and "brethren," among whom he will declare or make known his blessed Name? He says of them: "Thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out as a thick cloud, thy transgressions; and as a cloud, thy sins. Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens! for the *Lord hath done it.*"—Isa. xlv. 22.

That the blessed Jesus hath tasted death for every man of his people, we have no doubt; and that the merits of that death are sufficiently efficacious to bring every one of them to His eternal glory, there is no question. The grace of God does not simply offer salvation, conditionally, but it *brings* it to all of them—whether infants or idiots, old or young, learned or unlearned, rich or poor. They are saved of the Lord, and saved by grace; not of works, lest any man should

boast. It matters not what may be really necessary to a sinner's salvation, the grace of God furnishes and brings it all to him. Grace carries its own conditions and qualifications in and with itself. It requires nothing but what it gives. It brings salvation from sin, death and hell. It brings life eternal, and holy desires. It gives you to feel and know you are a needy, helpless sinner. It gives righteousness and justification; faith, hope, love, and every other grace.

We must close for the present.—M.

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### THE OLD AND NEW MAN.

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We have never professed to know the deep things of God, or to be able to explain them; and to define precisely the change in man by the new birth is doubtless far beyond our ability. We know but little more about it than the blind man knew when he said, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." But that there is a change in the man by the new birth the scriptures clearly teach, and in what it consists is our present inquiry. The scriptures abound in figurative expressions that were never designed to be construed literally; and to so construe them would involve us in inextricable confusion. For example, the words of Jesus in John iv., saying: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." Now, we know that Jesus did not refer to natural water, or natural thirst, or natural wells, only so far as they represented spiritual thirst, and spiritual water and wells, which they can at best only partly represent. He did not mean that there would be an actual well of natural water in a man, but he meant to represent by natural thirst, spiritual thirst for heavenly grace, and by natural water, that grace as given by him in the gift of eternal life, and by the well of living water, the unfailing character of his grace, as unlike natural wells—going dry in summer, and failing in the time of greatest need—but like the living water, his grace,

would be affected by no changes of times and seasons, but always, in summer as in winter, wet or dry, the same and sufficient. The spiritual people of God are called Zion, and it is said when Zion travailed she brought forth children; and we know the Church and Christians are meant by Zion, and that no church ever bore an actual child of flesh, blood and bones; but that she does conceive by the Lord, we all believe. She sorrows in mind, deplores as Hannah her barrenness and deadness, and cries unto the Lord as a woman of sorrowful spirit, and that spiritual joys are born to her.

And not to be too tedious, the Saviour, in John viii., said to the Scribes and Pharisees who boasted to him of Abraham as their father, that they were of their father the devil; but we know he did not mean that Abraham was not their fleshly father, or that the devil was their fleshly father, for the devil never had a fleshly child; but that he meant that in their opposition to the truth taught by him, and believed in and loved by Abraham, that they manifested the satanic spirit of hatred to God and his truth that has ever characterized the devil, and were in that sense the devil's children and not Abraham's.

*Old* and *new* man are New Testament figurative expressions; such as, "Ye are the temple of God"; "a spiritual house"; and "lively stones"; the "outward and inner man," &c. The words "old man" are used in the Old Testament, but in their literal sense, and refer to the years of a man's natural life, as when Zacharias said to the angel: "I am an old man," &c., the old man there being the real old man of flesh and blood, and not the *old* man we are charged in the scriptures to "put off"; nor is the *new* man we are told to "put on," a real man, a distinct person, but the works prompted by the new nature and commanded in the word. But whilst the figurative *old* and *new* man are not used in the Old Testament, the christian warfare was well known to the ancient saints; for Christians have been comforted and encouraged in all ages by the struggles and triumphs of faith recorded in the sacred pages for them.

Could we find a man who had never sinned, but was as good as Adam was before he fell, we would find a man with no *old* man or *new* man either but simply a good creature of God. Our blessed Redeemer had our nature, but not its depravity, save by imputation; and whilst, as his children, he had two natures in one person—the nature of God and the nature of man—he had no *old* man in his own person to contend with, as we have. It is this depraved nature, that is conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity,—not so much the man, but the nature,—because conception and birth are not of themselves sinful, man having been commanded to increase and multiply, and it is not therefore sinful to marry wives and beget children; but, being depraved, our offspring is conceived and brought forth sinful. When a man is born again (we would not say born over), he, the man, becomes a new creature, but not a new creature in flesh and blood,—for, as far as flesh and blood are concerned, he is the same creature,—but as woman in pangs of travail is delivered by birth, so he is delivered by faith, and rejoices in the truth. He is born of the Spirit, for God is a spirit. He is new in spirit; new in hope, faith and love, and the works of faith. He is new in his views of truth, of God, and of himself; old things have passed away, and he is one spirit with the Lord, and hates what God hates and loves what God loves; and hates what he once loved, and loves what he once hated. The *old* man is still, however, left; but the christian man—the man himself as a Christian—lives by faith. It is the same man who is thus changed, who has now in spirit partaken of the divine nature, that now has struggles and hates his own depravity, who once had no such struggles. It was the same Paul, who, after his change, loved unto death the same truth that he before hated unto death. If it was not him, who was it? It was the same Gadarene who one day was a fierce, wild and ungovernable savage, that sat the next day meekly at the feet of Jesus, as a little child. He was the same man of flesh and blood,—the same in size, features and stature,—that he was the day before, but not the

same in spirit; yet he had the depravity of nature to contend with until the struggle should end by death. He was a new creature; and what sort of a creature? why, he was a "wonder" from the Lord of hosts; a man with two natures,—the *old* man and the *new* man,—such a being as no man could be who had never sinned and been born again; both a creature and a child, both created and begotten, both of God and of man. The warfare is itself an evidence of the new birth; that the new reign has begun in the man, that the change has taken place, that the very identical man in whom this conflict is going on is a child of God and an heir of heaven. He is the one, the lost sinner, who is interested in salvation; we know of no other man, or creature, or being, interested in salvation. A man once said to us, "that when you get to heaven, it will not be John Respass"; to which we replied, "that if it is not John Respass, it had as well be Bill Smith, as far as we are concerned"; and it had; for it is this very person, John Respass, who longs for eternal life; this very sinner who hungers for holiness; and this very one who hopes to realize it, and praise God for redeeming grace—for saving a poor sinner!

With all due deference to others, we cannot construe the scriptural expressions in reference to the *old* and *new* man, literally, and make of them two distinct men, when, in fact, they are (the *old* and *new* man), more properly, two natures or spirits in *one* man or person. It has been said: "Whence these various distinctions between the *old* and *new* man, if indeed there are not two men?" And: "Two distinct births of two distinct elements, necessarily produce *two distinct beings*." Now, to argue from such a premise as this, will confuse the minds of God's feeble children, and cause estrangement and contention.

But we would say that the two births in God's children no more necessarily produce two distinct persons in them, than the birth of Christ of the seed of Abraham necessarily produced two distinct beings in Him. But no one believes that he, the adorable Redeemer! had two persons, but that he, like

his children, had two natures in *one* person—the nature of God and of man.

Therefore, we do not understand that God begets in sinners, even his chosen people, any actual children, or that there are any actual fleshly children of the devil; but that the *old* man is the corrupt nature of fallen man, and the *new* man the new nature begotten in him of God; so that, instead of being two distinct persons, he is *one* person with *two* natures. And though there are two distinct births, they are altogether different in character, as much as the natural water and natural well differ from the spiritual water and well; and it would be as sound reasoning to make the spiritual well alike in shape, form, &c., to the natural well, as to make the spiritual birth like the natural birth. The spiritual birth is designed to represent the change in spirit and character, and no being is brought forth by it any more than a being or person is brought forth by the travail of Zion.

But the meaning of the *old* and *new* man is clearly defined by the apostle in his letter to the church at Ephesus, 4th chapter; and also in his letter to the church at Colosse, 3rd chapter. He writes to the church: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation (or conduct), the *old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the *new man*, which after God (or of God and like God), is created in righteousness and true holiness." In this sentence Paul speaks of both the *old* and *new* man; the one to be put off, the other to be put on, as if we were putting off one coat and putting on another in its place; and it is not therefore a person to be put off and put on, but a life to live. The church was composed there of Gentiles by nature, and hence he said to them: "I testify in the Lord, that ye walk not as other Gentiles"—that is, as Gentiles who had not been made Christians, and who "walked in the vanity of their mind, whose understanding was darkened, and who were alienated from the life of God through ignorance that was in them because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling, had given themselves

over unto lasciviousness with greediness." Meaning that they, as Christians, were not to live as others, or as they had formerly lived themselves, but to live now as Christians, as children of God, those of another spirit; and in that way put off the *old* man and put on the *new* man. Because they had been taught better; they had learned Christ, "if so be they had heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you (this is the *old man*), with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave you (this the *new man*.) Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ hath loved us and hath given himself for us; but fornication, covetousness and all uncleanness, let them not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting," &c. To live this way is to put off the *old* man and to put on the *new* man. And what a warfare it is! and to accomplish it how necessary that we should every man be in his place in the camp, with the whole armor of God on! because that which the Spirit prompts and the word requires will find more or less opposition in our corrupt nature—the one being contrary to the other—so that we cannot of ourselves do what we would.

Therefore, the idea that the "old" and "new" man are two distinct beings, is not scriptural. It has also been said by gifted brethren, that, as all living souls were created in, and simultaneously with the first man, Adam, and being born of him, necessarily partake of his nature; so were all quickened spirits created in, and simultaneously with the last Adam (Christ), and that they (quickened spirits), all being born of him, as necessarily partake of his nature, &c. If we get the

idea the language conveys, it means that Christ was created as Adam was, and that these quickened spirits, whatever they are, were created in him, and that in the new birth they are born again, and not the man. But the scriptures say, "the man must be born again," not quickened spirits. And if Christ is a creature of God, and not God the Son, it would be idolatry to worship him as God. We know it is said that we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, but that refers altogether to the work of Christ in our hearts.

And the elect of God, these redeemed and saved sinners, will have something to praise God for in heaven that no unfallen and unsaved beings could possibly have. But we are not yet perfected, but wait for the final change; we see now through a glass darkly, and know only in part, but the time is fast coming when we shall see Him face to face, and know as we are known, and shall attain to the full stature of men. Now we press forward to the future, and shall at last be crowned with fullness of joy at His right hand. So our new nature is not a distinct being, but is our God given nature, as our faith, hope and love, and is evidence that we have eternal life and shall come off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Bless his holy name! Like the leaven hid in the meal until the whole shall be leavened, so shall his people be saved; nothing of them will be lost but their sin and corruption. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 11.

What is written is written in the interest of the truth of God and the peace of his regenerated people, and may the blessing of God rest upon it!—R.

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Christians can never want a praying time, if they possess a praying frame. In the morning, this is a golden key to open the heart for God's service; and in the evening, it is an iron lock to guard the heart against sin.

## FOR CHILDREN.

*Beloved Children:*—It is a blessed privilege that our God has given us to correspond and hear from one another by such a convenient and cheap method as we have enjoyed in the GOSPEL MESSENGER. Let us be careful lest we abuse this high privilege, by esteeming it so lightly that it be taken away from us. We should appreciate it greatly, and be very thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for it.

Amidst all our toils, and the many cares and discouragements with which we meet in our editorial work, there are, at times, a few little things to cheer and encourage us to go forward. And perhaps we cannot better tell you of one little matter of encouragement than by publishing a short extract from a letter that has been sent us from a nice little daughter of ten years old, living in Tennessee. Here is her letter:

WINCHESTER, TENN., September 17, 1883.

*Mr. W. M. Mitchell:*—*Very Dear Friend:*—I have been desirous to write to you. I have been reading, in July number of the MESSENGER, the letter you sent to us children. You said your eye was so afflicted that you could not write us a long letter. I was very sorry to hear of your affliction. I know how to feel sorry for you, because my papa's eyes have been afflicted for about thirteen years, and last summer and fall he had neuralgia very badly. My mother has been in very poor health for twenty years. My father is 56 years old, and my mother 46. Papa says he wants you to continue sending the GOSPEL MESSENGER to him, J. C. Fulton, and he will send you the first dollar he can spare.

I have six living sisters and one brother, and two sisters and three brothers dead, and in heaven, I hope, where parting will be no more. I am the daughter of J. C. and Eliza Fulton. I hope you will be able to write us many letters yet. My papa is now gone to the Baptist Association. I will close.

Respectfully, your little friend, IDA A. FULTON.

Now, dear children, is not the above a very nice little

letter from a lovely daughter of ten years old? There is reason to hope that she will make a good and useful woman, and even this little effort of writing to us has given such hope and comfort to her poor, afflicted mother that she is stirred up to send the letter for publication, and write us a note at the bottom of the letter, as follows:

*Dear Brethren:*—As my little daughter has written this letter, I will send it to the GOSPEL MESSENGER. It makes me think that the good Lord has caused her to choose, like Mary, that good part, which shall never be taken away from her. O, that God may bless the child, and bless this, her feeble letter! Remember me at a throne of grace.

ELIZA FULTON.

We have reason to hope and believe, from what we have seen and heard, that the Lord is dealing with some of our little readers, to bring them to a knowledge of their sinful condition, and also to a knowledge of that salvation which he has provided for them in Jesus Christ. He begins the work, and he carries it on, causing the poor child to cry to him for mercy. His ear is always ready to hear such a cry. Hope to hear from some other young friend soon.—M.

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### VISIT TO KENTUCKY.

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We made a visit in August last to some churches in Kentucky; and by impression, if we ever went anywhere by impression. We visited three churches that were for many years under the pastorate of the late Elder William Conrad, and several churches in the North District Association, and that Association in its session of the present year. We knew not before this visit the situation of things amongst the Baptists there, and were grieved in spirit to find estrangement amongst them. We have been puzzled to know why the Lord sent us there, if indeed he did send us, as we believe he did; but that, perhaps, is not for us to know. This we are

assured of, that we were received kindly and sincerely, and that we preached the same gospel amongst them that we have been preaching here all our ministry, and in the same spirit; so that we are obliged to believe that they are the people of God. The churches of Elder Conrad—now under the care of our beloved brother, Elder James J. Gilbert—were walking, as we believe, in the Spirit, though connected with no Association; and if we were ever with better churches, we do not know it. We believe that we were with them in weakness, in fear, and much trembling, and that the Lord enabled us to preach in humility to them the word that they received gladly. We love them, and may God's blessing be ever upon them! It is not our design to mention names in this short article, but these dear brethren may be assured that their names are written in our memory. We heard but few preachers speak—only, perhaps, Elders Gilbert, Rupard, Lampton and Anderson—and their doctrine was such as commended itself to our conscience. We regret that, though in the midst of the brethren of the Licking Association, but few of them came out to hear us preach; but the few who did, were, as we were informed, pleased with the doctrine preached.

We, whilst in Lexington, called, in company with Elder James Gilbert and Allen Rupard, to see the venerable Elder Thomas P. Dudley, and had a very agreeable interview of about an hour with him. He told us that he was now in his 92nd year, and that his father and himself had served the church at Bryan uninterruptedly for, we think, ninety-seven years. May God bless all the brethren there with peace and unity in the Spirit, so that, estrangement shall be done away and the fruits of the Spirit cover the land!—R.

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God looks more at our wills, than at our works. The first fruits of conversion hang upon the trees of holiness. "I will arise and go to my father." Arrows weakly shot, fall short of the mark.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

REIDSVILLE, N. C., September 18, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respess*:—I venture to give you a few items from this section. My membership is at Lick Fork, in the Country Line Association. We have had some little local troubles in some of our churches, or with some of the members, in regard to instrumentality, or the preaching of the gospel being the ordained means to quicken sinners; but I believe at this time every church in this section is at peace, and fully endorse the doctrine you advance in your article in September number of the present year. I believe the "means" party, or Instrumental Baptists, will and are now seeing they have been led astray by traditions, and the rudiments of the world, and that which is neither profitable, comforting, nor edifying.

We had Elder Bartley, from Indiana, with us five or six weeks. His preaching was well received and very edifying. But he is, he writes me, in very feeble health at this time—more so now than while here. His memory will ever be cherished by all of us.

We are having a general revival in the churches here. There have been thirteen added to one of the churches I serve, in the last two months; seven at another, and two at another; and many more looked for at our next meetings. "For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."

You and Elder Mitchell would be gladly received in our Association this fall. The "Mayo" meets 3rd Sunday in October, in fifteen miles of Reidsville. Come, if possible.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. M. HARRIS.

N. B.—Enclosed find one dollar for the MESSENGER. It is highly appreciated in my household. The editorials alone are worth the subscription price. I find you both always in full accord with the scriptures in all things pertaining to Zion; *i. e.*, "in the middle of the bridge." [Continue to discountenance controversies.]

J. M. H.

GATESVILLE, TEXAS, September 16, 1883.

*Dear Brother*:—After a delay of some time, I write you a few lines to thank you for your kindness and long forbearance in not stopping the MESSENGER. I have been unable to work any for three years, and am a very poor man. I have lived to the end of all my means, but through the goodness and kindness of the all-wise Creator, I am one time more on my feet, and am trying to support my family by my daily labor. I have a situation in a family grocery. I am unable to work on a farm, and never will be again. I try to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; but to live in a public place and keep right, is one of the hardest things I have ever tried, I know. To do right, is more than I can do all the time. How to meet all men and how treat all, is a very hard thing for me to know. I cannot leave my business to go to church, and am not able to ride, if I

could go. I never hear any preaching, nor ever see any one to talk to, and you can give a guess of the life I am living. All the satisfaction I see is when I get a MESSENGER to read. I will send you some money in this, and want you to continue the MESSENGER, for I cannot see how I could do without it.

I wrote to you for you to write when you could on Discipline. There are some points I will ask you about. Where there is trouble between two of the brethren, and they cannot be reconciled to each other, is the church in order to baptize members, or transact any kind of business?\*

And where there is no deacon, has the Moderator a right to appoint some of the lay members to hand round the bread and wine? There are a great many others, but more anon.

I am as ever,

P. VANCLEAVE.

\*Disorderly members should be dealt with by the church; and whilst she deals with it, and does not sanction it, she is in order for any church business. And even if a church gets disorderly, she can repent as a church, and get right; and that is a church act. There is no impropriety in any member handing round the bread and wine.—ED.

PLEASANT GROVE, ALA., August 28, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell*:—I will give you a brief account of our Union Meeting at Liberty Church, where my membership is; which began on Friday before 1st Sunday in August. Our pastor, Elder A. J. Coleman, with two other Elders, were with us; and they preached gospel to us in its purity, according to my judgment. The door of the church was opened, and 5 came forward and were received for baptism. It was a time of rejoicing with the brethren; and it seemed that all the people were more solemn than usual, nearly all being in tears; so that it was enough for me at that time, it being so manifest that the Lord was amongst us, as I believe he was. The 4th in August was our next meeting, and Saturday 2 came forward and were received, and met at the water Sunday morning, and 5 were baptized, and there was much feeling. Elder Coleman preached with great liberty; after which the door of the church was opened, and one old brother, 75 years of age, came and gave the reason of his hope, and was received, who had belonged to the Baptists before the split, but had gone off with the Missionaries, but had been dissatisfied with them many years, and had waited to see if he would ever become better satisfied, but got more and more dissatisfied. I feel, dear brethren, that the Lord is leading his people out of Babylon; for these all, six of them, belonged to other so called churches.

Bro. Respass, if you can ever find time to come to this part of the country, the brethren would be glad to see you. May the Lord bless you and Bro. Mitchell and families with health and strength, and grace to sustain you!

GREEN CARVER.

RANGER, EASTLAND CO., TEXAS, August 30, 1883.

*Elders Respass and Mitchell* :—As I am through the business part of my letter, I beg space to answer some of the brethren who have written me lately :

Elder Henry Meeks—I gave your letter to Elder J. S. Meeks. He proceeded to answer it. You can address him at Palo Pinto, Palo Pinto county, Texas.

Brethren Conn and Richardson, Jasper Co., Texas—I am unacquainted with the early history of Daniel Parker. I refer you to Elder A. B. Morris, Coffeeville, Miss.

Our Brazos River Association has just closed its sixth annual session, with the Pleasant Dale Church, Eastland county, Texas. All was from the beginning perfect peace and harmony. Three accessions to the church by experience, two of whom were baptized; the other, an aged sister, deferring her baptism until the next meeting. The two who were baptized were from the ranks of the Missionaries; and, in fact, most of our accessions here in the West are from the same source. We could add to our number from the Missionary ranks by the wholesale, if we would take them with their Babylonian garment. We have none only those who can say, "Shiboleth."

The corresponding brethren present were as follows: G. I. Thomas, Village Creek Association, son of the late Elder D. P. Thomas. He preached the word with great boldness, as did all the brethren that were in attendance. Elder E. M. Weeks, Basque River Association. We expected several other correspondents of the ministering brethren, but sickness and other causes prevented them. Elder Dean, of Arkansas, arrived while Elder D. W. Russell, the Moderator, was concluding. Learning he was on the ground, by request preached for us after dinner. A few very appropriate remarks by Elder J. M. Morgan. The last wine was the best! In all there were eight preachers in attendance.

Our Association will meet with the Dry Creek Church, Young county; commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in August, 1884. Dear brothers, come and see us; we think you will be remunerated for your time and trouble. With regard to our Association, we refer you to Elders Beene and Lancaster, of Tennessee, who have visited us the two past years.

I visited Village Creek Association, that commenced Friday before the 2nd Sunday in August. Thirteen preachers were present. Here I met Elder Samuel Beene, of Sequatchie Valley, Tenn. He preached the word with great boldness, much to the comfort of the dear saints; and it was especially comforting to myself. It had been thirty years since I had seen him. When last we met before, it was at Lynchburg, Tenn., on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in September, 1853. Old Bro. Holman, with many others, well remember the occurrences of that day and the next Sunday. The old brethren that filled the stand—Samuel Magbie, Jesse Cox and David Jacks—have laid their armor by and gone to their reward.

Brethren composing the Elk River Association—I did hope to meet with you at your annual session, but bad health will prevent. I said to Elder Rogers, two weeks ago, that if I could only visit you, and the Lord would help me to preach in demonstration and power of the Spirit, it would be more desirable to me than this world and all that belongs to it.

Brethren, I hope I have learned obedience by things I have suffered. I have learned it is better to obey than to sacrifice. I will close by asking the brethren to pray for me. O that they would pray for me! Farewell.

J. H. MILLER.

P. S.—In my communication in the August number these errors occur: The name of the church is Providence instead of "Bethel." Sister Nancy Tompkins is the daughter instead of the "granddaughter" of Elder Isaac Steele, who was pastor of Sulphur Spring Church, Simpson county, Ky., for the space of thirty-five years.

Since writing the above I have obtained one other subscriber, to wit, D. W. Hullum, Breckinridge, Stephens county, Texas, who is our worthy and efficient County and District Clerk.

J. H. M.

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DENMARK, LAFAYETTE CO., MISS., August 1, 1883.

*Dear Brother* :—Find enclosed one dollar, for which send the MESSENGER to the address of G. W. Pool, Delay P. O., LaFayette county, Miss. The MESSENGER is rapidly growing in favor among the Baptists in Mississippi. We love its contents; because it sets forth the same glorious truth, and vindicates the same great system of salvation through the vicarious death of our blessed Redeemer, as believed and preached by the Baptists here, and our souls feel wholly identified with and love those who love and advocate that salvation is of the Lord; knowing there are many who make war against this sacred truth, and bring to bear their most bitter invectives and vituperation against those who advocate this blessed truth, and hold up to public view the absurd and erroneous system of the Arminian doctrine. While we have much opposition here against Primitive Baptists, yet there are many of Zion's children among these idolatrous worshipers who are wearied of their taskmasters, and are sending up their bitter cries, and inquiring the way to the Zion of our God.

I am traveling much of my time, and trying to the best of my ability to preach Christ and him crucified, and many among the Arminian ranks are wont to come, and it is my sweet privilege to baptize a good many from that quarter. Our churches are in peace, and some of them in a prosperous condition; and we have reason to hope that the Lord has heard the prayers of his people, and is sending into his harvest some promising young gifts in the ministry, who will take part of the arduous labors of those who are already in the field, and help supply the many destitute places which are greatly desiring Primitive Baptist preaching. Many times my soul feels greatly stirred within me, when I so often hear the

Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us!" And were it not, my dear brother, that I know that our God works and none can hinder, and has all power in heaven and earth, I would sink in despair, feeling I am not sufficient for these things.

May the good Lord bless and sustain you and our dear old Father Mitchell in conducting the MESSENGER to the good of Zion and the glory of God!

Yours, tremblingly,

A. B. MORRIS.

COMANCHE COUNTY, TEXAS, June 25, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I am well pleased with the MESSENGER and aim to do all I can for it, although I have not been able to take it myself. The Baptists here are in peace, and are in a prosperous condition. I have the care of two churches, and try to preach at some place every Saturday and Sunday. I was at Shiloh Church, of which Elder Burks is a member and pastor; his family is well.

Dear brethren, pray for us; and may God bless you in your labors is the prayer of your unworthy brother to serve in the bonds of the gospel,

JOS. B. TAYLOR.

SPRINGTOWN, TEXAS, September 4, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass, Butler, Ga.* :—*My Dear Sir* :—Please find two dollars, for which you will please send to Elder B. L. Throneberry, at Springtown, Parker county, Texas, the GOSPEL MESSENGER for one year. The other dollar place to the credit of M. M. Harrison. The MESSENGER comes regularly, well laden with the rich treasures of the gospel of the Son of God. May the contributors to the MESSENGER continue to increase until they shall fill the land with the cry, "Salvation is of the Lord." O that the household of *Faith* would unite in petitioning a throne of God's grace for one in this part of Texas, who has for eighteen years been living, as it were, between hope and fear—a sad, a most deplorable state! May God in his infinite wisdom bless the labors of the editors, both here and hereafter.

Yours, in doubt,

J. P. RANDOLPH.

BLOOMING GROVE, TEXAS, August, 1883.

*Brother Respass* :—I have sent you the above names, to which you will please send the GOSPEL MESSENGER. I will continue to try and get up more and send you as soon as I can. I am well pleased with the MESSENGER; it has been sent to me through the kindness of Bro. Rufus Ezell, of Tennessee. I was living in Tennessee at the time you and Bro. Rowe preached through that country, but was deprived of the privilege of meeting you on the account of sickness and death in my family. I suppose I get the MESSENGER free for one year. [Yes, dear brother.]

THOS. W. ROSCOE.

PAIGE, TEXAS, August 3, 1883.

*Elder J. R. Respass* :—By request I send you the following proceedings for publication in the GOSPEL MESSENGER, if you see proper to do so.

Yours, &c.

J. R. CLARK.

SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1883.—The church at Bethel, Llano county, Texas, called a presbytery, consisting of Elders W. J. Hester, J. C. Denton and J. E. Woods, and Deacons T. S. Whiteley and J. R. Clark, for the purpose of ordaining Brethren R. A. Mercer and J. F. Richardson to the work of the ministry, and Bro. D. G. Mercer to the office of Deacon. The presbytery organized by appointing W. J. Hester, Moderator; J. C. Denton to examine the candidates for ordination; J. E. Woods to offer the ordination prayer, and J. R. Clark to act as Clerk; when, after examination had and satisfaction being given, the presbytery proceeded to ordain Brethren R. A. Mercer and J. F. Richardson to the full work of the ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands. Charge given by the Moderator.

The church then presented Bro. D. G. Mercer before the presbytery for ordination to the office of Deacon; when, after examination had and satisfaction being given as to his qualifications, the presbytery proceeded to ordain Bro. Mercer by prayer and the laying on of hands.

J. R. CLARK, Clerk.

W. J. HESTER, Moderator.

DENTON, TEXAS, August, 1883.

*W. M. Mitchell* :—*Dear Brother in Christ* :—After some delay I enclose remittance for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, which comes regularly, laden with good news from our dear kindred in the faith of Christ. We do not wish to be without the MESSENGER; it is all the religious paper we are taking. Our aged sister, J. Y. Harmon, Bro. Amp. Porter and myself, are all trying to send you other subscribers, and aid in the circulation and usefulness of the paper; and we do hope soon to be able to forward you a good list of new and paying subscribers, as we think its publication well worthy of being well sustained.

We often think of dear old Mount Olive Church, and the many instructive and soul-cheering discourses preached there by you and other ministers, whom the Lord sent with good tidings to us. While reading the precious letters of Sisters Myhand and McIntosh, as published in the MESSENGER, I felt like writing also to the dear brethren and sisters there at our old home at Mount Olive, but I feel too unworthy and incompetent to instruct or comfort any of them. I do desire I could be less concerned about temporal things, and more of things eternal. But often I feel that my way is so hedged in, that "when I would do good, evil is present with me."

We have met with many good brethren and sisters here, whom we love in the truth. But we have no house belonging exclusively to us, in which to assemble for worship. There is some talk of building a house the coming fall. At present we are regarded as an arm of Blooming Grove Church, and meet once a month at a school-house. I think our pastor is an able defender of the truth.

But I must close this letter. Mr. Moore says he has the best crop he ever had. He and Sister Lou join me in sending much love to you and family.

Your sister in hope of life eternal,

N. A. MOORE.

SKIPPERVILLE, ALA., September 1, 1883.

*Dear Brother:*—I have been in much trouble of late. My son-in-law was mortally wounded eight miles from home by the falling of his horse, but as my two little sons were with him, they managed to get him to my house before he died. He survived only twenty hours. He was a member with the Mission Baptists, and much esteemed among his brethren, as well as beloved by all who knew him. He has left a wife and two little babes, whom I have brought to my house to do the best I can for them. For a feeble man the prospect is gloomy, though we can but trust in God, who is able to fulfil all His will.

A. PELLUM.

CALHOUN COUNTY, MISS., May 10, 1883.

*Dear Elder and Brother in Christ:*—I have recently been to meeting in Webster county, and seeing so many brethren, animated my poor heart so, that I feel like I wanted others to rejoice with me; and so I will write to you. Brethren from our mother church at Emmaus were there—Elder E. D. Petty, O. C. Davis and others. We have an ordained minister—J. M. Easley—in our little church, and the Lord enables him at times to tell us a great many good things.

Would be glad to have your views of Matt. vii. 6: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs," &c.

Yours,

W. C. MITCHELL.

WILSON, N. C., September, 1883.

*Beloved Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—I have arrived at home once more, after a four weeks absence, and found my family well. I do so wish in my heart, that I could be grateful to God; but O, where is my gratitude? Unthankful and unholy I find myself, when I search my poor heart! I would love the Lord; but O, how cold is my warmest love! Dear Mercy, enable thy poor to bear the cross a little longer. Soon they shall lay down the cross, and take up the crown, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life. I had the privilege of visiting three Associations, and have met with many of whom I had reason to believe, loved the Lord Jesus Christ. And the churches I have visited, trying to proclaim the unsearchable riches of God's grace and glory among them, can tell you how they received the tidings. The many ministering brethren, also, with whom I became acquainted in the South, will testify of my liberty which I had among you all in speaking and conversing of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Beloved, I bid you all God speed, and my desire and prayer to God is, that we all may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanking you all for your great liberality shown to the Dear Lord's most unworthy servant, I live in hope of meeting again with you in this life, if it be the will of God. And now may you all prosper in soul, body and spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus, is my prayer.

B. GREENWOOD.

P. S.—I should be pleased if you would put this little notice in the MESSENGER.

B. G.

## OBITUARIES.

## MISS LOVIE E. MATTHEWS.

*Beloved Brother Mitchell*:—Death has again visited the household of our esteemed sister, Martha A. Matthews, taking from her fond embrace her lovely and estimable daughter, Miss LOVIE E. MATTHEWS. Tongue cannot express, neither pen describe, the anguish of our dear sister's heart in the bereavement of her loved ones. Only in October last she was bereft of her darling son, Josiah, and now her precious daughter, Ella. O, how I desired to help her bear her heavy stroke! but could only sympathize with her, and pray God to give her sustaining grace.

Miss Ella (as she was commonly called) died from a malignant attack of fever, August 5th, 1883; age, 24 years, 3 months and 12 days. She was indeed a noble-hearted young lady; kind, affectionate, and obedient to her mother, and was much devoted to her brothers and sister; was truly an ornament to her mother's family, and a precious jewel in society. But the best of all, she was a lovely child of God. Nine years ago this month, she became interested about the welfare of her soul, and, under excitement, joined the Missionary Baptist Church of this place. She said she thought she was doing right, but was deceived, and had remained in a state of delusion; never realizing her lost condition until her brother, "Joe," was taken seriously ill, and talked so beautifully (just before his death) of his happy conversion and his bright home in heaven. She then saw herself a lost and ruined sinner—that her brother was saved, but she was lost—realizing in her feelings a final separation between her and her dying brother, which caused her to pray earnestly for mercy that she might be prepared to meet him in a better world. But she received no relief until the morning after the burial. She stated that she had been deeply grieved all night about the loss of her brother, mingled with her condemned condition as a poor sinner; that her troubles were so great that she could not sleep, until awhile before the dawning of day, when it was said to her, "Put your whole trust in the Lord and he will save you." She was then enabled to trust in Him with her whole heart. Thus receiving the forgiveness of all her sins, she fell into a sweet sleep, and on awakening she was still happy, sung a song of praise to the name of her blessed Lord, and admonished the family not to grieve any longer about the death of her brother—that he was better off, &c. Thus she received "beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," that she "might be called a tree of righteousness; the Lord's planting." And truly she was the planting of the Lord, else she could never have manifested such wondrous faith and christian courage at the very verge of eternity. It was my happy lot to be present and witness the efficacy of God's grace manifested in her a short time before her demise. She was happy, had strong and unshaken faith in her blessed Lord; she was calm and much composed, talked freely of her hope in Christ; prayed earnestly for the salvation of her mother's family, and then for the town of Hogansville; sung the beautiful songs, "The Sweet By-and-By," and "O, bless me now!" then said

to her weeping relatives and friends, "Grieve not for me: I will soon be at a better and sweeter home than this; I will soon be with my brother, Joe; I have a hope in Christ that I would not exchange for all the world." After this beautiful and soul-cheering talk she suffered internally for a few hours, when she fell sweetly asleep in Jesus.

Her funeral was preached by the writer to a large and attentive audience, from 1 Cor. xv. 55: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" After which her body was interred in the cemetery near town. May God of his infinite goodness bless her bereaved family and answer her humble prayer in their behalf, is my prayer, for Christ's sake.

*Hogansville, Ga., August 15, 1883.*

A. B. WHATLEY.

IN MEMORY OF MY DEAR BROTHER, "JOE."

There was a flower that bloomed on earth,  
That God to us had given;  
But ere we learned to know its worth,  
He took the gift to heaven.

No longer now that flower we see,  
We once so fondly cherished;  
Yet, Lord, we feel 'twas plucked by thee—  
We know it has not perished.

And knowing that it was by thee given,  
We smile even through our tears;  
We know our flower now lives in heaven,  
To bloom through endless years.

And if thou'lt help us live aright,  
In this sad world of care,  
We'll soar to heaven—so fair and bright,  
And see our flower there.

L. E. MATTHEWS.

NEWTON T. VINING.

What a solemn thought is death! And yet how often we read the account of some one who has passed from time to eternity, and been placed in the cold earth to await the resurrection! But it is a glorious thought that though we shall sleep in the grave, yet in the morning of the resurrection these vile bodies of ours will be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Death is a terror to mankind, but the only thing we are sure of in this life; for in the fall of Adam death has passed upon all men. Death has visited us here and taken from our midst little NEWTON T. VINING, youngest son of Bro. and Sister J. L. Vining; aged 12 years, 6 months and 5 days. The writer knew him from infancy, and can truthfully say that he was a good boy, being of a mild and gentle nature, not given to much words, and dutiful and obedient to his parents and teachers. He was sick but two days, dying with a congestive chill. Just before his death he asked the physician what he thought of his condition, and the answer was, "Newty, you are quite sick, but will soon be well" and he told the doctor, "No, I am going to die"; and several times before his sickness he spoke of his going to die, and we have every reason to hope and believe that he is now

enjoying a life of happiness beyond this vale of tears—for he was not of a boisterous nature as some children, but quiet and inoffensive, showing that there was a higher power than man that ruled his actions. He leaves a father and mother, two brothers and two sisters, to mourn his irreparable loss. May they be resigned to the will of Him who doeth all things well. God has taken him for some wise purpose unknown to us. There is but one time appointed for all men to die; he cannot suffer the pangs of death again; it has no more dominion over him; he has only gone a little before us, for we have all got to die, sooner or later. This life is only a temporary abode, and we have the consolation that though he cannot come to us, if we are God's children we will some day go to him, and realize the joys of a blessed eternity; for we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And now I say to the bereaved ones, Mourn not for him, but be resigned to the will of your heavenly Father, and rejoice in God your Saviour. May you be able to say, with one of old, "Though he slay me, yet will I praise him." He died on the 4th day of July, 1883. Whilst many were rejoicing in honor of the great day of American Independence, he could sing a song of praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in a world without end. Amen.

*Macon, Ga., July 8, 1883.*

F. L. BROWN.

#### MRS. ELIZA PROCTOR.

Died, June 19th, 1883, at the residence of her son, in Emanuel county, Ga., Mrs. ELIZA PROCTOR; aged 70 years, 2 weeks and 3 days.

Sister Proctor was an orderly member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, having united with the church at Hebron at a very early age, near where she was born and raised, lived and died. She had many sore trials and conflicts to contend with during her life, but she bore all her troubles in humbleness, meekness and Christian fortitude. She was afflicted for three years previous to her death, but was not confined to her bed but a short time; and although she was unrational, she plainly manifested a desire to go home to rest, often pointing upward and raising her hands, saying, "Let me go!" and once, when her daughter asked her where she desired to go, she replied, "Home! to a better world than this!" After she died she looked more natural than she had during the three years of her affliction. From the image she bore and the evidences she manifested, we believe death was a happy change with her. She leaves a husband, and two sons and two daughters, and numerous other relatives and friends to mourn their loss; but they mourn not as those who have no hope beyond this vale of tears. She seemed to be especially attached to her youngest daughter, and often told her that, though they were doomed to live apart in this world, she hoped they would reunite in heaven, where parting would be known no more. And now her poor, afflicted child craves an interest in the prayers of all the saints of God who may read this, that it might be even so. Her funeral was preached with great liberty and zeal by Bro. S. M. Anderson, on the 2nd day of July, from Ezekiel xxxvii. 13: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves!"

The services were opened by the singing of the old sister's favorite hymn—

“Jerusalem, my happy home,  
O, how I long for thee!  
When will my sorrows have an end?  
Thy joys when shall I see?”

And concluded by the favorite of her daughter—

“O happy day, when saints shall meet  
To part no more! the thought is sweet!  
No more to feel the rending smart,  
Oft felt below when Christians part.”

Dear brethren, pray for the bereaved family that the Lord might make them submissive to his holy will, for she has only paid the debt we are all due; and may the Lord bless these lines to the satisfaction and consolation of the entire family.

SUSAN E. DERISO.

JOHN H. HARRISON.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—It is very sad to be separated from our loved ones in this time-world, with no hope of ever seeing their lovely faces any more on the shores of time; but O, what a glorious thought it is, that as they can never come to us, we, through the offering that Jesus has made to save his people from their sins, may go to them! They are saved here on earth, but are not acquainted with the relation until our heavenly Father sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, and then they can cry, “Abba, Father!”

Brethren, I only write this as a preliminary of the obituary of my dear old father, who was called from the shores of time between 2 and 3 o'clock on the morning of July 16th, and buried about 5 o'clock yesterday evening. My father's name was JOHN H. HARRISON. He was born in North Cumberland county, Va., but his father, Elijah Harrison, moved from that State to the State of Georgia, where my father grew up to manhood and married Caroline S. Wilkinson, who left him here on the shores of time the 21st of August, 1877. My father united with the Baptist Church before the split, but went off with the Missionaries, where he lived up to his death. He did not endorse any of the institutions that they have as auxiliaries to help save sinners, but believed in salvation by grace; and he put no trust in himself, only through the atoning blood of a Saviour. He had been with the church about fifty years, and he was 78 years, 9 months and 12 days old. He had no fear, only the sting of death. He was often at my house, and delighted to read the MESSENGER, and found no fault of the reading matter in it. He loved to read the editorials, and experiences of the dear children scattered abroad.

As I must close, brethren, I request you to insert the obituary of my father in the MESSENGER. May the God of all grace bless you and yours, and bless you in the cause you have espoused in the spread of the gospel. Remember me and my dear sisters in the flesh, in your prayers. I have but two sisters, and I hope they have been made to see the exceeding sinfulness of themselves in nature, and had Christ formed in them the hope of glory. Goodbye! May the dear Lord bless all of His little ones, the world over.

July 17, 1883.

THOMAS E. HARRISON.

## BEULAH ABERCROMBIE.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord! I send you the obituary notice of the death of Bro. J. Abercrombie's little daughter, BEULAH. She was born October 4th, 1874, and departed this life August 2nd, 1883; making her days on this earth 8 years, 9 months and 29 days. She was a child beloved by all who knew her; she was her parents' pet, and a favorite child with all the family. It is hard to give her up, but the parents' loss is her eternal gain. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, and blessed is the name of the Lord. The unworthy writer met with the family at the Presbyterian Church and tried to preach to the comfort of the bereaved family and before many weeping friends; and may the God of all grace bless and comfort those that mourn, and sanctify it to the good of the neighborhood, is our prayer, for Christ's sake.

“Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!  
From which none ever wake to weep;  
A calm and undisturbed repose,  
Unbroken by the last of foes.”

H. B. HOWARD.

## MARY ELIZABETH MAYO LANGLEY.

MARY ELIZABETH MAYO was born in Stewart county, Ga., July 7th, 1832; was married to Robert Langley in 1851; joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Stewart county (the name of the church is not known); was baptized by Elder James P. Ellis in the year 1856, and lived a Christian twenty-seven years; moved from Georgia to Louisiana in 1874 with her husband, Robert Langley, who died some two years before she did, July 24th, 1883. She leaves eight children to mourn her loss—three boys and five girls. They settled in Lincarn Parish, La., and lived there up to the time of her death. She joined Antioch Church by letter, and seemed to be much devoted to the cause of her blessed Redeemer. The unworthy writer was sent for to meet them at the burial ground, and met the sorrowing and heart-broken children, and a large crowd of sorrowing neighbors and friends, and tried to speak some comforting words to them, and said to them that they have lost a kind and beloved mother, and may they all remember that the Lord has given and taken away, and blessed be His holy name! And may they say—

God is my refuge in distress,  
A present hope when dangers press!

H. B. HOWARD.

## DEACON BENJAMIN BAGLEY

Departed this life, July 15th, 1881, after lingering for about five years with heart dropsy, which affliction he bore with great patience and christian fortitude, and was often heard to say that he desired to live only so long as the Lord designed for him to live, and to suffer all the affliction that his Lord and Saviour saw fit for him to endure.

Bro. BENJAMIN BAGLEY was born September 8th, 1817, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the early period of life, and was ordained deacon of Rehoboth Church, Ware county, Ga., August 31st, 1872, which position he filled with faithfulness until prevented by disease, which removed him

from time to await his adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body, having borne with us his portion of time's joys and sorrows and reproaches, leaving us to mourn, but we trust that mourn not as those that have no hope, but believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Wherefore may the grace of God enable us to bow in humble submission to the will of Him who bids his children in all things to give thanks.

In connection with this I send you some poetry to be published in the MESSENGER, composed by the deceased, which sets forth the spirit in which he met reproaches.

*Bickley, Ga., July 5, 1883.*

B. J. MINCHEW.

Poetry omitted in this issue for lack of space. Will try to get it in some other time.—Ed.

#### RICHARD ALDINE STEPHENS.

Little RICHARD ALDINE, only child of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Stephens, of Marion county, Fla., after a long and painful illness of meningitis, died in Houston county, Ga., at the residence of his grandfather, Mr. Richard Causey, on the 27th of June, 1883; aged 5 months and 27 days.

His merry prattle is hushed in death—

His face no more we see;

In angel's robe, at rest—from pain and sorrow free,

Around a Saviour's throne he'll ever be.

*Powersville, Ga., July 28, 1883.*

A FRIEND.

#### DAVID STEINBERGER.

DAVID STEINBERGER, son of John and Elizabeth Steinberger, was born September 19th, 1800, in Shenandoah county, Virginia, (now Page county.) When he was four years of age his parents emigrated to Ohio, and located on Nettle creek, near Millerstown. They afterward moved to Indiana, where the marriage union was legalized between him and Elizabeth Pence, January 1st, 1822. There were born unto them four sons and three daughters. The mother died March 12th, 1834. He was married to Lucy Gaines, April 12th, 1835, and unto them were born four sons and four daughters. Bro. Steinberger's bright and precious hope of a change from nature to grace occurred about 1850, when the Lord, we believe, made to appear unto him His unchangeable love in a vision of a golden chain extending from heaven to earth, and he found peace through faith in the Saviour's blood, and Jesus became all his hope for salvation. He has been since, until death, an unwavering advocate of the glorious system of salvation through the merits of Christ, independent of human agencies. He was baptized and became a member of the Regular Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, called Nettle Creek, Champagne county, Ohio, in June, 1882. He was carried to running water, near his residence, in a chair. He suffered great bodily pain during almost a year's confinement. His great desire and earnest prayer was that the Lord would take him, and being thus reconciled in mind, the spirit left the body, April 3rd, 1883; aged 82 years, 6 months and 24 days. His devoted wife and eight affectionate children—three sons and five daughters—mourn, but believe that their loss is his great gain.

JOHN M. THOMPSON.

We call attention to the advertisement of G. E. Thomas, Clothier, on the 2nd inside cover of this issue. His house is a good house, and friendly to us. We know it by experience, having traded a good deal with him. He will give you *good* goods at reasonable prices. We put none but reliable advertisements on our cover, though offered others, many of them, every issue.

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## Naaman, the Syrian!

The seventh thousand of this discourse is now out and ready at 10 cents single copy, or \$1.00 per dozen; and gratis to every new subscriber to the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and also to any old subscriber who will send us one new one; and gratis to all Primitive Baptist ministers and poor widows or brethren.

Address

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# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 12. BUTLER, GA., DECEMBER, 1883. Vol. 5.

## BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER A. KING.

I was born in Guilford county, N. C., 10th June, 1804. My father, Wm. King, lived and died a member of Rockingham Bridge Church, as also did my mother, whose maiden name was Abigail Lee. [We add, without Bro. King's knowledge, that his mother was a sister of Henry Lee, and aunt of the late Gen. Robt. E. Lee.—ED.]

At the age of nineteen, I moved to McMinn county, Tenn., where I married Susan Mathews. When about 16 years old, I was sent in com-

pany with a Baptist preacher, who went about fifty miles to preach the funeral of an aunt; and at an appointment on the way, whilst he was preaching, I became much affected, and in a way I was never before; so that, though I tried to refrain—the people being all strangers—I could not repress



*A. King*

my tears; and I left the house, and getting out the sound of the preacher's voice, I sat down and quit weeping—thinking what a strange occurrence it was, though I became easy in my feelings. I went on to my uncle's that night, and the next day, whilst the funeral was being preached, I was affected again the same way. Returning home, I resolved to quit my sinful practices, and did so for a while, trying to pray; but my prayers seemed so empty and vain, I quit, and turned to worse wickedness than ever. After I moved to Tennessee and married, I went to meeting but seldom. One Sunday we went to meeting near by, and the sermon seemed to make no impression; but at the close of it, my wife, unexpectedly to me, asked the minister to pray for her, and the same impression I had when about sixteen years old returned upon me, and I went to the woods, and became so miserable that I fell to my knees and tried to pray, but could not; and the meeting closing, I wiped my tears and went as cheerfully as I could to meet my wife. My impression continued; and I would try to pray. I used to think, when I was very wicked, that I would turn from my wicked ways, do good, and pray so good, that the Lord would bless me for doing so good and praying so good. But, alas! when I desired to pray, feeling the need of prayer, I could not then pray—all being empty and vain. I was in this condition about a year, and often thought I would quit, and would have done so if I could have done it and been easy, but I could rest neither day nor night when awake. I went one morning just at daylight to try to pray, and whilst there I became so concerned that I went off and left my hat, not thinking of it until after breakfast, when I stole back, unobserved, and got it. I went often to a lime-sink, a retired place at the roots of a long hickory tree, and late one evening I took a little Bible with me, thinking I would die soon and was lost forever; but I felt that my damnation would be just, and that I would go crying for mercy. Sitting down at the foot of the hickory, I opened my Bible, and reading the account of the Crucifixion, I became deeply affected, and in great despair, feeling that I would die in a

little while, so that I could not resist trying to pray one more time; and whilst in this condition I saw Christ hanging on the cross, the blood running down, and I was asked, "What is it for?" to which it was answered, "It is for sinners." "And I am a poor, lost sinner!" I cried out; "lost! lost!" when, in an instant, my distress and load of guilt that had so long worried me, left me. The first thing I knew of myself, I was standing on my feet, musing in my mind of what had taken place, and what had gone with my distress and guilt, when this thought rolled into my mind, "Your sins are all forgiven for Jesus' sake!" and love flowed into my soul such as I had never felt before—love to the Lord and to his people. My troubles were gone, and everything seemed to have a lovely appearance. The notes of the birds were sweet to my ears, and all was joy. I thought I saw the way of life for sinners, and wanted to tell it, and intended to tell them when I met with them. If I was ever called to declare God's counsel, it was then. But before I met them, or returned to the house, this suggestion rushed into my mind, "The devil has got you just where he wants you; you have believed a lie," and if there ever was a miserable being on earth, I was then. My first desire was to be at the root of that hickory tree again, and pressed down with my sin, so that I could better tell how it went off. I have often prayed for it to return, and it now has been fifty-seven years, but has never returned. Some time after, I went to a prayer meeting of the brethren near me, and an exhorter talked, and it seemed to me that I understood some things he had said, and was to some extent comforted. Several of the brethren prayed, and in the close they all seemed to get happy, and shook hands with each other, and I thought they were the loveliest people I ever saw, and soon I was amongst them, shaking hands with them, feeling much like I did at the root of the hickory tree. On returning home these suggestions were made to me: "Now you have as good as confessed a hope which had better been kept to yourself; and you'll go back to your wickedness, and make a mock of religion, and become a laughing-stock to the

world." I hesitated some length of time, praying if deceived to be undeceived, and waiting for a better hope; but at length with nothing better, I went to the church, and taking my seat, soon found my wife at my side also to join. I did not know she had a hope, we never having said anything to each other about it. I thought I would tell my feelings to the church, and if I was wrong, that they would tell me so; and whilst talking to them, many of them were in tears; and we were both received, and baptized next day by Elder Wm. Jones into the fellowship of Big Spring Church. The impression to declare the counsel of God continued with me, but it seemed impossible that God would send such an illiterate one to speak in His name; but when I could no longer put it off, one night at a prayer meeting I arose in a flood of tears and spoke for about ten minutes, and felt empty and easy, and that I had done all that would be required of me; but the impression returned, and Bro. Jones, at the next meeting, invited me into the pulpit, and soon I was licensed to preach in the bounds of the church, and then wherever my lot should be cast. In a few years I was ordained by Elders Wm. Jones, Wm. Wood and Daniel Buckner, at Mount Pleasant Church, McMinn county, Tenn., in 1832, and served that church, Big Spring, Mouse Creek and Christianburgh Church for twelve years, in which time the division amongst the Baptists occurred. The two principal causes were doctrine and money; not a great deal said about doctrine, though the Arminian doctrine and protracted meetings brought in the elements of the division. As a young minister, I was at first opposed to a division, and got on the fence to try to hold them together; but after three years' contention, they set the fence on fire, and I had to get down—and got down on the side I was at first, and was glad when we separated. The churches I served all stood fast except a few members. I continued to serve them until a new purchase of territory was made from the Indians, when I gave them up to move to the new purchase. The churches were unwilling to give me up, and I was loth to leave them, but promised to visit them as often as I could, and served two

of them two years longer, riding forty miles horseback to do so. My children grew up, and the country new, we went to work, and prospered—gathered property very rapidly, and became very worldly-minded, and quit preaching to all but one church, and sometimes failed to go there, though I had horses and mules in plenty, and drivers, and worked eight hundred acres of land in one body, and everything in plenty—but then could go to meeting but once a month, when I went to four churches a month, before I had a carriage and horses, and enjoyed myself with the brethren better than I did when I had all this wealth around me. But the war came on, and I lost my negroes and lands, and I am left in my old age without anything but my children, brethren and friends; but have not yet suffered for anything to eat or wear; and have tried to learn—and hope I have—to be content with food and raiment, and to be reconciled to His providence. And feel thankful that the good Lord has caused me to see the error of my way; and I bless his holy name that I have kissed the rod, and blessed the hand that has sent his love and presence to me in all my losses and troubles, so that with the apostle I can say, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; as filth under my feet; that I may win Christ, and be found in him.” In addition to my poverty, I lost my wife in a storm; but she fell asleep in Jesus, and I was consoled with the words, “Be still, and know that I am God.” I feel now that I could give up my children, and the enjoyment of my brethren, to depart and be with Christ. They are all I have to invite my stay here, and to be with Him would be far better. The will of God be done. Amen.

A. KING.

*Byron, Houston County, Ga.*

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It is reported of Alexander's footman, that he ran so swift upon the sand, that the prints of his footsteps were not to be seen. Thus may it be with Christians. Nothing is more pleasing to God than a hand liberally opened, and a tongue strictly silent.

## EXPERIENCE.

FREDERICKSBURG, VA., May 30, 1863.

*My Ever Dear Sister:*—It is with the most humble heart that I take my pen this evening to answer your most welcome letter of the 21st inst. Sister, I do not know how to begin to answer it, though I will try, in my feeble manner, to give you a short sketch of my travels. Sister, when I obtained a furlough to visit father's, I decided that I was a moral man, and that I would make that kind of appearance before the people at home; but I feared myself mistaken. When I got there I left off my moral character, and went in with my old associates, and participated with them in the so-called pleasures of the world. I attended a few parties, and joined in with them in the dance—the very thing that I had resolved within my own self that I would resist, for I thought it would be the only difficulty that I would meet with that would have any bearing to demoralize me at all. I went to a party at Ben Hickey's the night before I left home, and sat up all night, dancing and frolicking. But a few days after I got back to my company, I was struck with the thought that I was deceived, and had been deceiving of others in my pretensions of morality. But, sister, I am the one that will have to account for these deeds, and not the people that I have been trying to make believe that I was a moral boy. But these things got to troubling of me, and I could not get rid of them; so I came to the conclusion that I would reform and serve the Lord. But the more I strove to do something to gain the favor of the Lord, the further I seemed to get from it; and when we were down here before the fight, while I was attending the Soldiers' Association meeting, trying to get rid of that awful feeling, one night, during preaching, my heart became perfectly hard, and not one bit of sympathy could I have, and I remained in that condition until after the fight. I could neither get rid of the bad feeling, nor have any sympathy. But after we got back to camps, some of the members of the regiment commenced holding prayer-meeting,

and I attended them. My heart seemed to be moved, but in the place of being relieved of this awful bad feeling, it seemed to get worse. So I again tried to pray, but I was afraid to attempt such a thing, for every time I attempted it seemed to make me that much worse. We were then sent down here on duty, and I went to meeting again; but there was no relief for me there. But the 27th of this month we went up on the river on picket, and at night I lay down, but did not go to sleep right off, but was still trying to pray. I, after awhile, dropped off to sleep. I was awake several times during the night when they were waking the men to go on guard. It was the same feeling every time I was waked up. But a while before day, Lieutenant Davis waked me up, and asked me to visit the picket line. I told him I would do so, and told him to ask the commissioned officers to wake me up. But I could not go to sleep, for it seemed to me that my time was near at hand, and that I was in an awful condition to appear before the all-wise and ever merciful God, who gave his beloved Son to suffer and die for the redemption of sinful man. But, sister, just at that moment it seemed to me I saw Jesus on the cross, and the blood was running from his side. Then this thing seemed to present itself to me: "I have shed my blood for your sins." And that awful load of sin, or whatever it was, was removed from me all at once, but I knew not how it got off; but the glorious feeling it left I am not able to describe to you. Sister, I seemed to see it all so plain that I raised my head to see if it was so. But everything appeared perfectly dark to the natural eye. Sister, what it was I am unable to say, but I am in hopes that the blessed Lord has been precious to my never-dying soul. Sister, this was the first time that I have ever felt that I was wholly dependent on our blessed Jesus for relief. I thought that if I ever was saved, that it would be by my good deeds here in this sinful world. But there is a different feeling about me now, for if I am ever saved at all it will be by the grace of God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, not by my own good works. Sister, you stated

in yours that if you knew I had a hope of meeting you beyond this vale of tears that it would relieve you of your burning tears. I can only say that I am a different man to what I was two months ago, and I feel in hopes that the Lord has been precious to my soul in the forgiveness of my sins. But you have no idea how unworthy I feel. It seems to me that I am not worthy of the least of God's blessings; yet I cannot help but hope that he has been merciful to me, a sinner. O, sister, how I feel an interest in your prayers.

Sister, I will close for this time. I wish I could see you and talk with you now. Sister, I received a letter from brother Cap. the same time I received yours. He was well. May God bless you and family, is my humble prayer. Write soon to your ever dear brother,  
J. J. LANGFORD.

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### EXPERIENCE.

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BODENHAM, TENN., October 18, 1883.

*Dear Brethren Respass and Mitchell:*—I have been reading the MESSENGER for the last year, and I don't know how I could do without it; and as my time is about out, I have made up a small club of names, which you will find enclosed. And as I had to write on business, for the first time, I take the liberty of writing you a few lines; however, in so doing, there are many embarrassments in my way.

There are things in regard to my exercises of mind, both as a Christian and a minister of the gospel, that may be peculiar; at least I would be pleased to know if any other one has been exercised in the same way. When I first obtained a hope in the Saviour, if I ever did, I felt as clear of sin as if I had never committed one in life, and thought all my sorrows, trials and difficulties were ended, and that I would be a happy man the remnant of my days, and live in the enjoyment of the smiles of the Redeemer while this world was my home. But, O, how sadly I was mistaken! On the fifth or sixth day after I obtained relief, it occurred to my mind that perhaps I was mistaken; that it might be nothing more than delusion,

or the fleshly excitement of the mind, and that after all my enjoyment I was deceived, and was in a worse condition than I was before; that my burden of guilt and condemnation was gone, and I had nothing upon which I could rely in its place. Surely I did desire most sincerely to have my deep sense of condemnation and guilt back again, that I might better understand where it went and what I had received in its place. I labored in this condition for several days, but was never able to get back the same burden that I had once felt, but found, to my distress and sorrow, that I was still a sinner, and therefore no Christian; for I thought Christians were good people, and surely I was not one of them. Thus I labored for some time—sometimes hoping, and sometimes despairing. I felt that I loved christian people, but I was not fit to be among them. I often went to meeting, but felt so unworthy and sinful that I would take a back seat. I could not appear in front among those I believed to be Christians. I loved to hear the preaching, and I loved to hear them talk, but did not wish them to say anything to me. My mind became deeply exercised on the subject of baptism; but then the thought would arise, "You are no Christian; you are not fit to be baptized." I struggled on in this way for some time, but when I could live no longer under such distresses, I went forward to the church, and told them my feelings, requesting them to deal with me as a father would with a child, and if I was not a Christian to tell me so. At that my wife, who had a hope for a long while before I received one, was called on to commence and tell what she hoped the Lord had done for her. I was very much surprised at her presenting herself, for I had not said anything to her about going to the church. When she was through, I felt like I had told nothing that the church could receive. They, however, received me with her into fellowship, and we were baptized the next morning, October 10th, 1875, that being the second Sunday, by Elder R. H. Johnson, the pastor of County Line Church. I now thought my troubles were over, for I felt satisfied, and I enjoyed myself well. But soon

doubts began to arise in regard to my interest in the Saviour; I felt that I was deceived, and had deceived the church. So powerfully did this impression work upon my mind that I felt that I ought to tell the church that I had deceived them; and upon several occasions resolved I would do so, but this passage of scripture was impressed upon my mind with power: "Lord, to whom shall we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life?" I could not leave them. I loved them too well. My mind became deeply impressed upon the subject of preaching the gospel, but I could not believe those impressions were of the Lord. I thought such a poor, ignorant, unworthy sinner as I was could not be required to engage in a work of such importance; therefore I tried to throw off the impressions and get clear of trouble on the subject. But this I could not do; it haunted me day and night; sometimes more severely than others, until finally I could get but little rest anywhere. I was no company for my family. My wife would often ask me what was the matter with me, and I would put her off, by telling her not much of anything. But my troubles increased, and much of my time was spent in the woods, when the weather would permit. I was tempted to believe that Satan had influenced me to join the church, and now if he could get me to engage in the ministry he would have his ends accomplished; but I determined, however, that I would disappoint him in that particular. My troubles grew worse. I felt that I could not live long in that condition, and, indeed, I felt that I would prefer death rather than to engage in a work of such vast importance as the preaching of the gospel. I could not believe that a God of wisdom, justice and mercy would require such a creature as I was to perform such a work. I read the Bible as well as I could, and I could not find in myself one qualification for a gospel minister. I certainly did beg the Lord, with all the powers that I possessed, to give my poor, burdened soul relief in some way. I was answered almost constantly with this text of scripture: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, that shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention

of the Lord, keep not silence.”—Isa. lxii. 6. But this gave me no relief, for I am not one of those watchmen, therefore it cannot mean me. Such was my sorrow and grief, at one time, I remember well, in a deep, dark hollow, where I had been before, I said to the Lord, mentally, “My life is yours; you gave it to me, and you may take it away as soon as you please, but I will never try to preach to the public.” O, what a presumptuous wretch I was! I had now been in this condition of mind, more or less, for about four and a half years; but the Lord taught me to know that he could make me do as he pleased, and make me willing to be or do anything that he required, and this he did by the application of the following text of scripture, with such power and sweetness that my poor soul was melted down in deep humility, and “I cried out, Lord, it is enough; I will try.” “My grace is sufficient for thee.” O, how sweet those blessed words! What peace and joy they gave me at that time, and many times since, when almost overwhelmed in sorrow, they have brought heavenly consolation. I had exercised in public only about fourteen months, when my ordination was called for; this I opposed, with all the sense I had, in urging the church not to be in such haste upon a matter of such vast importance. But they urged my ordination, and at last this scripture was applied to my mind, “The mind of the Lord is with his people,” to which I felt to yield, and so my ordination took place on the second Sunday in October, 1881, and from that time until now I have been trying to preach and trying to quit; and now, if it is the will of the Lord, I will still try, in my weakness, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I still have my doubts about my call to the ministry, and also in regard to my interest in the merits and blood of the dear Saviour. When I see a young preacher anxious to be ordained, I am afraid that all is not right with him. I know that if he is right, I am very wrong. If I knew that I had ever preached one gospel sermon, or prayed one gospel prayer, it would be a great consolation to me.

Dear brethren, I have briefly hinted at some of the exer-

cises of my mind on the subjects above named, and I would be delighted to know if any other person ever had such thoughts or exercises of mind. When I sum the whole matter up, there are two things of which I am certain—the first is, I feel and know that I am a poor, helpless sinner; and the second is, I know that if I am ever saved in the kingdom of God's glory, it will be all of sovereign grace abounding towards the chief of sinners. In those two things I cannot be mistaken. May the Lord, in rich mercy, once more visit and build up Zion, and cause peace to reign among her members, is the prayer of yours to serve in the cause of truth.

Dear brethren Respass and Mitchell, do with this as you think best. Farewell,

B. O. DEARING.

STATE ROAD, DEL., October 1, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass*:—I am so well pleased with the MESSENGER, that I feel disposed to contribute frequently to its columns, when I can have anything to furnish that will be of interest and profit to your readers. I will now offer some thoughts on the scripture term, *Adoption*. I have not said the *subject* of adoption, as I am not sure that that is the proper way to speak of it. We are certainly safe in speaking of it as a scripture term, and as such, to examine it as to its signification. Much that has been said by preachers and writers in regard to the scriptural sense of this term has, to my mind, tended to confusion. I am aware that there is some difficulty in getting at a right understanding of it, and I am also aware that a wrong understanding of it will lead to error and confusion.

The danger is, that in dwelling upon the blessed effects of adoption, and the infinite condescension of the Adopter, we allow ourselves to lose sight of relationship. There is provision by statute in some States, by which children may be adopted, so as to legally bear the name and heir the property of those adopting them. The imperfection of this arrangement, even among men, must be apparent. Such adoption

will never affect the disposition of the child. Its features will not be conformed. Its affections will not be called forth. The tie that binds parent and child in mutual love and confidence, will not exist. The capacities of the child will not be enhanced, or improved; nor even its health, or physical condition, be bettered. On the other hand, for all that this legal adoption can do, the child may be and remain vicious. He may be deformed in body, or deficient in intellect, or depraved in mind and in his affections, and so would remain. It merely confers a name upon a child that never rightfully belongs to it, and enables it to receive and hold property to which it is not the rightful heir. I am not saying but what some good effects may be produced upon a child that has been adopted, but that adoption, of itself, can produce no such effects; not even acquiescence in judgment, on the part of the subject of it.

When God predestinated the sons and daughters of men to the *adoption of children* by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, it was certainly an adoption the like of which has never been wrought by any act of legislatures. In their first and natural birth they are said to be children of wrath, enemies in their minds by wicked works; and so are spoken of as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; being without God and without hope in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

“Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” In this connection we can see the sense in which the apostle uses the term we are dealing with. The adoption he speaks of is that *of children*. He sent forth his Son to redeem them, that they might receive the *adoption of sons*.

An adoption that would still leave them the sons of somebody else, is quite a different thing. And I do not understand the apostle as saying anywhere that the Lord adopts Hagar's children, or anybody else's children, to be his heirs. Their heirship is based upon relationship. “If *children*, then heirs.”

The apostle says: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry, Abba! Father." And then goes on to say that this same Spirit that they have received, bears witness with their spirit that they are *the children of God*.

To say that the Spirit that the Lord implants in the hearts of his people, who were aliens and enemies, is in them the Spirit of a child, and as such an adoption into the Redeemed family, that they can rightfully call God their Father, is quite a different thing from merely adopting an alien.

"He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, dwell in you"; this will certainly constitute vital relationship, and all the blessings that follow are bestowed *because ye are sons*. Isaac was not adopted. And although a child of promise, nevertheless a son of Abraham and Sarah. "Now, we brethren, as Isaac was, *are children*," &c. While the Lord's people were confessedly aliens and enemies, they must necessarily be the subjects of a work, and of an experience, by which they would become reconciled. The Lord knows them and loves them as his people, but they neither know nor love him. So, "you that were some time alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." This, I think, expresses the same thing as giving them the spirit of Adoption. What is here spoken of as the spirit of adoption, is elsewhere spoken of as that by which they are sealed unto the day of Redemption. The redemption which they have in the Lord Jesus Christ not being yet completed, they have the spirit of it, as the earnest of their final inheritance, until the personal and experimental redemption of the entire purchased possession shall have been completed. The spirit received bears witness of relationship. It could not bear this witness if the relationship did not exist. It would not bear witness to it if it were not true. In order to a mere literal adoption as a legal arrangement among men, there need be no redemption. Indeed, there could be none; as the right, as well as the work, of redemption rests on the right of previous

relationship. In an experimental sense the body is not yet redeemed. But there is a consciousness of what that redemption is, or rather will be; so that there is a waiting in earnest expectation for that event. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren," &c. Again, "Behold, I and the children that God hath given me."—Heb. ii. 11, 13.

If the fact is clearly established that we *are now the sons of God*, we may wait with confidence for our manifestation as such. Though we know but little of what we shall be, we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him. From a mere adoption, as referred to above, we certainly could not expect to ever be conformed to the image of the Son of God, or awake in the likeness of his resurrection.

Yours in a precious hope,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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COVINGTON, NEWTON CO., GA., Aug. 30, 1883.

*Beloved Editors*:—By the request of the bereaved ones, I send you a copy of the christian experience of my nephew, James C. Marks, written by him to his relatives of this county, who died most triumphantly, after a lingering illness (some four weeks), of typhoid fever, in Warren county, Ga., on the 20th of June, 1883; in his 30th year. (He was left without parents quite young; his father, John C. Marks, died during the late war, at Lauderdale Hospital, Miss., soon after the siege of Vicksburg.) He leaves a companion and two children, the eldest of whom survived him one month. Although he did not join the church, yet I am satisfied he would have done so, if there had been a church of the Primitive order convenient. May the Lord comfort his bereaved companion in her deep sorrow. Your brother, J. J. ADAMS.

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THOMSON, GA., September 25, 1881.

Dear Brother and Sister, Sam'l and Rebecca A. Lazenby:—I seat myself to drop you a few lines to-day, to let you hear from us. We are all well. We received your welcome letter

last week, and were truly glad to hear from you all once more in life. Sis, I wish I was up there to go with you all to Shoal Creek meeting to-day. I would like so much to hear Mr. Eubanks preach, and see the members, but I fear I will never have the pleasure of hearing him again, and if not, it will be all right.

I will try and write you a little of my troubles. It was in August, 1876, when I first found that I was a lost sinner; I then tried to pray, but I could not; the more I tried and studied about my lost condition, the worse I got; I even went into dissipation, thinking it all delusion, and thereby to get rid of my deep trouble of mind; I could not find any comfort in that; I would go off to some secluded place to try and pray; all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!" my prayer did not seem to rise higher than my head; I was sinking down to torment, and, in this dreadful condition, I wished that others could be saved, if I am left alone to be forever lost; this was the fourth Sunday in June, 1877, while living with Mr. Dodson; my condition was so wretched that I could not rest anywhere; so I fell upon my knees, and then I could say nothing except "O Lord, there is nothing that I can do but lay at thy feet and plead for mercy!" no mercy for me; I got up and started, not knowing where I was going; everything looked as dark as midnight; but I had not gone far before, all at once, these blessed words came to me:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!  
That saved a wretch like me;  
I once was lost, but now am found—  
Was blind, but now I see."

Now everything appeared new to me, and I turned back, rejoicing, singing those words; and I felt surely that I was the happiest creature living; but in a few days great doubts and fears came over me—that perhaps I was deceived in the whole matter, and the Lord knew it. O, how I was made to groan, pondering over my condition—a poor, deceived mortal! But not long after this, while at my work, trying to implore the Lord, these sweet words came to me, "Jesus is the sin-

ner's friend; trust in him, for in him is eternal life." With all my doubts and fears that I have passed through, and that await me, I still have the blessed assurance as expressed by the poet:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come:  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home."

Dear Sis, this world has no charms for me. All I want is to go to my Father's house to dwell. May the Lord bless you and family, and save you all in his kingdom, is my prayer.

I remain as ever your true brother, J. C. MARKS.

BUTLER, GA., October 18, 1883.

"Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. iv. 32.

For weeks and months I have been meditating much on the subject of gospel forgiveness and forbearance; and especially as contrasting the nature, the fullness and completeness of God's forgiveness as bestowed upon us, with that that we bestow upon each other. And in connection with this, the condition of some churches, that seem to indicate that this spirit of forgiveness and long forbearance is not prevailing and maintaining that peace so desirable. For peace should be the prized object of each church and each member. Jesus gives his disciples peace; and it is their right, their good and glory; therefore their indispensable duty, to take fast hold on the things that make for peace. Now, this spirit of forgiveness is one of the main things that make for peace. Consequently the lack of peace in the household of faith, it seems to me, is the want of this gospel grace; or, in other words, a failure to forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave us. As without forgiveness there could be no peace with God, so without it there can be no peace one with another. For as truly as God found us sinners, so surely will we continue subject to sin while in the body of this death; and so long must we contend with the weakness and infirmities of the flesh. In consequence of which, Jesus, as well as the apostles, so often impressed upon us the duty and necessity of mutual forbearance. So that, prone to sin, there could be no continued peace without forgiveness, and no forgiveness without love, and no love without God. Therefore, where there is no peace, there is no God, no Christ in the heart. By what right has one to say that Christ is in his heart, if variance and bitterness is there for a brother for whom Christ died? And how can he say he loves Christ, if he cannot forgive a brother whom Christ loves? Forgiveness is the free, spontaneous fruit or outcome of divine love. God loved his people and

freely forgave them. If born of God, we are born unto love; for God is love, and we will as certainly love those who are begotten of God. In the first glory and liberty of this love, how easy to forgive even an enemy! How sweet to forgive a brother! How blessed to submit to that rule that works by love, and serves one another! And herein continuing is God's love perfected in us. Alas! in whom is it perfected to-day? Not in those that do not love in deeds. And this divine love is very peculiar in its power and preciousness. It has the mystery of binding all its true-born subjects into a union, as of the members of a body; so that all things are in common; all causes, and effects, and resultings are alike to all; so that, if love reigns, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost permeates and glorifies the whole kingdom within, and also sends its light out a blessing to the world. For the strong, predominating sentiment of this divine love toward the household is the endearing, reclaiming, sheltering outgiving of arms of forgiveness that covers the multitude of sins, and draws to a unity of spirit in the bonds of peace; while toward all the world else, it is a universal benediction of "peace on earth, and good will to man." So that, if offences come in through the weakness of the flesh, when love reigns, the sweet, gentle, soft hand of forgiveness quietly puts them out and away; while, with all incurable infirmities, is patient, bearing with all long suffering. So that, if christianity prevailed, how much more blessed the state of church and world!

But, dear brethren and sisters, that strife, variance, confusion, &c., prevails, to more or less extent, is that love reigns not. And these, usurping and clamoring for the throne, despoil the peace of the kingdom. Sins and offences abound. That they are guilty who bring them in, is another question. To meet them as disturbing, discordant elements, and put them away, according to the spirit of the gospel, is the question and work for us. The command is to put away from our hearts all envyings, evil surmisings and evil speaking, and all malice, bitterness and wrath; and be kind and tender-hearted to one another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

Now, this last may seem simple; and you may think you do, and can forgive; while you may be far from it, as God for Christ forgave you—that is, to that perfection. Jesus tells you, "Be ye perfect, even as my Father which is in heaven is perfect." This does not mean be perfect in yourself as God is in himself—that were impossible—but be perfect in the performance of gospel works; do them perfectly, as God does them. Now, do you forgive to that perfection He does? How evident that all of us, perhaps, do not! how mournfully evident to those who sadly seek for love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost as lost, or hidden, or suspended blessings, that nothing but the meek, humble resumption of the vital force of true, gospel forgiveness and long forbearance, can recover!

And the time has come, it seems to me, for this, the only means or medium by and through which to put away all existing offences among us—forgive them even as God forgave you. But how did God forgive us?

As showing its nature and perfection to his people, he says, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Have you been thus perfect in your work of forgiving? Have you forgiven offences against you, and *remembered* them no more? A brother could never sin so great and grievous against a brother, as we against God; yet God forgave us, and remembered our sins, as against us, no more forever. Maybe you have said to a brother or sister, "I forgive you," but have you *forgotten* the offense? do you remember it no more? that is, as having and holding it in the least bit against him? Maybe, if you examine closely, you may find you hold the fact that he did sin, and you had to say you forgave, in disagreeable remembrance against him. This is not "even as God for Christ's sake" forgave you. When you *thus* forgive, your heart will be as devoid of anything—the least feeling—*against* him, as though he had never sinned against you, or as though you had entirely forgotten the whole thing. Thus God forgave you—forgetting, as it were, that he ever had anything against you—making your sins and iniquities like the Egyptian hosts in the Red Sea, drowned, to be seen no more forever. Did God remember, how soon would we perish! But we sin and sin, and cry and cry to God for pardon, and always receive it, as though we had not sinned before. Blessed forevermore be this precious, gracious God and Saviour!

But, brother or sister, have you not said, "I forgive you," while you still hold that offending brother in unrestored confidence? And has not the remembrance of his sin caused you to regard him with suspicion, watchfulness and coldness, that often made you shun and hurt him? And the first evil report you heard of him, how more ready you were to condemn him! And if he requires pardon again, you are backward—you have not forgotten how he sinned before. And that remembrance maims, if not prevents, a free pardon; so that his second offense is burdened with his first, and his third with these, and so on, until it becomes a hard matter for you to even say you forgive. Ah! how heavy would be the word at "seventy times seven." And when we say, "we forgive," is it for Christ's sake, or because customary, or for policy's sake, or other reason? If for Christ's sake, why then God is in you, of a truth. For none but God can forgive sin for Christ's sake. Therefore, when you forgive a brother for Christ's sake, it is from that love to and of Christ in you—which love is God, in the sense in which "God is love." God loves Christ, and ever hears him; in like manner he loves each member of the Body of Christ. And never did one of these plead in vain to God for forgiveness for Christ's sake; therefore, never did one of these plead to another for forgiveness, but in that love (which is God) he forgives for Christ's sake.

Then, how can any one say that the love of God—or God as love—is in his soul, if he cannot forgive a brother? How can one say that Christ is in his heart, if wrath, bitterness, envy, &c., is there against a brother? Why, the love of God being the vital force of life in us (the new man),

we so love Christ, that we can forgive an enemy for his sake, who commands it. Then, how full, and free, and perfect those whom we love as ourselves for Christ's sake! O, if we would assure our own hearts, and the world, that we are Christians—that Christ as God, and God as love, abides in our hearts—let us “by (this) love serve one another.” In whatsoever things another has need, whether it be forgiveness or long forbearance—whether it be spiritual or temporal things—and never once say as the flesh and evil spirit does, of temporal things, that we had better keep back these things, fearing we may need them ourselves. For these have fears. But the Spirit of God and love has no such fears, but knows that all things are ours, and God is able to make us abound in all things.

Then, “above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” And, “above all things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” How plain, that if charity—love—is put on, the multitude of sins is covered, and thereby peace! The peace of God rules in the heart, and all existing strife, envy, malice, &c., has ceased. O God, for Christ's sake, grant it!

R. ANNA PHILLIPS.

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### “PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE.”

(2 Peter i. 4.)

*Elders Respass and Mitchell:—Dear Brethren:—*Some reflections upon the truth contained in the above words having occurred to me, I feel like sending them to your most excellent paper. This expression, though peculiar in its form, yet expresses the same truth that is revealed elsewhere, as follows: “Are changed into the same image from glory to glory.”—2 Cor. iii. 18. “That ye put on the new man, which AFTER GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness.”—Eph. iv. 24. “That we might be partakers of his holiness,” &c.—Heb. xii. 10. And frequently the people of God are called holy, not only as they appear clad in the imputed righteousness of Christ for their justification, but also with reference to a partaken righteousness, through the Holy Ghost, which dwells within them.—See Eph. i. 4; Eph. v. 27; Col. i. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 8; Titus i. 8; Heb. iii. 1; 2 Peter iii. 11; Rev. xxii. 11. That we are justified in Christ, and are forever accepted in his righteousness, is a most grand and soul-

rejoicing truth, and we cannot but wonder and adore when we remember how vast a debt Jesus has paid for us. But yet we want more than this; we want to be not only COUNTED righteous, but to be MADE righteous—to be conformed to the image of God; to stand in his likeness. We mourn a cold heart, an unsanctified imagination, a perverse will, and an unrighteous life. If, indeed, we be Christ's, we shall not only rejoice at the imputed righteousness of Christ, but we shall ardently desire to be like him, and shall never be satisfied till we "awake in his likeness."—Psa. xvii. 15. Now, this is the promise given us in the word: "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. If a sense of our need of imputed righteousness fills our heart, there *will be*, there *must be*, a longing after personal holiness filling us also—because we see our debt to be so great, therefore Jesus must pay it; and as we come to acknowledge this, we also shall desire never to fall in debt again. Sin is such a grievous thing in itself, and so heinous in the sight of God, that the renewed man longs to escape from it forever and forever. And this longing soul shall be satisfied.—Psa. cxvi. 7, 8; Jer. xxxi. 12. Such is the truth contained in the words at the head of this article. But let us look more particularly at them.

1st. Negatively. To be a partaker of the divine nature does not mean that the Christian ever becomes a partaker of the unbegotten and underived and essential Godhead of Deity. This is, and must to all eternity be, incommunicable to any creature which God has made. In this God must be ever the same—high and exalted above all worlds and beings; forever and forever God must reign, and angels and redeemed men must bow and acknowledge him Lord and King. Neither does this mean that we are to be partakers of any of the incommunicable attributes of Deity. We are not to become omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient. We shall still be limited in wisdom, even as angels are now, and are still to be limited in power. Neither does this mean that we shall ever be independent of the love, care and power of God, so as that

we can stand alone; but always must we fall at his feet, and confess that we are kept by his power alone. It is in Christ that we stand here, and it shall be by virtue of our union with him, and by virtue of this alone, that we shall continue to endure forever and ever.

2nd. But the text means that, with reference to HOLINESS, we become partakers of the divine nature. We are not by nature in fellowship with God. We are unholy, sinful and at enmity with God. We are rebels, and aliens, and strangers, and know not God. Our sins have separated us from him. To be a sinner IS NOT to partake of the divine nature. To be holy IS to partake of it. It is with reference to holiness ALONE, that we ever become one with God. The fall in sin, meant separation from God; redemption unto God, means to be made holy. These two things are the theme of the Bible. The fall, sin; eternal death, on the one hand; redemption, holiness, eternal life, on the other. In christian experience, the sinner's grief is (not that he is finite, limited in power and wisdom), but that he is unholy; and the joy of salvation is, on the other hand, that he is redeemed from sin and death unto life and holiness.

3rd. How is it that a sinner can become a partaker of the divine nature? A great gulf is between man and his God; how can it be spanned? How shall man be one with God? This question has its answer, and all the answer it ever can have in our Immanuel (Matt. i. 23.) This name solves the whole mystery, "God with us." "God was manifest in the flesh."—1 Tim. iii. 16. "The word was made flesh."—John i. 14. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he took part of the same."—Heb. ii. 14. We can never, in any sense of the word, go to God, unless he first comes to us. And Jesus is "God with us." In him heaven has come down to earth; God has stooped to man. *We never can be one with God, unless he first becomes one with us.* He must partake of our human nature, else we never can partake of his divine nature. He must be clothed in flesh, else we never can be filled with the Spirit. *We have no union with him in the*

*Spirit, unless he first unites himself to our flesh; and this he has done. In all things the work of God precedes all else. We are nothing, and never can be anything, without him.*

4th. But Jesus has come to us. "UNTO US a child is born, unto us a Son is given."—Isa. ix. 6. Mark, it is "*unto us.*" Here is a complete identity in our flesh; and now in him is our salvation complete. In his flesh he became one with us, and lived among men as a man, and died to atone for sin. For this let our loftiest songs of praise be attuned. But this Saviour, also, by his Spirit, comes to each one of his chosen, and personally and experimentally becomes one with us, that we may be one with him. How grand and glorious is this truth! If Christ is formed in the heart, the hope of glory, then are we partakers of the divine nature indeed (Col. i. 27.) How deplorable was our condition by nature! No life, love, holiness; no oneness with God; no union and communion with Christ; no hope here and hereafter; the blackness of despair and death. But how changed in Jesus! Having him, we have life (John i. 4; 1 John v. 11), love, holiness, oneness with God, union and communion with Christ, and a hope that is sure and steadfast, abiding as an anchor of the soul. Without Jesus, nothing; with Jesus, everything! So in Christ, and in him only, we partake of the holiness of God—the divine nature.

5th. Peter, in the connection of the text, speaks of the corruption (that is, the evil doing) that is in the world through lust, and of the fact that his brethren have escaped this corruption, and have received all things that pertain to life and godliness. And this is what he calls "partaking of the divine nature." Thus we see that the apostle speaks of practical things—of things pertaining to the faith, love and life of the believer. According to the apostle, to know and love the truth; to reject all falsehood; to hate evil; to forsake, as a result of this, evil works, and do right works, is to become Christlike—to be a partaker of the divine nature. As we know the nature that a tree possesses by its fruit, so also we know the nature that actuates a man by his deeds (Matt. vii.

16-20; Matt. xii. 33). The deeds of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit are as distinct as the sources from which they emanate. And the fruit of the Spirit is enumerated in its various manifestations as follows: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," &c.—Gal. v. 22, 23. If we are then partakers of the divine nature, we shall find—first, a desire after God and all holy things; and then a striving after them, and prayer to God that they may abound in us. The life of a man, naturally, is two-fold—inward and outward—and the outward is the index of the inward. The life of the Christian in the Spirit is also two-fold—the inward, which God sees, and the outward, which is seen of his fellow man. Within are the holy emotions of love, joy, fear, desire toward God, and without are the effects of these holy emotions, seen in obedience to God and in doing good to his fellow man. This opens up the whole wide field of christian obedience to the commands of God, and I can do no more than to briefly allude to it. Love to God, and love to our neighbor, sums up the whole law of God. (Matt. xix. 19, and many other places.) Love works no ill to his neighbor, and love works no dishonor to God, and no disobedience. Thus love fulfils the law. And he who loves is born of God.—1 John iv. 7. We need not stop to argue unprofitably what the new birth is. It is the most important thing to know that, if born of God, we partake of the divine nature, and that the evidence of this is "love." To contend about what the new birth is does not prove that I am born of God, but to love does prove it. In his heart, he that partakes of the divine nature has love, fear, hope, joy, good will to men, and an abhorrence of whatever seems to him to rob God of his glory. Salvation by grace, and of God only, he delights in, because this glorifies God and his Saviour. Since these feelings fill his heart, in outward life he forsakes all idols, when he sees them to be idols, and departs from iniquity. He strives to walk soberly, righteously and godly among his fellow men. Thus he manifests that he indeed partakes of the divine nature.

6th. This work is begun here, but it is not to be perfected until this clog of flesh is laid aside. But the work begun makes the Christian long for its perfecting. The taste begets a longing for the full cup of salvation. We receive the measure that God has given, and call for more.—Psa. cxvi. 12. O, my brothers and sisters! ye that mourn over sin here; ye that are sad because of such constant failure to love and serve God as you ought, you shall not always be sad. The fruition of all your hope, the end of all your grief, shall come at last. We shall be like him who is our example as well as Redeemer. We shall see him as he is—1 John iii. 2—and the end is near. “We SHALL be like him.” The work is now begun; it shall be completed.

O, what a wonder! I, a poor, vile sinner, to be like the holy Lamb of God! I, a rebel, to be a son! Wonder of wonders! Hear, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! Let heaven and earth, and air and seas, and all that in them is, animate and inanimate, all join to praise such rich and glorious grace!

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

As ever, your brother in hope, F. A. CHICK.  
*Reisterstown, Md., October 22, 1883.*

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LULING, TEXAS, October 23, 1883.

*Editors Gospel Messenger:—Very Dear Brethren in the Lord:—*By request of dear Elder A. W. Patterson, I will give a short account of our Association just past, it being the thirty-fourth annual meeting of the Providence Association. The Association convened with the San Marcus Church, on San Marcus river, Guadalupe county, on Saturday before 2nd Sunday, present month, and continued three days. And first of all, we feel that we can in truth say it was a precious meeting, from first to last. Our Association consists of ten active or living churches, and a membership of about 250. A small body at present, but, be it remembered, that old Providence Association is the mother of two other Associations, to wit: Friendship, and the now Primitive Baptist Association, formerly Concord.

It would, perhaps, not be amiss to state that some of us were looking

forward to the meeting of this Association with a good deal of anxiety, and, perhaps, some curiosity, from the fact that we were notified that our brethren and kindred in Christ of old Georgia would be represented by one of her able ministers in our meeting, Elder A. W. Patterson. And here we will take occasion to say to Elder Denton, that we thank you, or, rather, we should say, we thank God, that it was in your feelings to influence Bro. Patterson to make a trip to Texas, and to come this way; and when we remember how large a territory our State is, and that the Baptists are, as it were, scattered all over it, we are made to feel the more humble and thankful to God, that we should be among the ones to be remembered and visited by our precious brethren.

Elder Patterson arrived at my humble home on Wednesday evening preceding our meeting, somewhat dusty and fatigued, one or two days sooner than I expected, but he was welcome all the same. All were soon engaged in conversation, and I am happy to say that it was pleasant. Our talk was mostly of a godly sort, and Bro. Patterson's part of it was indeed very pleasant and interesting to myself and family. We had him to preach a little for us on Thursday night, and his subject was, "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock," &c., and his interpretations, we thought, were all good.

Friday evening came on, and the brethren and sisters and friends from the different parts of the country began to pour in. One car load of fifty got off near my house, among whom was Elder J. W. Shook, who is prominent among us here in Texas. We had a right lively time passing an introduction between all the people and the Georgia preacher. He being large and portly, the people would gaze upon him, but I told some of them that Elder Patterson was only one man. Supper being over, arrangements were made for preaching, when Bro. Patterson addressed the people, followed by Bro. Shook, and all passed off well.

Saturday morning, 10 o'clock, Bro. Shook preached an interesting introductory discourse from the text, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith," &c. Bro. Shook, in our judgment, is a man set for the defense of the truth, and we would here say we bid him God speed in it.

The business part of the Association all passed off in perfect peace and harmony. We do not have much business in our Associations; our chief object is the worship of God, and all to be together as much so as possible.

Elders Patterson and Shook filled the stand on Sunday, and we do feel that we heard great things on that day. Elder Patterson preached first, from the text, "Thy kingdom come," and Elder Shook from the text, "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand." We all felt that it was good to be there. Sunday night was somewhat a failure. A large congregation assembled at my house to hear preaching, expecting great things as they had heard in the day. But lo! and behold! the big guns both snapped, and couldn't come forth, and a couple of rather smaller pieces tried it; and we thought, putting all together, that it was good enough

for us, for there is no doubt in my mind but there was more flesh among the people that night than Spirit—that is, fleshly desires.

I did not hear the preaching on Monday, but the congregation told me that Bro. Patterson had a good day. Monday night, at my house, he preached one of his good discourses, and we feel certain that his labors among us are highly appreciated by many souls, and I am sure that he will never be forgotten by the people of this country.

Tuesday morning we met at the river (San Marcus), and administered baptism to two persons. The time was now at hand to separate, and our feelings we shall never be able to express. Only one thought was necessary to remind us eleven hundred miles separated between us and Bro. Patterson when he should get home, and the probabilities were that we would never see him any more in this world; but we feel to hope that it may be the will of God to plant him somewhere in our State at some time not far in the future. We would say to our brethren in Georgia, should you discover a disposition in him to move to Texas, let him come, and help him on, for we feel that we need such men here. We try to remember his dear family in our prayers. He manifested a great concern and love for his family while here. He is now somewhere north of the capital of the State, filling his appointments, and may the Lord be with him, in all his journey till he shall reach home, is our prayer. In conclusion, we would say to our brethren in Georgia, you have great reason to be thankful to God for such men as Bro. Patterson.

I will now close, with a few words of encouragement to the MESSENGER: First, my judgment is, that it is ably edited; the communications in general are very instructive and edifying; Bro. F. A. Chick's articles are certainly worth to every Baptist all the paper costs. I see, also, the name of Bro. B. Greenwood as a contributor to the MESSENGER. His pen gives no uncertain sound. We bid him God speed. I wonder if Bro. Greenwood could not make a trip to Texas and spend a month or two? I think we would feed and clothe him while here, and help him on after a godly sort. So let the German preacher come on, doubting nothing.

Dear brethren Respass and Mitchell, you are strangers to me in the flesh, but I feel to congratulate you as the highly favored of the Lord. It does seem to me that if there is such a thing as a higher order of gifts, that you possess them. May the Lord help you to improve your many talents, that you may hear him say, when your work is done, Come, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord.

J. M. BAKER.

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While meteors keep above in the firmament, they yield a pleasing lustre; but when they decline, and fall to the earth, they come to nothing.

## EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS and Wm. M. MITCHELL,.....Editors

### THE END OF THE YEAR.

BELOVED FRIENDS:—With this number the fifth volume of the GOSPEL MESSENGER and the year 1883, closes. We feel that we have been greatly blessed of the Lord in our work; because the Lord has given us favor with his people, and made the MESSENGER useful to them. Its list has swollen from a little one to about 4,000; so that it is now probable that not less than 10,000 Christians read it every month. We say it has been useful to the people of God, for such is the unanimous testimony of our brethren everywhere. That it is the cheapest publication in the United States, there can be no doubt—it being really a \$3.00 magazine at \$1.00 a year. It is so cheap, that to sustain it at the present price, prompt payments will be necessary by all to whom it is not sent gratis. Our five years' labor has been thus far without a solitary cent of remuneration; in fact, taking the whole five years, our expenditures have not been reimbursed. But we confide in the honesty of our brethren—knowing that to be a Christian, is to be an honest man; to pay our debts when we are able to do it—even to make great sacrifices to pay them. We all know it is useless to talk about salvation by grace, if it does not save us from wilful dishonesty. But, as we have said, we are persuaded better things of our readers, though we thus speak; we are persuaded that they will not only exert themselves to pay us, and promptly, but also use their exertions in extending our circulation to double, and treble, its present number. Because the Cause is one; it is theirs, as well as ours. You know, dear friends, that we have enlarged the MESSENGER from 32 pages as at first, to 56 as it is now, being nearly twice as large as at first, keeping it at the same price. There is no possibility of making money by it, and hardly of being paid any very considerable sum for our labor, at that

price. It is useful to us all, and also to our children, as many testify. One good sister in Florida writes that it is a great help to her in governing her children. Our beloved associate, Elder Mitchell, writes us (30th October): "It is with humble thankfulness and gratitude to God that I learn the GOSPEL MESSENGER has been blessed of God to the good of many young people, as well as old ones, in causing them to cease Novel reading, and reading the Bible and other good things." And yet, some brethren oppose such publications; and we did once ourself—but the Lord, as we believe, converted us from that error. We had as well oppose the publication of a Hymn Book or Bible—because they cannot be published without money, and we have to pay money for them. We have good cause to encourage and sustain them rather than oppose them. If a good thing is abused, it is no reason why it should be destroyed, but that the abuse should cease. We would not boast of our charity; but we give the MESSENGER to a great many without charge, though we have a large family to care for, and many others dependent upon us and have been for many years. But we ask none to sustain the MESSENGER out of mere sympathy for us, but for their own sakes and the Cause's sake. If it is worthy, patronize it; and if not, let it go down. Nor do we ask brethren to aid us because of its location; State lines have nothing to do with the cause of Christ, and it matters not where it is published, if it be useful to Christians and the cause. Patronize and sustain it as a publication of your own, as much yours as ours; and as for money, there is very little in it. We confess that we would be glad to be paid in part, at least, for our labor; for we need it. We have spent our lives in the cause, and our strength is gone, and we would be worthless now in any other business, if we are not, as we often fear, worthless in this.

We have been and are often concerned about the MESSENGER, as to whether our motives have been pure or not, in the sight of God; because we know that whilst we may hide from man, we can't, if we so wished, hide from God; and if we know our heart, it is before God that we wish, above all, to

be right. We have, also, the same concern in regard to our ministry—as to whether we were prompted by the right spirit or not. We know that one time, before we began to speak in the name of the Lord, that it seemed to us that the glory of God was our chief concern. We have had much affliction, and what yet awaits us, the only wise God knoweth. We have had many blessings—very much to be grateful for—and can in sincerity say that we have not been worthy of the least of all the mercy and truth that the Lord has bestowed upon us. Indeed, we are often amazed at the mercy and goodness of the Lord to us.

There seems to be prosperity in places in the Zion of our God, and indications of a better day in many places. Our beloved brother, Elder Mitchell, writes us of his church at Mount Olive (October 30th): “We had a splendid turn out of brethren and friends to hear Elder Dameron, of North Carolina, on Saturday; and I do believe the Lord sent him and opened the hearts of His children to receive the word. One by letter, and one received by baptism. In the midst of my sufferings, the Lord helped by his Spirit, that I might preach in spirit, I hope, from Acts ii. 38. The meeting was closed by prayer by one of our deacons, Bro. Taylor. Such a solemn, deep-seated feeling as was manifested in the congregation, I have not seen for many long years, if ever. An old Missionary friend and his wife—who takes the MESSENGER—came up to the pulpit and gave me their hands, before services closed, and begged that prayer be made for them, telling us that an only daughter, a married lady in Atlanta, Ga., who had been a strong Mission Baptist, was baptized last Sunday and became a member of the Primitive Baptists in that city; that she first got her eyes opened by reading the GOSPEL MESSENGER. After them, many young people, and some old ones, came rushing up, apparently heart-broken, and gathered my hand whilst I was still in the pulpit, saying, ‘Pray for me!’ Surely, brother, it is the Lord’s doings, and my scul is melted in me whilst I write this to you.”

This is refreshing; but in many places it is quite different,

there being a great dearth in the fruits of the Spirit. Love seems to have grown cold, and forbearance and gentleness almost ready to expire, so that the times call the people of God to earnest and continued prayer, to diligence and faithfulness in every good work, and to more self-denial and greater charity. The day of adversity is a call to consider, that we may amend our ways and doings. There was a time when the prophet of the Lord, Elijah, the representative of the truth of God to His people, was hid from them, under Ahab's reign, for three years and six months. They were deaf to the truth, and to have proclaimed it to them, would have been presumptuous and suicidal in the prophet, for they would have slain him for it. But the famine humbled them, and made way for the acceptance of the prophet, so that the truth could be proclaimed, the altars of Baal thrown down, and the false prophets be slain. We can easily imagine the hard efforts made by Israel, under Ahab, to sustain themselves whilst the prophet was hid from them; and can see them at last, in the absence of the softening showers, fainting in their efforts, and leaving the worn-out shares and plows lying useless upon the stony furrows of the field. Then came the word of the Lord to Elijah, "Go shew thyself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth." The time had come, for Israel had realized that all her efforts were vain in the absence of rain, and that God only could give that.

O, our hard hearts! How impossible to soften them ourselves! Though we preach and write with ability, all is nothing without the Spirit. We have attended five Associations this fall, and we believe that the ministers of the Lord are preaching the gospel in more simplicity than we have ever noticed, and we consider that a good token. There seems to be no effort at big sermons or unrevealed things, but such things as the feeble children of God have experienced. Because we know nothing, save what we have experienced; we only know now in part, having only experienced in part; but we shall know all, when we have experienced all. We have got to die, to experience the other part—and then we will

know it all. O, beloved of God! let us strive for the peace of Jerusalem. Let us do what our hands find to do, with our might; for the time is short, and the night cometh when no man can work. We trust to be spared to meet with you all, and many more, the year to come, and to be useful to one another. The Lord be with us all.—R.

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### TO CHILDREN.

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*Dear Children:*—A great many years ago we knew a little boy, whose parents, though honest and industrious, were quite poor. This little boy was the second child and oldest son of a family of five or six children, and as his father was a workman and owned no land, the family were frequently moving about from place to place, wherever the father thought best for his business. The mother was a precious, good woman, though none of the family were members of any religious sect or church. The most of the time she and her little children were left alone of nights, as the husband and father had to be off where he could find work.

This good mother, besides being very industrious, was a good singer; and being lonesome, she would seek various ways to entertain her children of nights, so that they might not only be instructed in useful things, but be kept awake for company till late bed-time. She would sit up of nights, carding and spinning, knitting and sewing, and at the same time she would engage the attention of her children by telling first one interesting thing and then another, and sometimes she would repeat and sing some very beautiful songs to them.

These children all loved their mother dearly; and truly she was worthy to be loved by them. The little son, of whom we have spoken above, would often sit down on the floor by his precious mother, looking up in her face, and thinking he surely had the best mother in all the world. The little fellow could not then read, for he had not been to school but very few weeks; but his mother would tell him and the other chil-

dren about a great many things that are written in the Bible, and also of some things in the New Testament, and tell them when they learned to spell and read well, they could read all these things for themselves. This caused the little son, as well as his oldest sister, to have a great desire to read, so that they could read in the Bible about the building of the Ark, and the great flood of water that God sent to destroy the wicked world.

The mother often told them about Jacob and his twelve sons, and how he loved Joseph, one of his younger sons, better than all the other sons. She would tell them of the strange dreams which Joseph had when quite a boy, and how his brethren hated him for his dreams,—how they put him in a deep pit,—and finally sold him to a company of Ishmaelites, and they went down to Egypt and sold the poor little boy again to a great man whose name was Potiphar. She would tell them how badly Joseph's brethren did, not only in selling their own brother, but in telling lies, and deceiving their poor old father by dipping Joseph's coat in the blood of a kid which they had killed, and then taking this coat to their father to make him believe some wild beast had slain his darling son, Joseph.

But we must close this letter by telling you that the little boy, of whom we have been speaking, had a great thirst to read about Joseph and other things which his mother had talked about to him. He studied his book, and soon could read anything in the English language. He read the Bible through. The Lord brought him to see his condition as a poor, lost sinner, and delivered him from the power of darkness, and after some years he joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and soon commenced preaching, and is yet living and preaching Jesus.

Dear children, we now bid you adieu for this year.—M.

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Is it not a pity that those plants should be found in Egypt, that will thrive so well in Canaan?

“HOW CAN THESE THINGS BE?”—JOHN III. 9.

There is a natural tendency in men generally to call in question the plain declarations of God's word, unless they can fully solve them by natural laws or natural reasoning. While it is true that there are many things which the Lord hath spoken that are in perfect harmony with natural laws and reason, yet there are many other things respecting the existence, character and work of God, that are so far above our natural reason, as to stagger the most intelligent, who may vainly seek for some logical explanation. What can the application of natural laws and reasoning do with Isaiah ix. 6? Can natural reason explain how God created the heavens and the earth from *nothing* by the word of his power? Can it tell us the nature of an atonement for sin—the “Just dying for the unjust,” and thereby putting away sin, and bringing the guilty sinner before God spotless, pure and innocent? Will it unfold to us how God shall raise the dead, and fashion the vile body of his saints like unto the glorious body of Jesus?

With regard to these and many kindred things respecting the gospel of our salvation, it may be said of all men as is said of the apostles: “They understood none of these things.” Luke xviii. 34. And again, it is written that “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” 1 Cor. ii. 9.

We have long since been convinced that a personal knowledge of christianity in all its principles is a revelation, to be received by that faith which is the evidence of things *not* seen. That which the natural mind and reason of man can comprehend and unfold to others, is not a revelation by the Spirit in the sense of the text quoted above, as well as many other texts which we might notice. One is but a natural science, which natural men may know because God has given them natural capacity to comprehend these things; but the other is

a spiritual revelation, which the natural man "cannot know." 1 Cor. ii. 14. "No man by searching can find out God."

Nicodemus was a devout Pharisee—had read the scriptures, and been taught after the perfect manner of legal worship. He was promoted to be a "ruler of the Jews," and a "master in Israel." It is very probable that he felt a deep anxiety to know more about Jesus, but his honorable station forbid him to come to Him openly for instruction, lest he might fall into disrepute with his people. He comes to Jesus by night, fully prepared in mind, perhaps, as he thought, to receive instruction in faith and confidence. He says to Jesus: "No man can do the miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." But what was his astonishment when he heard: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"! This so astonished the "master in Israel," that, like men generally, instead of receiving the positive assertion of the Son of God as truth, he wants to reason, and desires an answer that his natural reason can solve. "How can a man be born when he is old?" Did Christ stop to reason and tell him *how* it could be done? He did not; but he reminds Nicodemus to "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Remember *that*—and remember that He who cannot lie, hath said it. Do not seek to reason and quibble because you can not see *how* it is to be done.

There is evidently something about a spiritual birth that even the subject of such birth cannot know. Christ does not stop to answer all the quibbles of mind upon this subject, but lets us know that the birth itself is a reality, a truth, though there be some things thou "canst not know," nor cannot tell. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but *canst not tell* from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Mark well the words, "thou canst not tell." There is no use in speculating and theorizing to bring it within the scope of natural reasoning. Our Lord has said, "thou canst not tell," and, "so is *every one* that is born of the Spirit." Still, the pride and unbelief of many will rise like Nicodemus and ask, "How can these things be?" If the Lord has said it, that should be sufficient.—M.

## A VOICE FROM MISSISSIPPI.

[This has been overlooked for over a year.—R.]

A Missionary Baptist gentleman writes us from Mississippi, in a very respectful manner, expressing a desire to read our magazine and learn, if possible, what is the difference between his denomination and Primitive Baptists. He says there are no churches of our order in that country, and he does not meet with any of the members, but he has been told that we are opposed to "Mission work," and desires to know whether this is so, or whether we are only opposed to the "methods of conducting" such work; and also whether we are opposed to Sunday Schools, or only the "methods of conducting them," and the "*books* used in them." He also states that he has read with interest our article on Sunday Schools in the September issue of the MESSENGER (1882), "but did not gather from it that we are opposed to schools, but only to the books used."

If our Mississippi correspondent has ever been truly converted to God, and born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, he loves the truth in his heart, and there is some hope for his being instructed in the right way of the Lord, though he may have been much bewildered in mind and led astray by the doctrines and commandments of men. But if he knows nothing but what he has learned from books and from human teachers, he is but a "natural man" in understanding; and however intelligent and refined he may be in that respect, he cannot, with that qualification alone, "receive the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. And, without following our correspondent's questions in the numerical order in which they are presented, we say, that while we are in favor of schools for teaching literature, or any natural science which has for its object the cultivation of the human mind, and the application of science to any proper and laudable object which natural men and women are capable of, yet we do oppose every school, of every grade or name, whether it be called Sunday or Monday school, which has for its pretended object

the making of Christians, or even imparting to any of the posterity of Adam, a knowledge of the guilt of sin, of God, of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost. We believe that any school which uninspired men have originated, and of which they are the teachers, claiming to be even a means of God's ordaining, to prepare the mind and heart of children for the reception of the gospel, is a base and wicked assumption of men, wholly unauthorized by the sacred word of God. To ascribe to the schools of men, that work which God alone can do; or to substitute the wisdom and learning of this world to do that which can only be done by the Spirit and power of God, is certainly wrong and sinful.

If our Mississippi correspondent has failed to gather from September number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER that we oppose both the modern Sunday School and the methods of conducting it, we have but little hope of enlightening him by anything we might say further upon this subject. It may be, however, that our friend has not carefully noticed the following sentence of our editorial article, on page 316, in the September issue: "The modern Sunday School is a society of a professed religious character, but as it is not at all *recognized* in the scriptures as of divine authority, there are no rules given therein for its government, nor respecting the qualifications nor character of its members."

Again, our Mississippi correspondent says: "I have been told, you are opposed to Mission work. Is this so? or are you opposed only to Missionary Baptists' method of conducting missionary work?" To this we reply, that we are most emphatically opposed to every form and grade of "Mission work," not only of Missionary Baptists, but of every other religious sect, society, or fraternity, which is founded on the wisdom of men, and not sustained by the unerring word of God. We believe that God has ordained that the gospel of his grace shall be preached among all nations in *the name*, or by the authority of Jesus, and not in the name, character, nor authority of any humanly devised institution, however wise, learned, or powerful it may be. That modern missionary

work, and the methods of conducting it, is of men, and not of God's appointing, is too plain for any gentleman of even ordinary information or intelligence to attempt to controvert. "Mission work," in the gospel sense, is the work of such as are chosen and sent by God's *authority* to do a work distinctly specified in the word of the Lord. No man nor combination of men have the rightful authority to send men to attempt to do that which God has reserved to himself to do. The work of such men when sent by men, is truly "mission work," yet it is only the *work of men*, and not the power of God, nor the wisdom of God.

The Lord calls and sends forth his ministers to preach the blessed gospel of Christ in such a way and manner that each one can say in truth: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. i. 12. And, also, each one comes in his own ministerial experience into fellowship with the apostle of Christ, in saying: "I *was made* a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given me by the *effectual* working of his power."—Eph. iii. 7. Can those who are made and sent by men to preach say this in truth? We know they cannot.

To this humanly-devised Mission work we are honestly opposed, and to every means or method of conducting such work. It is a work of error, and those who are engaged in it are "gone in the way of Cain," which was a way of his own choosing, and not of God's appointing, nor of His acceptance.

M.

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"Let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall." You will quickly lose your standing, if you are fearless of falling. He that abstains from no lawful thing, may soon be brought to commit something that is sinful. Many a man hath been thrown out of the saddle of profession, by riding with too slack a rein of circumspection.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

CONYERS, GA., October 11, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I hate it that I have gotten behind with my subscription, but will try to do better in future.

Dear brother, I would like to see you up in this section again, and hear you preach, if it is the pleasure of the good Lord for you to do so. If I am any judge, the preaching at the Yellow River Association was about the best I have ever heard.

This leaves all well, and trust it may find you and family in enjoyment of the same blessing.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

J. E. WHITAKER.

CIMARON, NEW MEXICO.

*Dear Sister Respass* :—I would have dearly loved to have been at your Association, but do not know when I can come. I did hope to be able to come to see you this fall, but will have to give it up, but trust that it may be the Lord's will to let me come some time. I greatly need strength and abounding grace to be resigned to His will in all things. I am a very rebellious child, if one at all, seeing myself daily in rebellion; and "Lord, help mine unbelief," is all, at many times, that I can say. But if I am not a child of God, I do surely know that I love those who are. I wish Bro. Respass had been sent here instead of Kentucky. Once in a while we hear a little preaching, but I am afraid we will never have a church here. Many here are "Two Seed," and my husband and I do not believe that way, and do not want to hear it advocated. If they will preach to me Christ, and tell me of his goodness to the children of men, pointing out the way of salvation to the believer, that is all I ask. I know of no other way by which we can be saved, nor do I wish to hear of any other. And when this poor, frail body is laid in the dust, I want it there to rest until that great day, when the grave shall give up its dead, and it shall be clothed with immortality.

Remember me, and when your heart goes out in prayer do not forget me, a poor, unworthy worm. As ever,  
LAVINIA J. DAWSON.

Elder J. H. MILLER's address is changed from Ranger, Eastland county, Texas, to Bowie, Montague county, Texas.—ED.

LAGRO, IND., September 30, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—The reason why I have made the effort, and sent you this club, is, because I believe the GOSPEL MESSENGER worthy a place in every Baptist household, and feel that each one will be comforted by its perusal. What a privilege, to hear from the dear children of God from all parts of our country! telling of their hope in Christ and trust in the same precious promises in which we trust.

May your labors be crowned with success, is the wish of your unworthy sister,  
EMMA B. KELSEY.

CLEAR WATER, FLA., September 24, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I send you \$1.00 for a lady, who, I trust, is inquiring for the good old way. She likes the MESSENGER well. We are deprived of preaching, and the MESSENGER is our only comfort of the kind, and it is next thing to preaching to us. Remember our destitute condition to our preaching brethren in their travels. O, what a blessing it is to have the privilege of hearing the gospel preached, and to have the precious society of brethren and sisters of like precious faith! None who have never been cast into such a land of Arminianism as this can tell how hard it is to endure. We hear them say, "Let us preach to every creature, and by it we may save some that God did not intend to save," &c.

Now, dear brother, that is the kind of doctrine they try to feed us on, and of course we can't eat it. Dear brethren, remember us at a throne of grace.

Your unworthy brother,

J. D. McMILLEN.

NEWCASTLE, PENN., September 29, 1883.

*Dear Brethren* :—Some days ago I went to the office and they handed me the GOSPEL MESSENGER of September, and it had the same effect on me as a dear friend being long absent and returning. I opened it, and commenced reading Bro. Higginbotham's letter to Bro. Mitchell, and became blind with tears. I have to say with Bro. M., that I was both sorry and glad, but confess that the joy far outwent the sorrow. O, poor me! well do I know what it is to get into darkness; and then when the darkness is taken away and God gives light, it makes me glad, because I believe it to be the dealing of the Lord with me. I am an old man now, nearly 84, and am surrounded with nothing but trash—or so it looks to me. But blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I still grow stronger and stronger in the doctrine of free and sovereign grace; not unfelt grace, but that grace that causes the creature to thank, praise and adore God the giver. O, brethren, pray for me, that I may be kept in the good old paths in my last days, which are but few!

When I opened the MESSENGER, I looked for Bro. Mitchell's name, being very anxious to know whether he was living or not, knowing of his poor health. When I first got here last fall, I recruited some, but in November was taken down and became almost helpless, and was so all winter, not expecting to live. In March I took a change, but had to apply to the authorities for help; but am now able to do some work, and some days feel better, and others quite poorly. Dear brethren, it seems I can never raise a dollar for you, but I wish I could.

Your unworthy brother, as I hope, in Christ,

WILLIAM DEAN.

We have been sending the MESSENGER to you regularly ever since you left Chicago, and don't know why you have failed to get it.—ED.

RICHLAND, ARK., October 1, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—My family is well; my own health is poor. Let me say to you that I had a feast truly on last 3rd Sunday. I wish you could have been there and have taken a part in our good meeting at Sharon Church, Claiborne Parish, La. My first son, and wife, and three daughters, with three others, were added to the church by experience and baptism. Elder M. C. Parker is the pastor of the church. He is a son of Elder C. A. Parker, and is, I believe, one of the Lord's ministers, and whose labors have been abundantly blessed.

Yours in love,

E. J. DEAN.

ECHECONEE, GA., September 26, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I think I can safely say that the Lord was with us at the Ebenezer Association. The preachers were nearly all from the wire-grass country, and I do feel assured I never attended a better meeting nor heard better preaching. No high-flying preaching, but good, comforting preaching—savory meat—such as the soul loves. I never witnessed better feeling, and would be glad to have it all over again. No; I am wrong to wish that, for our God has an inexhaustible supply for all his children who walk uprightly.

Yours in hope,

R. E. STORY.

CAIRO, TEXAS.—*Dear Brother* :—I said to you, that if I liked the MESSENGER, I would patronize it; and now I say to you, after reading seven numbers, that I give it my hearty approval; and may the Lord direct you and Bro. Mitchell in the work, that it may continue to be a blessing to the children of God. It comes laden with gospel truths, and is well worthy its name (GOSPEL MESSENGER.) When I read its contents from different writers and various sections, and see that they all speak the same things, well may we say that "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isa. liv. All taught in the same school, by the same Teacher. And then, so assured, we might use the words of Job (xiv.) : "For I know that my Redeemer liveth," and that salvation is of the Lord; that by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, but is the gift of God. The golden bells upon the robe of the High Priest, when in the holiest place making intercession for Israel, as they sounded, assured Israel that the High Priest still lived; so we know by the cry of the penitent sinner, the quickened sinner, the works of love and obedience, the testimony of the saints scattered throughout the earth, that Jesus lives in them. But when doubts and fears assail the mind, and we are grieved by sin, we wander back to the Bethel spot, where we received the grace—the spark of joy.

I am always glad to see my friends come once a month in the MESSENGER, and speak to me of heavenly things. Your humble brother in hope of eternal life,

J. S. CONN.

LIBERTY COUNTY, GA., September 16, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—We have received at Deloache's Church during the year, 14 by baptism. I had appointment at Anderson's, 1st in September, and such a reviving as we had is hardly ever seen amongst Baptists. On Sunday the unworthy writer had the pleasure of baptizing 7, all of whom seemed to have great liberty in relating their travel from nature to grace. Elder H. Parrish is the pastor of this church, and the word in this case was true, that "one soweth and another reapeth." We have built a house of worship, near me, and were constituted in March with 5 in number, and now number 14. During the year I have baptized 24. Surely, as poor as I feel to be, I have been greatly favored of the Lord with joy in seeing and hearing so many of the Lord's poor following Christ, and tell of his goodness. We are looking for several more. I try to serve three churches in my weakness, and much encouragement that gives me, my dear brother. I would be glad to see all the churches in a prosperous condition, but have often to lament coldness, and then indeed we have to consider, and in the day of prosperity we are joyful. I truly hope that the Lord will give you good speed in the work of the GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Your unworthy brother,

A. R. STRICKLAND.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND., October 19, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—Having just read your article on "The Old and New Man" with satisfaction and comfort, permit me to express in the MESSENGER my hearty approval of it as scriptural and experimental, and therefore true. It is what I have tried to teach and preach everywhere; and it is received by all the brethren, because it is the simple truth, and does not confuse nor divide the children of God.

Controversy and strife should cease on this subject; for, as we can neither comprehend nor control the mind, neither can we the operation and work of the Holy Spirit in the quickened sinner—the man who is born again. But that he *himself* is born again—quickened by, and born of the Spirit—is the truth of God. And as born again, *he* is passed from death unto life, and he now lives in Christ and Christ in him. And *this one* is therefore a child of God, as also a child of man—possessing both the life of Adam and the life of Christ, in his one person. For he is born of the flesh, and born of the Spirit; and therefore he is in Adam and in Christ.

In Adam *he* dies, but in Christ *he* shall be made alive.

*Mortality* shall be swallowed up of LIFE! And *we* shall be changed! Jesus shall save his *people* from their sins. People are men, women and children, and sinners—not pure spirits. "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*."

Well do I know that *I* am a sorrowing sinner; and my faith and hope in Christ are, that he will *save me*. In this hope your brother,

D. BARTLEY.

WINCHESTER, KY., October 22, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I think your article on "The Old and New Man" excellent. Surely all experimental Baptists ought to unite on your explanation of the subject. Eld. John Theobald, of the Licking Association, died a few days ago. He was highly esteemed, and will be greatly missed among them in the bounds of his labors. He died of inflammatory rheumatism. May the Lord continue to bless your labors.

Yours to serve in Christ,

JAMES J. GILBERT.

We have received "Gadby's Wanderings," Bro. Gilbert.—R.

SHELBYVILLE, TENN., October 24, 1883.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I am well pleased and edified by yours and Bro. Mitchell's editorials. Especially am I pleased with your elucidation of "The Old and New Man." It is man, who was lost. It is that which was lost, Christ came to save. It is man that will be saved from sin and corruption; for this corruptible shall put on incorruption. And every man (including women and children) for whom Christ gave himself a ransom, will be saved with an everlasting salvation.

God has abundantly blessed you, my dear brother; and may He ever bless you and yours, is your little brother's desire,

FRANK E. LACY.

WILSON, N. C., October 10, 1883.

*Elders Respass and Mitchell* :—*Dear Brethren* :—We have just witnessed the close of a most harmonious session of the Kehukee Association with the church at Flat Swamp, in Martin county, North Carolina. Out of 44 churches, 38 were represented, and the number of people in attendance was estimated at about 5,000. Twenty-three ordained ministers, including seven from sister Associations, were present; and ten discourses were delivered. The Lord Jesus Christ was clearly and ably presented as the only possible Saviour of sinners; and the order and attention of the congregation were remarkable. The question of holding the future sessions of the Association exclusively in the week, and not at all on Sunday, was referred to the churches for their decision.

The next session of the Association is to be held, if the Lord will, with the South Quay Church, in Southampton county, Virginia, the first Sunday in October, 1884, and the day preceding and following.

For the information of the brethren who are subscribers to the GOSPEL MESSENGER, I herewith enclose my Report on the Church History.

Yours in gospel bonds,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—I desire to say that the whole tone of the MESSENGER pleases me. And by this I mean its mechanical execution, its form, the quality of the paper, and the printing, as well as the subject matter which it contains. I like the two features which you have added,

of the brief Biography of Aged Ministers and Sketches of Churches. I am gratified at the exclusion of direct personal controversy. A brother can give his views to much better profit, without assailing the views of another, who differs. Every one here who has seen your paper likes it, and I shall occasionally be able to send you new subscribers. The price puts it within easy reach of nearly all. It is wonderfully cheap. Some one suggested that it be printed twice a month. My opinion is that once a month is better than twice. If any increase is to be made, it had better be by the addition of a few pages than by more frequent numbers.

I wish you God speed, because I believe the Lord is with you. I would like to meet you and Bro. Mitchell face to face again. I echo Bro. Kelly's invitation to come and see us.

As ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

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COMANCHE, TEXAS, October 16, 1883.

*Brother Respass* :—We would be pleased if you would make us a visit. There are some precious brethren here, who would be glad to see you, and hear you preach. Some of us have heard you, many years since, and would delight to hear you again. We have not forgotten you, but we do with heartfelt pleasure remember the pleasant times and seasons, when we have met together, and were made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (at least, I believe we were), at the Ocmulgee Association and at other places in Georgia, when we did feel to realize that we loved one another. "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." But do we know that we love them? this is the important question. Well, here arises another question: Why do we feel so much concern, so much interest in this matter, if we do not love them? Would it be thus with us, if we cared nothing for these things? Then, is it not a testimony in our favor, when we fear we do not love the brethren as we should, and feel to desire to love them better; to make manifest our love to them, and to God our Saviour, "because he first loved us," and by walking in all his laws and ordinances blameless? Do we not hate sin and love righteousness? Or, are we still the servants of sin? Then, why do we mourn because we cannot live free from sin? "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Then, none mourn on account of sin except those who have been blessed with divine life; who have been enabled by grace to have a proper view of themselves as poor sinners, as well as the justice of God in their condemnation. But they shall be comforted.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

M. H. HUTCHISON.

---

#### FUNERAL OF ELDER JOHN BUIE.

*Dear Brother Respass* :—It was our happy privilege to be at a good meeting at Beulah Church, Graham, Ga., third Sunday in August, at which time the funeral of the late Elder John Buie was preached by the

writer, followed by Elder M. Sikes. This was by his own request at his last visit amongst us. The congregation was large and attentive. The text was 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8; and Elder Sikes's, John xvii. 4.

Many of the readers of the GOSPEL MESSENGER were personally acquainted with Elder Buie, and more so than the writer. He was a good man, a minister of the gospel, and was born blind, having never seen any earthly object; but he was taught of the Lord that wisdom which is infinitely superior to any earthly teaching and theological training in the schools of men. He had been a defender of the truth for about forty-five years—a long time to face the storms of ridicule hurled against the followers of Christ. He has another brother in the flesh, now living, who was also born blind, and is also a minister of the gospel, and is a member of Beulah Church; and he, too, must soon pass away from time and go to his Elder Brother, as his old age and declining health thus admonish us.

I want to give the readers of the MESSENGER an item or two in reference to Beulah Church and her present prosperity. This church is now exceeding nine years old, constituted at first of a few hoary-headed Baptists, and served ever since by our esteemed brother, Elder M. Sikes. The church now consists of a large membership—in addition to which two other churches have grown out of her, which are also in a prosperous condition. We feel assured that the Lord has graciously and bountifully blessed the labors of Elder Sikes. On Saturday before the third Sunday above mentioned, three were baptized by the writer, who were received a month previous. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

Bro. Respass, before I close this, I will ask you to write upon Rev. i. 12, if not asking too much. Yours in hope, J. W. LOARD.

Will some brother who has light, write on the above.—ED.

---

#### CHURCH HISTORY—REPORT TO KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION.

WILSON, N. C., October 4, 1883.

*Dear Brethren:*—My father and I have, now for seven years, been engaged upon the preparation of a History, not only of the Kehukee Association, but of the Church of God from the Creation to the present time. The proper completion of the General Church History has involved a great deal of time and labor. I have earnestly endeavored to make the statements of the work accurate and reliable—incontestable by any competent authority. I now feel sure, with the Divine blessing, that I shall be able to send the manuscript to press next January, so that the book can be published the coming winter. My great object has been the ascertainment and defense of Bible truth—especially the delineation of the twelve characteristic marks of the Apostolic Church, and the tracing of these marks down through the nineteen centuries of the Christian Era. The presence or the absence of these marks is the sure test of the apostolic or the un-

apostolic character of every organization calling itself a Church. I have also presented, in a single chapter—because the subjects are so closely connected—the History of the Belief and the Disbelief of the Doctrine of Grace, and of Scriptural and Unscriptural Missions. My father and I have, in general, at points where the truth is assailed, purposely used the very language and the reluctant admissions of such as occupy the highest positions among the enemies of the truth, so as effectually to silence the gainsayings of those who defend error with less information and less ability. We have dwelt sorrowfully, but emphatically and solemnly, upon the extravagant religious pharisaism and the extraordinary religious superficiality of the Nineteenth Century. The world presses into the nominal Church; myriads compass sea and land to make proselytes; while the unfelt horror of spiritual death reigns throughout almost the entire extent of the civilized, as well as the uncivilized inhabitants of the globe. But, while gross darkness covers the rich, proud, and corrupt Egypt of the world, as of old, the few, poor, humble, and despised Israel of God are blessed with Divine light in their dwellings; and, to the spiritual mind, it is intensely interesting and edifying to observe the providential course and circumstances of that heavenly light as it comes down to us through the historical wilderness of the ages. Straight and narrow, high and holy, spiritual and Divine, is the mysterious path along which patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, and all the dear people of God have been led by the Spirit and Providence of the Most High. The infallible Scriptures, illuminated by the Divine Spirit in our hearts, alone can enable us to discover that heavenly path, and to walk therein, and find rest to our souls. The Lord Jesus Christ, in his almighty divinity, his efficacious atonement, and his triumphant resurrection and ascension to glory, is the only way, truth, and life of his people. He is their only Head, their only Prophet, Priest and King. Without him we can do nothing. May His all-important blessing attend the publication and circulation of this humble attempt, undertaken by my father and myself, at your request, to unfold the providential development of His militant kingdom; and to His gracious Name shall all the glory be given.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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## OBITUARIES.

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JOSIAH WILLIAM OWEN—EUGENIA STUART OWEN.

“Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.”

*Elder D. P. Gold:—Very Dear Brother:—*It becomes my heart-rending duty to chronicle the death of our only two darling children. O, how can we live without them! But it is a stroke we must submit to, knowing that

“Not a single shaft can hit,  
Till the God of love sees fit.”

JOSIAH WILLIAM OWEN was born Sunday, July 2nd, 11 o'clock A. M., 1865.  
EUGENIA STUART OWEN was born Wednesday, September 4th, 6 o'clock P. M., 1867.

I took our son to Winchester the last days of last August, intending to put him in school at that place. I expected to take our daughter when the Female School opened, but when I got there I found there was small-pox in the town. I brought our son back and kept them until January 22nd, 1883. There being so much small-pox in the country, we had them vaccinated, and their mother accompanied them to Winchester, Tenn., and got board for them together at the same house. Some time in February they took the mumps; soon after I heard of it, I went to see them, being sixty miles from my home. I arrived there the second Sunday in March. I left them in school. Tuesday after, I came home. Friday following, our daughter was attacked with measles; eight days after, we got news of her sickness. My wife went to her immediately; found her very sick, and under treatment from a doctor. A few days later, which was the 27th of March, my wife sent me a telegram that our daughter was very sick, and for me to come right away. I went, and the morning after I got there our son took the measles. We had them both in the same room together, and gave them all of our attention, both night and day, not so much as undressing ourselves to sleep. We called in what medical aid the town could afford—they were too sick for us to bring them home. The measles terminated in bronchitis with both of them. They grew worse and worse every day. Myself and wife prayed for their lives, but without avail. O, how we wanted the lives of our dear, darling ones spared to us! But it seems that it was not the will of Heaven. They lingered on until, Saturday, 14th of April, 4 o'clock P. M., our dear daughter sweetly fell asleep, as we hope, in the arms of Jesus; it being the twenty-eighth day from her attack of measles. She carried through her sickness the brightest face I ever saw. She frequently called upon me to intercede and pray for her.

Twelve hours later, Sunday, 4 o'clock A. M., our dear boy also fell asleep calmly, after a night of very acute suffering, his disease having assumed the typhoid form, which made his sufferings very great. But near the end, quiet came, and he seemed to gently fall asleep. I hope his sufferings were over, as he demonstrated signs of repentance to me before he grew so very sick. Our son died the sixteenth day from his attack of measles.

O, dear Bro. Gold, what a heart-rending scene to be around the bed of our darling dying ones, and hear them call on us, and our arms too short to help! What a grand and glorious thing it is to have a Saviour that has all power in heaven and upon earth! He it is that rules the armies above and supervises the earth beneath. O that we could say, like Job: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord!"

O, Bro. Gold, and brethren one and all! will you not petition the Lord at a throne of divine grace in behalf of the bereaved, heart-broken parents—especially my dear wife, who is almost wild with grief—that we bear up under this great affliction with great patience and having sustaining grace, knowing too that we must die.

We put our darling dead upon the evening train for Murfreesboro. When

we arrived there, Elder J. E. Frost, being there at his monthly meeting, met us at the depot; we invited him home with us. We brought them to our home, nine miles in the country, that night. Bro. Frost came out to our house the next day, 16th of April; held services over our children at 3½ o'clock P. M. We laid them in one grave, by the side of their little brother we lost in the war. We feel like we are ruined for this life. O, pray for us that our faith fail us not!

WILLIAM B. OWEN.

*Rutherford County, Tenn., May 30, 1883.*

DEACON JOHN CALDWELL.

DEACON JOHN CALDWELL died of paralysis at his residence in Floyd county, Ga., May 12th, 1883; aged 69 years. Bro. Caldwell was born and raised in Upson county, Ga., and was baptized about the year 1830, by Elder Creed Caldwell, his uncle. As a Baptist, he was much devoted to the interest of peace, love and unanimity of his brethren, using the office of deacon well, and purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. As a citizen, he was quiet, peaceable and obliging, obeying magistrates and those that ruled over him. Being taught by the grace of God, he lived soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. As a husband, he was cautious, kind and tender, ever willing and anxious to share with his dear companion a portion of all her sorrows and sufferings in this life. Likewise that she should be a participator with him in all the joys and comforts of the same—traveling much together, visiting Associations, Union Meetings, and their Monthly Meetings, giving evidence that they greatly enjoyed and realized the power and influence of the gospel of Christ. As a father, he was strict, yet tender and kind—ever teaching, both by word and precept, good morals, industry, economy and honesty. And as a fruit of the Spirit and a seal of his inheritance, God blessed him to witness six out of nine of his beloved children baptized into the faith of the Old School Baptist Church. Then may we write: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

O, may the Lord give unto the aged, afflicted and bereft sister, grace sufficient for her day and trial, and implant within her heart the sweet spirit of submission and reconciliation to every dispensation of His will. May his children follow the worthy example of their loving father, remembering that the Lord doeth all things well. Peace be upon them all.

On the 14th of May his remains were conveyed to Rocky Creek Church, where his membership was, and the writer endeavored to comfort all the children of God that mourned, from these words: "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life."—John iii. 36. Also: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."—John xi. 26. After which he was calmly conveyed to the tomb, his widow, eight of his children, a goodly number of his brethren and sisters, and many friends, being present to witness the solemn scene.

With silent and submissive awe,  
Adored a chastening God—  
Revered the terrors of his law,  
And humbly kissed the rod.

*Adairsville, Ga.*

F. M. CASEY.

## MRS. MARGARET T. A. GILMORE.

Mrs. MARGARET TINSY ANN GILMORE was born in Twiggs county, Ga., in 1796, and died in Union Parish, La., August 18th, 1883; in the 87th year of her age. She had been a consistent and orderly member of the Primitive Baptist Church for sixty-seven years, having united with them when there was but one kind of Baptists, and ever remained a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and a strong opposer of all innovation upon Christ's doctrines and mode of worship. The writer can bear record that for a number of years, while he served the church of her membership, her seat was never vacant except from providential hinderance—an exemplary rebuke to many mere professors now, who rarely attend often enough to know the members. She leaves many relatives and friends in Pike and Barbour counties, and other portions of Alabama and Georgia, who will remember her.

*Oakland, Union Parish, La., Sept. 1, 1883.*

HENRY ARCHER.

The *Primitive Pathway* will please copy.

## MRS. C. HAMILTON.

Died, on the morning of the 11th of April, at the residence of her grandson, D. U. Bowers, Jr., Mrs. CHERRY HAMILTON; aged 80 years. She was the widow of the late Thomas Hamilton, Sr., and had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than fifty years, and a widow forty years. Just one week before her death she was taken with congestion of the lungs, which rapidly ran into pneumonia, which soon took her from our midst to that land of rest—the saints' delight—for she had ever lived in the hope that when God called her hence, that her soul would take its everlasting flight to a far better world than this. Never murmuring at any affliction God saw fit to send upon her. For her to die, was her eternal gain. She leaves two children to mourn her departure, and several other relatives and friends. Farewell, dear departed one! May our end be as peaceful as thine!

*Hampton Court House, S. C., Sept., 1883.*

A GRANDSON.

## W. H. LANGFORD—ELISABETH LANGFORD.

*Dear Brother:*—Please publish the death of W. H. LANGFORD, and also his wife, ELISABETH LANGFORD. She was the daughter of Alexander Fitzpatrick. They were both born and raised in Morgan county, Ga. Bro. Langford was born April 14th, 1808, and departed this life January 8th, 1866. His dear wife was born January 23, 1814, and departed this life August 11th, 1878. They were married September 16th, 1829, and joined the Baptist Church of Christ, at Buck Head, in 1830. They were soldiers when that heart-rending division took place with the Baptists for the sake of truth, and stood the storm of persecution, the good Lord not suffering them to be led off by those who made a fair show in the flesh. They remained with that afflicted and poor people, who excluded boasting, giving God all the glory.

Bro. Langford moved with his family from Morgan county, in 1832, to Crawford and Marion counties. At the County Line Church, Marion, he was set apart to the office of deacon, in 1865, and filled the office to the satisfac-

tion of the church, and to the glory of God, we hope. He left Georgia for the State of Louisiana on the 8th of January, 1865. He was a faithful soldier of Christ, and laid his armor by, aged 57 years, 3 months and 11 days.

Notwithstanding Bro. Langford was taken from his family in a strange land, his faithful companion was not forgetful of the obligations resting on her. The Lord blessed her and her little children with a good living. It can truly be said that she fought a good fight and has finished her course. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth, even forever.

*Richland, Columbia County, Ark.*

ELIJAH DEAN.

MRS. ELLA WILLIAMS.

“O death! where is thy sting?  
And boasting grave! where is thy victory?”

In the triumphant death of Mrs. ELLA WILLIAMS, the sentiment of this exclamation has been verified and illustrated. One of the brightest jewels in human society has just been plucked, but to be transplanted in the celestial diadem of glory. I am conscious of my inability to depict in their true light the thrilling scenes which clustered around the death-bed of this noble young woman, on the 26th and 27th days of September, 1883.

Ella Williams was the youngest daughter of James and Elizabeth Sharmon, and consort of Eugene Williams, to whom she was married about ten months ago, and with whom she lived happily till her death. She was on a sojourn with her mother, who resided near Hickory Flat, Ala., where in child-bed her spirit took its flight, the 27th inst., 12 o'clock at night, after the unremitting but unavailing efforts of her attending physicians. To-day (the 28th inst.) behold her enrobed for the grave, and even bearing upon her placid cheeks the radiant smiles of innocence, as she lies with her little babe embraced in the icy grasp of death! Many days preceding her demise she seemed to entertain an intensitive premonition that she could never survive the dreadful ordeal which awaited her; and, true to her apprehension, she was relieved only by the dark angel of death. And as the tide of life was ebbing out, her sweet voice was heard humming some little favorite sonnet. A while before she became unconscious, she made ready for the direful exit by bidding adieu to that “sweet mother,” kind relatives, friends, and her devoted young husband, and instructed that her body be buried beside her “dear papa,” who died many years ago, but with whom in her sickness she appeared to enjoy a spiritual inter-communion even before the flickering flame of mortality had expired. This dear young mother now sleeps, with her little innocent, in the Mount Pisgah cemetery, while her happy spirit has soared to the bosom of her Saviour, there to chant unceasing pæans around the radiant throne of God so long as the cycles of eternity shall roll round.

Far from a world of sin and strife,  
She now enjoys a heavenly life—  
And joins to praise, and shout, and sing,

And make the heavenly arches ring.  
Could we but hear her angelic tongue  
So sweetly sing the heavenly song—  
Could we but see her smiling face,  
Delighted with the happy place—  
We could not wish her back again,  
But say, Sweet Ella! with God remain—  
We'll try to gain that peaceful shore,  
Where those who meet shall part no more.

And in conclusion, I would entreat the dear old mother in Israel to weep no more for thy baby girl, and may God of his infinite love grant you sustaining grace in this sore bereavement. And, O Eugene! can I say nothing to comfort you? Why, it is God who gave you Ella—the idol of your heart—and it is God who has taken her to himself. May this dispensation of His providence save you; and since your dear little “Precious” can never return to you, may He prepare you to go to her.

W. P. FINLEY.

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END OF VOLUME V.

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"Two bottles cured my friend who was almost gone with Consumption." F. T. ABEL.

"Stopped my Hemorrhages and cured me." HENRY WOOTEN.

"It is the best medicine in the market." L. W. HUNT.

"Cured my wife of Bronchitis when every-thing else failed." N. C. MUNROE.

"It is helping me very much." JAS. G. GARDNER.

"Cured my shortness of breath." C. C. BALKCOM.

"Has greatly benefited my son." Mrs. E. J. WILLIAMS.

**LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR,**  
Macon, Atlanta and Albany, Ga.

Beware of Imitations.

We are honest in our opinion of this Medicine, and believe that all who testify as to its virtues believe and will stand by what they say.

We have placed many articles of merit upon the market, but none with such merit as

Brewer's  
Lung  
Restorer.

There is not one case in a thousand that it fails to benefit, and if the suffering public knew one-half as much about the Medicine as we do, they would not hesitate to give it a thorough trial.

Some may think it is too highly endorsed by us, but we are willing, and do stake our reputation (which is good) on it being the best THROAT AND LUNG MEDICINE in the market.

[Signed]  
LAMAR, RANKIN & LAMAR









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