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EMBRACING A PERIOD OF FORTY-NINE YEARS

1832-1881

IN WHICH IS REFLECTED THE
DOCTRINE AND ORDER OF THE
OLD SCHOOL, OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

WRITTEN BY
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INTRODUCTORY.

With the first article of this volume Elder Beebe had been editor of the “Signs of the Times” for over 35 years. His beliefs and doctrine were as well known as any Baptist’s views in the nation. The “Signs” had found its way to the distant reaches of the expanding states and territories. When the War Between the States drew to a close, many of his old subscribers to the South renewed their association with the paper and an ever increasing number of readers sought comfort and fellowship through the medium of the “Signs”.

Volume Seven contains numerous responses to letters from readers seeking comfort and instruction. These are among the richest articles from a spiritual point of view. Beebe never relaxed his firm stand on the new birth, eternal union, absolute predestination and kindred themes, but it seemed that as the years drew on he sought, more and more, to speak comfortably to Jerusalem and to tell her that her warfare had been accomplished. To this end we feel he was successful beyond measure.

There are no new themes in Volume Seven. Beebe was the same defender of the truth in 1867 as he was in 1832. While some few detractors attempted to brand him as a vacillator, no charge came near being proved.

With a keen desire to provide the family of God with the same sweet messages the church feasted on in years past, we submit this volume.

The Publishes

ROMANS 16:17, 18; II THESSALONIANS 3:6.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17-18).”

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and flat after the tradition which he received of us (II Thessalonians 3:6).”

If in the apostles’ day the members of the primitive churches had need of solemn admonitions contained in the foregoing words, how great must be the necessity of carefully attending to them now that those days and times are upon us of which the apostles have forewarned us, in which “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (I Timothy 4:1).”

The rebukes of the Almighty are shaking the world and causing the thrones of earth to totter to their fall, making the deep to boil like a pot, and the sea like a pot of ointment; and while the organized powers of antichrist are filled with consternation and amazement, and “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time (Revelation 12:12).”

Even in this time of severe rebuke and blasphemy, the church of the living God, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptists, continues steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship; and so shall she forever continue to stand; for “Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken (Isaiah 33:20).” Like a mighty rock in the midst of the ocean, assailed on every side by angry waves and foaming billows which, unable to move her, only recoil upon themselves, foaming out their own shame. This day of trial is designed, however, to make the sinners in Zion afraid; and fearfulness to surprise the hypocrites who have, like the birds of the air, been lodging in her branches. The fiery trials which have no power to consume or harm the legitimate members of the Redeemer’s kingdom shall purge her of those who are, and have been as *spots* in her feasts of charity, feasting themselves without fear; whose god is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.

Although the church herself is immovably and immutably established in the apostles’ doctrine, and firmly built upon their foundation, she has always been infested with carnal professors and graceless hypocrites which are sure to show themselves in the times of trial and severe persecution. Of all this the apostles have spoken distinctly, and to their admonitions we do well that we take heed.

In the two passages at the head of this article the apostle uses in the one, entreaty, in the other, authority. Let us examine them. This great apostle to the Gentiles, endued with power from on high, speaking by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, yet in the tender, affectionate and melting manner which cannot fail to draw a response from every heart in which God has written his law said, “I beseech you, brethren.” What solicitude for their welfare, what paternal tenderness, and what undisguised anxiety is expressed in this appeal. Vested as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, he had authority to command; but in this case he entreats them as brethren, to mark certain characters which were among them, whose movements were highly prejudicial to the order, peace and harmony of the church of God. While all the admonitions of this apostle had been against evil surmisings. or distrust of brethren, there were then in the churches (as there should afterwards be) those in whom

undue confidence should not be reposed. Those who were to be marked and avoided are particularly described, as “them which cause divisions among you.” That is, among brethren. The truth is calculated to unite, consolidate and bind together the brotherhood; but those who cause divisions and offenses among the children of God cannot be worthy of the confidence of the saints.

Striking examples of those who cause divisions and offenses among the children of God were found troubling and bewitching the churches of Galatia and Antioch. The introduction of legal rights and forms, which were abolished, produced division, alienation and strife; and such as were drawn from a correct course were made to offend, by transgressing the laws of Christ and the rules of the church of God. And all such divisions and offenses were contrary to the doctrine which these brethren of Paul had learned by the teaching of the word and Spirit, and under the ministry of the apostles. These disorganizers and troublesome characters are to be *marked*. But how? We do not understand the apostle to urge the brethren to mutilate their bodies, or asperse their characters, or inflict any injury upon them; but to observe the *marks* which such characters always have upon them; as they might mark a wolf by his propensity to devour the flock, or a fox by his sly and crafty tricks and propensity to spoil the vine of her tender grapes. The marks with which the apostle himself has branded them are a pattern for us. The marks are these: they cause divisions contrary to the instructions which the saints have learned of the apostle; causing some at least to disregard the authority of the apostles, and thereby causing offenses to be committed by those who should strictly adhere to the teachings which they have received from the word and Spirit of the Lord. To mark them then is to closely and carefully observe their general characteristics, and the object of marking them is that we may avoid them, and warn others to beware of and avoid them.

But in his admonition to the Thessalonians, he speaks with the authority of his apostolic power. “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.” This injunction, being imperative and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, demands profound respect and implicit obedience; it cannot be ignored or neglected without disobedience to Christ: for the command is issued to his saints in his name, and consequently by his authority. Not only is it given in the name of Jesus, but in his name as our Lord. To disobey then is to deny him as our Lord, and to dispute his authority over us. We cannot maintain our allegiance to him as our Lord and disregard what he has commanded us by his authorized apostles, for they are endued with authority from heaven to proclaim his laws in the churches. And what they bind on earth is bound in heaven. In binding this command, all the apostles are represented. “Now we command you, brethren.” They are all inspired by the same Spirit, and endowed with the same authority, and all agree in teaching us to observe all things, namely, whatsoever our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded them. See their commission in Matthew 28:20. All the injunctions, instructions or traditions of the apostles contained in the New Testament are of the same binding authority on all the saints, and all the saints are not only commanded in the name and by the authority of their Lord to observe and strictly obey them, but they are also by the same supreme authority commanded to mark, avoid and withdraw themselves from all such as do not love, honor and obey the same rules. The *traditions* of the apostles mean the teachings and instructions which they have received from the Lord Jesus and in his name enjoined upon the saints as the *rule* by which they are to be governed in all things. All those who profess to be disciples of Christ, or Christians, and fail to conform in doctrine or practice to their unerring rule are, by the apostles, denounced as *unruly*, and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake. (See Titus 1:10,11.) “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16).” Christians are

subject to infirmities and weaknesses which this divine rule requires the saints to bear with: a brother is not to be made an offender for a word inconsiderately spoken, nor are the lame, so long as their lameness may be cured, to be turned out of the way; let them rather be healed. “Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations (Romans 14:1).” The strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” All this forbearance, patience, sympathy and tenderness is enjoined upon the saints by the law of Christ, which is our only authorized *rule*. But these lenient instructions are not to be so construed as to apply then to those whom we are commanded in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to mark, avoid and withdraw from. A child may be exceedingly weak in the faith; a mere babe, and from very weakness, unable to comprehend some of the cardinal principles of our faith, or to appreciate the full bearing of all the laws of the kingdom; but still so far as such weaklings are taught they show a love for truth, and desire to walk in all the order of the house of God; these are weak enough to doubt, but not strong enough to dispute. Those who not only doubt or disbelieve the truth, but also dispute it as far as it is presented, “Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (II Timothy 3:4-7).” These must not be received, for they are not those who are weak in the faith; but are given to doubtful disputations. And, as our text informs us, “For they that are such [whatever their pretensions, or even forms of godliness may be] serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

Those honest, well-meaning Christians who are sufficiently simple to be charmed by their *good words*, and captivated by their fair *speeches*, are allured from the footsteps of the flock, and from the laws and ordinances of the church of God, and drawn to follow her whose “house is the way to hell (Proverbs 7:27).”

A steadfast continuance in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship like that of the primitive Baptists (Acts 2:42) will subject the saints to reproach and bring down on them the virulent opposition and envenomed malediction of those who constantly lie in wait to deceive them. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Timothy 3:12).” The rules laid down by the inspired apostles for the government of the church and people of God are subject to no amendments or modifications, suspensions or changes of any kind, for any purpose, or at any period while time shall endure. Times and circumstances with us may change in regard to the things of nature; but the ordinances of heaven are unalterable. The Scriptures by which we all must be judged will recognize none as loyal subjects of the King of Zion who do not adhere to the instructions of the holy apostles, just as they were delivered by them to the saints, and just as we find them recorded in the New Testament. The church of Christ must throughout all ages be distinguished and identified by her strict conformity to the laws; all the laws of the kingdom as laid down by the apostles. Then, and only then, are we Christ’s disciples if we do whatsoever he has commanded us.

So far from intimating to us that a time might come when the saints should have less occasion to conform strictly to all their instructions, they faithfully advised us of the terrible apostasies of these last days, in which some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. “Therefore,” says the apostle, “we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at *any time* we should let them slip.” Hence we infer that there is no time, either ancient or modern, in which the saints should let them slip. In the apostles’ day it would not do, and

certainly now in these last days, in which evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, how shall we escape their pollutions if we neglect this great salvation?

We are the most earnest in the reiteration of these apostolic admonitions, because we see these evil days are even now upon us, and some have been turned away from the truth and are turned unto fables. Simple souls have been strangely beguiled, and unstable ones have departed from the faith which they once professed. Even of our own selves have some risen up and spoken perverse things, and have drawn away disciples after them. Having ourself been in the field over fifty years, we have never witnessed a time in which so many disorganizers were engaged in perverting the right way of the Lord, or so zealously working. Some who had formerly been held in our fellowship, confidence and affections, as sound and useful ministers and brethren, are now literally creeping into houses and leading captive silly women and silly men also, and doing all in their power to disorganize and break up the churches, disregarding the laws of Christ, and defying his authority which he has vested in his church. Many dear brethren with whom we have stood side by side through many a storm of persecution for the truth's sake, have received their discharge from the warfare; but very few of our early contemporaries yet remain in the field, and we feel assured that soon the cold grave with her bars shall close upon our mortal body, and our tongue shall be silent in death; and our pen will cease to write and our type to print the solemn convictions of our heart; but even then this admonition to our kindred in Christ shall survive us, and it is our prayer that God may incline the hearts of his dear children to read, reflect and heed these solemn admonitions, so far as they are in harmony with his word and Spirit. May God give them light to discern, and firmness to *mark, avoid, and withdraw* from all such as cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned from the apostles of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the "Blessed and only Potentate" to rule and govern his people, and who is worthy of all reverence, obedience, homage and immortal honor, world without end. Amen.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1867.

DEATH OF MISS HATTIE M. BEEBE.

On Sunday, the 14th of April, our house was the scene of the most terrible calamity that has ever befallen our family. Miss Hattie M. Beebe, eldest daughter of G. J. Beebe, and grand-daughter of the Editor of this paper, came to her death by a pistol shot by her own hands, at about five o'clock in the afternoon. She was aged 22 years and 4 months.

The circumstances relating to and resulting in this appalling calamity, so far as known to us, are briefly these: she had been laboring under a mental malady, producing frequent and excessive alternations of extreme hilarity and gloomy depression of mind, more or less marked at times for several years past,

with intervals of apparent composure, at which no one unacquainted with her would suspect her of insanity.

In childhood she was uncommonly intelligent and promising, and her talents were cultivated by the most careful parental attention, at the best educational institutions in the country. Her progress and improvement was all that could be desired. After several years attendance at the excellent school of Mrs. Houston, in this village, and at our village Academy, she was sent to the celebrated institutions at Pittsfield, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. No pains nor expense were spared by her father, in furnishing the means for a thorough education.

At the outbreak of war in 1861, she was brought home from Washington in the midst of a session of her school, but one day before the interruption of traveling communication by a riot at Baltimore. While at the latter place, her mental malady began to assume an unmistakable form, so much so as to elicit remark. During the year following, while at home, its development continued until in the spring of 1862, by advice of eminent physicians, she was taken to the Bloomingdale Asylum for treatment. While there, which was about six months, her improvement was not such as had been hoped for. At her own wish, her father removed her from Bloomingdale, N.Y., to the Asylum at Brattleboro, Vt., where she remained nearly a year, when it was thought she had so much improved that she could be safely discharged. She was then taken home in the fall of 1863, where she remained until the following Christmas, when she was taken to visit her aunt at Cannel, N.Y, and subsequently arrangements were made for her to remain and board there. She continued there until the following September, when she went to visit another relative at Norwick, Conn., and was boarded there by her father until she left there of her own accord, with a view of endeavoring to support herself. Having engaged with some young ladies of her acquaintance in some employment in Newark, N.J. a few weeks, her mind again yielding to mental depression, she left Newark and came to our house, where she received a cordial welcome to make her home as long as she pleased. During that time she has been alternately subject to extravagant hilarity and most gloomy depression of mind, with lucid intervals of cheerfulness and seeming sanity. Her spells of depression sometimes came on suddenly, and at other times more gradually; but in all of them she invariably sought seclusion, especially when there was any company visiting the house. Even her most cherished friends were avoided by her at such times, and it annoyed her to be urged to greater cheerfulness or sociability. Her temperament was naturally gentle and agreeable, and when relieved from her unbalanced state of mind, she seemed remarkably intelligent, chaste, and refined in her manners and deportment. Outbreaks of severe ravings were not frequent, but sometimes clearly demonstrative of serious alienation of reason. Such marked developments were carefully concealed as far as possible from the observation of all except those of our household, in the hope she might ultimately overcome them, and to prevent any from alluding to them in her calmer moments, which to one of her sensitiveness was very annoying.

At about the first of March last, she made a visit to our daughter, Mrs. F. C. Tuthill, in New York City, for whom she entertained a great partiality, and as Mrs. Beebe was going to visit our son, Elder William L. Beebe, in Georgia for a few weeks, arrangements were made for her to remain with her aunt during the absence of her grand-mother. During her stay in the city she continued as usual, and on Mrs. Beebe's return from Georgia, she called for her, and brought her home with her. They both arrived here on Friday evening, April 12. She was on her arrival apparently somewhat depressed in her mind. On Saturday, the 13th, her appearance was very sad, yet very gentle and affectionate. We observed an unusual melancholy expression in her countenance as she came to her meals, and we spoke of it to the family after she had retired to her room; but we observed no other mark of unusual agitation than that sad expression; her eyes looked as though she had been weeping. We all tried to cheer her, but as she

often told us, she could not control or prevent those *blues*, as she called them. On Sunday morning, and at dinner at noon, which was the last time we saw her alive, she seemed much improved in her appearance, inspiring the hope that her depression was abating. She had frequently said to her aunt that she did not fear death as she had formerly. And on the fly-leaf of her Bible, which she had with her on the fatal day, was found written in her handwriting, "God forgive me; I am sorely tempted." While ourself and some of the family were at meeting in the Hall, our daughter, Mrs. Carmichael, who had remained at home, went into the room where Hattie was sitting on a chair and reclining on the bed, and urged her to come into the dining room and sit with her by the fire, as she was alone. But she replied, "O, I can't, I can't." This was at about 4 o'clock p.m. This is the last time she was seen alive by any one. A few minutes later, as nearly as we can judge, our grand-son, Otis Carmichael, was in the wood house and heard something fall, and at the same time an exclamation, but not loud or startling, "Oh!" Thinking that the noise proceeded from his mother's room, he ran up stairs to see if she was hurt; saw nothing wrong there, and listened a moment, and heard nothing more; concluded no one was hurt, and thought no more of the noise until the dreadful reality was realized.

Our meeting at the Hall was dismissed at 5 p.m., and some company came with us into the house, and we were engaged in conversation until nearly seven o'clock, when the company retired and the family went down into the dining room to tea, which was waiting for us. As we took our seats at the table, a messenger was sent by Mrs. Beebe to call Hattie to her tea. The girl returned, and said Hattie was not there. She was immediately sent again, as we were sure she must be there. She then renewed her pursuit, and in a few moments reported that Hattie was on the floor in Benton L. Beebe's room, between the bed and the partition, and would not answer her. This report alarmed us all, and we left the table. Mrs. Carmichael being in advance as we approached, we heard her exclaim, "O God! she is dead." Immediately we were on the spot, and found it evidently true. Her body filled the whole space between the bed and the partition and we tried to draw her body out to examine whether there were any signs of life, but we failed. Dr. John Taylor was called in, and was immediately on the spot, and with his assistance we removed her into an adjoining room. As we were doing this, Mrs. Carmichael found the pistol on the side of the bed. We then examined, but could find no mark of violence, until her dress was opened, when the wound was discovered immediately over her heart, where the ball had entered. No noise like the report of a pistol had been heard, the pistol found by her was not more than four inches long, a mere toy, and it is presumed she deadened its sound by pressing its muzzle against her breast. She undoubtedly died instantly as the ball must have entered her heart. She had probably been dead about two hours when discovered. The overwhelming horror of the scene when the discovery was made we cannot describe, nor will we attempt it. The whole community was startled, and the unrestrained sympathy of the whole village was most kindly expressed without distinction of party or sects. The coroner's inquest was held on Monday, and the verdict was given, in substantially these words: Hattie M. Beebe came to her death by a pistol shot by her own hand while laboring under great depression of mind.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, and although the day was very rainy, the assembly was very large, and as probably not a fourth part of them could be seated in our Hall, the trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church of this village kindly tendered the use of their house which was greatly accepted, where Elder William L. Benedict of Warwick preached to us a comforting discourse from the words, "Be still and know that I am God," after which the body was conveyed to the cemetery at New Vernon, and laid in a grave by the side of her deceased mother.

At some subsequent period, if spared, when our own mind shall more fully recover from the shock which has fallen so heavily upon us, we propose to give our views on the subject, of what this

inscrutable providence suggests to our mind. We desire the prayers of our kindred in Christ that God may sanctify this severe stroke to the stricken and afflicted parent, grand-parents and their families, sustain us in our deep affliction, and teach us by his Spirit to be still and know that *he* is God.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1867.

REWARDS AND DEATH.

Elder Beebe: Will you or some of your able correspondents give through the “Signs of the Times” a Bible answer to the following question, Do the dead receive their reward at death, or at the resurrection? And oblige

A Friend to truth.

REPLY: We would not anticipate what any of our correspondents may have to say in reply to “A friend to truth,” for we are by no means sure that we understand the question. Death may be properly regarded as a *reward*; for the wages of sin is death. In this application of the term, the reward, so far as the dissolution of our mortal bodies is concerned, is received at death. But if your friend alludes to the joys of heaven, and the pains of hell, which are most commonly denominated by the Arminians, *rewards and punishments*, we believe those who die enter immediately into that state of happiness or woe to which they are destined. But we do not regard the resurrection or everlasting happiness of the saints as a *reward* for anything they have ever done to merit the favor of God. It is true that God told Abraham that He was his exceeding great reward; but the term thus used cannot mean a reward of merit, but rather an inheritance by vital union with Christ. And this was not said of something in anticipation, at death, or at the resurrection, for He said to him, “*I am,*” not, I will be. This is a gracious provision of the new covenant which God has made with the seed of Abraham, “I will be their God, and they shall be my people, and I will be merciful [not to their righteousness, for if they were righteous they would not need mercy, but] to their unrighteousness; and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

This new covenant state is not reckoned of debt, but of grace, and all the saints enter into it as soon as they are brought into manifestation by the new birth, as children of Abraham. They have not to wait for it until the death or resurrection of their mortal bodies. The very moment that a sinner is quickened by the Spirit, he is a recipient of Eternal Life, and shall never perish nor be plucked out of the hand of Christ (John 10:28). His body must go down to the grave, according to the great decree, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” But that eternal life, which is the gift, not reward of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, is immortal; it cannot die with the body, nor go down with it into the grave, for it is hid with Christ in God. The earthly bodies of the saints in which this immortal life is implanted, are to be put off. This mortal is to put on immortality, and death to the saints is to be swallowed up of life. This earthly house shall be dissolved and fall, and the saints shall be clothed with their house which is from heaven, which house is not made with hands, but is eternal in the heavens.

When men die they pass into a state of existence where time is unknown. Our association with time and things of time in this earthly state of our existence disqualifies us for a just conception of an eternal

state, or of eternal things. How hard for us now to comprehend that time is a creature brought into existence with all other created things, to continue for a limited duration and then cease to be. Beyond its limitation, where time is not, there is no difference between the twinkling of an eye and all the years appointed for the duration of nature. As soon as we leave this world, we enter that world to which we are hastening; as soon as we leave these shores of time we launch into that boundless eternity which we are now so incompetent to comprehend. But however inconceivable the difference to our minds, we may rest assured that the very moment we pass from hence we enter upon our final destiny, unmeasured by days, months or years; fixed in an eternal state.

The joys of the saints, of which we have but an earnest here, will be complete as soon as we leave this world; and the perdition of the ungodly will be equally consummate and instantaneous. Such are our views, and only as our views have we expressed them; believing they are sustained by the Scriptures; if not so sustained they should be rejected as worthless; but if taught by the Word and Spirit, nothing can overthrow them.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1867.

PSALM 46:10.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

In listening to the excellent discourse of brother William L. Benedict, preached at the funeral of our lamented granddaughter, on the sixteenth ultimo, from the words at the head of this article, the subject was opened with more sublime beauty and awful grandeur than we had ever before discovered in it, although we had on several occasions used the same words as a text; and sometimes with considerable liberty. But when our esteemed brother was enabled to apply its salutary instruction, admonition and consolation more directly to the grief-stricken circle of mourners, in which we were included, there seemed to be a power in the text as issuing from the mouth of God himself; perfectly irresistible, and full of divine majesty.

It is not our intention to repeat the discourse, for we feel incompetent to do so; but simply to record some of the leading presentations to our mind, at the time, and subsequently. Truly, to know God is eternal life; as our Savior has said, “And this is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” The admonition is therefore clearly addressed to such only as have received the gift of God, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The apostle John gives us an infallible criterion, or test, by which every saint may discriminate between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error. “He that knoweth God, heareth us;” that is, all who know God recognize the high authority of the apostles who are divinely inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in judgment, upon the twelve thrones of the house of Israel. “He that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” Whatever a man’s profession or his works may be, we have no lawful right to recognize him as a child of God, or to fellowship him as such, if he is not governed and controlled by the authoritative mandates and decisions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A saving knowledge of the true God cannot be attained by any study or application of the natural mind to the instruction of men. No man can teach his brother, his neighbor or his child, saying, “Know the Lord,” 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 (Matthew 11:27).”

When the apostle Peter, in behalf of the disciples, declared his and their knowledge of the Father and the Son, Jesus answered and said unto him, “Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 16:17).” “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 4:6).” Christ is Himself the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of his person (Hebrews 1:3). “Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature (Colossians 1:15).”

The words of this text imply that a knowledge of God will silence our murmurings, and cause us, like the Psalmist, to say, “I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it (Psalm 39:9).” Or, like Eli, “It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good (I Samuel 3:18).”

All who by experience and revelation know him who is “The true God, and eternal life (I John 5:20)” know he is too wise to err, and too holy and righteous to be unjust; and having this knowledge they can confide in him, and passively accept whatever of good or evil his hand deals out to them (Job 2:10).

Let us consider the awful import of the words “I am God.” A Spirit, infinite and eternal, self existent, independent, the Creator and upholder of all things. He is Author and professor of all conceivable and inconceivable perfections. High on his imperial throne; the “High and lofty One inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.” He has created all things for himself, and for whose pleasure alone all things are, and were, created. He doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. The septre of whose authority he sways over all beings, all worlds, and all events, with irresistible power, and unerring wisdom and righteousness. His absolute providence and decrees embrace the very hairs of our heads, unalterably fixes the number of them, and makes it perfectly impossible that one of them can fall from our head without an order from his throne.

“Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown, Hang on his firm decree.

Nothing exists independently of him, and all things that do exist in heaven, earth or hell, he has caused to exist for his pleasure, and all by his power shall subserve the great purpose for which he has brought them into being. His hand garnished the skies, and laid the foundation of the universe. The sun, moon and stars are the works of his fingers. The earth and seas are his, and he made them.

“God is a King of power unknown,
Firm are the orders of his throne;
If he resolves, who dare oppose,
Or ask him why, or what he does?

He wounds the heart, and he makes whole;
He calms the tempest of the soul;
When he shuts up in long despair,
Who can remove the heavy bar?

He frowns, and darkness veils the moon,
The fainting sun grows dim at noon;
The pillars of heaven’s starry roof,
Tremble and start at his reproof.

He gave the vaulted heaven its form,
The crooked serpent and the worm;
He breaks the billows with his breath,
And smites the son of pride to death.

These are a portion of his ways,
But who shall dare describe his face?
Who can endure his light? or stand
To hear the thunders of his hand?"

"By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand (Job 26: 13,14)."

To know then that God is all this, and infinitely more; that inspired prophets and holy apostles have only been permitted to tell us *parts of his ways*, while the thunder of his power is yet unexplained to mortals, is calculated to seal up our lips in silence, and fill our hearts with the most profound reverence in his awful presence.

"Earth from afar has heard his fame,
And worms have learnt to lisp his name;
But, O! the glories of his mind,
Leave all our soaring thoughts behind."

To know that the Lord is God is to know, not only in a general, but also in a particular sense, that he is the supreme Ruler of the universe, that in all minute things, as well as in things of greater magnitude, he executes his sovereign will and pleasure, leaving nothing to chance, or uncertainty. The sparrow cleaves the air in the precise track marked by the counsel of God with no less certainty than the blazing sun fills his fixed orbit in the heavens. Poor blind mortals gaze, wonder and are confounded in the contemplation; but God declares the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

But we propose to contemplate this profound subject in the connection in which the inspired psalmist has presented it in the psalm in which the text occurs.

"God is our refuge and strength." Can any refuge be so secure, so safe, so perfectly reliable? God who is everywhere present, must surely be a very present help in all our troubles. Pursued by sin, by Satan, by doubts and fears, we find no efficient refuge short of God. He is our Rock, and his wings are spread for our defense, and however weak and trembling in ourselves, God is our Strength. He is the Strength of our life, the Strength of Israel, and we are assured that "the Strength of Israel will not lie." He will not betray our confidence in him, for, "They that trust in him shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever (Psalm 125:1)." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1)." And the psalmist says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations....even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God (Psalm 90:1,2)." This assurance of safety and protection is enough to banish our fear. Of what can we be afraid, if he who holds a perfect control of all powers, and influences, is our Refuge? A refugee cannot be unsafe if his refuge be invulnerable; for a refuge must first be stormed and captured before the refugee can be imperiled. And this hope have we, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. Sin, death and hell, the world, flesh and devil, doubts, fears and temptations, losses, crosses and bereavements, all may assail the child of God; and

yet he can be still, rest confidently, for he knows that his Rock and Refuge is God. “Therefore” says the psalmist, “will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” What odds, where the earth shall rest, or whether it is dissolved and cease to be? God, not earth, is our refuge and strength, and God cannot be moved nor overcome; and as he is not moved, so neither can his holy city, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High be moved by any or all of the commotions, or convulsions of the earth: for, “God is in the midst of her; *she shall not be moved*; God shall help her, and that right early.” The wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, or be still; because the earth does not know that he is God. Yet, though the waters of the sea roar and be troubled, and the mountains of the earth be shaken with the swellings thereof, the river which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb, whose waters of life are clear as crystal, are tranquil in their channel; for, “There the glorious Lord shall be unto us the place of broad rivers and streams; subject to no such turbulence, its peaceful, placid streams make glad the city of God. The Lord their Shepherd leads them beside the *still waters*. “The heathen [those who do not know that the Lord is God, and therefore cannot rest] raged; the kingdoms were moved.” But, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers [of the earth] take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure (Psalm 2:1-5).” Yet, notwithstanding all their rage, their counsel, their resolutions, their kingly power, and lordly authority, and their united assault upon the bands and cords, by which the church of the living God is bound together and secured in his impregnable fortress, the government of Christ shall tower above their rage and violence; for, “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” The kings of the earth *set themselves*; but the government of God, in Christ his Anointed, *God himself has set*. And Christ shall rule them with a rod of iron, and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel; so that they can never be reconstructed or put together again. The heathen raged, the kingdoms (or governments) of earth which set themselves against the Lord, and against his anointed, were moved. He who uproots the mountains and casts them into the midst of the sea, removes the established nations and governments of the kings and judges of the earth; “the kingdoms were moved.” How were they moved? We are told. “He uttered his voice, the earth melted.” By the utterance of his voice, the world with all its kingdoms, nations, generations and powers were brought into being, and at the utterance of his voice they melt and pass away. “Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” “The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our Refuge.” With whom? With those who know that he is God, and who dwell in him: for he will never leave nor forsake them. God is in the midst of her; and she is safe. Do we ask for evidence that God, who is our refuge, is with us, and in our midst, and that he will help us right early? If so, “Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth.” Look at a deluged world in the days of Noah. Where now is Sodom and Gomorrah? What became of the Egyptian army that pursued Israel? Where are the Canaanites? Where is Moab, Babylon, – or any of the nations that opposed the armies of the living God? Can we review the desolations which our God has made in the earth, and doubt that he will, in due time, make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth? His word has gone forth in righteousness, and shall not be recalled; unto him every knee shall bow, and to him every tongue shall swear. All this will be accomplished without our aid; for what can we do to strengthen his hand, or subdue his foes? Yet, “The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces, out of heaven will he thunder upon them.” What had Israel to do when confronted by the Red Sea, hemmed in by insurmountable mountains on the right and left, and closely pursued by a mighty army in the rear? “Stand still” was the command, “and see

the salvation of God.” And even so comes the command of God to his people. “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”

This whole psalm is replete with striking illustration of the power, wisdom and providence of God; giving testimony of what he is, and what he does in ordering and executing his government over all beings and all events. First his recognition of the exposure of his people to the violence of their adversaries, and the perfect security he has provided for them in himself as their refuge, and their strength. The faith and confidence he inspires them with, in him, to shield them from fear or dismay when his judgments walk the earth, remove the mountains, disturb the seas, and dissolve the world. Then the opening to his people the fountain of joy and salvation, whose ever flowing supplies make glad the city of God, the holy place of his tabernacles. The assurance that God is never absent from Zion; God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; although the earth be removed and the mountains deposited in the midst of the sea. Her own inability to protect, or to avenge herself shall not imperil her safety at any time, for God will help her, and that right early. In evidence of his power and faithfulness, “Behold what desolations he has made in the earth, and with what ease he can break the bow that is bent, or the spear that is aimed for her annoyance, and what peace he can command for her to the earth’s most distant bounds.”

Relying on God to do all this for her, she has no occasion to bestir herself, to bend a bow, or raise a spear in self defense; but, knowing that the battle is the Lord’s, leave the whole result with him, and simply be still, be calm, be confident; for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, therefore he that believeth shall not make haste.

We had designed in this article to say something in regard to the manner in which the text was applied to our own mind in relation to the melancholy death of our lamented granddaughter, at whose funeral it was used as a text. In addition to the appropriate application made by our beloved brother, a train of thoughts came forcible to our mind. In the knowledge that the Lord is God, and that we are to be still; to hush every murmuring thought, and leave all with him; we were led to contemplate his inscrutable providence in dealing with the children of men. Who hath made us to differ? Why are some more subject to diseases, physically and mentally, than others? It was not because those Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices were sinner above all the Galileans, that these things were suffered; or those eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem, that they were slain; nor was it either he that was born blind, or his parents that were sinners above others, that he was born blind, nor yet was it because the children of Rebecca had done any good or evil, that it was said of them, “the elder shall serve the younger;” as it is written, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated ” David speaks of the wicked who oppress and persecute God’s children as God’s hand and his sword. Whatever may be their malignant design; they can only go so far as wielded by the power and wisdom of God. They are used by him, as we use our hand or sword, to execute our purpose. So are all the diseases, whether of body or mind, to which men are subject as God’s servants. They are employed by him to do his bidding. “Is there evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?” “Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and not evil?” The evils are employed by him to chastise his children, or to scourge his enemies, embrace wars, pestilence and famines, together with all the evils that are brought upon us. Our troubles come not up unbidden out of the earth, nor do our afflictions come on us by chance. Some by physical disease are bowed down with pain and infirmity all their days, from the cradle to the tomb. Why is it? What is it? We call it a dispensation of divine providence, and however dark and mysterious to us, we dare not protest; for we know it is by the inscrutable judgment of God; therefore we feel admonished to “Be still and know that he is God.” When others are diseased mentally, their reason dethroned, and in their irrational moments

they do deeds of violence to themselves or to others, is it less providential? By no means. Insanity, or alienation of reason is as truly a malady, to which our nature is subject, and which comes as directly from the hand of God, as comes the cholera, the typhoid, or any other fever, or disease, and the consequences resulting are as fully appointed as all other causes and results are. We cannot perceive that any of the human family ever came to their death by any other than the means appointed. A sparrow cannot fall, nor a hair from our head, without our Heavenly Father. God careth for sparrows as he cares for worlds. Our hairs are all numbered, as are the days of our pilgrimage on earth, so that we cannot pass our bounds. Nor can we by any possible care or foresight of ours add to our stature one cubit, make a hair black or white, or lengthen or diminish from the number of days which God has allotted us upon his footstool. When men die suddenly, human theology says they go unprepared to the bar of God; but divine revelation teaches us that “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Jesus says “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out (John 6:37).” No accident, casualty or fortuitous event can interrupt the execution of the counsel of God; and he who falls in death by a thunderbolt, if an heir of salvation, will as certainly reign in glory with Christ, as though he were translated like Enoch or Elijah; and if not a subject of God’s saving grace, would be no nearer to heaven, or likely to be saved if a thousand years were added to his days.

“Plagues and death around us fly,
‘Til He bids, we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
‘Til the God of grace sees *fit*.”

God is immutable in his counsel, of one mind, and none can turn him; and it therefore becomes us to “Be still and know that he is God.”

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1867.

ELECTION.

Elder Beebe: I desire your views on the election of God’s children. Were they elected at the beginning, or not until they were convened to God? The doctrine here is that they are not elected until they are convened; but I cannot so understand it. I therefore ask for your views, or the views of some of your correspondents on the subject.

H. Phillips.
Union Co., Ohio.
April 1, 1867.

Reply: It is well for the children of God, that their election does not rest on the views which may be entertained by uninspired men. Whatever men think or preach cannot change what God has spoken by his prophets and apostles on the subject. Holy men have spoken as they were inspired by the Holy

Ghost. Unholy men have contradicted the testimony of divine inspiration, and spoken against it as they are inspired by the devil. Our Lord Jesus Christ has informed us that the Spirit of Truth, which he would send them, is a Spirit which the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; neither knoweth him (John 14:17). Also he has said that when the devil “speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44).” And to the saints God has given a rule by which they know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error. It is this – they that are of the world, speak of the world, and the world heareth them, “We” (the apostles) “are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (I John 4:6).” This rule is infallible, clear, plain and directly to the point: let us apply it. The apostle says “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13).” What he means by the beginning is explained in Ephesians 1:1,3-6: “To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

All who hear the apostles believe that God chose or elected his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and these, the apostles say, know God. All who deny this doctrine, and who believe and advocate its opposite, are not of God, but are manifestly of the world, and are led by the spirit of error, which spirit of error is the devil, for he is, as we have proved, a liar and the father of lies.

No force of truth can convince them of the error they are in, for they are under chains of darkness, and the Savior says they *cannot* receive the Spirit of Truth because they see him not, neither do they know him.

Those whom God has quickened by his Spirit, and delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the marvelous light of the Sun of Righteousness, and those only, are manifestly of the class whom God hath from the beginning chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. All others are under “strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:11,12).” “(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, [Rebecca], The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated (Romans 9:11-13).” “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (Romans 9:16).” “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour (Romans 9:18-21)?”

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1867.

I CORINTHIANS 5:4-8.

Dear Elder Beebe: If it is not taxing your time and patience too much, you will confer a favor on me by giving your views on I Corinthians 5:4-8.

Yours in Hope of eternal life,
Mary J. Dinslow.
Bowdoinham, Me.,
December 12, 1866.

Reply: The text submitted is lengthy, and presents a vast field of weighty considerations, involving the order and discipline of a gospel church.

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

In the preceding verses of this chapter, the apostle calls the attention of the church to a case of disorder, involving not only the guilty party in a wicked course of so great notoriety as to be a common report, but of a magnitude which even the Gentiles would consider degrading and insufferable; but involving, also, gross disorder in the church in neglecting the laws of Christ which he has given for the discipline of the church, by which the offender should have been put away from fellowship. In reproofing the delinquency of the church, the apostle points out the course which the order of the house of God demands, and these special instructions are to be strictly adhered to and complied with in all the churches, and throughout all time. In complying with the request of sister Dinslow, we will briefly notice the indispensable rules for the organization of the church for the transaction of church business.

First. The convocation and all her action should be in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly. The church should be convened, every member, if possible, in his place.

Thirdly. The church has no authority to transact any business relating to the order of the house of God, unless the spirit of Paul pervades the church; and,

Fourthly. The power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the absence of any of these four requisites, no church can be duly organized for administering the laws of the kingdom of Christ.

One. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, is summed up all the right or authority that any assembly or community can possibly have for assuming to be a gospel church. His name is the strong tower of his flock, and the righteous can find safety there, but nowhere else. In his name they have a vital interest. Only in his name can they approach unto God. In his name they are baptized into the one body over which he in all things presides as their head, and on which body and head alone his name is called. And it is in his name, as their *Lord*, their rightful proprietor, their blessed and only potentate, having a full and unreserved dominion over them, they are authorized to assemble and transact the business of his house. Their convocation, and all their actions should be in his name, as signifying that all is done by, and in obedience to his special and supreme commands. No other authority is sufficient. No king or

potentate of earth, no pontiff, cardinal, priest or bishop, can be admitted in his place. Nothing short of “Thus saith the Lord” will be allowed by this apostolic rule. His name alone gives validity to his laws and ordinances, rules and instructions; they are all binding on his disciples, simply because they bear his name, as being enacted by him, and in his name enjoined upon his church. This was the highest, and, indeed, the only authority ever claimed by the apostles of the Lamb. In his name they preached, baptized, wrought miracles, and set all things in order in all the churches. For his name they suffered persecutions and reproaches, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name. What authority has any church to labor to reclaim delinquents, or to exclude the incorrigible, aside from that authority which bears his name?

Two. “When ye be gathered together.” When the laws of Christ require to be executed in the church, it is required of his disciples to come together for that purpose. No member of the church, unless providentially hindered, has a right to be absent. They are forbidden to forsake the assembling of themselves. The church is required to be gathered together, in the name of Jesus Christ, their Lord, whenever the order of the house of God calls for the assembling of the saints.

Several good reasons may be urged why the church should be convened for the transaction of whatever business Christ has, by his apostles, enjoined. One reason is, because all are alike interested, and equally responsible, according to their ability, for the faithful observance of the laws of Christ, and they cannot shift off their responsibility on others. Much trouble and disorder has been painfully felt when members, instead of assembling with the church for business, have shown a readiness to do their full share in whispering or openly talking over the affairs of the church in private interviews with one or more of the members; and, in such a clandestine manner, are sometimes very free to give their judgment or decisions in regard to difficulties which concern the church or involve any of her members; and thus bias the minds of others by expressing opinions or convictions in private, which if expressed before the whole church could, if wrong, be easily corrected. The whole wisdom of the church and all her gifts, helps and governments are required, and to secure them all the church must be gathered together. No rule is given by the apostle for the church to act, in such cases as he has named, without coming together. Nor is it enough that the church be assembled, but being gathered, it is important:

Three. To have an evidence that the spirit of Paul is there. “When ye are gathered together, and my spirit.” By the spirit of Paul we understand the spirit which God gave to Paul, and to all the other apostles when they were endued with power from on high, as apostles of Christ, to sit on the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost to set all things in order, and to teach us to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them. But with all their inspiration, they were barbarians to all who were not quickened and led by the same spirit by which they were inspired. The same spirit by which they were inspired to rule in judgment is required to be in us, that we may be profited by their instructions and decisions. Jesus said to them, “When the Son of man shall sit upon his throne, then shall ye also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Our Lord now sits on his throne, and so do also all of his apostles on their thrones of judgment. But the apostles are not now present with us in body, neither is the Son of man any more in the flesh. But as Christ, by his Spirit, is with his church and dwells in every heart, so the apostles are in the spirit of their apostleship seated in judgment in every apostolic church, where Jesus is honored as King in Zion, filling the throne of his glory. Hence the apostle says, in the third verse of this chapter, “For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already.” There can no case come up before the church of God which the apostles have not officially already judged, and their decisions could be no more weighty or decisive if they were with us in body. It was not their bodily presence that

gave validity to their decisions; but it was the spirit of inspiration which they possessed; and in that spirit they are still in, and compose an important part of, the church of God, the ground and pillar of the truth. A church, therefore, where the spirit of the apostles is not, cannot be an apostolic church, and consequently has no authority to execute any of the laws of the kingdom of our Redeemer.

Four. “With the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.” By the *power*, in this, as in many other scriptures, is intended the authoritative power, which embraces all power in heaven and in earth. Having supreme and universal authority in his kingdom, no church which disputes the supreme power and unrestricted authority of our Lord Jesus Christ can be competent to transact any of the business of his kingdom. If any man have not his Spirit, he is none of his; and all who have his Spirit recognize in him all the power and glory of the Father, and by that Spirit they will humbly adopt the language taught by him to his disciples, and with them freely acknowledge to him, “For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever, and ever. Amen.”

A church thus organized is invested to act in the name, and by the authority, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and her acts being performed in his name, in his Spirit, and by his authority, are recognized by him as his acts, and therefore most solemnly binding. But mere decisions by a professed church, carried by a majority, where this order is not preserved, cannot be so regarded.

Having thus shown, in the case of the Corinthians, what should be the order of the church for the transaction of her legitimate business, the apostle proceeds to instruct them how to proceed, and what to do in the case which was before them. “To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” Satan is the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. He is the opposite of the Spirit of truth and holiness, in which all who are born of God are called to walk. As many as are led by the Spirit of God are to be recognized in the church as the sons of God, and as long as they manifest that Spirit they are entitled to the fellowship of the church; but when they depart from the faith by giving heed to seducing spirits, and by adhering to doctrines of devils, that fellowship is to be withdrawn from them. The withdrawing of the fellowship from those who walk disorderly is to deliver them over to the spirit by which they are led. As it was said of Ephraim, when he was joined to idols, “Let him alone,” that he might be filled with his own way. When the church by an act of exclusion relinquishes her authority and watch care of one who has had a standing with her, she formally delivers that person to that society and company of the spirit to which he is inclined. As when the Lord withholds from us his presence, we are for the time left to the buffetings of Satan. It was thus when Peter required to be sifted as wheat; he was for a time delivered over to Satan, to the tempter, and for the same purpose, for the destruction of the flesh: that is, of his fleshly propensity to savor the things which were of men. But the intercession of Christ in his behalf secured for him deliverance, and made his severe trial and sifting in the end a benefit to his brethren. To deliver a refractory or disorderly member unto Satan is simply to give them up to their evil passions, or to the spirit by which they are led. It is not to cherish bitter or malignant feelings against them, or to indulge in imprecations or maledictions against them, but the ultimate good of the offender is held in view. If he be indeed a child of God, when cast out of the fellowship and communion of the spirits, he will soon, like the poor prodigal, be reduced to severe poverty, and find himself a companion of swine, and in a starving condition. All his substance being wasted, his fleshly confidence destroyed, and his fleshly temper checked and subdued, he will remember his father’s house, where there is bread enough and to spare. This result will be in the day of the Lord Jesus. That is when the Lord Jesus shall heal his backslidings, and restore to him the joy of his salvation.

“Your glorying is not good.” The manner and circumstances of the glorying of the Corinthians, in the case under consideration, are not stated, only that they were puffed up, and had not rather mourned, that the discipline had not taken its course in putting the offender away from them. And their glorying was not good. “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” This figure of the nature and effects of leaven is very appropriate, and full of instruction, and had a powerful bearing on their case. As the nature of leaven is to ferment, expand, and puff up the lump in which it is hidden, so the *old* leaven of malice and wickedness is active and operative in fomenting discord, disorder and confusion when allowed to remain in the church. It should therefore be purged out.

The leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, which, our Lord said, was hypocrisy, and of which he bade them beware, had the effect to puff them up, to inflate them with pride, and cause them to expand themselves with the most extravagant notions of their own self-importance. If Christians were not liable to this kind of inflation, they would not have been warned to beware of it. Leaven is secret in its workings, but certain in its operations, and diffusive in its nature; and where it has its course, it will ultimately conform the whole lump to its own nature and quality, so that the whole lump that is leavened, itself becomes leaven of the same kind and quality of that by which it has been leavened.

A Christian, who in his fleshly nature is subject to this fermentation when malice or wickedness is hidden in his mind, comes to think more highly of himself than he ought, and holds depreciating views of others. So also when the leaven of pride, malice or heresy is concealed in a church, its nature is to spread its poison through all the members, and it is certain to do so, unless it be thoroughly purged out. Thus *if* a wicked or malicious person be allowed to remain in the church without reproof, like the one in the Corinthian church, the effect must be like allowing a piece of leaven in a lump of dough, as exemplified in their case, until all the members become “puffed up,” as they were.

Now, as the church of Christ is redeemed from the world, and washed, purged and purified, she is to be a new lump, “Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.” Dead to the law by the body of Christ, and married to him that is risen from the dead. Crucified with him, and now quickened and living by the faith of the Son of God. Put off the *old man* with his affections and lusts, and put on the *new man*, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. With the old leaven purged out, “Ye are now unleavened.” And here the apostle reminds us that, “Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,” and urges from that consideration that we shall keep the feast, “not with old leaven,” etc. The feast of the Passover was kept by the Hebrews, as God himself ordained, throughout their generations, in commemoration of their redemption from bondage, and deliverance from Egypt, by the uplifted arm of the Lord, by which he broke their yoke and led them forth in triumph. On that memorable night when God smote the first-born of every family of the Egyptians, the Passover was instituted, and special instruction was given that a lamb of the first year, without blemish, should be slain on the evening of the night of their redemption, its blood sprinkled on the door posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews, and the flesh prepared by fire for the feast, according to the families of the Hebrews. And it was the command of God to them that they should eat the flesh of it on that night, roast with fire, and with unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs they should eat it. (See Exodus 12.) And forever, throughout their generations, they should perpetuate the celebration of that Passover feast annually, in the precise manner and form in which it was instituted. This very expressive ceremony was enjoined, not only as a memorial of their temporal deliverance from the house of bondage and God’s judgments executed upon the pride of Egypt, but as typical of Christ our Passover, which was to be sacrificed for us, and our deliverance from the wrath and dominion of the law, and from the guilt and penalty of our transgressions, and also to signify the feast which God has prepared in the gospel for his

redeemed. While eating of the gospel feast, God has ordained that his people shall taste the bitter herbs, or the trials and afflictions which, like bitter herbs, are needful to correct and sharpen our appetites for the provisions of his table; that we, on whom the blood of our Passover has been applied as a peaceful sign, shall relish the food, and eat the flesh and drink the blood of him who as our Passover was sacrificed for us.

In eating this Passover, it is most expressly commanded that no leaven shall be allowed even in our dwellings during the seven days of the feast. “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.”

Having thus briefly examined the figure referred to by the apostle, let us observe his application of it in admonition to the Corinthians and to the saints in all subsequent ages of the church. “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Christ, the unblemished Lamb of God, the firstling of his flock, the first-born among many brethren, first begotten from the dead, and in all things having the pre-eminence, is the Passover of the spiritual Israel. The consecrated Lamb, whose blood was shed for the remission of our sins, and is applied as a sure token and certain pledge that the angel of divine wrath which shall find out and crush all the adversaries of the Lord, shall pass over us, and shield and protect us from all condemnation. We are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, (every way answering to the figure of the paschal lamb of the Hebrews). Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last days for you who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, etc. “Christ our Passover was sacrificed,” according to the import of the type. And for us, for his church, his spiritual Israel, and he the real, and not the lamb in the type, is our Passover, and as such was sacrificed for us. We are therefore to relinquish the type and accept the anti-type, and in coming to the feast which our anti-typical Lamb supplies, purge out the old leaven of Judaism, abandon the types and shadows, and worship God, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. Purging out the old legal leaven, we become a new lump, though we were leavened, yet now the old leaven being purged out, “Ye are unleavened,” and “Therefore let us keep the feast,” the gospel, which is our Passover feast, at which the saints eat abundantly, and drink as Christ’s beloved, and live by faith upon the Son of God.

Old things are now passed away; all things are become new. We are no more under the law, but under grace. The old leaven is purged out. Those who retain the old Jewish, or legal, leaven are cut off from Israel; for they cannot live on their own works and at the same time live by faith upon the Son of God. If it be of works it is no more of grace; and if of grace, it is no more of works. “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle (Hebrews 13:10).” Banish, then, all workmongrel leaven from your houses, ye blood-sprinkled tribes who come to the gospel feast. Grace, free, sovereign, saving, almighty grace, be your theme, and Christ your Passover be your song.

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness.” Can a Christian feed on Jesus, as the bread of life, digest the heavenly food, and enjoy its life-inspiring and heart-cheering power, while cherishing malice and wickedness in his heart? Let Christians answer. The apostle Peter also admonishes the saints to lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speaking. As it requires but little leaven to leaven a whole lump, so a little malice, or envy, or guile, hypocrisy, or evil speaking, will be sufficient, if allowed to be entertained in a church, to diffuse itself until a whole church may be thrown into a state of fermentation

and disorder. What can be more unbecoming in the children of God, coming to the Passover feast to feed upon the provisions of the house of God, than to harbor in their breasts a sullen, morose, and malicious feeling towards a brother or sister of the same household, or even towards an alien, or an enemy? Can we ask our Father in heaven to forgive us our trespasses, while we hold a brother who has trespassed against us by the throat and refuse from our heart to forgive him? We are perfectly certain that with the leaven of malice or wickedness concealed in us, we cannot eat this Passover. Nothing can be more directly calculated to provoke a similar feeling of bitterness in our brethren than for us to indulge in ill feeling towards them, for it works like leaven, secretly producing its malignant effects on those around us. God commands that all this pernicious leaven shall be banished from our dwellings, or the offender who retains it shall be cut off from Israel; he shall not eat the Passover, or feast upon Christ our Passover, or enjoy the melting power of his love in our hearts, unless all this unholy leaven be purged out of us. The love of God shed abroad in us will make us love our brethren and esteem them better than ourselves. Instead of feeling maliciously inclined to injure any one of them, or to speak evil or disparagingly of any one of them, we are amazed at the greatness of the grace of God which has given us the privilege to occupy a humble place among those who seem to us as far superior to us in all Christian gifts and virtues.

To enjoy the gospel feast, let us eat it with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. May the God of all grace thoroughly purge out from us all unholy influences, and evermore give us the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, and may we eat and drink abundantly in his kingdom, and go forth and grow up as the calves of the stall.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1867.

ZECHARIAH 3:3.

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.”

Contemporary with Nehemiah and Zerubbabel at the time of the building of the second temple in Jerusalem, Joshua presided as the High Priest of Israel, and as such was a type of the great High Priest of our profession who is brought to view in the gospel, and presides over the building of the spiritual and anti-typical temple, which of lively stones is built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. Christ as the builder of his church was prophesied of by this same prophet, saying, “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne: and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the peace shall be between them both (Zechariah 6.12, 13).”

The priesthood of Aaron and his sons claimed no regal power, no right to reign or rule, but was confined to the service of the altar, and continually engaged in offering sacrifices for the sins of the people; but in the figure of the man whose name is The Branch is presented a regal or royal priesthood, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec, and in it is presented the King and priest in one man, whose name is The Branch, and the Counsel of Peace, between them both, that is between the King and the priest. As all the approved kings of Israel counseled with the priests, and through them received counsel from the Lord; they in their communion and consultation pointed to him, who should sum up all that was set forth by prophets, priests and kings, in the person of him who is our Prophet, Priest and King; the King of Righteousness and Priest unto the Most High God, and all the counsel of peace involving and embracing the eternal salvation of his church and kingdom is embraced in the official characters which are embodied in, and sustained by, our Lord Jesus Christ. Men sometimes volunteer their counsels, professedly for peace; and which they seem to flatter themselves will be an improvement on God's counsel; but the counsels of men invariably conflict with the counsel of the Lord which alone shall stand.

In offering a few remarks on the text which we have placed at the head of this article, we propose to notice Joshua in his typical relation to Christ, and of Christ in his vital relation to his church.

The person, priesthood and official service of Joshua differed in nothing essential from that of other priests of the same order; but in his name, and connection with the building of the temple, as also in his presentation in the subject under consideration, are found some expressive peculiarities in which he prefigures our Lord Jesus Christ.

His name, Joshua, is in signification the same as Jesus, which signifies a Savior, and as such was given to our Lord to assure us that he should save his people from their sins. And Joshua's connection with the building of the temple gives additional significance to him as a type of our great High Priest.

But the position occupied by him in our text and its surroundings, demands our special attention. The prophet says, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." Here, if we comprehend the figure, our Lord Jesus Christ is brought to view in his mediatorial work in his priestly habiliments, as bearing all the tribes of his redeemed Israel, and stands for them before the angel of the divine presence in his holy law. The angel, or Spirit of the holy law of God, is the angel of the Lord. God's presence is called his angel; and God appears in his law demanding satisfaction for the sins, which Christ, in his priesthood, came to expiate, and make atonement for. No priest or offering under the old dispensation could meet the demands of the law and justice of God, but our spiritual Joshua was able to stand before the angel; and although there resisted in his mediatorial work by Satan, sin, death, hell, and the grave, he occupies the place.

Joshua stood as one arraigned before the angel to bear the judgment and meet the awakened sword which God had commanded to smite the Shepherd. In his description of this dreadful conflict, Jude says, "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses... said, the Lord rebuke thee (Jude 9)."

From this declaration of Jude we learn what was the ground of contention. By the body of Moses, which God buried in the wilderness, and whose sepulchre could never afterwards be found, we understand is signified the power and dominion of the law, as administered by Moses over God's people, Israel, whose demands were met and canceled by our Redeemer, and which in its dominion became dead to them, and they to it, by the body of Christ. In this conflict an effectual appeal was made to God to rebuke the disputing adversary. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath

chosen Jerusalem;” the very God of election, whose sovereign choice of Jerusalem is in the eternal and immutable election of grace rebuke thee. “Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”

Observe the figure. After a seventy year captivity of the children of Israel in Babylon, in which the city had been nearly demolished, the old temple destroyed, its consecrated furniture desecrated and carried away, and few of the citizens permitted to return, what more appropriate figure could represent this preserved remnant according to the election of grace than is here used, *a brand plucked out of the fire*? Nearly consumed, but a brand remains, which must inevitably have been consumed, but for the election of grace.

Now in the great redemption and deliverance of this chosen remnant, our High Priest appears before the angel of the Lord, clothed with filthy garments. His work is to purge and cleanse Jerusalem from all her uncleanness, and to do this, as her High Priest he must represent her as she truly is, by an assumption of all her sins and pollutions. And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. Bearing all the sins of his people, he stands before the angel of the divine presence. The flaming eye of the law and justice of the pure and holy God is upon him, and yet he stands clothed in filthy garments, before whose searching gaze no unclean or unholy thing can be tolerated, or allowed to live.

No greater affront could be offered to the law than for the priests to appear before the Lord except in consecrated priestly garments perfectly pure and clean. But, wonder ye heavens, and be astonished O earth, the High Priest of our profession before the presence of the angel of the Lord in filthy garments; behold he comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah; and he will stain all his raiment. He is made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He is numbered with the transgressors, and bears the sins of many. He is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. He who is the righteousness of God is clothed in filthy garments and stands before the angel. How could this be? The Word which was with God, even the Word which was God, is made flesh. He has taken on him the seed of Abraham, is made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law; and in the assumption of the seed of Abraham, all the transgressions of that seed are laid on him, and bearing them in his own body on the tree, he stood before the angel with full ability to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to finish transgressions and make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Having as our High Priest made an offering for sin, he has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1).”

Through the efficient Priesthood of our spiritual Joshua, a fountain is opened for the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. For he has himself borne our griefs, carried our sorrows, and endured the chastisement of our peace, and with his stripes we are healed. Truly such an High Priest became us. No other priest could, with our sins upon him, have stood before the angel. He only was able to bear the storm of wrath which was due to our transgressions; as none but Jesus was able to lay down his life, and then to take it up again. Not all the blood that flowed from Hebrew altars, nor all the sacrificial offerings made by Aaron and his sons, could have purged our hearts from an evil conscience, or qualified us to serve the true God acceptably. But he was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and so we are freely justified, through the redemption that is in him.

The brand is rescued from the burning. The fire of righteous indignation and wrath is quenched by the one offering which Jesus Christ, through the eternal Spirit made of himself unto God; and by the which he has obtained eternal redemption for us. Can we contemplate the subject without feeling emotions of

love and gratitude to him who hath loved us and given himself for us? He endured the cross, he despised the shame, he suffered without the camp, for us: and shall we, can we, feel reluctant to go unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach? He has redeemed us unto God with his precious blood, plucked us as brands out of the fire, called us by his grace, quickened us by his Spirit, and assured us that we shall reign with him in glory. Then what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? No service by him enjoined can be too hard; no sacrifice of ease, or wealth, of time or substance, can be too great. If indeed we love him, let us keep his commandments.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1867.

THE REGENERATION.

Since the publication of brother J. F. Johnson's communication on the subject of regeneration, we have received several letters from brethren, some approving and others querying as to the correctness of his position. We are inclined to believe that his views have not been perfectly understood by all our readers. If we have correctly understood him, his views on the subject of the new birth differ not from the views generally held by all sound Old School Baptists, namely, that every one of God's chosen people are in time quickened by the Holy Spirit, and born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. That the personal experience of the saints, in being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the marvelous light and liberty of the sons of God, is what is in the New Testament called being born again. Not that our earthly nature is born over again and made spiritual and holy, for this every child of God knows is not the case; but that life and immortality which was given them in Jesus Christ is by a spiritual birth brought into manifestation. As our earthly nature was brought into manifestation by our natural birth, yet so that, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and continues to be flesh, after the new birth has developed in them the new man, which after God (Christ, not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, not renewed flesh, nor human nature revised, new-modeled or reconstructed. The flesh which is born of the flesh and the spirit which is born of the Spirit both exist in the Christian so long as he continues in the flesh, and they not only are not the same, in nature or parentage, but they are essentially different in all respects. The one is natural, the other spiritual; the one is human, the other is divine; the one mortal, the other immortal; the one cannot sin because it is born of God, and is incorruptible, the other cannot be subject to the law of God, because it is carnal and depraved. The one is life, the other is death; the one is to be put on, the other to be put off. The one knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, which can only be spiritually discerned, and the other searches all things, even the deep things of God. The one is Christ in you the hope of glory; the other is Adam, and sin and pollution in you. These are not only in every way distinct and dissimilar, but they are in direct and deadly hostility to each other. They who by the first and second birth, like the Shulamite, in the Canticles, present in each saint the belligerent elements of two armies. The flesh wars against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, and a

perpetual warfare is the result until the dissolution of the flesh and triumph of the Spirit, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

But while it is conceded that the saints of all ages are personally and experimentally subjects of the new birth, as defined in the foregoing remarks, it is held that the Scriptures in no case apply the word *regeneration* to this birth. The word *regeneration* occurs but twice in the Bible, and in both instances it is believed to be applied to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ as the Head and embodiment of his church. After describing the inefficiency of sacrifices and offering which were made under the law, Christ is heard to say, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.” And in so coming to do what the law could not, in that it was weak through the flesh, he says, “But a body hast thou prepared me (Hebrews 10:5).” And in Hebrews 2:16, it is declared: “for verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” And in Galatians 3:29, “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:15,16).” Here we have the profound mystery which is without controversy. “God is manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” And an apostle declares that he is an anti-christ who shall deny that Christ is come in the flesh. The great object of his assumption of our flesh was to offer up that body, as demanded by the law, and required by inflexible justice. “He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of children.” In this identity with his church, which is his body, he was delivered for our offences. Baptized deep in death, all the billows of divine wrath went over him, and the grave closed upon him. And his love constrained us because we thus judge, that if one died for all (all that body which he took) then were all dead. “Crucified with Christ.” “Put to death in the flesh.” Yielding to law and justice all the jots and tittles which they demanded. Here in the sacrifice that life which was demanded was given up, and that death which was denounced was endured. But “he was raised again for our justification.” Not by restoration of that body to primeval innocence, but by being quickened by the Spirit of Immortality, a resurrection life over which sin and death can never exert a dominion. Death is from his resurrected body abolished, and immortality is brought to light in the resurrection. Thus, “God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us [or made us alive] together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with him (Ephesians 2:4-6).” Thus in the mediatorial offering the law has its full demand, and lawful captives are redeemed; their relation to the law is dead, and they are dead to the law by the body of Christ, that they should be married to him who is risen from the dead and participate in his immortal resurrection life. “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead [not by the mortality of Adamic animation, but] by the glory of the Father [the immortality of the self-existent and eternal Godhead], even so we also should walk [or be quickened and animated by, and] in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also of resurrection.” Omitting the supplied words, the above is a correct rendering. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord

(Romans 6:3-11).” We might follow the arguments of the apostle through this and the next chapter, and indeed throughout the whole epistle. In confirmation of the doctrine of the identity of the church, or body of Christ with him, is his death, burial and resurrection, which is so strikingly set forth as a baptism into death and resurrection to a new, spiritual, immortal life, which is born of God and not of the flesh. It sustains the same relation to God that the immortality of Christ sustains to him. Almost a literal repetition of these arguments and illustrations are also found in Colossians 2:10-15.

In the doctrine thus far stated, we apprehend no serious disagreement among Old School, or Bible Baptists. Where the word *regeneration*, as used but twice in the Scriptures, is applicable to this circumcision of Christ, and crucifixion of the old man, baptism into death and resurrection of the church in Christ in new immortal life, or to the personal individual experience of the children of God, is the question on which there may be some difference of opinion. The word *regeneration* occurs in Titus 3:5, signifying not only a cleansing which only the blood of Christ could possibly effect, but also an inspiration of a new spiritual life which is shed upon the church, through Christ our Savior, and in this new life we are justified, and made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. First, the apostle declares what we once were, that is, in that earthly Adamic nature in which we were held guilty and condemned by the law, which life was under the law, married to the law, and which life the law demanded, and which was yielded up in the circumcision of Christ, so that all the members of Christ were buried with Christ by baptism into his death, became dead to the law, and in his resurrection life the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Immortality, was abundantly shed on us, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This atoning work, wherein we are redeemed from our relation to the earthly Adam, and from the tribes and kindred of the earth, and quickened with the life and immortality of Christ, was indispensable to our being made heirs. In our earthly relations we could only be heirs to an earthly inheritance. But Christ was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem us from under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And if sons, in this new relationship to God, in Christ, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and hence we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, in distinction from the mortal life of our earthly generation in the earthly Adam. “For this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Our generation in Adam makes us heirs of sin and corruption; but our regeneration in the life and immortality of the Son of God makes us heirs of an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and which is according to the hope of eternal life. This hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie promised before the world began, comes not to us by or through our regeneration in Adam, but by and through our regeneration in Jesus Christ.

Let us now inquire, is this death and resurrection of Christ, and of his church in him, set forth in the light of a regeneration in the Scriptures? Generation, whether natural or spiritual, is understood to involve begetting, conception and birth, by which the life of the progenitor is brought into manifestation in a posterity. Generation cannot be applied to the eternal Godhead, for that is underived, unbegotten, self-existent and eternal; but it is applied to Christ in his mediatorial identity, as the Son of God and Head of the church.

By a miraculous conception, the Word was made flesh when he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was made under the law to redeem his people. In this generation he was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, and having accomplished that suffering, the exceeding greatness of God’s mighty power was wrought in him, in raising him from the dead, and in setting him far above all principalities and powers. That exceeding greatness of the power of God is thus declared by God himself. “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I

begotten thee (Psalm 2:7).” What day? Dr. Gill, we believe, says it was the day of eternity; but an inspired apostle testifies thus: “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts 13:32,33).” “John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten from the dead (Revelations 1:5).” God “hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world: who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be unto him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he said, And let all the angels of God worship him (Hebrews 1:1-6).”

In this begetting Christ from the dead, we are told that he was raised up by the glory of the Father, which we understand to be the life and immortality of the eternal Godhead, “the power of an endless life.” “Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” This was spoken of by the prophet, “the spirit of the Lord God is upon me,” etc. And was typified by the precious ointment poured on the head of Aaron, which ran down his beard and descended to the skirt of his garment, thus anointing both the Head and the Body of Christ. It was predicted, “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord. My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever (Isaiah 59:20,21).” In this regeneration, that life which was with the Father and was given to the members of Christ in him, is by the resurrection of Christ made manifest. In his resurrection from the dead he has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, and God in the exceeding greatness of his mighty power to usward, which he wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead, hath quickened us together with him, and hath raised us up together, as the legitimate children of the resurrection, as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. When he was begotten from the dead by the glory or immortality of the Father, his children in him were and are “Begotten again to a lively [living or vital] hope by the resurrection of 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 [the power of an endless life], through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.” “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who 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 up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God (I Peter 1:18-21).”

To our understanding this begetting from the dead in him who from the dead has the pre-eminence as the first born of the dead, is called the regeneration, in which all the chosen of God are redeemed from that corruptible nature which they received by their natural generation, and by the resurrection of Christ begotten again to a lively hope to eternal life and to an incorruptible inheritance and immortal glory.

That Christ was begotten and born from the dead is so clearly stated in the word as to forbid all controversy on the subject, and that he was raised up as the embodiment of his church, as his body, as a perfect man, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, and perfectly filling up the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, Head and body, and all his members, is confirmed by its exact conformity to the prophecy of Isaiah. “Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children (Isaiah 66.8).”

“T’was for his saints Christ tasted death,
All glory to his name;
And when he breath’d his dying breath,
With him his saints o’ercame.

Since Jesus slept among the dead,
His saints have nought to fear,
For with their glorious suffering Head
His members sojourned there.

When from the dead we see him rise,
Triumphant o’er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose.”

Viewed in her identity with Christ, the church which is his body was not left behind when he arose from the dead; the doors of death were opened, and the portals of immortality were entered. Death and the grave were vanquished, and he who was delivered for our offences arose for our justification. The church of God is redeemed; the law holds no further dominion over her; her life is now with Christ in God, and she sits with him in heavenly places, and all his redeemed must in due time follow him experimentally in this regeneration. With him on the cross, and in the tomb, they shall all be in experimental fellowship with his sufferings here, and participate in his glory hereafter in a world without end.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1867.

PHILIPPIANS 2:10.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.”

Although the apostle Paul had more cause to glory in the flesh than others, circumcised as he had been on the eighth day – of the stock of Israel – of the tribe of Benjamin – a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless; yet now being born of God and taught by the Spirit, he counted all these things, in which he had once gloried, but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his

Lord. Now the fullness of his aspirations are summed up in the single desire that he might win Christ, and be found in him without a rag of his own law righteousness, but having that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; and that he might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death; if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Without attempting a general investigation of the position and experience of this eminent servant of God and apostle of Christ, we propose to offer a few remarks on the two leading propositions embraced in the words which we have placed at the head of this article. Namely,

First, a knowledge of Christ Jesus, the Lord, and, Secondly, a knowledge of the power of his resurrection. *First*, a knowledge of Jesus Christ not only surpasses all human knowledge that can be attained by study from the schools of men, but is an immediate revelation from God, and made only to those who are quickened by the Holy Ghost. Christ has himself said, in his most solemn appeal to his Father, when lifting up his eyes to heaven, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).” Hence, Simon Peter, and the other apostles, when confessing their knowledge of him as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, were by him assured that the revelation of this knowledge to them was not from or by flesh and blood, but it was revealed to them by his and their Father which is in heaven. The school of Gamaliel from which Paul had graduated, was probably as orthodox in its theology as any institution of the kind that has ever been set up or patronized by the children of men since the world began; and yet with his perfect knowledge of the Jews’ religion in which he had been thoroughly educated, he was a stranger to Christ, and betrayed his total ignorance of him when he appeared to him on his way to Damascus by inquiring, “Who art thou, Lord?” We are expressly told that none of the princes of this world knew him; for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The knowledge which the apostle had of Christ, he was free to confess, came immediately by revelation from God. “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, etc. (Galatians 1:15).” “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and 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 (Matthew 11:25-27).”

How excellent must be that knowledge which comes immediately from God, and which being revealed to us by his word and Spirit, quickens every one to whom the revelation is made; so that they are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Every one therefore, saith Jesus, who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me. Well might the apostle, and well may we, cheerfully give up all that we once held dear, and even gladly give up all things else for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and to know him as our Lord; for none can call him Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. We cannot know him and be ignorant of the Father; for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father. He and the Father are one. And he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also. And, remember, that thus to know him is eternal life.

Secondly, all who know the Son desire to know the power of his resurrection. Perhaps this subject of the *power* of the resurrection of the Son of God has not been as fully investigated in our day as many other important branches of the gospel; not however because it is any less important; but probably because the minds of the brethren have not been led to the consideration of it as they have been to other points.

That Jesus died for his people, and that he arose from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures, has been generally accepted by the saints as an incontrovertible truth, and scarcely doubted or denied by any at the present time. If indeed we were to speak only of his personal resurrection, that is of his crucified body which was laid in Joseph's new tomb, the subject would be of peculiar interest. In vindication of his declaration that he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again; his resurrection has fully demonstrated that power. But when we consider that the power of his resurrection is the power of immortality in which all the subjects of salvation are quickened, and in which alone they can know the things of the Spirit, or be qualified to reign in glory, the subject is invested with thrilling interest.

The power of the resurrection of the Son of God is a subject so awfully sublime and glorious as to baffle and confound the wisdom and philosophy of the sons of men; surpassing all human understanding it leaves all our intellectual powers in the distance. And even the most enlightened of the children of God confess their utter inability to comprehend its amazing fullness. Even the apostle himself with all the abundance of revelation and inspiration frankly acknowledges his inability to comprehend the fullness of its glory. He says, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:11-14)."

The mark of the prize of the high calling of the saints of God is presented in the risen and glorified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his resurrected body has ascended into heaven as the first fruits of them that slept; and to that exalted mark the eye of the faith of God's elect aspires; while with eagerness we press through all the opposing impediments, in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. That mark of ultimate glory is exemplified in the resurrection and exaltation of our Lord, who is the first begotten from the dead, and by the power of his resurrection the final glory of all the saints is secured.

Let us consider, so far as light may be given us, the power of his resurrection, which Paul desired to know, and which all the saints shall ultimately know, to the saving of their souls.

Carefully avoiding all vain speculations on this incomprehensible subject, let us prayerfully search what God the Lord hath spoken on the subject by his inspired apostles. In the first chapter of the epistle to the saints which were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, after setting forth the election of the saints in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and their predestination to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, the holy apostle goes on to affirm that God has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him to whom also we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption [or resurrection] of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1.13,14)." Wherefore, the apostle ceases not to pray, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the

hope of his calling.” Namely, to a resurrection to that immortal glory of which they have now the earnest, and to which after that they believed they were sealed. And that they might also “know what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:18-22).”

In these Scriptures and their immediate connection, we are informed of the power of his resurrection; when so far enlightened as to know what is the hope of our calling and of the riches of the glory of Christ’s inheritance in his saints. In that light is revealed to us that the power of his resurrection is the power by which we were quickened and made to believe in God. His resurrection power to usward who believe is according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. And this power is not only great, but exceeds even greatness, and exemplified the supreme greatness of the mighty power of God himself.

That power of God which was displayed in the creation of the world, in sustaining and governing all things is truly very great; but the resurrection power, by which we are made partakers of the resurrection and glory of Christ is still greater, and is therefore called the *exceeding greatness* of his power. It is exceeding in as far as it goes beyond all the exhibitions of the omnipotence of the Eternal God, in his works of creation and providence.

To the natural eye and understanding of man, no more power is displayed in the resurrection of the crucified body of Christ than in the resurrection of Lazarus or of the widow’s son; but to whom God has given the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, this power excels all to her demonstrations of his might. They are made to know the power of his resurrection, which is to them the power of God unto salvation.

When we consider the identification of the church with Christ in his mediatorial works, as his body and fullness, and he the head over all things to that body, that he was made lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, in that angels are not capable of dying; that he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham, in which “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” He was made of a woman and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; a partaker of the same flesh and blood that his children were partakers of, thus legally embodying all the seed of Abraham, as his body and members, and this for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every one of them; and that he might thus bear our sins in his own body, and meet the penalty of the holy law in their behalf, and cancel all the demands of divine Justice; and so redeem them from under the law. “He was delivered for their offences.” Their sins were found on him, and the penalty was exacted at his hand. He died for them, and in him that law was honored and fulfilled which required that they should die; and as he died for them all, so they were all dead. And he was raised from the dead for their justification. The power of his resurrection was so exceedingly great as to abolish death, so far as he and his members were concerned, and bring life and immortality to light in his resurrection. As the apostle in this first and second chapters to the Ephesians show that in his resurrection and exaltation above all principalities and powers, he is given to be the head over all things to the church which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

The divine record does not leave the subject here but goes on, "And you hath he quickened." The division of this record into chapters and verses, by the compilers of our version of the Scriptures, should not be allowed to divert or mislead our minds from the connection of the subject. Remember, the apostle is dwelling on the exceeding greatness of the power of God in raising up Jesus from the dead, and in putting all things under his feet. It is evidently in his resurrection that he has quickened his body, the church; which in all its members were, before they were quickened, dead in trespasses and sins; and were by nature, in their earthly or Adamic nature, children of wrath even as others. But the power of his resurrection was to change their relation to the law, as a first husband, by marrying and identifying them by the power of his resurrection with the risen body of Christ. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another; even to him that raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God. Romans 4 and Ephesians 2:1, omitting the supplied words, should read in con'n with the last preceding verses. "And hath put all under his feet, gave him the head over all to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Even you who were dead in trespasses and sins wherein in time past ye walked, etc." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Christ and his church, as the head and the body, are quickened together. We who were dead in trespasses and sins, who were by nature children of wrath, are quickened together with Christ. Such is the amazing greatness of the power of his resurrection that in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, his body, the seed of Abraham which he took on him are quickened together with him who is the head of that body; and God has raised up that body together with Christ, and made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts (Romans 6:3-12)."

Now precisely the same sense is conveyed in the words recorded in Colossians 2:10-15, as in Ephesians 2:1-8, and in Romans 6:3-12. Compare them carefully. "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;" But when was Christ circumcised without hands? Not when he was circumcised at eight days old, after the manner of the Jews, for that was performed with hands: but when he suffered in the flesh, was put to death in the flesh, and put off forever the body of that flesh which was made of a woman, which identified him with the seed of Abraham under the law, so that although we have known him after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more. He was not quickened from the dead by a return of fleshly or Adamic vitality, to be subject again to die; but by the power of an endless life; by that immortality which Paul calls the glory of the Father. In that circumcision all his body and members are circumcised, redeemed from the flesh, from the relation in which they stood to the law, to sin, and to death. And

being thus dead with him, we were “Buried with him in baptism,” wherein also ye are raised with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him; having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Now in this baptism with Christ there is a death to the law signified, and putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; and life and immortality to the church brought to light by the resurrection of Christ, in which the apostle positively declares that the church is risen with Christ her risen Head. Whether we are authorized to call this baptism with Christ *regeneration* depends not on what our modern lexicons may say as to the proper meaning of words, but rather, as we conceive on the sense in which this word is used in the two places in the Bible. We will not contend with brethren as to the sense in which the word is used, for we are forbidden to contend for words to no profit. We are content to call this doctrine baptism, or redemption, or salvation, or by any other Scriptural name.

In the doctrine of the new birth as taught by our Lord and by his apostles in its personal experimental application to the saints, we all agree relative to our being called from death unto life, from darkness into marvelous light; when this resurrection life is made manifest in our personal individual experience. By the same quickening spirit and power that brought from the dead the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ all the saints from Abel down to the last vessel of mercy shall be brought in, all are or shall be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that in you (Romans 8:11).”

The same resurrection power that brought up from under the death dominion of the law, the church embodied in Christ, quickens with resurrection life in the new birth, and gives assurance that the same resurrection spirit and power shall ultimately quicken the mortal bodies of the saints in their final resurrection at the last day.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1867.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AND ORDER OF THE GOSPEL.

We call the especial attention of our churches and brethren to the letter of brother D. Bartley, found in this number, and bespeak for it a careful perusal. The subject treated on is at this time invested with special importance. We have never witnessed a time when the peace and order of the church of God has been more violently assailed, or the laws which Christ has given for her government more artfully perverted and wantonly disregarded by many who have once stood approved by the churches, than the present.

If we admit that Christ has a regularly organized church on earth, we must also admit that there are marks and characteristics by which that organization is to be identified and recognized by those who belong to her communion and have a right to her fellowship; and that the peculiar marks and characteristics of the church of the Living God are all given in the New Testament. What the church of Christ was in her primitive organization, order, ordinances, doctrine and practice, the church of Christ must continue to be throughout all time. It was predicted of her (Isaiah 33:20) that Jerusalem should be seen a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. This Jerusalem, this church of God, now stands precisely where she stood when her stakes were set and her cords drawn on the day of Pentecost. No party, profession, or people, outside of those stakes, and not environed by those cords, can be scripturally recognized or fellowshiped as the church of Christ. “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Revelations 22:15).”

To suppose that any member or members of a church may become restless and dissatisfied with her order, and thereupon declare themselves independent of her authority, is simply preposterous. Christ has given laws for the discipline of all her members, and authorized and commanded her to enforce them. Those laws and that authority must and will be respected by all the loyal subjects of the kingdom of our Redeemer. If any of her members refuse to respect and obey her order, she is commanded to expel them from fellowship and membership, and to let them be to her as the publicans and sinners were to the Jews. As the Jews could not have any dealings with publicans and sinners without defilement and disorder, so neither can those who are held in the church extend fellowship, or aid to them in their opposition to the faith or order of the church of Christ, without becoming thereby partakers of their disorder and insubordination. “He that is joined to an harlot is become one flesh” with her. Of the flagrant disorder of Mr. Smart, of whom brother Bartley speaks, we here in the East have been witnesses for about thirty years past. It seems that he has more recently palmed himself off on the Old Baptists at the West, as a regular Old School Baptist, and now that his disorder has become known to them, he again denounces the Old Baptists as he did when in Philadelphia. If it be claimed for him that he is sound in his doctrine, etc., let him leave his gift (if he has any) before the altar, and return to the church from which he was regularly excluded, and first be reconciled to the church, and then let him offer his gift. And let all who fear the Lord and respect his laws beware how they receive him into their houses or bid him God speed until he shall have complied with the law of Christ. But Mr. Smart is not alone in his bold defiance of the laws of Christ and authority of the church of the Living God. In New York City, in Canada West, in Middletown, N.Y., and in several other places parties have more recently raised the standard of rebellion against the laws of Christ’s king, and defiantly asserted their independence of her jurisdiction, and zealously engaged in trying to draw away disciples after them. A party in the city of New York, and another in this place (Middletown), of this description, have recently received aid and concurrence from two or ministers who have been hitherto held by us as orderly brethren.

Nearly two years ago, about eight or nine members of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, and about the same number in the New Vernon, whose abolition and warlike proclivities predominated over their attachment to the churches with which they had solemnly covenanted to walk in the order of the gospel, took offence at the doctrine of the Scriptures as held by our churches, and as set forth in the “*Signs of the Times*,” and went out from us and set up a separate meeting in defiance of the order and authority of the churches which they had solemnly pledged themselves to adhere to, and declared themselves no longer members of our churches, and some of them by letter formally demanded to be dropped from

our list of members. Their *secession* from the churches and repudiation of the laws of Christ and of the authority of the churches occurred when there was not a charge before either church against any of them, and after due labor, they were excluded according to the laws of Christ. Such was their standing and position when Elder James Bicknell (a minister who had been highly esteemed and cordially welcomed among us whenever he had visited us), without making a word of inquiry of the churches with whom he had always before professed to be in full fellowship, came some two or three hundred miles from his home and extended to this disorderly faction his fellowship and baptized into their connection five people. Our churches, of course, notified the Westmoreland Church, of which Elder Bicknell is supposed to be a member, but have received no response from that church. Some few others we have been informed have manifested the same contempt for the authority and action – of our churches in other localities, and yet seem to flatter themselves that they will still be recognized by our Old School churches and associations. But that cannot be; for any church or association, knowing of their disorderly and disorganizing course, who should still recognize them, would themselves cease to be Old School or Apostolic Baptists; for the apostles have commanded us to withdraw from all such, and to mark and avoid them. We cannot obey the law of Christ, as laid down by his inspired apostles, if we do not “Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17,18).”

It certainly does not require any extraordinary degree of intelligence to see where this disorganizing course, if persisted in and tolerated, must inevitably lead. If members in our churches are not held under sacred obligation to respect the authority of our churches, how is disorder to be kept out; and if it be not kept out of our churches, what will it avail to be members of churches which are in disorder? And if the action of our churches in disciplining their own members is to be disregarded by other churches who profess to be of the same faith and order, how can such churches correspond with and hold fellowship for each other? Churches, we admit, may err; may become disorderly, and may forfeit the fellowship of sister churches. And we presume that it is alleged by Elder Bicknell, in over-riding the authority of our churches, that we have become disorderly; but even if that were true, and we claim no infallibility, is it his right, without making a word of enquiry of us, to sit in judgment over us, give his decision in our case and assist in building up an opposition to us, without one step of labor to show us our error, or to reclaim us? We hold (and we appeal to all regular Old School brethren and churches to decide by the laws of Christ whether we be right or wrong), that no church has a right to annul the decisions of a sister church without first inquiring of such church as to the ground of their action. And further, we hold that every church is bound to let her order be scrutinized by her sister churches. But we solemnly protest against the usurpation of any church or minister to disrespect or disregard the decisions of a gospel church without first making due inquiry in a respectful and Christian-like manner of that church, and after hearing and duly considering her version of the matter in question, let their decisions first be made known to such church, and then if she will give no satisfaction, an appeal may be made to the churches of our faith and order generally.

So far as the churches of our Warwick Association are implicated by reports, charges, or accusations, we are ready to submit all that we have and all that we hold, to the most open investigation of any or all of Old School Baptist brethren, churches, or associations on the face of the earth, and as far as they may convict us of any departure from the faith or spirit of the gospel, we will make all gospel satisfaction in our power.

But until such investigation shall be made, and we convicted of some from the gospel, we shall deny the right of any one to disregard decisions, and shall hold all such as identify themselves by acts

implying fellowship with those by us excluded, as disorderly, and we shall no longer recognize any such as Old School or Bible Baptists.

In this article we have alluded more largely to local matters than was our design, as our object was to commend to the prayerful consideration of our readers the subject matter of brother Bartley's seasonable and well written letter, in which he has called our attention to the laws and ordinances, discipline and order of the churches of the saints.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1867.

BORN OF THE WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT: JOHN 3:5.

In our last issue, sister L. Fewell asked for our opinion as to the meaning of these words – whether the words, *born of water*, refer to baptism or to the action of the Holy Spirit.

Various views have been entertained and expressed by some of our most enlightened brethren as to what our Lord referred to by being born of water. That a man must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God seems so perfectly clear as to leave no doubt that a man must be born of the Spirit before he can see or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:14).” It would seem that being born of the Spirit would comprehend and embrace the entire work or quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, in giving birth to those who are begotten of God, and brought into an experimental knowledge of Christ, by the implantation of the Spirit which searches all things, even the deep things of God. No forms of godliness, applications, or ordinances, baptism, or circumcision, or any other with all that can be acquired by education, discipline, or otherwise, can possibly enable an unquickened person to even see the kingdom of God.

As no man, except he be born again, can possibly see the kingdom of God, we infer that every one that is born of the Spirit is divinely qualified to see the kingdom; and are instructed by the word and Spirit to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and they have the assurance that all things else that their Heavenly Father knoweth they need shall be added unto them.

By the *kingdom of God* we understand is intended that kingdom which Daniel and all the prophets prophesied the God of heaven should set up, and which John the Baptist and Christ in their first preaching declared was then at hand, and for the coming of which Christ, before his crucifixion, taught his disciples to pray. All who were born of the Spirit under the old dispensation, especially the prophets, saw and prophesied of that kingdom, as Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad. So all who are born of the Spirit since the day of John the Baptist possess that Spirit which capacitates them to see, and which alone can reveal to them that kingdom which is not of the world. The kingdom of God, which being spiritual, and not of the world, is invisible to all who are not born of the Spirit; and it is all that is implied in the word *kingdom*. The kingdom here spoken of cannot mean the universal

dominion of God, over all beings and all worlds, for that has always existed; but it refers to the church of God, over which Christ came to preside, which is called a kingdom because it is subject to the laws, ordinances, and special authority of Christ. All who are born again may see it; but to enter into it implies a recognition of the supreme authority of Christ, by a cheerful obedience to his commands. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14).” “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set 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 (Matthew 18:2,3).”

There are, we have reason to hope, many who are born again, and who see, and admire the kingdom of our Lord, who have never come into the church by a public recognition of Christ as their King, nor can any one enter this spiritual enclosure without an acknowledgement of, and obedience to, the law and authority of Christ. And the very first precept binding on a heaven-born subject is to be baptized. Whether gospel baptism was meant by our Lord when he said “Except a man be born of water:” or not, it is true beyond all controversy that no unbaptized person, even though born of the Spirit and able to see the kingdom, can enter the portals of the kingdom of God which Christ was about to organize, and over which he presides. The New Testament clearly shows, not only that Christ required all that were born again to be baptized according to the pattern and example which he had given, but also that no one was received into the church but by baptism. Those at Pentecost on whom the Spirit was poured, who were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word, were evidently born of the Spirit, yet in coming into the kingdom, the apostle commanded every one of them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41).”

Although baptism is the ordinance by which those who are born of the Spirit first acknowledge their allegiance to Christ, and are to be recognized as his subjects, and by which they have right to the tree of life, or privileges of the gospel church, yet baptism of any one who has not been born of the Spirit is a desecration of that sacred ordinance. None are required to keep the commandments of Christ which he has enjoined upon the subjects of his kingdom but those who love him. “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” And none can love him except they have passed from death unto life. The Campbellite doctrine, which substitutes immersion for the new birth, is a perversion of the truth and order of the gospel. Those who are immersed by them can no more see nor enter into the church and kingdom of Christ than they could before; they may be immersed into Campbellism, just as others are circumcised or sprinkled into other branches of anti-christ; but without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, which none can possibly have unless they are born of God. The marks by which the apostles were authorized to know who were the saved people of God, and whom they were commanded to teach to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them, were, first faith, then obedience to Christ. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16).” The question was clearly stated by the Eunuch to Philip. “What doth hinder me to be baptized?” Whatever might hinder the Eunuch would also hinder any other person; and whatever in his case was an indispensable prerequisite to baptism, is equally so to all others. Philip said in reply to this important question, “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” That faith which is only possessed by those who are born of the Spirit is an indispensable prerequisite to Christian baptism.

We will not attempt now to argue, in the face of the views of brethren for whose opinions we have great respect, that to be baptized in water is to be born of water, in the sense in which these words were spoken by our Lord to Nicodemus; but we see no reason why gospel baptism should not be figuratively

so called, seeing it is an ordinance, the figurative import of which is present at death, burial, and resurrection; and so far as the candidate is personally described, he is represented as renouncing the world and its vanities, and entering into a new element, and brought forth in a new relation to the church as his mother, and to all the saints as his brethren and kindred in Christ. First, he is born of the Spirit, and in which birth he passes from death unto life, is delivered from the power of darkness, and born into God's marvelous light. By baptism, he publicly puts on Christ; and is born into the liberty of the sons of God, into the fellowship, and fellow-citizenship of the saints, and is recognized as a disciple and follower of Christ. Having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed in pure water.

Whether this is the being "born of water" spoken of by our Lord or not, it is certain that without gospel baptism no man can enter lawfully into any gospel church. Other avenues are open to any and all the various branches of anti-christ; but without a Scriptural baptism none can come into the church which is built upon the foundation of the apostles, of which Jesus Christ our Lord is the Chief Corner Stone.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1867.

HEBREWS 6:4-6.

Elder Beebe: If it is not asking too much, please give your views on Hebrews 6:4-6, and oblige yours truly,

I. D. Irwin. Tecumseh, Neb.
July 26, 1867.

Reply: – We have on several occasions published our views elaborately on the text proposed, namely: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Those Hebrew, or Jewish disciples had been brought up under the ceremonial law, the priesthood of which allowed, and required for every new offence, that the offender should lay a new foundation for repentance and reinstatement in the congregation of Israel. For which cause their priests had to officiate continually at the altar; for being ceremonially purged from their defilement only served until they again became defiled. These disciples had shown a strong disposition to adhere to those abrogated rites, supposing that as it had been under the law, so it continued to be under the gospel, that new sacrifices must be made to lay a new foundation for repentance for every new transgression; not comprehending that Christ, our High Priest, has "by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified." That this offering of himself, being once made could never be made again, without again crucifying the Son of God and putting him to an open shame. Hence, "It is impossible." What is impossible? It is impossible for the children of God, who by virtue of the one offering of the Son of God, have been once purged from their sins, and brought into the enjoyment of all the marks and evidences of their acceptance with God, by the strongest and most unequivocal, and unmistakable evidences that the children of God ever

had, or ever can have while in the flesh, it is impossible for them to fall away from this foundation and be renewed again.

The glory of our High Priest shone in refulgent splendor. When being made perfect he became the author of *eternal salvation* unto all that obey him. (See Hebrews 5:9.) And in comparing and contrasting the two priesthoods, the apostle says, after speaking of the inefficiency of the offerings and service of the Levitical priesthood, “But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:11-14)?” It is therefore impossible that any who are redeemed to God by the one offering of Christ, if this should fail them, if they shall fall away from this foundation, to renew, or replace them, or again redeem them, as it would require that Christ should again be crucified, and all the glory and triumph of the offering which he has once made would be lost, and he put to open shame. For if those once purged and redeemed by him could ever require to be redeemed again, it would sink his glory down at least to a level with that of the Levitical priesthood.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1867.

PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

The following correspondence was not written for publication; nor have we asked or obtained the consent of our correspondent to expose it in our columns; but as the entire subject matter of her letter, and our reply, is of common interest to all the tried, trembling, doubting lambs of the flock, in the hope that its perusal will be useful to others, we take the liberty to present it to our readers. As we suppress her signature and her place of date, we think the writer will not charge us with a breach of trust. Having had some previous correspondence and personal acquaintance with the writer, we fully believe she is a subject of grace, and an heir of glory, notwithstanding all her doubts and fears.

Dear Elder Beebe: – Many times I have thought I would never again write to one on the subject of religion, then I feel how very ungrateful it is in me to your kindness in this way. But which is the worse crime, write and perhaps deceive those whom you have the least desire to deceive, or be silent and let them you know not what the feeling of gratitude is? I often think, dear Elder that I have deceived you, though I do not think it has been my intention to. I think the animal feelings can become excited when there is really no of heart. I have felt for the last few weeks indifferent to everything; my heart, as it were, has lost its feeling; there is a hopelessness connected with the future, and I often feel that it matters but little whether I live or die. I think of all states of the mind, this is the most to be deplored. In reading the other evening I came to this passage:

“*So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief* (Hebrews 3:19).”

What has this reference to? Does it refer to any members of the church of God? If so, what rest is meant? It cannot be their final rest, for the Bible says, “they rest from their labors and their works do follow them.” And we know that all the saints will attain that rest; none will fall short of it.

I often desire rest, feeling weary and heavy laden. Christ says, “Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Now if I could feel that the weariness that I feel is the weariness spoken of by the Savior, then this promise would be very precious; but every thing to me is uncertain. I cannot allow myself to hope, for fear I may at last find myself doomed to hell. You think it is because I look for perfection in myself that I do not find that consolation in the gospel that the subjects of grace receive. I do not think I look for perfection in myself; I know there is no good in me; though I think if I were a Christian I would be different from what I am. Still, what right have I to look to Christ; I have no claim there? From the hour of my birth to the present time I have sinned against him. My heart sickens at the thought of my hopeless condition. I often feel that if I could exchange places with any one in the world, there would be some hope. You will ask why there is not as much hope for me as for others? I know not; God is so far off he never hears my cry; beside he knows what a wicked deceitful heart I have, and he knows I am unworthy of any notice. I try to give up thinking of the future, but I cannot. I endeavor to find pleasure in my old pursuits, but I have lost my relish for them. I used to take great pleasure in politics; was well posted on all the issues of the day. Now I cannot endure the subject; I feel but little interest in the welfare of the country, I know God will rule it for his own glory; he undoubtedly has a people here, and when they are gathered home, the balance will soon be disposed of. I used to think the acquisition of knowledge was the great object of life, but that also has lost its charm. I visited a lecture at Rome the other day but found my interest in such had passed away. When I think of these things I feel there has been a change, but Oh! What right have I to hope this is the change I desire? You will think I am a strange being; but do not, if it is any trouble, write me any more. I fully appreciate your kindness and would gladly repay you if I could, but all that my friends can say to me cannot relieve me of troubles, it is there to remain till God lifts the burden, and I fear that may never be. You say in your letter that you hope I may be an obedient child. O! how willingly I would follow in the footsteps of the blessed Savior did I feel that I dare claim him as mine. If I knew one drop of his precious blood was shed for me, I would rejoice all the days of my life; but you will not ask me to follow in the footsteps of the flock when I feel to have no place there. I would rather remain without always, and have a little enjoyment lingering around the fold, than to enter in and know I were a wolf in sheep’s clothing. I have the greatest fear of being a hypocrite. I feel it would be a great pleasure to me if no one knew any thing about my feelings, then I think I would not deceive any one, but as it is, so many have spoken to me on the subject that if I am deceived, my deception has been extensive.

Is it possible for one to feel any spiritual enjoyment who has never had a full and complete Savior presented to their view?

Is it possible for any one to receive a change of heart who is not aware of such change?

Does the Christian ever feel sure of his acceptance in Christ?

I would like to ask many more questions but fear I may weary you. When I used to read the many experiences in the “Signs of the Times,” I thought how strange it was the writers did not know it was the Lord dealing with them. I felt if I should ever become troubled I would immediately know the cause. How very wise we are in our own estimation. Trouble has since overtaken me and I find my worldly wisdom of no avail.

Last fall when my mind first became interested in my future welfare, I thought if I only could become well enough acquainted with some of the ministers to tell them how I felt, they could tell if my feelings

were those of a Christian. I have had that pleasure; have become acquainted with some I have the greatest confidence in; have talked freely with them; they have all spoken words of encouragement, and yet, dear Elder Beebe, I have no more hope than I had before I was acquainted with them. I feel that it is possible in my case that they are deceived. I would be willing to receive their judgments in regard to others, but myself I cannot. My desire to attend the association was gratified; I heard what should have comforted any one, except they be so deep in sin that their case is hopeless. You see I have been gratified in many things, but have not found that consolation I was seeking. Dear Elder Beebe, for the last four or five years I have been unable listen with any degree of patience to an Arminian sermon. I felt in my heart what they preached was false. I would try not to listen to it, yet my mind would be keenly alive to every word; again when I would have an opportunity to hear the gospel, my mind perhaps would wander so I would not hear a dozen words. Now why was this, if my dislike for the doctrine of salvation by works had arisen from a love for the truth, would not I have appreciated the truth when I heard it? Is it not all prejudice from first to last? I have been taught to believe that salvation is of grace. I have learned the letter and know nothing of the Spirit. I cannot remember the time when I could not detect the difference between a gospel sermon and one that was not. I never hated the gospel; I may not have loved it, but I never hated. If I had, and had been made to love it, then I would know what I am. When no more than nine years of age, I have heard sermons that impressed me deeply. At about this time I heard you preach from the text: "Christ, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness," etc. The sermon troubled me a great deal, but I have lived twenty years since then, and still without hope and without God in the world. If you think this worthy of an answer, I should be very glad to hear from you. But do not allow me to weary your patience. My ideas are very disconnected, but I am not able to write a nicely connected letter.

Believe me as ever your unworthy friend.

Reply: – My esteemed, tried, tempted, tempest-tossed friend; your letter of the inst. is received, describing, to my judgment, a quickened, living child of God; but in a state of severe trial occasioned by doubts and unbelief. If you have never passed from death unto life, how shall we account for this state of things? You "think the animal feelings can become excited, when there is really no change of heart." And so do

I. Our physical powers and nervous system are subject to excitements; such as are common to all our race: but it is equally true that when the cause of such agitation is removed the excitement ceases, and the mind settles back to its former tranquility. But such is not your case. Your love for the society of the saints, and for the doctrine which gives God all the glory of the eternal salvation of his people is not an effect resulting from excitement of animal passions. No excitement can change our nature so as to make us love that which our carnal nature always hates. It cannot make us love God, his cause, his people, his truth, or his ordinances. The children of Israel had no less right to declare that the golden calf which they had made was the god that brought them out of Egypt than you have to ascribe the change which has been wrought in you to animal excitement. With them it was idolatry. God's glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images.

There have been times when you have felt a comfortable assurance that you were born again; and at such times you were disposed to seek the society of the children of God, and follow and obey your Lord and Master. But because you are not permitted to feel the same assurance at all times, you cast aside all that God has done for you, and almost deny that he has done anything for you. Is this right? Would you really choose rather to walk by sight than to live by faith? If not, why appeal from faith to sense; and insist on having some evidence that can be demonstrated to your reasoning powers? Do you

think if an angel were sent down from heaven, and with your eyes you could see him, and with your ears could hear him say you were a child of God and an heir of glory, that that would satisfy you? If all that were done, your confidence would not result from faith, but sight. “For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” God’s people must live by faith and not walk by sight. The passage in Hebrews 3, to which you refer, is full of instruction for you. The children of Israel were typical of the people of God. They could not enter into rest because of unbelief. The land of Canaan was a type of gospel rest; but they disbelieved the promise of God, and came short of that rest; and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. It is even so with the spiritual children of God; it is only so far as our faith triumphs over our fears and unbelief that we can enter into and enjoy that Sabbath of rest wherein we cease from all our own works—from thinking our own thoughts, and from speaking our own words. You cannot deny that whenever you have been enabled to believe that you were a subject of grace, you have felt at rest. You could rest in the promises which God has spoken, in the oaths which he has sworn, and in the sweet consolations this hope has afforded you. And you continued to rest securely, and sweetly, until your unbelief arose to dispute your faith and confidence in God. But as soon as you began to doubt, you became disquieted and restless. How is it possible for a child to rest in the Redeemer when he does not believe in him as *his* Redeemer?

All our faith is the fruit of the Spirit which is born of God. And all our doubts are from our carnal minds which are not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be. In every heaven-born child, both of these opposite and conflicting natures exist. The flesh warring against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh. But remember, they cannot possibly both be found in any one that is not born of the Spirit. Hence the very conflicts in your mind which you regard as witnesses against you are positive evidence that you are born again. Your fleshly powers resist the evidences of your heavenly birth, and it is not possible it should be otherwise; for your natural mind cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, nor know them, for they are only spiritually discerned. But you, like a fretful child, cherish and nurse your doubts, fears, and unbelief, and refuse to be comforted by the testimony which the word presents to your faith. And why? Only because your natural mind cannot perceive them.

Could you and I be entirely divested of the selfishness of our carnal nature, and raised above it, we should have no trouble, toil or labor about our own personal interest in Jesus; all that we should leave in better, safer hands than ours and we should gaze with joy and admiration on what faith presents to our minds—of the uncreated glory of our adorable God and Savior. There would be rest. All our care he bids us cast on him: he assumes it all; he careth for us. Why then, if we can trust him, should we care for ourselves? Who is it that feeds the ravens, clothes in beauty the lilies, and protects the sparrows? Can we by taking thought add to our stature one cubit, or make a hair black or white?

“Then doubting child, forbid your fears,
For all he has, and is, are yours.”

That hopelessness in regard to the future which settles heavily upon your mind, of which you speak, is but the natural consequence of unbelief; *cherished* unbelief. Faith reviving in your heart will say, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, [not in thyself, nor in thy frames and feelings] for I shall yet praise him; who is the health of my countenance and my God.”

If yours is not the uneasiness spoken of by the Savior, of what kind does he speak, and to what class does your weariness belong? Is yours a kind that can find relief any where else but in Jesus? Why allow your unbelief and the tempter to criticize, pervert, and cast from you the blessed words on which God’s children feed and thrive?

You cannot allow yourself to hope for fear that at last you will find yourself doomed to hell! Poor child! What have you to do with hell; or hell to do with you? If Jesus had not redeemed you from hell, you would never have been sensible of your lost estate; you never would have been weary and heavy laden; you would never have hungered and thirsted after righteousness; you never would have lost your relish for sin; you never would have loved the company of the saints or desired to be one; you never would have seen a beauty in the holy ordinances of the gospel, nor seen the kingdom of God. The fear of hell could never make you love holiness or desire companionship with the children of the living God. Nothing but the love of God himself shed abroad in your heart could make you love God, his word, his people or his ordinances.

You say, you do not look for perfection in yourself; but think if you were a Christian you would be different from what you are. Just so would say every Christian on earth. Ask any of them; even Paul has told you that, to will was present with him, but how to perform that which is good he found not. He could not do the things that he would. And you ask, "What right have I to look to Christ?" The best possible right; for he has commanded you to do so. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else (Isaiah 45:22)." It takes a God to save a sinner; you are a sinner, and as there is no other God, it is vain to look to any other source for salvation. He says, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. This constitutes your right; and the very fact that you have no claim on God proves that you are the very sinner that he has thus called: for Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And yet another unmistakable mark you have that you are the very sinner Jesus came to save is that you are the chief of sinners, sickened at heart in view of your vileness, and so much worse than anybody else that you often feel that if you could exchange places with anyone in the world, there would then be some hope in your case. Do you not believe it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save the very chief of sinners?

What right have you to say that God is so far off he does not hear your cry? You no doubt feel that you are far off from God; because he is so holy, and you feel so vile; but it is God that works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. And if he did not know how wicked and deceitful a heart you have, and that of yourself you are utterly unworthy of his notice, your case would be hopeless indeed; for if he knew not our malady how would he know how to cure? Who but God has caused you to see and feel and acknowledge how vile and sinful you are? Who but God has sent a famine upon all the vanities on earth in which you once delighted? Who but God has given you a longing desire to be a Christian? Do you ascribe the work to any other than the God that made you? You say, He undoubtedly has a people here, and when they are gathered home, the balance will soon be disposed of. This you do not doubt, of this you are fully satisfied; and so am I. But what evidence have you that this is true, more than you have that you are one of that very people: for without an exception they all have the very same experience in every essential particular that you relate? How much easier it is for us to be satisfied with the experience of others than with our own. You are compelled to admit that in your own case there has been a change. The things you once loved now you hate; your views, and taste, and desires, and hopes, and fears are none of them such as you once had; and yet you ask, what right have you to hope that this is the change that you desire? Precisely the same that any other quickened one has to hope: and my impression is that in spite of yourself you are obliged to hope, and do hope; but the trouble is, like all others who have this hope, you find it opposed by the darkness and unbelief of your own unrenewed nature; by doubts and fears that you will have to battle with as long as you remain here in the flesh. Truly the words of all your friends are powerless unless God by his Spirit shall apply them with comfort to your heart.

I would by no means urge any one to profess faith in the Lord Jesus who does not possess such faith, nor to be baptized who has never felt a sincere love to the people of God; but we hold that it is not possible that one can truly love the brethren who has not passed from death unto life, or that any can love the brethren who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ: and his command is, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” He does not say, If ye feel worthy, if ye have no doubts and fears, or if ye know that one drop of his precious blood was shed especially for you; but simply, *if ye love me*, for if you love him, it is positive proof that he first loved you, and gave himself for you, and that not merely one drop, but all the rich fountain of his blood was shed for the remission of your sins.

If you were a hypocrite, you would be trying to deceive. A fear of deceiving and being deceived is a mark of sincerity and truth. And certainly no hypocrite or wolf in sheep’s clothing could find any enjoyment in lingering around the fold of Christ, except for the purpose of devouring the flock. You cannot conceal your love for the people of God, and desire to be numbered with them, for your speech, looks, and actions all betray you.

To your questions I answer, It is not possible that one can feel a particle of spiritual enjoyment, who is not born of God. For, as before quoted, “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.” That measure of spiritual enjoyment is an earnest of an incorruptible inheritance of glory; and we may add, in the words of the poet,

“Yes, I to the end shall endure
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure
Are the glorified spirits in heaven.”

Is it possible, you ask, for any one to receive a change of heart who is not aware of such a change? There are evidences given to all who have passed from death unto life, such as I have already enumerated; but there are thousands who like yourself are distrustful of such evidences as the Scriptures warrant them to rely upon; such as a love of the brethren, desire after holiness, a disrelish for carnal enjoyments in which they have once delighted: and the seeing a beauty in the ordinances of the church of God. Some are very suddenly ushered into the light and liberty of the gospel, and can tell the day and hour, the place and circumstances when their deliverance came; but others who may be numbered by thousands have been led in such a manner as never to be able to tell when they ceased to hate, and when they began to love the Savior, and his people. But the fact that they do love Christ and desire to honor and obey him are equally as reliable and scriptural evidences that they are born of God, as though an angel came down from heaven and declared it.

Again you ask, “Does a Christian ever feel sure of his acceptance in Christ?” Yes. There are times when Christians enjoy the faith of assurance; but as a general thing, those precious seasons are few and far between. Whenever they confer with flesh and blood, doubts arise, fears prevail, and unbelief is master of the field. When faith revives and looks within the vail; then it puts our doubts to flight, and again we enter into rest.

Again, your case is not unlike all the children of God in being keenly sensitive when you hear the truth of God blasphemed by Arminians; and often sluggish and inattentive while sitting under the preaching of the gospel. The rantings of Arminians are understood and repelled by our knowledge of the truth; but the preaching of the gospel must be sent home by the Spirit before it can animate and feed us. Prejudice never taught any one to know that salvation is of grace; nor can the letter of that doctrine be so acquired as to qualify one to detect error, unless the error be so gross as to be apparent to our natural judgment.

You may not be conscious of a time when you ever hated the gospel, but you certainly came into the world with a hatred to it. Your change of heart may have been as early, or even before you were nine years of age; and your being troubled in hearing me preach at that early period may have been in consequence of the word being sent home with divine power to your quickened heart.

In conclusion, let me say, it cannot be right for us to cherish the unbelief and infidelity of our carnal reason, and reject the evidences which God has warranted us to rely upon. Nor are we justifiable, if we love God and his people, and his truth, and see a beauty in the ordinances which he has enjoined on all who love him, to tempt God by saying, unless he shall give us greater evidences than he has given to others, or such as will be tangible to our mental powers, we will not obey his precepts. Thomas said, "Except I see the prints of the nails," etc., I will not believe that Christ is risen. Was that commendable in Thomas? Is the like commendable in us?

Here I must leave the subject for the present; for the conversation I have had with you, and the evidences received, I cannot doubt that you are a subject of saving grace; and although the tempter may strive to make you think that it is wise and prudent in you to cast away or under rate the evidence you have of your acceptance with God, to demand more, or a different kind of testimony, I will only remind you that you will find that the way of the transgressor is hard.

Deeply solicitous for your spiritual welfare, I am your sincere friend and kindred in Christ.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1867.

JOHN 21:21-23.

Brother Beebe: Two years ago I requested your views on John 21:21-23, but have received no reply. Please give such views as you have, and may God help you. I am well. Yours as ever,

Stephen Hammond.
Greenville, Mich.
March 1, 1867.

Reply: – "Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

The probable reason why we did not give our views on this text when called on was that we had no views to give that would make the subject more clear.

Peter was, like some of us, over curious to know some things, which, could he have been gratified, would neither promote his good or his Master's glory. And in what is here related we have an example of his impertinence, and of the wholesome reproof which he received from our Lord. All the care and ability of every member of the body of Christ is required for the faithful discharge of his own duty, or obligation to Christ. And if it were the pleasure of Christ that some of his disciples should remain, even unemployed, it would be nothing to others; their duties would be neither greater nor less. The word of

command to each is, “follow thou me.” It is not to lead him, or to go before him, or anticipate what he will do, or what command he will enjoin on others.

It was evidently from a misunderstanding of Christ’s reply to Peter that the impression prevailed among the disciples that John was not to die, but continue on the earth until the second coming of Christ; but this misapprehension John himself corrects by stating that Jesus did not say that John was not to die; and what he did say did not justify their impressions on that subject.

The lesson may be of great service to the people of God in all subsequent time. It shows that it does not become us to make suggestions to our Lord and Master. It may be that Peter (for this occurred before he was endued with power from on high as an apostle), feared that the Lord, in his partiality to John, had either forgotten or neglected to give him anything to do; but whatever may have induced his excessive inquisitiveness, the reproof given him should teach us all, each to mind his own business, and trust to the wisdom of Christ the right to give to each his orders. Let us endeavor to profit by this lesson of instruction, and *follow* instead of trying to go before our Lord.

Middletown, N. Y.,
September 15, 1867.

I TIMOTHY 3:11.

Brother Beebe: – Will you give your views on I Timothy 3:11. The point of instruction more particularly desired is whether the wife of a deacon is required to be a visible member of the church, before the husband can lawfully hold the office of a deacon?

S. L. W.
Chrenshaw Co., Ala.
July 17, 1867.

Reply: – It would be very difficult at the present day for the church to find among her members those who in all respects come up to the gospel, or apostolic, standing in their qualifications for the office either of bishop or deacon; but in the organization of a gospel church, these marks and characteristics should be kept in view; and those who come nearest to the standard should be regarded as best qualified for either position. It is required also of all the members of a gospel church that they should in all respects be followers of God, as dear children; yet, we are not allowed to reject those who in their hearts feel to confess from day to day their shortcomings. The deacon in a church, as an assistant to the bishop, or elder, or pastor, in visiting the sick, ministering to the poor, and counseling the members, would be much assisted by the cooperation of a wife bearing the requisite qualifications named by the apostle. These may sometimes be defective even when the wife is a member of the church; but it is certain that she cannot assist him in the discharge of the duties of his station if she is not a member, and walking in the fellowship of the church. True, the apostle does not name membership among the indispensable requisites for a deacon’s wife, unless it be implied in her being faithful in all things.

We are not prepared to say that a brother, who is otherwise qualified, but has no wife, or whose wife is not a member of the church, if she be grave, sober, and not a slanderer, should be regarded as ineligible

to the office; but it seems clear to us that where there are in the church brethren having wives that are also members, they should by all means be preferred. But where such members are not, the church should, under the circumstances, and for the time, or until those of better qualifications be brought in, allow such to hold the position.

Brother S. L. W. will understand the above to be but our view of the subject; every church should ask counsel of God in this matter, with fasting and prayer.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1867.

GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE: II CORINTHIANS 7:10

Brother Beebe: – As I have never troubled you much, will you give me your views on the words, “Godly sorrow worketh repentance,” etc. What is it that repents, the new man or the old man, or neither? Is the Christian constituted of three parts? The new man has nothing to repent of, and the old man will not.

J.M. West
Troy, N.Y.
July 20, 1867.

Reply: – A careful reading of the chapter and epistle which contains these words of the apostle will show that Paul addressed his instructions to the saints in their complexed character, as children of God but here in the flesh. As subjects only of a fleshly birth they could have known nothing of godly sorrow; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and sorrow to be godly must be a spiritual exercise. And as that life which is born of God cannot commit sin, it, when abstractly considered, has nothing to be sorry for, or to repent of. And we know of no third nature in what constitutes a Christian. In our natural birth we partake of a nature which we call human, which is depraved and by which we were children of wrath even as others. In our new birth, we are born of God, and made partakers of the divine nature. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:23).”

We cannot therefore apply these words either to the old man, abstractly from the new, nor to the new man, abstractly from the old; for in the absence of either, a Christian cannot be found on earth. The old man, before the new birth by which the new is born, can neither receive nor know the things of the Spirit of God, and when the new man shall be separated from the old, it will mingle only with the spirits of just men made perfect, and be found on earth no more. The apostle was not addressing his instructions to carnal, unquickened, ungodly men, nor to the glorified spirits of the departed saints; but to the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints which were at Achaia. These, in both epistles, he describes as being saints, born of God and yet in the flesh. The saints in the militant state of the church are always addressed in the Scriptures as subjects of two distinct births; one of the flesh, the other of the Spirit. The production of the first birth is flesh, and the production of the second, or new birth, is

spirit. These two natures, which are called flesh and spirit, old man and new man, inner man and outer man, are contrary one to the other; and while both exist in every Christian, they never exist in harmony, but are in continual conflict one with the other. We know of no instance in the Scripture where the appellation is given either to the flesh or to the spirit separately considered. A Christian is then a person who has been born of the flesh, and afterward of the Spirit – a complex being, having both flesh and spirit. An old man which is corrupt with its deeds, and which he is admonished to put off, keep under, deny, etc.; and the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and which is to be put on, followed and exhibited. The first verse of the chapter in which our text occurs, recognized in the people addressed the existence of both natures, in the admonition, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” In this complex character the saints are addressed in this, and in all the admonitions given by the apostle. In either nature separately considered from the other, these admonitions would all be totally inapplicable. In this state and condition Christians and saints are subject to two kinds of sorrow; the one is called the sorrow of the world, such as is common to the world, and even to Christians while in the world, and which worketh death. Not the death of the new man, for that is eternal life, and can not die; but the death of that worldly nature which, borne down with excessive sorrow, yields up the ghost. As expressed by our Savior when he said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.” Crushed beneath the guilt of all our transgressions, his holy soul groaned in spirit and was sorrowful even to death. But his was godly sorrow, so far as he was personally the subject of it; but resulting from the sins and ungodliness of those for whom he bore it. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4).” But the apostle is here speaking particularly of the two kinds of sorrow to which God’s children are subject while here in the flesh. The sorrow to which our earthly nature is subject, occasioned by losses, crosses, bereavements, disappointments, diseases and pains, tend to bow us down with sorrow to the grave. But godly sorrow arising from a godly source differs from worldly sorrow, both in its nature and effects. As the one worketh death, the other develops the life of the spirit which is manifested by a godly walk and deportment. It was thus exemplified in the Corinthians. They had been made sorry by Paul’s letter (his first epistle, in which he had reproved them for many disorders which existed among them); and the sorrow thus occasioned proved to be of a godly sort, for they sorrowed after a godly manner, so that it resulted in their profit, in producing repentance and deliverance from their disorder. Herein then is the *salvation*, or *deliverance*, to which godly sorrow tends. “For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!” Godly sorrow wrought *repentance*, or reformation, as described in the foregoing particulars. This repentance, or reformation, was wrought by godly sorrow. Godly sorrow is not *repentance*, as many suppose; for it is a spiritual exercise of a quickened child of God, which springing from the Spirit which dwells in the saints, makes them sorry for their faults; not from any sense of wrath or damnation, but because they love God, and loving him supremely they love holiness, and hate sin; it therefore works, or leads to repentance, as in the examples given by Paul. It is not the dread of retribution, but the love of God in the Christian’s heart that leads to repentance. Because the Christian loves God and holiness, he is filled with sorrow for his faults, and that sorrow leads to reformation.

Now as to what part of the Christian repents, etc., we understand that this is said of the Christian as he is, and not to any particular part of him. It is true that the eternal life which is born of God cannot commit sin; because it is born of God; but the Christian is nevertheless subject to vanity, and liable to transgress the laws of Christ. And the law of sin which is in the members of the Christian may, and too often does, bring him into captivity to the law of sin and death. Not to everlasting death, but to that

death of which the apostle speaks when he says, “If ye live after the flesh ye shall die.” It is the Christian, as such, including his whole person, soul, body and spirit, that is required to conform to the law of Christ.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1867.

THE SABBATH.

Dear Brother Beebe: – In a former letter I requested your views on the Sabbath: I wish to urge you to comply with that request, not alone for my sake, but it is the earnest wish of many brethren. Not for speculation, but alone for the truth’s sake. We want to know why the change was made from Saturday to Sunday; and, by whom it was made and for what purpose? If the Sabbath was typical, what is its anti-type?

John E. Frost.
Shelbyville, Tenn.
May 7, 1867.

Reply: – We have so frequently given our views on the subject of the Sabbath that we have felt a delicacy in inflicting them again on those who may have kept a file of the former volumes of the “Signs”. But as brother Frost and others with him make the request, and probably have not heard from us on the subject, we will briefly reply to those points on which they desire to be enlightened.

First, Why was the Sabbath day changed from the seventh to the first day of the week?

Second, By whom was it so changed?

Third, For what purpose was the change made?

Fourth, If the Sabbath was typical, of what was it a type?

The third and first inquiry as stated above cover the same ground. The why, and the wherefore, must be the same. As the Scriptures are silent in regard to any change, we must seek elsewhere for any reasons. Modern Sabbatarians say that it is because the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ occurred on the first day of the week, and that the day was changed from the seventh to the first in honor of that glorious event. If the Scriptures anywhere confirmed this testimony, it would settle the matter conclusively, with all who take the Scriptures as the man of their counsel and standard of their faith and practice; but unhappily for their theory, the Bible not only fails to establish their position, but utterly fails to show that a Sabbath, either seventh or first day, was ever given by any divine authority to the Gentiles, or to any people under heaven but the children of Israel. God, by Moses, enjoined the observance of the seventh day of every week on the children of Israel, when they were gathering manna in the wilderness. That was the first mention made of a Sabbath day in the volume of divine revelation. God told the children of Israel, or commanded Moses, saying, “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you (Exodus 31:13,14).” Read it to the end of the chapter. Here is a

positive command from God to the children of Israel, by which they were to be separated and distinguished from all other people as a sign throughout all their generations. If there can be found in either the Old or New Testament, in law or gospel, a like command of God, enjoining the observance of that, or any other day to be observed by any other nation or people, let such authority be produced. If such command could be found, how would that day or its observance distinguish the children of Israel from all others of mankind? The reason which God assigned for appointing the seventh day, in distinction from all other days, is given in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter, as well as in the decalogue. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth; and rested on the seventh day." So that the day commanded to be observed as a Sabbath could no more be changed than the days on which God made heaven and earth, or the day on which he rested can be changed. To ascertain then why, or for what purpose the day was changed, we must apply to those who changed it; and they will probably be found in that numerous and popular family connection which was charged by our Lord with making void God's law by their traditions, and of teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.

If in the absence of positive data we may be allowed to speculate, the most probable object or design of those who assumed the right to make the change was, first, to so accommodate their religion to Pagan forms and customs as to secure popularity, and avoid persecution. And secondly, by setting apart one day in seven as more sacred, and better adapted to the public administration of the world and worship of God than any other, they might secure places and business for a far greater number of their clergy. As, for instance, if one day were regarded as good as another, and any day in the week appropriate for the public assembling of the churches, one minister could supply ministerially seven churches one day in each week by a proper arrangement of appointments. Each church could set apart one day without interfering with the appointments of the others.

Another reason may probably have been to have a pretext for calling on human governments to legalize their day, and by fines and penalties compel the people to lay aside their avocations and attend their ministry.

Thirdly, so far as history gives any light on the question, by whom was it changed, we gather that the adoption of the first day for the seventh was by professed Christians. They had in many other things become greatly corrupted some three hundred years after the organization of the gospel church. In that three hundred years, so far as we are informed, no legal Sabbath had been observed or allowed. Those nominal professors of Christianity who have assumed to be the church, in compliance with the superstitions of the Pagans who worshiped the sun, and fire, etc., by whom the first day had been set apart as a holy day, and called Sunday, adopted it as a Christian Sabbath. The adoption of it was afterwards confirmed by Papists, and subsequently by Protestants.

Fourthly, the last point of inquiry submitted is in relation to the typical import of the legal Sabbath, as given to the children of Israel.

Israel being a typical people, all the ordinances and ritual enjoined on them must necessarily typify something peculiar to that people of which Israel was the type. The apostles have settled the point as to what the people of Israel were the type of. Under the gospel dispensation, he is a Jew, or Israelite, who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, in the Spirit. And the church over which Christ is King, and his apostles are seated on thrones of judgment, are, spiritually speaking, the twelve tribes of Israel.

To the gospel church, as God's sign by which they shall be known in distinction from all the work-mongrel tribes of anti-christ, God has given his anti-typical Sabbath of perfect rest; which remains for the people of God, and for them alone. The wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest; and of

whom God hath sworn that they shall not enter into his rest. The anti-typical Sabbath is more clearly defined and illustrated in the third and fourth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews than it can be by any thing that can be said or written by us. Those only who are born of God can have that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; and none who have not that faith can enter into this anti-typical Sabbath of rest. “For we which have believed do enter into rest (Hebrews 4:3).” “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his (Hebrews 4:10).” That is as in the works of creation, as alluded to in the fourth verse. In this gospel Sabbath to believers, they cease from working, from thinking their own thoughts, and from speaking their own words. All their cares are cast on him who careth for them. They kindle no fires (give up no revivals for themselves), gather no fuel to warm or enlighten themselves; but keep their Sabbath holy; relying on God for everything. And in this they differ from all other people; and hence it is a sign between God and his peculiar people.

None but his peculiar people who believe can possibly enter into, enjoy, or keep this Sabbath; nor can even the *saints* only so far as their faith triumphs over their fears and doubts. For them to doubt and fear, and disbelieve, and reason with themselves, and think their own thoughts, or speak their own words, or kindle fires of their own, or walk in the light of fires they have kindled, is Sabbath-breaking; and while thus transgressing they cannot rest. The Sabbath is not one day in the week, but it is at all times alike with the believer.

In the order of the type, “Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work,” etc., refers, first, to the law or legal dispensation which preceded the gospel dispensation, in which all their work was exacted; but legal works may not be done in the gospel day. So also in the personal experience of every saint, in their convictions, they labor and do all their legal works; but when faith in Christ as their resting place is given them, their Sabbath then begins, and they enter into his rest. Let us labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the example of those restless unbelieving Israelites, who could not enter into rest because of unbelief, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1867.

EPHESIANS 2:8.

Please give your views on Ephesians 2:8. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

Bell Buckle, Tenn.
June 4, 1867.

Reply: – The doctrine of salvation by grace, without any merit or works, conditions of terms to be performed on the part of the saved to procure or secure it, is so clearly stated and affirmed by the Holy Ghost, through this inspired apostle in this epistle, as well as in all that has ever been written by holy men who have written as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, that it cannot be successfully controverted by all the ingenuity of wicked men and devils. The supreme glory of God in the eternal

salvation of his chosen people is most gloriously displayed by the sovereign reign of his grace in its complete accomplishment.

The positive declaration, *For by grace are ye saved*, is too plain and emphatic to require any explanation. The fifth verse affirms the same truth. *By grace ye are saved*. The inquiry arises, not as to how, but who, are saved by grace, and in what sense is it through faith; and the testimony that neither the grace by which, or the faith through which, salvation comes are of those who are saved, but are the gift of God, deserves our special attention.

First. Who are saved by grace? The unequivocal answer to this inquiry is found in the beginning of the epistle, “The saints” which were, at the time this epistle was written, at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus; whether at Ephesus or elsewhere, and at all times. Those who are in Christ Jesus, we are told in the fourth verse of the first chapter, were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and in the tenth verse of this second chapter, that they are God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Thus having created and chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and having before ordained that they should walk in good works, and be holy and without blame before him in love, their faithfulness in Christ Jesus is most clearly established. For if God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world for this express purpose, that they should be holy and without blame; and if God has before ordained that they shall walk in good works; how can it possibly be otherwise than they should be the faithful in Christ Jesus, as stated in the identification of those to whom our text is addressed?

The first inquiry, *Who are saved?* being settled beyond all doubt, by the plain and unmistakable testimony given above, which cannot possibly admit of any other construction than that it embraces all who were chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and before ordained that they shall walk in good works, and be holy and without blame before the heart-searching and re-in-trying God. And consequently, all who are so chosen and ordained of God are saved by grace, and not by any thing that is in any sense of themselves; we have next to consider:

Second. In what sense we are to understand that this salvation by grace is *through faith*.

1. The apostle Paul, in all his epistles, distinguished the two dispensations of law and gospel, the former as *of works*, and the latter as of faith. Hence we are to understand that salvation by grace comes to us through the gospel, and not through the law. For if a law had been given that could have given life, then verily righteousness should have been by the law. But such could not be the case; for by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God, or be holy and without blame before him in love. “For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect; because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,” etc.

2. Faith is defined by the Spirit of inspiration, as “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Hebrews 11:1).” The eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, is invisible to the sight or understanding of natural man; even those who were embraced in the electing purpose and predestination of God were by nature children of wrath even as others, and as destitute of ability to see, feel, or know, what God had laid up in store for them as any other of mankind; and the knowledge of their salvation comes to them through faith; by revelation of the Spirit to their faith; and their faith is, as we shall presently show, not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

Personally and experimentally, no man can have a knowledge of his calling and election of God until he is born of that Spirit whose fruit is faith. "All men have not faith," neither has any man faith until it is given to him; for our text declares that it is the "gift of God." Jesus Christ is the Author and finisher of it, and it is the faith of the Son of God. Therefore it is very apparent to those who have the faith of Jesus Christ, that their salvation by grace is through faith, but:

3. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." The hope of the gospel received by or through faith, is thus stated: – "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Titus 1:2)." In the purpose, predestination and promise of God, the salvation by grace of all his chosen people in Christ was secure and perfect from everlasting, and that eternal grace which reigned in our salvation was given to us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as God had chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world: "According to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Timothy 1:8-10)." This manifestation is made to and through the faith of the Son of God. When Christ appeared, and abolished death by his own death, or "through death destroyed him that had the power of death," and rising from the dead brought life and immortality to light, he finished transgression and made an end of sin for all his people. This he came to do, and his name was called Jesus because he should save his people from their sins. He put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; and we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Having thus saved us according to God's own purpose and grace which was given us in him before the world began, we are, and shall be, called with a holy calling in due time, according to the same purpose and grace. This salvation was finished and complete according to God's own purpose and grace when Jesus rose from the dead and brought our life and immortality to light in his resurrection life. The faith of the Son of God, when his soul was made an offering for sin, did see his seed, and prolonged his days, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands (Isaiah 53.10). Through the same faith of the Son of God in his members, the saving virtue of his blood and righteousness was anticipated, applied, and savingly received by Abel, Abraham, and all the Old Testament saints; and through the same faith of the Son of God all the redeemed of the Lord, under the present dispensation have, do, or shall receive a knowledge of this salvation, and they shall all know and confess that it is wholly of grace, through faith, and in no sense, in any wise or measure of themselves. "It is the gift of God;" which it could not be if obtained as a reward of merit, or in consideration of any thing done by us. For the apostle testifies that if it be by works, then it is no more by grace; and if by grace, then it is no more by works. It cannot possibly be of both, or partly of grace and partly of works. We are not left to guess on which of these two opposites our salvation rests; for we are so plainly told that it is of the one, and that it is not of the other. "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."

Infidel Arminians (we say infidel, because none who believe what God has said can be Arminians) in their desperate effort to pervert this Scripture, say that the grace by which we are saved is of God, but the faith through which we receive it is of ourselves; and that by faith as a condition, we may obtain the grace, and so secure the salvation; and this heaven daring logic finds a ready market in our guilty world. But suppose their logic good, would it not follow that if we procured the grace by our faith, that the whole, grace, faith and salvation would all be of ourselves, and not the gift of God? If, as they affirm, God has offered this salvation on certain terms to everybody, and some comply with the terms

and are saved, and others reject the terms and perish, then the declaration of our text would be falsified, and men who complied with the terms would have right to boast over those who rejected them. And would it not further prove that neither the grace nor the faith, nor even the blood of Christ, saved anybody? If the salvation of sinners depends on what they do to obtain it, then the apostle is found a false witness of God to us. But the Scriptures abundantly testify that the grace by which the saints are saved is the grace of God; therefore it is not of ourselves; and the faith through which we are saved is the faith of the Son of God, and the fruit of the Spirit, it therefore cannot be of ourselves. It is the gift of God. This grace by which we are saved, as we have proved by II Timothy 1:9, was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. And this faith through which we are saved is the faith of Jesus Christ, and fruit of his Spirit by which we are quickened and born again; and that it is through the faith of Jesus Christ that we receive the salvation which is by grace, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls (I Peter 1:9)."

In conclusion, let us review the array of the apostle's testimony in its connection. God the Father hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. This Christ in whom God has given all spiritual blessings, God has raised up from the dead, and hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. And you, the body of Christ, hath he quickened; for he is the life of his whole body – and he filleth all, in all the members of that body. So in his resurrection, he has brought life and immortality to light, and vitalized, or redeemed from death, the ministration of the law; and quickened, and raised them up together, and made them sit together in the heavenly places in him. That in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Thus the faith of Jesus Christ, through which salvation comes, looking down the dim vista of ages to come, holds in view all the millions of his redeemed, whom he has redeemed from death, and of whom he is the resurrection, and the life, although they are in themselves dead in sins. In the ages to come he will shew, exhibit, bring to light, all the members of that body over which God has given him to preside, and call them all by his grace, deliver them experimentally from sin, and bring them into the glorious light of the gospel; and cause them all to come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. The faith through which salvation by grace is received, holds the certain ultimate gathering of all things which are in heaven, or in earth, and down to the end of time, even in him.

We confidently believe no quickened child of God can hate or resist this doctrine of salvation by grace. Some may fail to understand it; but so far as it is opened to their understanding they are obliged to love it, and to rejoice in it. But the trouble is with many, if not all, to know that they are embraced in this great salvation. That assurance and consolation they can only receive through faith. When their faith prevails above their fears, then they set to their seal that God is true; and then they can and do rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. As the carnal Israelites could not enter into rest, because of unbelief, so when darkness and doubts, and unbelief from our fleshly nature prevails over our mind, we labor and toil through wearisome nights through which we pass; but when the eyes of our understanding are enlightened that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in his saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward

who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead; then, believing we rejoice, and enter into rest.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1867.

VIEWS ON THE NEW BIRTH.

Brother Beebe: – In looking over the “Signs” for July 15th, I see you have noticed the subject of brother J. F. Johnson’s thoughts on regeneration, which were new to me when he presented them; but I think your reasoning sound. As you are old and well versed in the points of doctrine, I will ask your opinion on the new birth. I was at an association in 1860, and there heard the idea advanced that as soon as a person is made to see that he is a sinner, he is born of the Spirit. I have always thought differently. It seems to me there must be a begetting before a birth and life, for Paul says we were dead in sins. Lazarus was dead and in his grave when Christ called him; and we believe that when he called he gave the power of life, and he came forth, bound hand and feet; and Jesus said, “Loose him and let him go.” We believe that in this birth we are passive; but we hear some say they might have been born again years before they were, as well as when they were. I have always believed that God calls, begets or quickens before there is any effort put forth by the dead sinner. And when he is quickened, which answers to conviction, he then begins with all his soul to pray for mercy; and when delivered from distress and guilt, he feels that he is in a wide place of broad rivers and streams, free from trouble and misery; and all this without his aid or ability. Almost every one has some way laid out in their mind; but when their deliverance comes, it is in a way they are not looking for; but it comes in God’s own way and time; and God’s way is always right. If we are born of the Spirit, then we are spiritual, and can discern the things of the Spirit. But I will quit, lest I weary you. Please give your views on the new birth, and oblige a brother in tribulation.

Charles Hunsacker.
Oak Point, Mo.
July 28, 1867.

Views on the New Birth: – Reply to Brother Charles Hunsacker: – When Christians confine their remarks to what they have experienced of the work of the Spirit in their deliverance from the power of darkness, and translation into the light and liberty of the sons of God, there is but very little occasion for any difference of opinion, or ground for controversy on the subject. All have to tell the same story and to attribute their change to the same boundless mercy and grace of God. Whatever may be the variation in circumstances, substantially their experience is the same. The thief in the agony of a painful and disgraceful death, and the proud Pharisee who was breathing threatenings and slaughter against the saints, differed widely in circumstances; but both could record their wonderful experience in the inspired words of the psalmist, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul (Psalm 66:16).” “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay,

and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God (Psalm 40:2,3).”

But in our discussions in regard to the metaphors and figures which are used in the Scriptures, there is more room for misapprehension, not only of the true nature or design of the metaphor, or of the views which our brethren may have advanced in regard to them. Thus when contemplating our passage from death unto life as a birth, some have, as in the instance referred to by our brother, made no distinction between the first manifestation of quickening power, by which conviction of guilt and ruin is fastened on the mind of an awakened sinner, and his sensible deliverance from wrath and condemnation, when the Savior is revealed and his blood and righteousness are applied for the remission of sin, and justification before God. In nature, a birth is the bringing forth into light and liberty that which was before begotten, conceived and quickened; and always preceded by travail and labor for deliverance.

In the spiritual application of the term, the children of God are born again, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The words which Jesus speaks in the calling of his children are spirit and they are life. The dead hear his voice, or his words, and they that hear are quickened. The first evidence we can have that we are quickened is to feel our guilty and justly condemned condition, which cannot be felt until quickened, and therefore is an evidence of life. This life produces a struggle for deliverance; and the deliverance when it comes is a birth. The quickened, living child, in conviction, is shut up in darkness until ushered into the light and liberty of the gospel. Deliverance from great trouble is figuratively called a birth in several instances in the Bible, as II Kings 19:3; Isaiah 37:9; also Galatians 4:19. Neither of these passages are speaking of what is called the new birth, or the first experience of the children of God in passing from death unto life, but they serve to show that a birth is always used figuratively to signify deliverance; but that which is born must first have an existence. Had the brother referred to at the association said that the quickening of the Spirit always precedes the first convictions of guilt, etc., we think he would have spoken more correctly, and indeed, that is probably what he meant.

We have not in this article attempted to treat at large on the whole subject of the new and spiritual birth of the children of God, but we have confined our remarks more particularly to what we have understood to be implied in the inquiries of brother Hunsacker. If what we have written shall be of any service to him or to any of the saints, we shall not have labored in vain.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1867.

MATTHEW 27:52.

Elder Beebe: – Please give your views, through the “Signs of the Times” on Matthew 27:52. “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose.” Your compliance with this request will oblige,

An Inquirer.

Milwaukie – May 19, 1867.

Reply: – We have no further light on this subject than what we derive from the literal reading of the text, and we fear that our views may fail to satisfy our inquiring correspondent.

The opening of the graves of the slumbering saints, and the resurrection of their bodies, are recorded in connection with all the other astonishing displays of divine power on that eventful occasion in demonstration of Christ's identity as the Son of God. These demonstrations, however spiritual in their import, were literal and apparent to the apprehension of the natural understanding of all who witnessed them; therefore when the centurion and they that were with him saw those things, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God."

We cannot doubt that the sun in the heavens ceased to shine from the sixth to the ninth hour; or that the earth quaked, and the rocks were literally rent, and that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. That these wonderful manifestations were literally made, none will dispute; and why then should we doubt that the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, literally.

That all these wonders, though literally performed, have a figurative and spiritual signification perfectly imperceptible to the natural mind of the natural men, we have not the smallest doubt; and that in their literal development they were perceptible to ungodly men is clear from the confession of the centurion and those that were with him. This was apparent from their consternation as well as from their confession, "Truly this was the Son of God."

We think it must be admitted that the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many, and literally and perceptibly to the centurion and his company, so far as witnessed by them; for it is distinctly so declared. What the centurion and they that were with him saw was what occurred at the time Jesus yielded up the ghost; but the resurrection of the bodies of many of the saints, their coming out of their graves and going into the Holy City was not until after the resurrection of our Lord: and this was witnessed only, so far as we are informed, by those in the Holy City, to the many to whom they appeared; these we presume were chosen witnesses. Now what became of these risen bodies we are not informed. Whether like those of Lazarus and the widow's son, they were subsequently remanded to their graves, or like the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, they were translated, or like the body of Moses, disposed of in a secret manner by the Lord, we have no information, and therefore judge that it is not proper for us to know. The testimony given we are bound to accept; and what God has seen best to conceal from us, we should leave with him, and cautiously avoid all vain speculations.

The Holy City in which these bodies of the saints appeared unto many we understand to be Jerusalem. Who these many were, and how the bodies appeared to them, we must leave just where the sacred record has left the matter.

But while we confess our inability to trace the literal bearings of our subject any farther than simply to accept and believe the statements as they are given to us in the faithful record, there is to our mind a sublime glory in what we perceive to be their spiritual import.

The three hours of darkness when the sun at mid day, as though utterly extinguished, ceased to shine upon the earth, answering to the three days and nights in which the Son of Man was in the heart of the earth, according to the sign of the prophet Jonah, shows the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, "And I will shew wonders in the heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come (Acts 2:19,20)." In his death, he who is the Sun, the fountain of that *life* which is

light, was turned into *death* or darkness; and in that period in which he dwelt among the dead, there was no other sun, or light to supply his place; for truly there is life, light and salvation in no other name. But as soon as the three hours, or days of darkness were fulfilled, the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings. Having in his death abolished death, so in his resurrection he brought immortality to light.

The quaking earth and rending rocks, responding to his dying groans, gives witness of the power of his atoning blood; which when and where applied, shall rend and break the obdurate and adamant hearts of those for whom he died. Nature convulses, stirs up volcanic fires, and earthquakes rock the world. All this portrays the quaking of our earthly nature, the upheaving of our mortal powers, when, resulting from an application of his death and sufferings to his people, the law with all its fiery power, produces a quaking of the soul, and the vast magazine of hidden fiery wrath, like the irrepressible power of an earthquake throws up to our astonished view the mountains of our guilt, and sin revives, and the sinner dies.

The veil of the temple, which represents the law which hid the ark, the mercy seat, the cherubim, and all the sacred things of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, from the congregation of Israel, was rent in twain; thus at once disclosing that way of life and salvation which the law had so long concealed. For that veil still remains untaken away from them that still read Moses. (See II Corinthians 3:1-18.)

The opening of the graves, spiritually considered, leads us to enquire how and by what power the graves were closed and barred upon us. "The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law." "Death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The challenge is given, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave (Psalm 89:48)?" The valley of dry bones which Ezekiel saw shows the utter impossibility of dead delivering themselves from the power of the grave (Ezekiel 37:1-4). "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave." "Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 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 (Ezekiel 37: 12,13)."

When divine justice had accepted Christ as the sacrifice for the sins of all his people, and laid on him the iniquities of us all, the doors of death and the grave were to them unbarred by his death; and he could say, as he said to the soldiers who came to arrest him, "If ye seek me, let these go their way." But although in his death he ransomed them from death, and canceled the demands of the law which had closed the grave upon them, yet their resurrection must be in the resurrection life and immortality of the Son of God; and in that, as in all things, he must have the pre-eminence; he must be the first fruits, the first begotten from the dead, the first born of every creature. Hence they could not, though the bars of death were removed and their graves opened at his death, come up out of their graves until after his resurrection. Dead with their crucified Lord, to their Adamic or mortal life, which is put away with the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; they are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should be raised up by the same power and glory of the Father, to walk in newness of life: as the children of the resurrection.

Those bodies of the saints which came out of their graves after Christ's resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many, beautifully exemplify or figuratively set forth the quickening of those who were dead in trespasses and sins, and their experimental deliverance from their graves when made alive by the Spirit, and born of the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. Those who have been thus quickened and brought out of their graves, in a spiritual sense, or in other words, taken

up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, have many of them appeared in the spiritual Jerusalem, the Holy City, and have there been seen by many of their kindred in Christ Jesus.

We might pursue this subject still farther, as we believe that all the wonderful events of that day when Jesus suffered and died on the cross, and which attended his resurrection, were designed to signify and represent the wonderous power and grace of God which has been subsequently manifested in our deliverance from wrath and bondage, and induction into the liberty of the sons of God: but what we have written we will submit for the present.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1867.

MILK AND MEAT.

In reading the excellent letter of brother Durand, as published in our last number, we have been led to a more close examination of those portions of the word wherein these figures are used, and we do most fully concur, and doubt not that all our brethren, on a full investigation of the subject will, in the conclusion that they were not intended to signify or teach that some portions of the gospel of Christ are compared to meat, and others to milk. For if the inspired writers had so designed they would have told us what part should be regarded as meat and withheld from babes; and what part as milk, and unfit for those of riper age. The ministers of Christ who are called to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, would surely need very special and particular instruction, or in the absence of such instruction they might do much mischief, by dealing to the tender ones of the flock some parts of the gospel too strong and solid for them to digest, and starve them by ministering such food as they cannot eat. Certainly if there is any part of the doctrine of Christ unwholesome or unfit to be eaten by any portions of the flock, such as would have a pernicious effect on them, it is highly important that we should know what it is. But the apostle Paul, for himself, declares most solemnly, and on a very solemn occasion, in his farewell address to the Elders of Ephesus, and those among whom he had labored long and faithfully, and whose faces he knew he should never see again, and called them to witness *how* he had kept back nothing, even in the face of persecutions, stripes and imprisonment. “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27).” Now as Paul at this time gave a solemn charge to the elders to take heed to themselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the church of God, would he on this occasion have declared that he had kept back nothing in his ministry, nor shunned to declare to them all the counsel of God, if he had designed to warn them against declaring all the counsel of God in feeding *all* the flock of God, over the which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers?

If it were true that any part of the doctrine of the gospel of Christ ought to be withheld from any portion of the church of God, we should have been thoroughly furnished as to what part we might conceal, and what part to exhibit.

It is a fearful thing to either add to or diminish from what God the Lord hath spoken. Hear the admonition given in the last chapter of the book of God. “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto

you *these* things in the churches (Revelation 22.16).” “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, [or as in the margin rendered, from the tree of life] and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly (Revelation 22.18-20).” “The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord (Jeremiah 23:28).”

The meaning and design of the apostles in using the figurative words milk and meat, the former for the weaklings, dwarfs, or babes, who, either from infancy and want of more experience, are unable to digest the truth, and the latter for those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil, teaches us, not that either Christ or his gospel is or can be divided. There is a difference in the capacity of the children of God to comprehend so as to feast upon the doctrine of God our Savior. Paul speaks of the Corinthians as being babes in regard to spiritual things, from their strong propensity to look back to the law of a carnal commandment. Their digestive organs had not been sufficiently exercised to comprehend the perfection of the gospel. And he told the Hebrews that when, for the time, they ought to be teachers, they were in need of one to teach them the first principles of the oracles of God, and therefore he had to treat them as babes, and feed them on milk.

Now let us examine these figures. What is meat? And what is milk? All the productions of the earth, every green herb, tree, etc., were given unto man to be meat for man to subsist upon. Man in his first estate being made of the dust of the ground himself, and man from his creation with fully developed natural powers, could at once eat and digest the strongest meat. And so also with all the beasts of the field; while they in their developed capacities could feed on the grass and herbs of the field, their young required to be supplied with milk. Well, what is the difference? Nature has provided for that portion of the animal creation which cannot in infancy, by reason of weakness, masticate and digest the productions of earth, that the mother’s or parents’ teeth and digestive organs shall masticate and prepare the same food on which the parent subsists, so as to suit the weaker capacity of the babes, or young; food so prepared is called milk. So whether in nature or in spiritual life, the babes live on precisely the same food as that which sustains the parent, from whose maternal organs the food is rendered suitable for the babe.

Now apply this figure to the saints, all of whom are born of incorruptible seed by the word of God. Jerusalem, which is above, which is free, is the mother of all the children of God. This Jerusalem means the church which is raised up together with Christ, in her gospel exaltation above the old Jerusalem. In the gospel church, as all the children are born of the incorruptible word of God must live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; and in the infancy of experience they are to desire the sincere milk of the word. To supply them with milk suited to their capacity, the church, which is the mother of us all, is supplied with gifts, by which the doctrine of the gospel is elucidated and adapted to the understanding of the babes of the family, or lambs of the flock. Not by selecting some portions of the doctrine and calling it milk, but by defining the whole, every word which cometh from the mouth of God, so as to make it plain to the feeblest of the saints. Thus in beautiful figures used in the Song of Songs, it is said to the church, “Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing;” etc. The teeth of the church are not only ornamental, but useful in masticating the food for the body. The gifts which God has placed in the church add greatly to her beauty, for they are even-shorn, as they come up from the washing, and are set in the church for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of

God. As in the perfectly organized body of Christ, God has set all the gifts as it has pleased him, there are teeth to masticate the food, and organs to so perfectly digest it, that its nutritious virtue is dispensed to every part. "For there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." A rich variety of figures, forming one perfect cluster, are used to illustrate the peculiarities of the church. Not only as a perfectly organized body, with teeth even-shorn to aid the body in the reception of its spiritual food, but as a mother, prepared with the breasts of her consolation, to supply her newborn babes with the sincere milk of the word. Special mention is made in the Song of Songs of the breasts of the church; her breasts are like towers, affording strength and security, comfort and safety to all the children of her maternal care. The church, or mother of us all, eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of Man. She lives on the bread which comes down from heaven, and on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, and she is thus prepared to impart through her organic gifts succor and food to the feeblest of her children. But the mother, in order to afford wholesome supplies to her children, must herself be fed only on wholesome food. The milk, to be the sincere milk of the word, must be wholly derived from the doctrine of God our Savior; it must be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and that defined and explained by the gifts in the church so that all may understand it, and realize the healthful virtues of it. Should any but the sincere milk be ministered to the feeble ones, they will still remain feeble and sickly.

Peter speaks of its suitableness for new-born babes, or infants in the divine life, and Paul speaks of those who being carnal in their propensities, when for the time they should be able to instruct or feed others, require to be instructed in the first principles of the oracles of God, and when for the time they have had hope in Christ they should be men, with fully developed minds, they are mere babes, and to be treated as such.

Practically, then, as the creatures of earth are to be fed and nourished by every vegetable production of the earth, every green herb, etc., so in our spiritual life received from and by the word of God, which by the gospel is preached unto us, we must be fed, nourished and sustained by every communication from heaven contained in the word which by the gospel is preached unto us.

The distinction made by the apostle between milk and meat for the saints is to impress us with the importance of defining, examining and instructing the feeble ones and babes so that the essence and virtue of the strongest food may be received by them. If there be some old members in the church whose senses or capacities by long experience are able to more fully comprehend the deep things of God, they are to bear the infirmities of the weak by employing their gifts for the mastication and digestion of the strong meat, for the benefit of the feeblest of the flock.

None of us have grown so strong as not to need the instruction of the apostles of Christ to teach us to observe all things which he has commanded us. In this sense they are the teeth for chewing our food, or breasts of the church for supplying us with the spiritual nutrition of the gospel. And all the gifts which God has bestowed on the church are also for the same purpose, that we may be helpers one of another.

How absurd then to suppose that there are portions of the Scriptures so full of instruction, so sweet and nutritious that the babes and weaklings of the flock must not taste them. Above all others they need to be strengthened and fed; and the strongest meat in the gospel, when duly defined, is the richest milk, and most wholesome food on which the little ones can feed.

The apostles have given example as well as precept for feeding the church of God. Paul says he has fed some of the children with milk; and his manner of doing this is clearly manifest in the record of his whole ministry; not by withholding from any of the saints any portion of the counsel of God; for he declares, as we have seen, that he had done no such thing; but by adapting his instructions to the

weakest capacity as well as to the strongest. In his own account of his manner he says: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you (I Corinthians 9:19-23)." Thus, in his ministry the apostle, whom we have as a pattern or example, adapted his ministry to all classes, capacities and conditions of the children of God, that he might *gain them all*, that is in the sense in which Christ says, "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." (See Matthew 18) Not a wit inferior to the very chief of the apostles, yet less than the least of all saints. Able to vie with the strongest and most gifted, yet to the weak, because he is weak; adapting himself to the condition of all the saints, just as the prophet Elisha did to the child of the Shunanimite, when "And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child (II Kings 4:34)." Thus making himself as small as the child, while in stature he was able to measure with the greatest of the prophets. So the apostle could make himself useful to any and to all the children of God. To those of riper age and stronger capacity he could speak as unto wise men, so that they could judge of what he said: but unto the weak, like a nursing father, he could make himself as weak, and use such language and figures, illustrations and words as they could comprehend. But be it remembered that in all his ministry, under no circumstance, did he ever shun to declare the whole counsel of God.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1867.

PROSPECTUS FOR VOLUME 36.

As the thirty-fifth year of our publication is now closing upon us, it is time to announce to our readers what are our prospects and designs for another year. With humble gratitude to the Sovereign Ruler of all events, we desire to record his goodness and mercy which have followed us all our days; and especially on this occasion would we render a tribute of praise and thanksgiving for his manifold favors to us in our connection with this periodical. With fear and trembling we commenced our editorial and publishing labors just as we were entering the prime and vigor of manhood, under very many discouraging circumstances, and in the face of most violent opposition, as the first, and for many years the only paper devoted to the Old School, or Primitive Baptist cause. Since we commenced our labors just one-half of the three score years and ten which are allotted to man have passed away, and in their rapid flight they have borne away by far the greater portion of those who were our companions and contemporaries at that time. A long list of the names of those who encouraged us in the beginning are now, alas! inscribed upon their tombstones, and their mortal remains now slumber with the silent dead; and why we are spared while so many have been called hence is only known to God; but whatever has been his purpose, we know that our unfeigned love and gratitude is due to him. But while we look around us in vain for those who were companions of our earlier days, to the praise of God be it

acknowledged we are not left without true and faithful friends, and loving brethren who have never failed to show themselves in our most trying straits. Today we have a greater number of able and devoted brethren and sisters, scattered throughout all the states and territories of our wide spread country, ready to contribute able communications to fill up and enrich our columns, than we have ever before had at any one time. The violent opposition we have encountered from time to time from avowed enemies, and still more annoying from professed friends, has been more than balanced by the true friendship, fellowship and cooperation of thousands, the faces of many of whom we have never seen in the flesh.

The circulation of our paper was seriously restricted, and its continuance imperiled by the late dreadful scenes of carnage in which our country has been involved, but for the last two years the way has been opened for a circulation in the Southern States, and we are now constantly receiving accessions to our subscription list from all quarters.

In view of our increasing circulation, and the increasing demands for enlarged facilities for a general correspondence, extending to all parts of our country and the Canadas, we propose to add four pages to each number of the “Signs” for the next year, beginning with the first day of January next. The paper to be the same form and size as at present, each number to contain twelve instead of eight pages; without any addition to the subscription price, and the postage, being by weight, will be no more than now. Not more than one page will be occupied with standing advertisements.

This new arrangement will add 50 percent to the amount of printed matter, and afford space for many valuable communications which have heretofore been excluded for want of room. And we flatter ourselves that our additional expense will be met by our increased subscription. As it will involve an expense to us of a large amount, may we not hope our brethren and all who are friends to the paper will use their influence to procure new subscribers, and forward their orders and remittances without delay.

Should our circulation during the year 1868 reach ten thousand, we will, if spared, at the commencement of 1869, issue the “Signs of the Times” weekly.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1867.

SHAKING HANDS.

In publishing the letter of Elder J. G. Williams in a former, and that of Elder I. N. Vanmeter in the present number, on the subject of shaking of hands while engaged in the public worship of God, we feel called on to give our own views upon the subject. Our Lord said to the Jews, “In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” From this rebuke we infer that divine authority is indispensable to an acceptable worship of God. The authority of God, unmingled with the traditions of men, must be observed and obeyed in every act of devotion, whether it be singing, praying or preaching his word. God has given us a law to govern us in all things pertaining to our faith and practice, and we should take heed that we be not chargeable, as were the Jews, of making void God’s law by our own traditions, or innovations. God is not the author of confusion. He is a Spirit, and they

that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. This is his *law*; and that we may serve him acceptably, we must serve him with reverence and godly fear. “For our God is a consuming fire.”

On the subject of shaking of hands in time of preaching or singing as complained of by brother Williams, brother Vanmeter says: “Now the question to be settled is whether those thus acting are prompted by mere fleshly excitement and natural human sympathy, or, whether they do not feel a higher and holier love than that of the flesh, and a fellowship unknown to the world. And farther, whether the practice occasionally followed by perhaps three-fourths of the churches of the West and South, of giving the hand of fellowship while singing, is contrary to the spirit and letter of God’s word.”

With becoming deference to the judgment of brother Vanmeter, and the practice of churches in the South and West, we understand that other, and by far more weighty, questions are involved, which require to be settled before we can feel at liberty to either endorse or participate in the practice to which brother Williams has objected. In our mind, at least, some of these questions have very little to do in settling the question of the right or wrong of the practice. Brother Williams is not understood to express a doubt as to the sincerity, or piety, of those brethren, to whose practice he objects; and certainly if we did not believe that our brethren had higher and holier motives than such as are *merely* fleshly, or that they did not feel a fellowship which is unknown to the world, we would not waste our ink and paper in trying to point out the wrong; for then it would be like casting pearls before swine, who would trample them under their feet and turn again and rend us. The Methodists, and other Arminians, depend much on those practices to work on the passions of the people, and by shaking and clapping of hands, shouting, and a confusion of sounds, produce a Babel of excitement which they call religion; and we had hoped that such fleshly and impulsive demonstrations were principally confined to the Arminians. But, with us, the question to be settled is, are these *antics* enjoined upon the true worshipers of the living God, by any precept or example found in his law? “To the Law, and to the Testimony.” If the law of Christ enjoins this sort of bodily exercise in worship, then not only three-fourths of the Baptists in the West and South, but all orderly Baptists everywhere are required to conform to it. And if on a careful examination we find that the law of Christ does not require it, we must conclude that there is no other authority than that of men; and we cannot teach the practice without teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, thereby proving that our worship is vain.

If it be said, it is not practiced as a command either of God or men, but in gratification of an impulsive feeling sanctioned by the practice of three-fourths of the churches, then are we not in our practice making void the law of Christ by our own traditions? Are we as worshipers of God at liberty to be governed by and yield obedience to our impulsive feelings, without regard to the divine rule? “His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.” It is called an unimportant and harmless indulgence. May not the same plea be entered for any other unlawful indulgence of our feelings? We say *unlawful*, for if there be no law requiring it, it must be without law, and therefore unlawful. Can those who thus “*indulge*” (as brother Vanmeter uses this word) in the practice claim with the Apostolic saints, “We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh”? Are we indeed convinced that the flesh profiteth nothing? Is it in this way of indulgence that we crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts?

The giving of the right hand of fellowship in an orderly manner, and on suitable occasions, was practiced by the apostles, but not while singing or preaching; and when it was given it was not to signify the unrestrained impulse of an individual, but it was to express the deliberate decision and fellowship of the whole church. We hope no brother on reflection will contend that these outbursts of

passionate feelings which impel a person to interrupt the minister of Christ while delivering a message from God by shaking hands, is in conformity with the apostles' manner of giving the right hand of fellowship. Where in this shall we find harmony with either the letter or spirit of the word? As we before said, if the practice be according to the letter and spirit of the word, then all the saints should practice it, and all who are led by the Spirit would; but if it is not required of all the saints, it is required of none. It is either required by the letter and spirit of the word or it is contrary to both, and should be rejected as an innovation.

Brother Vanmeter says: "If it is a weakness in those who sometimes feel the power of Christian fellowship so strong as to wish to manifest it to their brethren in this way, can you not, my dear brother, bear with the infirmity of the weak?"

It is rather begging the question to pronounce this impetuous torrent of feeling *the power of Christian fellowship*. Will not the power of Christian fellowship allow those who are under it to behave orderly in the house of God? Or do none feel and know that power but those whose animal passions are thus irrepressible? We do not say that those who have thus indulged feel not the power of Christian fellowship; but we dispute that this disorderly course expresses any such power; for the practice is by far more common in those synagogues of Satan where Christian fellowship was never known than in the assemblies of the saints of God. And the enthusiasms produced by the practice is about the same in the theatre, circus, ball-room, or meeting-house. It cannot therefore be claimed for it that it is a scriptural expression of the power of Christian fellowship. And as to our regarding it as a weakness and infirmity which stronger brethren are to bear with, this appeal is rendered the less potent by the fact disclosed by brother Vanmeter, that "some of the most able and firm defenders of the faith of God's elect in the West and South have indulged in this practice," including himself and perhaps three-fourths of the churches. The plea of weakness seems rather lame. Is it not to be feared that the weak and confiding are misled by those whom they regard as able and firm, and look up to as ensamples to the flock?

From our own personal observation for more than half a century, we know that multitudes have been drawn into our churches by such enthusiastic demonstrations as appeal to the sympathetic passions of the flesh, who when the paroxysm has abated have required the same kind of excitement to retain them in the churches. Not being born of the word they have no relish for the sincere milk of the word, but a constant lusting after fleshly excitement. Such children of excitement have always annoyed the children of the free woman by objecting to the solid doctrine of the gospel, for which they have no appetite, and are always ready to patronize such doctrine and practice as will please the flesh and swell their number.

We do not understand brother Williams to object to a friendly and brotherly recognition on meeting or separating, by a friendly grasp, or shaking of hands.

Brother Vanmeter says: "Some *indulge* in the kiss of charity." For this they have apostolic precept and example, and to the practice we have no objection, provided they do not extend the *indulgence* beyond the apostolic rule. But let the practice be restricted to the decorum of gospel charity. Should the kissing *indulgence* be extended so far as to interrupt the public worship of God, and the brethren and sisters should feel impelled to kiss each other while singing, praying, or preaching, doubts might arise whether such impulsion were not induced by passion rather than by charity, which vaunteth not in iniquity.

We were sorry to learn through brother Vanmeter's letter that there were any Baptists in the range of his knowledge who refuse to obey any command of our Lord Jesus Christ because commanded but once. Is it possible? Among all the delinquents we have ever met, we never met one who gave such a reason for

their disobedience to the commands of Christ. We hope for the honor of the cause that the instances in his knowledge are but few.

Brother Vanmeter thinks the practice of shaking hands, for which he pleads, may be carried too far. But who is to decide to what extent any unauthorized, unscriptural practice may be carried with propriety? If the practice be good and right, let it go its whole length; if unlawful and evil, nip it in the bud.

Let no expression in the foregoing article be construed as uttered in disrespect or bitterness to brother Vanmeter, or the churches and brethren who differ with us on the subject of our discussion; for we write in sorrow and grief rather than in a censorious mood. Our own personal knowledge of what disorders and distresses have come into the church by adhering to fleshly passions and fleshly sympathies, makes us earnest in our appeals to those whom we love and esteem as the excellent ones of the earth, with whom is all our delight. We entreat them, in the words of the beloved disciple, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1867.

INFANT SALVATION.

Elder Beebe: – Will you give your views on the subject of what is usually called Infant Salvation, or on what Bible grounds they are saved. There is much said on the subject here, but I desire to know what are your views. If I know my own heart, I am your

Well Wisher.

Reply: – The Bible, as we read and understand it, shows but one way of salvation for any of the fallen sons of Adam, and that is by and through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by him. He is the only Mediator between God and men, and independent of his mediation no sinner, young or old, can possibly be saved; for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. As it is written, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." God's method of saving sinners is by grace; 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," etc.

Every principle and every provision involved in God's way of salvation is alike applicable to all who are saved, whether young or old. All who are saved by grace are saved from sin, death, and hell; Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance – to save that which was lost. As all have sinned, so condemnation and death have passed upon all, and none who are condemned by the righteous law of God can be delivered from sin, death and wrath, only by the blood and righteousness of him who bore their sins in his own body on the tree.

All for whom he gave himself a ransom are redeemed from the condemnation, wrath and dominion of the law, and all such are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. By his one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart, being sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called.

Redemption from sin, and from the curse of the law of God is not all that the gospel reveals of the grace of God in the salvation of his people; for if it were possible to remit all our sins, that alone would not make us spiritual, nor qualify us for communion and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. To meet the stern demands of God's eternal justice every jot and tittle of the law is required to be fulfilled, and every particle of its penalty endured and cancelled. This being fully, finally and forever accomplished by the holy life, bitter death and sufferings of him on whom the iniquities of all his people were laid, all who were thus redeemed, set free from sin, wrath and condemnation, were prepared to be partakers of the resurrection life and immortality of their risen Savior. This spiritual eternal life and immortality which was with the Father (I John 1:2), was given to those whom Christ came to redeem in him before the foundation of the world. See I John 5:11,12 and Ephesians 1:4. And this spiritual, immortal, eternal life which is hid with Christ in God is implanted in his redeemed people, and they are brought unto a personal reception and experience of it when they are quickened and born of the Spirit. Hence the indispensable necessity of our being born again; for "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Even though a man or child were redeemed from the curse of the law, yet that redeemed vessel of mercy must be quickened with spiritual life before he can see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit of God. Therefore the Savior has said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

This doctrine applies alike to all who are saved. None who are not lost can be saved. None but sinners are redeemed. None but the redeemed are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And none others shall reign with Christ in glory.

We can make no distinction, for the Bible makes none between infants and adults.

If infants are not sinners in the eye of the divine law, they cannot die; for "the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," for sin is the transgression of the law, and the penalty of sin provided by the law is death. All the human family were not only sinners and transgressors of the law of God from their earliest infancy, but a long time before they were born of the flesh; for we are expressly told that as soon as sin entered into the world, and death by sin, that death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, and this was before a son or daughter of Adam had been born. If we of the present day and generation were not sinners when Christ died for us, how could our sins have been laid on him? "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Romans 5:8,10)." If then we were sinners and enemies to our God when Jesus bore our sins upon the cross, how can it be denied that we were conceived in sin, born in sin, and were sinners in our nature, from the time our nature became defiled with guilt in Adam? Our earthly, depraved nature *is* Adam, in us, and in it all have sinned; not only all who have been and all who are now upon the earth, but all of Adam's posterity that are yet unborn. In Adam we all sin, and in Adam we all die. Where then shall we make a discrimination in favor of infants, or any other class? Are they not all mortal? Do they not all die? And is not death the wages of sin?

Having, as we trust, shown by irrefragible testimony that all who are capable of dying, or that are mortal, or that death has dominion over, are sinners, and that there is but one way or name given under heaven whereby sinners can be saved, we will now endeavor to relieve our Well Wisher's mind in

regard to the perfect suitableness and adaptation of God's method of salvation to infants, and to all classes of men, women and children who are chosen unto salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It will be found on a careful examination of this subject that the doctrine of the gospel, as held and preached by all consistent and sound Old School or Primitive Baptists, is the only doctrine which, if true, will admit the possibility of the salvation of infants who die in infancy. Let us see The Mother of Harlots, and most of her daughters, hold, or profess to hold, that infants are made "members of Christ, heirs of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of God," by baptism, and that sprinkling or *rantizing* is baptism. But Christ, the Eternal Judge, whose decision is final, declares that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and that none can enter it except they be born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the most heaven-daring contradiction of all divine testimony to the contrary, they assert that the children of believers (that is, believers of their unscriptural doctrines) are in their fleshly birth partakers of the faith of their parents, and have a right to baptism and membership in the pales of the church.

1. If we suppose for argument's sake that this theory were a true and faithful statement of God's method of saving infants, it would involve a necessity for a different way of salvation for infants from that provided for adults. Whereas the God of heaven declares there is but one way.
2. It would palpably contradict the declaration of the Holy Ghost wherein it is affirmed that salvation is alone by grace, and as positively said that it is not of works. Not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy.
3. If their doctrine be true, then all infants who are not sprinkled are lost, for this theory makes works, and not grace, effectual in salvation.
4. An infant, dying with no other passport to the skies than the wet finger of a priest or prelate snapped or rubbed on its little unconscious face, according to this theory, passes into heaven, to grow up there in all the elements of a carnal, unrenewed, human nature; but as all the joys of God's right hand are purely spiritual, none who are not born of the Spirit can participate in or enjoy them.

But it is sufficient for us to know that this anti-christian theory, though a main pillar on which Babylon rests, is not only without the least particle of support in the Scriptures, but in direct contradiction of all that God has taught in his holy word upon the subject. We feel fully warranted by the sacred record which God has given to testify, in the face of all the sprinkling tribes of anti-christ, that upon this theory it is impossible for a single infant or adult to be saved.

Nor is there any other doctrine, except that alone which is held by us Old School Baptists, that can possibly save an infant.

Suppose we try the Arminian heresy, which claims that God has made provisions for the conditional salvation of everybody, but for the positive, unconditional salvation of nobody. All, according to this theory, who will accept the terms, and comply with the conditions, shall be saved if they will hold out faithful till they get to heaven. Allowing this abominable heresy to be true, what power has the unconscious infant of an hour, a day, or even a year, to consider the propositions, comply with the terms, close in with the overtures, or strike the bargain?

Nothing can be more certain than the conclusion, if the salvation of any class is based on conditions, and the conditions are such as those to whom they are made are unable to comply with, that salvation on any such terms is impossible. To avoid this difficulty, a very large and learned portion of the Arminian Conditionalists profess to believe that although the infant cannot comply with the terms of salvation while in infancy, their parents, or sponsors in what they falsely call *baptism*, can perform the

conditions for them, until they become old enough to assume the responsibility for themselves. Should parents, or god-fathers and god-mothers, fail to do what they pledge themselves to do, the contract is broken, and the infant is lost for the sins or unfaithfulness of his securities; but if they faithfully perform, and the infant is saved, his salvation is effected by his sponsors, and not by our Lord Jesus Christ. But as God himself declares that “He is God, and beside him there is no Savior,” it is impossible for any infant or adult to be *saved* only by God himself.

Others there are who seeing this difficulty and wishing to avoid it, assert that Christ, in the atonement made by him, removed all original sins and therefore all infants are born pure and holy, and dying in that infant purity, go to heaven, not as sinners saved by grace, but because they are born holy, and die in a state of innocence. This theory seems so plausible that it is accepted and relied on by thousands, and this class are so wedded to their delusion that they will denounce and charge any who deny this theory as consigning all who die in infancy to hell. But the fallacy of this doctrine is at once exposed by the undeniable fact that infants die, and death is always the evidence of sin. None but sinners can die. Because of the sinfulness of our fleshly nature, even Christians must at the appointed time lay off the earthly house of their mortal tabernacle.

We may examine all the theories of men upon the subject of infant salvation which have ever been propagated, and not one of them all can show a possibility of saving a single infant, all are not only without scriptural support, but all are in opposition to the direct testimony which God has given in the Scriptures.

After all the false charges against the Old Order of Baptists of preaching infants in hell, it will be found that the doctrine of the Old School or Primitive Baptists is the only doctrine which provides for the certain salvation of either infants or adults. The doctrine of the Bible, as held by us, is that “Salvation is of the Lord,” and that “God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.” And the salvation of our God, being unconditional, and wholly of grace, is perfectly adapted to the helpless state and condition of infants, idiots, or insane persons. It is readily admitted by us that the infant is totally incapable of doing anything to procure his own salvation; and it is affirmed by us that the adult sinner is equally helpless and as powerless, and perfectly passive in his salvation, as the merest infant is. Instead of the infant being required to attain to years of maturity to assume the responsibility and meet the supposed terms, the oldest sinner must be converted and become as a little child, or he can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.

But let it be understood that neither adults nor infants can see or enter the kingdom of God without first being “born again.” This new, spiritual birth, which is an indispensable prerequisite, and which alone can qualify any, young or old, to enter the kingdom of God, cannot be effected by the power of men. Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God. God himself must be the author of that birth, by which we are brought into his family as sons of God. Born, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. In this spiritual birth, as in our natural birth, that which is born is passive. It can no more be produced by any power or effort of ours than our first creation could have resulted from our own wills or works. If by any effort of ours we could have produced our first or second birth, we should have been our own fathers, and not the children of God. If we are born of God, it is because, as the Scriptures testify, that, “Of his own will begat he us, by the word of his power.” This is the doctrine of the new birth, as taught in the Scriptures, and how preposterous to say that an adult has more power to produce it, or that an infant has less, when if the birth be of God both old and young are perfectly passive; and if it be not of

God it can bring us into no relation to God, nor secure to us any birth-right privileges in the house of God, nor make us heirs of God, nor joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The notion that infants go to heaven without being born again, or on the ground of infant innocence or irresponsibility, is a contradiction of the express declaration of the Savior. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," even if it were ever so pure, it would still be flesh, and not spiritual; the infant taken to heaven, if that were possible, in its fleshly nature, would cry after fleshly enjoyments; it would still be fleshly in all its propensities, and without spiritual capacity to enjoy God, or heaven, or spiritual things. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

As without an earthly birth we could never have seen the earth, or the things of this natural world, so without being born of the Spirit we could neither see or know the things of the Spirit. The natural man, the subject only of a natural birth, however wise, or prudent, or learned, 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. None can have spiritual discernment until they are born of the Spirit.

Infants cannot be saved merely because they die in infancy; there is no virtue in their mortality to save them. We have shown that their mortality proves conclusively that they are sinners by nature, and although they have not developed the depravity of their fleshly nature, they are nevertheless sinners. And as sinners they must be redeemed, washed, cleansed, and born again, made spiritual; and as this is the work of God, in which the subject is helpless and passive, it is perfectly adapted to the state of the helpless infant, and also to the helpless adult; and the promise of this salvation is unto you, who are quickened and pricked in your hearts, as were those at Pentecost, to whom these gracious words were spoken, "and to your children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Whether all that die in infancy are redeemed, and born of God, and prepared for immortal glory or not, we are not prepared to say; for God has not revealed that secret to us, and we have no light on the subject, except what God has revealed in his word; but certain we are that if they are not, their living on earth a thousand years would have no effect to change their destiny. All that the Father gave to Christ shall come to him, and shall never be cast out, whether they die in infancy or old age. Whom our God foreknew, at whatever age or condition, them he did predestinate, and call, and justify, and glorify. It was the will of the Father that of all whom he gave to Christ, none should be lost. And he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. It is also the will of our adorable Redeemer, for he says, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," etc.

It has not pleased God to inform us whether all who die in infancy are saved, for then we might on that subject walk by sight. Nor did it please God to tell Abraham that he would certainly prevent the actual sacrifice of his darling Isaac, but kept the secret from him for the trial of his faith. How meaningless would have been the offering if Abraham had been told that an angel of deliverance should descend from heaven for the rescue of Isaac, so that the lad should not die. We are instructed by this and many other lessons to trust in God. If he calls away our infants before they are able to give us any evidence of their spiritual state, shall we murmur and distrust him? If we ourselves are reconciled to God, our faith will rather lay hold and rest upon the seal of God's foundation, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our faith must be tried by all the afflictions our Holy Father sees fit to lay upon us. It would be folly in us to think ourselves better qualified to retain our infants, or that we could do better for or by them. Having all confidence in God, and no confidence in the flesh, we should with due submission bow to

his will, knowing as we do that our God doeth all things well, we cheerfully commit all to his disposal, who said, “suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1867.

THE NEW YEAR AND THE NEW VOLUME.

In entering upon the labors of the new year, we sincerely hope we have the best wishes and devout prayers of our long tried and faithful friends and patrons for success in our attempts to make our publication more useful in the future than it has been in the years which are past. Thirty-five years of constant labor in this field of our calling has, we trust, convinced us of our need of divine support, and our dependence on God for every requisite qualification to edify, instruct, admonish, exhort and comfort the saints of the Lord, either in the pulpit or through the press. Our ministerial labors have not been less on account of the time and labor devoted to the publication of the “Signs of the Times”. Whilst engaged in publishing this paper, we have traveled more extensively into the different and distant parts of our wide-spread country than we probably should have done were it not for acquaintance formed through our publication with brethren in distant parts. But while our preaching labors have been comparatively local, we have had the privilege of addressing “the saints scattered abroad,” and of receiving communications from them during the whole time. Twice in each month for thirty-five years, we have sent out our paper containing communications and epistles of love from brethren and sisters in all parts, and to those in all parts of the country.

So general a correspondence of the children of God could scarcely fail to comfort, benefit, and edify the readers of our periodical; and that they have been blessed to this end has been abundantly attested by many thousands of the saints.

In preparing to enter upon the new year and the new volume, we were at some loss whether to reduce the subscription price of the paper, which now, from our extensive and increasing circulation, we could do without loss to ourself, or to supply our subscribers with more reading matter without increasing the cost. We, after advising with our brethren, determined on the latter course, and shall in this new volume supply one half as much more matter as formerly. This will increase our expense nearly fifty percent; but it will give room for many communications of great worth which have hitherto been kept back for want of room for insertion.

Our present facilities for publishing are, as far as needed for our purposes, equal to any printing house in the States, and one paper well sustained will much better meet the interests and desires of our brethren at large than a greater number of papers, for at least two important reasons:

First. The effect of several papers would circumscribe the range of correspondence to certain localities, whereas one paper will spread them to every part of the country, and a general interchange of sentiments will tend to a greater degree of union and Christian love and fellowship.

Secondly. The greater the circulation of a paper, the cheaper it can be published, and consequently the greater amount of reading can be supplied for less expense to the readers.

Having already occupied our position as publisher of the “Signs of the Times” for fully one half of the three-score years and ten allotted to man on the earth, we feel a consciousness that the time of our departure from the field of our labor is not very far distant, when another will be required to take our place, we can speak on this subject with less embarrassment than we could in earlier periods, and at times when there were other periodicals of the same profession in the field.

It is well known that ours was the first paper ever published in our country devoted exclusively to the cause of the Old School or Primitive order of Baptists, and that, although its circulation has been restricted, and its publication embarrassed from time to time by a number of new publications of the same profession, that ours is the only one that has been continued when attended with pecuniary loss to their proprietors.

This year we try the experiment of giving twelve pages in each number instead of only eight, and at the rate of two dollars a year, as formerly, to be paid in advance. Should we be sustained, we shall hope at no distant day to issue our paper every week at the same price. And at all events we shall try to keep up with the liberality of our patrons by furnishing them with all that we can afford for the amount, and with more, we think, than can be afforded by any other establishment in the States.

As to the doctrine and order to which our paper is pledged, our record is with our brethren. As in thirty-five years we have never departed from any item contained in our original prospectus, we are sure our brethren will entertain no serious apprehensions of a departure at so late a period of our life. But we are not our own keeper, and if left of the Lord to our own feeble judgment or ability, we should surely fall. In defense of what is generally regarded by all Old School or Primitive Baptists as the doctrine of the Bible, and the faith which was once delivered to the saints, we have endured a great amount of opposition, reproach and persecution from avowed enemies, and also from professed friends. But having obtained help of the Lord, we continue to the present time and feel disposed even now to adopt the words of the apostle, “But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

While we would encourage a temperate and brotherly discussion of all subjects which are of vital interest to those who are of the household of faith, we are opposed to all vain speculations which gender strife and discord among the people of God. We are under a solemn charge to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints; but we are forbidden to strive for mastery, or for the gratification of carnal ambition. Letters on Christian experience, wherein the writers give account of God’s dealings with them in his Spirit’s work in their hearts, however simply written, scarcely ever fail to afford sweet comfort and satisfaction to the saints. Admonitions and exhortations to the children of the kingdom, when addressed in harmony with the Spirit and the word, are of great importance, but in all our communications we must recognize and accept the Scriptures of truth as the unerring standard by which all our words and actions, as well as the spirit of them, are to be tested.

As editor and publisher, all communications are necessarily submitted to us as we are held responsible to our brethren for the matter published in our columns. Brethren who submit their communications must not feel hurt if we suppress such of them as in our judgment would not tend to edification. Or should we insert them, or any of them, with our objections to anything which they embrace, no brother or sister should be hurt with us, as it is a duty incumbent on us as editor, and this duty we desire to perform according to our best ability, without partiality or prejudice.

The paramount object of every writer, including the editor, should be the edification of the saints, and the glory of God, therefore if any of us should inadvertently express any sentiment or idea which is not sustained by the Scriptures, especially should such sentiment or idea be in conflict with the word of truth, it should be our desire that the error might be detected and exposed, so as to prevent any harm from it to the children of God.

With our enlarged facilities for publishing, we shall require the cooperation of our brethren and sisters to furnish us with suitable matter. Unlike all other publications of the day, our paper is filled chiefly, and almost exclusively, with original articles, as there is very little contained in the religious magazines and newspapers of the age suitable for our columns. We hope to be kept advised of the state and condition of our churches and associations, and also of our brethren and friends of the cause of truth in all sections of the country, that we may be enabled to meet the constant enquiries of those who, like the psalmist, are praying for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem.

We tender our grateful acknowledgements to those dear brethren who have so greatly assisted us by their communications and exertions to procure subscribers, collect payments, and forward remittances, and hope they will not be weary in well doing; and we hope that all who feel an interest in the dissemination of truth and opposition to error, will use their influence in our behalf. We shall need the aid of all, and we appeal especially to our brethren in the ministry to act in our behalf as agents for the "Signs," in procuring subscribers, and forwarding remittances; but we rely also on the exertions of all the friends of the cause in which we are engaged. We believe that with reasonable effort our circulation could be doubled, and we enabled to issue our paper every week. Will our brethren and friends make the effort?

Middletown, N. Y.
January 1, 1868.

REPLY TO "A STRANGER."

The earnest appeal of our correspondent for our judgment and advice in regard to her case is substantially the same as that to which we replied in the 18th number of our last volume; and her queries concerning doubts, glimmering hopes, distressing fears, and deep anxiety for instruction, are the expression of what is pent-up in the secret recesses of many hearts. How many with burdened hearts and contrite spirits are in the same strain, breathing their prayers to the Great Shepherd of Israel, in the language of the spouse in Song 1:7? "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turnest aside by the flocks of thy companions?" And failing to receive a satisfactory answer, some of them have appealed to us, as did the restless spouse to the watchmen, saying, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth (Song 3:3)?"

We have not time to answer all the inquiries of our correspondents by private epistles; nor do we deem it necessary to do so; as in answering one through our columns we answer many. Of course, we do not assume to be able to do more than give such light and counsel as with our limited ability we may be able to do; and it will ever be found as stated in the Song, the inquiries must go beyond the watchmen for light and comfort. But when appealed to, as in the present case, in the childlike spirit of our

correspondent, who regarding us as a father in Israel, presuming that our long experience has qualified us in some measure for feeding the lambs of the flock; although conscious of our lack of paternal wisdom, we do not feel willing to withhold from them such light as we trust the Lord has given us for them. But we would at the same time remind them of the divine direction, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him (James 1:5).” It may however be given through those gifts which God has bestowed on his church for the profit of all her members. But to attend to the letter of “A Stranger”:

It is written as a strictly private or confidential letter; but as it is anonymously signed, the real name and place of the writer is only known to us; and it will, we think, not be regarded as a breach of confidence in us to publish the letter with our reply.

The exercises of the children of God should not be regarded as the private property of any one. Whatever may be the measure of the Spirit received, it is given “to profit with all.” That is, with all who are spiritual; but as the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and cannot know them, they cannot be profited by them. But spiritual gifts and spiritual exercises may be profitable to all who are born of and taught by the Spirit of God. Our correspondent would no doubt be greatly profited if she were informed of the same exercises of which she speaks, as they are felt and experienced by thousands; and thousands, all of whom may think their own secret exercises peculiar to themselves, and all such will probably be profited by a perusal of what she has written of hers. It is consoling to the tempted and troubled ones to know that those in whom they have great confidence are tried and tempted just as they themselves are; and it is still more cheering to know that the Great High Priest of our profession was also tempted in all points as his people are, and that he knows the feelings of our infirmities, and knows how to succor the tempted.

From early childhood you have seen a beauty in Christianity, and, at times, earnestly desired an evidence of your election in Christ Jesus. This part of your experience is just like our own; for as far back in childhood as we can remember anything, our own mind was exercised in the same way; and at the first time we remember of feeling a melting, confiding emotion, which came with such relief to our mind, and enabled us to confidently rest that, vile as we saw and felt ourself to be, there would come a day before leaving this mortal state that God would for Jesus’ sake pardon our sins and make us a Christian. Although unable to regard this relief as an evidence of a new birth; from that hour we saw a beauty in Christianity, and a desire to be an humble Christian; and waited anxiously, and prayed fervently for the time to come when we might feel that pungent conviction for sin, and distress of soul, which we heard others speaking of. For some three or four years we continued in this condition. Unable to realize that we had passed from death unto life, we were equally unable to bring back upon ourself the terrors of the law, or the fear of hell which we had before felt. We have met with very many who have been exercised in the same way, and who for many years have been unable to rejoice in hope, or quite despair through fear. It is not infrequently the case with the heaven-born children who by the light of life and truth, and the love of holiness which God has implanted within them, to see so much depravity in themselves, and such as they suppose Christians do not feel or have, that they are led to doubt and discredit all the evidences of a new and spiritual birth that they have ever had. And others, because they cannot tell the time when, place where, and manner how they were first convicted, and delivered, or fully to rely on such other evidences as they have, like Rachel, refuse to be comforted. It would be well for all such to examine the manner of evidence the Scriptures warrant them to rely upon. “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself (I John 5:10).” Observe, he is not himself the witness; but he hath the witness in himself. The Spirit of life, by which he loves God, loves holiness, loves the people, the laws and ordinances of the house of God, and desires to dwell in them;

these bear witness with his spirit that he is born of God. This witness *he hath*; he has not to go back to look for it in past experience; nor to find it in comparing himself with what he supposes others are, nor yet is he to rely upon himself as a competent witness to himself. His own testimony would be as fickle and vacillating as are his frames and feelings. A witness that contradicts his own testimony would be ruled out of court. Christians are not their own witnesses, for they cannot safely rely upon their own testimony: therefore those who “measure themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise (II Corinthians 10:12).” But while we are not to depend on our own testimony, our judgment, or frames, we may implicitly rely on the witness which we have within, if we believe on the Son of God. That Spirit which beareth witness with our spirit is the witness; and it is the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive; and its testimony is true. Its dwelling in us is evidence that we are born of God and are not of the world; because the world cannot receive it. And wherever it dwells, its fruits are the same; they are “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,” etc. These are not the fruits of the Christian’s fleshly nature; but the fruits of the indwelling Spirit which is given him, and of which he is born again, while that which is born of the flesh, even in the Christian, is flesh; and the flesh will always war against the Spirit.

If this Spirit dwells not in us, it is not possible that we should really love God, or holiness, or hate sin; for love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God. If then we love the saints, love the truth, and love the order and ordinances of the Church of God, God himself testifies in us by his Spirit, that we are born of him. “We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.” This is not speculative, it is the word and testimony of God that cannot lie.

“Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness.”

When a child of God arraigns his hope before the bar of carnal reason, it is impossible from such a court to obtain a true decision; for human reason is incompetent to know or appreciate the testimony in the case. All the evidence a Christian can have that is reliable must be spiritual testimony; and what can reason know of spiritual things? God’s Spirit witnesses with our spirit, not with our reason or natural intellect. The revelation of spiritual things is only made to the faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, and is consequently spiritual; and whenever so revealed, it is invariably resisted by all our carnal powers; and every inch of the ground of our spiritual evidence is disputed by the law of our members which wars against the law of our mind. The carnal, or fleshly, mind is enmity against God: but the spiritual mind of the Christian is the mind of Christ. How can they possibly agree?

Let us suppose Peter and John, submitting the question of the validity of their hope, is to be decided by reason. The same objections are urged which are brought to bear against the hope of many at this day. Peter and John may say, We were thoughtless and unconcerned when Jesus came and bid us follow him. We felt an irresistible attraction, and left our fishing boat, and our father Zebedee, and followed Jesus because we could not help it. We were satisfied that Jesus had called us until we heard how Saul of Tarsus was called, and then we began to compare our experience with his, and were greatly alarmed because on careful investigation we failed to find that we had ever heard a voice from heaven as Saul did, neither were we smitten down to the ground, nor did we see a light brighter than the sun, nor were we made blind, nor were our eyes so enlightened at any time as though scales had fallen from them. Human reason would decide against Peter and John and in favor of Paul.

But Paul is led in turn to compare his evidences with those of Peter and John. Alas! For me! I am not worthy to be reckoned with them, or to be called an apostle. I am as one born out of due time, and am

the least of the apostles, for I persecuted the church of God; and am even less than the least of all saints.

We do not mean to represent the apostles as reasoning thus, but merely to show that if they had conferred with flesh and blood, or yielded to carnal reasoning, they could have found as much ground for doubts and fears as any of the saints of the present day have.

Our correspondent reasons, because her parents were devout Christians, her father a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus, and her surroundings from infancy such as were calculated to inspire her with a feeling of veneration for religion, and especially as she has heard of some who were suddenly arrested, and more deeply alarmed and terrified, and more suddenly delivered than herself; might she not attribute all the religious exercises she has had to natural causes? It is thus the unbelief of all the children of God, which in the flesh will at times assail their faith and hope, and urge them to deny to themselves the comfort, and to God the glory of what he has done for them.

While we readily admit all the force and influence that can properly be claimed for tradition, and association with relatives and earthly friends whom we regard as devout and sincere Christians, we cannot believe that any such influence can produce in any unquickened child, either a hatred of sin or love of holiness. It cannot implant the fear of the Lord in any heart, nor cause one to feel and know his lost and helpless condition, or to see the justice of God in the penalties of his holy law, or really to desire to be associated with the people of God.

Our trembling friend has longed for a sudden arrest by divine power, that she might know that she had such convictions as others have had; but cannot perceive that these very convictions, such as others have had, have followed her from early childhood. And such convictions too as clearly demonstrate that she has passed from death unto life. It is not possible that any one should see, and feel, and mourn their vileness, and see a beauty in Christianity, love the people of God, love his word, his ordinances, and his cause, if they have not passed from death unto life.

Much comfort is lost to many of the children of God by an unwarranted research after the manner and circumstances of first entering into life. In all the examples given in the Scriptures, we do not find a single instance recorded of the primitive saints going back to their first experience for the present evidence that they were born of God; nor were they ever required, in order to gain the fellowship of the people of God, to the when, and where, and how, they were first arrested, how deep were their convictions, or how suddenly they were delivered. Jeremiah speaks of the time of wormwood and of gall, which his soul still remembered, which inspired hope; but the hope so inspired was that as God had delivered him from bitter trials before, he would not now forsake him in his deep distress. Paul on several occasions related the remarkable circumstances of his conversion from a persecuting Saul, breathing slaughter against the saints, to an apostle of the Lamb; but never as a reason of a present hope for life and salvation, nor as the ground on which he claimed the fellowship of the saints. These relations in every instance were made when standing before carnal rulers and judges, on trial as a prisoner. Those who came to John's baptism were required to exhibit fruits meet for repentance. Those on the day of Pentecost gladly received the gospel; gave evidence that they were born again by their joyful reception of the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. The Eunuch was required to declare his faith in the Lord Jesus; and thus in every case we shall find the evidence of being in a quickened state was required to be an evidence in them at the time. It was not said, "If thou hast believed; if thou feelest worthy;" but, "if thou believest with all thy heart." No matter how long thou hast believed. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Observe our Lord does not say, If thou hast loved, and canst tell how long thou hast loved, or how thou was brought from hating to love; nor if thou art worthy; but "If ye

love me, keep my commandments.” And then leave all the rest to him. If we love him, it is proof incontestable that he has first loved us; and all whom he loves, he loves to the end.

In the absence of that deep distress which others have felt, you knew you were a sinner, yes, “a great sinner.” Pray, how did you find that out? What made you so restless? Why, if you were not thirsty, did you long for that pure water of life? Has not Jesus called unto him, “Every one that thirsteth?” By the prophet, saying, “Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.” And in the last day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink,” etc. And it is also written, “And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” But, say you, I don’t know how I became thirsty, nor how long I have been thirsty. Nor is it necessary that you should know. He who has caused you to thirst knows all about it; he bids you drink. But again a doubt arises. I fear that I do not thirst aright. Let then your thirst be tested. If it be a spiritual thirst, nothing but the water of life will satisfy it. The springs of nature will fail, no water from your own cistern can allay it. Only the pure water of life which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, can satisfy you. If your thirst be natural, the streams of nature will suffice; but if it be spiritual, none but the living water of life and salvation will do you any good.

You have been made acquainted with the plague and pollution of your own heart. Ah, poor child! That is a lesson none but God can teach. For the heart of man is so deceitful and desperately wicked that none can know it except by revelation. God alone can know our hearts, and only he can make us know them. And this is taught by his Spirit, whose instructions are only given to those who are quickened and made spiritual. You acknowledge that the emotions of your heart are no better than the most depraved. What is this but conviction? You confess this just as any criminal would confess. True, but would any criminal confess guiltiness of which he was unconscious? It is by the law you have this knowledge of sin; the commandment came, sin revived and you died. That is, your hope for justification before God by your own purity or righteousness expired. You have no right to say nor conclude that your knowledge of your sinful state is not by the Spirit. None but the Spirit can convince us of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. You have felt that your prayers were shut out from the Lord, and you could envy those who could sensibly feel that God was angry with them. We do not understand you to desire that God should be angry with you; but you covet a kind of conviction that will be *sensibly felt*; something that will arouse your passions and terrify your mind. That seems to be your trouble. You have marked out in your mind a way in which you desire to be led. But God has a way of his own, and will “Lead the blind in a way which they know not, and in paths which they have not known.” Our passions, or the senses of our nature, are not capable of comprehending the ways or works of God. Having ourself been in the same condition for some three years, waiting for a conviction and contrition of spirit which we supposed must come before we had a right to indulge a hope in God, we did also covet the anguish of soul which we saw in others; but at last were taught to rely upon what God had wrought in us years before. When a living child throws away the evidence which God has given him in order to try to obtain a better or a brighter one, he has at last to fall back on what he had before, and trust himself in the hands of his God and Savior. These rebellious feelings of our nature are not to be gratified. The light of life which God has caused to shine in us, the darkness of our natural reasoning faculties comprehendeth not. If we could walk by sight we would need no faith; and hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for; but if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (See Romans 8:24,25.)

That slavish fear that God will withdraw his protection, and that you will finally be lost is the legitimate consequence of your slowness to believe and trust in God. The Israelites could not enter into the promised land of rest because of unbelief, and it is just so with the spiritual, anti-typical Israelites,

when nursing and cherishing our doubts and fears. If all that God has done for you in giving you eyes to see your lost condition and utter helplessness, and in enabling you at times to hope in him, is to be under rated and rejected because you have such an experience as it has pleased him to give you, and not such as your judgment would accept, how can you expect to rest? If you were not quickened and made alive by his Spirit, you would have no such trouble; for none but such as the Lord loves does he chasten. Hypocrites and false professors have no such trouble; they will tell you they have all the religion they work for; if they wanted more they would work harder. But God has in wisdom ordained that his children shall live and walk by faith, and not by sight. If we can really trust all that we have and all we are to God, that confidence will relieve us from all trouble about a future state. If we are redeemed from death and hell by the precious blood of Christ, we are not our own, we are bought with a price. Our life is secure with Christ in God, and our blessed Savior has assumed all the care and responsibility of our final and immortal happiness. It is not our business henceforth what will become of us. Our Surety has pledged his word that he will raise us up at the last day; and as he lives, so shall all his people live with him. The care and safety of our eternal inheritance God will not trust to us. He careth for us. His charge to us is to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon our God. The sympathies of your nature, stirred up by the death of a godly father, could have nothing to do in quickening or making your spiritually alive. Such sympathies are common to all men; they arouse our tenderest passions, and make us resolve to serve the Lord; but leave us to feel as though we were not mortal. Such excitements are quite unreliable. But faith looks away from self to God, to Christ, and sometimes heeds not whether we are in or out of the body. And it is a truth that the more we enjoy the presence of God and feel an assurance of faith, the less we shall think about ourselves. Having committed the keeping of our souls to God, as to a faithful Creator, we at once should relinquish that charge to him and pursue the course of obedience to his commands which he has enjoined on all who love him.

Again, your trouble arose from fearing that you were not of the elect. What have you to do with that matter? You can only make your calling and election sure so far as the development of it is manifested in evidence, by working out that salvation which God has wrought in you with fear and trembling. Our happiness and rest lies not in questioning what God has the entire charge of; but rather in gazing, wondering and admiring the wonderful works of God, especially his works of salvation. Our greatest troubles arise from worrying about what God has settled for us in the ancients of eternity, while our sweetest comforts flow from confidently trusting all our eternal interests to his faithful care.

In that sweet moment, when returning from a visit to your father's grave, your cup was filled to its brim, and you had to acknowledge that you were a subject of grace, a child of God, a Christian. Then you tasted how sweet it is to believe; then believing, you entered into rest, and as long as you believed, your joy was full; but how soon the tempter came to dash your cup of happiness by unbelief. You had not been exercised like others. What of that? Neither are all others exercised in these respects as you were. It is not essential that all should be exercised alike in regard to circumstances, but there are thousands who will read your relation who can testify that substantially they have been exercised as you have. Seven years you have been held between hope and despair. Abuse, quarrel with, and dispute your hope as you may, you cannot annul it. It came not at your bidding; it will not depart by your command. When, by severe discipline, you shall learn to look more to your Redeemer and less to yourself, you will more sweetly appreciate its blessedness, and rejoice in it as an anchor of your soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail.

In conclusion, suffer the word of exhortation. Acknowledge with gratitude what God has done for you. Bow your neck to the yoke of Jesus; learn of him who is meek and lowly, and you shall find rest to your soul.

“Let not doubtings make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him;
This he gives you: this he gives you;
‘Tis the Spirit’s rising beam.”

We have made this reply very lengthy, and perhaps too much so to be interesting to all our readers, but in the hope that what we have written may be of some service to many of that large class of trembling and bewildered pilgrims, who feel like our correspondent, that they are *strangers*, we submit it.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 15, 1868.

REPLY TO MARY S. DuVAL.

Among the many enquiries contained in the letter to sister DuVal, which will be found in this issue, there is one addressed to us, asking how we understand the words of the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:29. “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?”

The grand object and figurative import of Christian baptism is to set forth the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; and all the saints who have been baptized according to the order and design of that ordinance, have thereby signified their faith in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; and have therefore been baptized for the dead, or to signify their faith and hope which are founded on his death and resurrection.

Secondly, in baptism they signify that they as members of Christ, in his person, met the demands of the law, were “crucified with him,” “buried with him by baptism into death,” were quickened together with him, and raised up together with him, as partakers of his resurrection life and immortality, and are to walk in newness of life.

Thirdly, by their baptism they also show that they have personally and experimentally been slain by the commandment, or law, as was the apostle, when “sin revived and he died,” and raised up from that state of death, darkness and despair, by a revelation made to them by the Spirit of Christ, as their resurrection and life.

Fourthly, the doctrine of the final resurrection and conformation to the perfect likeness of their risen and glorified Savior, and ultimate participation in the reserved glory and happiness of all the saints, is most clearly and beautifully set forth in the ordinance of baptism. In all these respects we understand that the baptized disciples of Christ were all baptized for the dead; and if it were not for the setting forth the doctrine of life from the dead in a resurrection from the one state to the other, baptism would

be an unmeaning and useless rite. As a figure it would represent or describe absolutely nothing, and the apostle might well demand, as he has, “Why then are they baptized for the dead?” The apostle Peter informs us in I Peter 3:21 that baptism is a like figure to that of the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark. They were saved from the waters of the deluge, and borne in the ark upon the surface of the waters, passed out of the old antediluvian into the new, or post-diluvian world, as in Christian baptism our death and separation from the elements of this world, and deliverance from the wrath and dominion of the law, and passage thence into the organization, order, fellowship and provisions of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ are set forth, as by the ark, the same element which destroyed the ungodly bore up the ark, and wrought the salvation of those who were in it; it is a figure pointing to the spiritual deliverance and complete salvation of all whom God has shut up in his Ark (the church), who are by what Christian baptism signifies delivered from wrath.

We know of no other sense in which any are baptized for the dead than that which we have alluded to; but in all these particulars, all who were scripturally baptized were and are manifestly baptized for the dead.

The baptism of John, which was unto repentance, in which the subjects of grace among the Jews were formally separated from Judaism, and the ministration of death, by the baptism of repentance, came out of that legal dispensation and were ushered into the life and liberty of the gospel; their baptism set forth a resurrection, or passage from a ministration of death into the gospel, which is the ministration of life. They were therefore, in the sense of the apostles’ words, baptized for the dead, and in rising from their burial of baptism signified a resurrection to newness of life.

The peculiar form of the expression rendered, “Else what shall they do,” is relieved from seeming obscurity by what follows in the verse. “If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?” Or to express the same, as if it were written, If the dead rise not, why are persons baptized in a manner describing death, burial and resurrection?

There would be no resemblance of death, burial and resurrection in any of the numerous perversions of this beautiful and expressive ordinance. The apostle connects it with *burial*, *planting*, and like illustrations, all of which would be totally lost if sprinkling, pouring, or any other form were substituted for burying. No figure can be changed in form, and retain the same figurative import; and when the Holy Ghost has given a figure, how daringly presumptuous for any to presume to change its form or signification. With as much propriety may we change the words which God has spoken on the plea that there is no special virtue in the words, and other words than such as God has spoken will be equally pleasing to him, as to change an ordinance which he has given both by precept and by example, on the plea that in the opinion of men a little water is as good as a fountain, or unconscious infants as proper subjects as believers.

We judge that no extraordinary amount of sagacity is required to perceive that the alteration of a figure given by divine inspiration would change its analogy to the thing intended to be represented. Sprinkling, pouring, or crossing can by no possibility represent death, burial and resurrection.

As the further inquiries of our sister are addressed to brother Durand, we will leave him to reply as his mind may be led, but we will however say that all those passages in which Christ is spoken of as the first-born, first-begotten from the dead, etc., we understand those Scriptures to speak of his resurrection from the dead. We know of no sense in which he was born of the Spirit except, first, that his conception and birth of the Virgin Mary were produced by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; and secondly, that having been put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit. He was not, like his members, first born of the flesh, and then born again by the quickening operation of the Spirit; for as

the Second Adam, he himself is the Quickening Spirit, as he is the Lord from heaven. As the Quickening Spirit he is the progenitor and everlasting Father of all his spiritual seed. And as his Spirit was in the prophets and all the Old Testament saints, they were born of it. He said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Abraham saw his day, and his kingdom was seen by Isaiah, and other prophets and Old Testaments saints.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1868.

REMARKS ON MATTHEW 18:10.

"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.

Although we have on a former occasion expressed such views as we had on this text, yet at the request of brother Elias Newkirk, we will offer a few remarks further on the subject.

An ambitious spirit unbecoming the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God had been detected in the disciples, in agitating the question of their comparative greatness, and as they could not settle the matter to their mutual satisfaction, they appealed to our Lord for a decision; whereupon Jesus called a little child unto him and set 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." In this connection our Lord gave them such instructions and rules for their social government as should always be applicable to his church and people throughout all time. We shall not attempt in this article to comment on all the rules of order enjoined upon the members of the church of Christ in this chapter, but dwell particularly on what we understand to be embraced in the text proposed for consideration. In doing that we will call attention to the solemn admonition given to all the disciples, to *take heed* that they despise not one of these little ones. The command to take heed implies that through inattention, thoughtlessness, or without direct design, the error against which they are warned may be committed even by Christians. Care and close and constant attention is required that the little ones be not overlooked, or their place and importance in the house or kingdom of God be not underrated. Aspirants for distinguishing positions will be apt to bring themselves into notice; but those who are more diffident and childlike may, unless great heed be taken, be overlooked, neglected or forgotten, or they may come to be regarded as of less importance in the church of God.

Two causes may tend to this result. First, the humble and childlike humility of the little ones make them unassuming and retiring, for they feel themselves to be less than the least of all the saints, and willing to be servants or door-keepers, and to let others whom they esteem better than themselves occupy more conspicuous or exalted places. Secondly, the fleshly pride and vanity which is too frequently betrayed, unless closely watched and promptly checked, will predominate, as in the example presented in the first verse of this chapter, and in its ascendancy tempt us either to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, or be attracted by the splendid appearance of some others, so that the humble, quiet, childlike little ones fail to be appreciated. Where the little ones are wantonly thrust aside, and that which is lame is turned out of the way by the arrogance or wantonness of any one, God will avenge the oppressed; but

woe to him by whom the offence cometh. But while Christians are here in the flesh, the utmost vigilance is required to watch over our prejudices and partialities, lest, even undesignedly, we despise one of these little ones. It is not enough that we may say we have not wounded the feelings, disturbed the peace, or disregarded the expressed wishes of such. It may well be presumed that many a wound has been keenly felt in the heart of an humble child of God which has festered, unseen by any eye but that which watches over these little ones, causing grief untold, and perhaps unutterable, leading the wounded child to reason thus: O that I were worthy of the esteem of those whom I so dearly love, but while they show strong appreciation of the society, the gifts, or the conversation of others who are so far my superiors, they treat me as I deserve as though they have little or no confidence in me. We are commanded to be kindly affectioned one towards another, and to be especially careful in regard to those who are weak and tender; what care should we take lest we despise one of these little ones.

But, who are these little ones? All who enter into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. This truth is not only declared by our Lord in the third verse of this chapter, but it is fully implied in his declaration to Nicodemus. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:3,5)." All who are born again, of incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever become "new born babes." (See I Peter 1:23 and 2:2.) In that birth not only are they manifested as children, but as very little children. Whatever may be their age in the flesh, or whatever may be their capacity, strength, physical or mental, if they are born again, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and among the fruits of that spirit will be found childlike humility. Like little children, very small, they are dependent, reliant, and desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow *thereby*. No other growth is compatible with their heavenly birth.

All who enter the kingdom of our God must enter as little children, and the more they learn, experience or know of God and of spiritual things, the smaller they will feel themselves to be, and the smaller they are in their own esteem, the higher they will stand in the estimation of their brethren. When Christians become vain in their imaginations, heady and high-minded, God will provide a way to humble them. They become sensitive, and if their importance is not acknowledged, they are mortified and offended. A gospel course, in such cases, will be very apt to offend them. But woe unto him who shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Jesus. "It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

As a consideration calculated to impress the solemn admonition more deeply on the minds of the disciples, Jesus added the following emphatic declaration: "For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The words *their angels* are the same in signification as *their spirits*. For spirits, when spoken of in distinction from the bodies, are called angels, as in the case of Peter when he had been delivered from prison, he came to the house of Mary and knocked for admittance. When the damsel affirmed that Peter was at the gate, they thinking it impossible that he could be there in his body, concluded that it was his angel, or spirit, or ghost. In the same manner the word was used by the Saddusees in denying the resurrection of the dead, etc.

God's presence is heaven to all who are born of him, and although our bodies are dead because of sin, the spirit within us, which is born of the Spirit of God, is life, because of righteousness, and although flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet we worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. "In heaven," in the spiritual presence of God, the spirit, or angel, of the child of God is in communion with God, in his presence, enjoying his presence, and behold his face, for he reveals himself unto them as he does not to the world. No man hath seen the

Father at any time, but the Father reveals his face to the faith of his elect, and every one that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also; but not with their mortal eyes or natural perceptions. Only to their faith, spirit or angels, is he revealed. Always when in heaven, or in a heavenly frame, they behold his face, and derive all their consolation from his presence, in which they have fullness of joy, and at his right hand they have pleasure forevermore.

Seeing then that these little ones which believe in Jesus are in spirit held in communion with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, how presumptuously wicked for us to despise or offend them. God will avenge them, as his own elect who cry unto him day and night, and they shall certainly triumph over all their enemies.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1868.

REMARKS ON BROTHER VANMETER'S LETTER.

In regard to the change experienced by the subjects of the new and heavenly birth, there is probably a want of a clearer understanding among some of our brethren, in comprehending each other's views, and the manner in which they are expressed. On the one hand, brethren hold that the new birth develops in those who are born again a new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, embodying all the elements of a spiritual man, and that they are brought into the possession and experience of all the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, as the legitimate fruits of the Spirit, and that none of these fruits ever emanated from the fleshly nature, which is born of the flesh, either before or subsequently to their new and spiritual birth. The difference between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit is so great as to produce a bitter and unreconcilable warfare between the flesh and the spirit in all who are the subjects of both births. Those who hold these scriptural views, as did Paul, whose flesh (though he were born of God, and was an apostle of the Lamb) still lusted against his spirit, and his spirit warred constantly against his flesh, and so much so as to bring him into captivity to the law of sin, which was still in his members, may in the avowal of their experience, be misunderstood to mean that the new birth effects no change in the man who is born again, because they accept the declarations of the Scriptures, that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "And these are contrary one to the other." They see another law in their members warring against the law of their mind, and they deny that anything spiritual, holy and good is born of the flesh, or that anything carnal, earthly, sensual or devilish is born of the Spirit of God.

While those who believe, with brother Vanmeter, that their heart, soul, spirit, conscience, mind, understanding, will and affections are changed, embracing all their mental or intellectual faculties, and so changed by regeneration and the new birth, that they now have become pure, holy, spiritual, and subject to the law of Christ, may still, with our esteemed brother, after all only mean, as he expresses in the latter part of his letter, that "Regeneration does not destroy any of the faculties of the mind or soul; but changes their course right about, to will and to do of his good pleasure." And that there is still an opposite inclination of the flesh, from that of the spirit in the children of God, causing a warfare

between them, and that the flesh, from which all this opposition to the Spirit proceeds, is called *the old man*. And the spirit from which holiness proceeds in the Christian is called *the new man*; and that these two are as contrary to each other as sin and holiness can make them.

With this last expression of his views, we can understand what would otherwise have been a mystery to us, namely, how our brother can feel so deeply, and confess so freely his own personal imperfections, lack of knowledge, want of perfection, etc., if his mind and understanding, his intellectual and mental faculties were all made perfect and spiritual, by regeneration or the new birth. The apostle has informed us that “He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:15,16).”

This, then, is the key to the secret. Brother Vanmeter’s natural mind, faculties, understanding and perceptive powers, may only be turned into a new channel, or directed in a new course, by the powers of the *new man*, by which he keeps his body under; and yet like all his brethren, be very imperfect and unable to see or comprehend the things of the Spirit, only so far as the things of the Spirit are revealed by the Spirit of his faith, by which he has the mind of Christ. It has been the same with us; it is the same with all the saints; it was so with Paul; for he was not sufficient to think anything as of himself. See II Corinthians 3:5. We are glad to learn that the same conflict is felt in our brother, between his carnal, or fleshly mind, and the mind of Christ, which by virtue of his new and heavenly birth, has been given him.

In the absence of his closing explanatory remarks, we would perhaps have done him injustice by imputing to him what his words seemed to us to imply, but which he probably does not mean.

It has been contended by some that the new birth makes that which is born of the flesh spiritual; that the sinner is in his earthly nature, soul, body and spirit all changed from natural to *spiritual*. This brother V. has not said; but we should have concluded that, with the exception of the corporal substance of the fleshly body, he held that the whole man had become spiritual and holy. This we now think could not have been his meaning; for if all the faculties of the natural man were changed from being natural, and had become spiritual, his mind, conscience, understanding, affections and desires would cease to be natural; and if spiritual, then pure and immortal, in which case they could never err, or commit transgression; and the fleshly body, without the soul, mind, understanding, or any of its former faculties, could never sin; for in their absence the fleshly body would be dead, and he that is dead is free from committing sin; it could then no longer maintain a warfare between the flesh and the spirit.

Now in regard to what change is wrought in those who are born of God, we do understand, and presume, that our brethren generally agree with us that the redeemed sinner of Adam’s race, who was dead, is quickened by the quickening Spirit and power of God; that he is passed from death unto life; that he who was a child of wrath, even as others, is quickened together with Christ. He that was lost is found. He that was blind is made to see; is delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. He who hated God is filled with the love of God. He who was guilty and condemned is now freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. He who was without hope, has now a hope that is sure and steadfast. He who was an infidel is now a believer. He who persecuted the saints now esteems them as the excellent ones of the earth, in whom he delights; he now desires a place and home with them, though feeling himself less than the least of all. The stranger and foreigner is made nigh by the blood of Christ. And he who had always been under the delusion that he possessed faculties, fleshly powers and abilities with which he could serve God is stripped of all his self-conceit, and self-righteousness, and is manifestly “of the circumcision who worship God in the

spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have *no* confidence in the flesh.” He who knew no warfare before sees a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members.

Now we ask, is there no change in all this? The course of the man is changed. He that was a profane swearer prayeth; the mouth that was full of cursing is engaged in singing the praise of God. Does a denial that any or all these gifts bestowed on us by the Spirit, in our new and spiritual birth, are born of our flesh, or that our *carnal*, depraved nature, with its natural faculties, are born of the Spirit, necessarily involve a denial of *any change* wrought in us by the implantation of the Spirit of the living God? We think not.

We believe that every one who is born of God is astonished at the wonderful change that God has wrought in him; and while every day of his life he has the unmistakable evidence that his old carnal nature is the same as it was before, causing him to mourn and weep, to doubt and fear, to groan and confess his vileness; he is amazed to contemplate what God has wrought in bringing him to see, feel and confess that in him, that is, in his flesh, which is born of the flesh, there dwells no good thing. Still he has in him a hope, full of immortality, that the conflict between the old man, that is born of the flesh, and the new man, which is born of the Spirit, will cease when this mortal shall put on immortality, and when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and that glorious saying that is written shall be brought to pass, “that death is swallowed up of victory.” Thanks, eternal thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot, without extending this article to too great a length, show the perfect harmony of all those passages of Scriptures quoted by brother Vanmeter, and the doctrine held by all consistent and divinely instructed Old School or Primitive Baptists. If there is among all the readers of the “Signs of the Times” a Christian who feels sure that in his new birth his old nature is changed from carnal to spiritual, whose carnal mind has (Paul’s declaration to the contrary notwithstanding) become spiritual and subject to the law of God, and whose natural understanding has become spiritual, so that he is competent to judge all things, and yet himself be judged of no man, who being so radically changed that he has no more doubts or fears to encounter, no more lusts to suppress, no more vain thoughts to rise in his mind, no more propensity to transgress, we ask that man to let us hear from him.

Brethren, in pointing out what may seem to them to be error in the views of other brethren of the household of faith, should be exceedingly careful to make their differences seem no greater than they really are. Walk as charitably as we may, we shall all find enough in ourselves and others to deplore, pity and forgive, without exaggeration or magnifying our differences. From what we can learn, there has been too little prudence in some quarters in the discussion of the subject of the change which is wrought in the subjects of grace by the new birth.

As an example, take the case now on hand. Who, in reading the communication of brother Vanmeter, if totally unacquainted with the views of the editor of the “Signs of the Times” and eminent brethren who have expressed their views in the “Signs,” would not conclude that he had to encounter those who hold that the new birth makes no change in the person who is born again? Such an impression would naturally arise from the frank acknowledgement of his conscientious dissent from our views; and then, instead of carefully identifying the views to which he objects, he leaves the reader to infer that we entertain and have promulgated views through the “Signs of the Times,” which conflict with the long array of Scriptures which he has produced, as though he intended to demolish our views and to establish his own. We are very slow to believe that there can be found any where in the connection of the Old School or Primitive Baptists even one intelligent brother or sister, who does not as sacredly

regard the full force of every passage as brother Vanmeter can. Nor is there any change expressed or implied in any or in all of them, that is disputed by those brethren who have and do deny that any of our natural powers are or ever will be made spiritual until God shall in our final resurrection change these vile bodies, and fashion them like unto Christ's glorious body.

Brother Vanmeter understands "that the Scriptures abundantly teach *a change of heart, soul, spirit, conscience, mind, understanding, will, affections, etc.*" Let all this be taken in connection with his concluding remarks, that all these faculties or elements of the man are brought into subordination to the spirit of holiness of which he is born again, and we will not dispute his position. What we dispute is that these faculties are changed from natural to spiritual. And even this we hope we may have no occasion to dispute with brother Vanmeter; for he with us holds that they are turned *right about* by that power that works in us both to will and do of God's good pleasure. Now here is the point. What power is it that worketh in the saints to will and to do of his good pleasure? The apostle says it is God; then it is not our fleshly faculties made spiritual; but it is God himself, by his own power, that subjects us to his own pleasure by curbing our wills and controlling our actions. If our fleshly faculties had become changed from their nature and relation to our flesh, and had by a heavenly birth become spiritual, then they would be pure and holy, and would never lead us astray.

Let us illustrate: If our old natural heart is changed into a spiritual, pure and holy heart, why are the saints still reprov'd for being "slow of heart to believe?" And why do censurable thoughts still arise in them? It is true God has given to us a *new heart*, in which he has written his law, and he has put within us a right spirit, but every Christian finds his old natural heart as full of doubts, fears, unbelief, vain thoughts, murmurings, rebellions and inconstancies as ever; but still he has a heart which believes unto righteousness, and a mouth with which confession is made unto salvation. We fully agree with our brother that those who are born again "were dead, but are now quickened and made alive." But the death in which they were held has not become life, but is death still, and the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. Christ is our life, and he has taken his abode in us. "We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God." "And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." So it is not the flesh that is quickened and becomes immortal, but an immortal life is given us, and as long as we remain in the flesh we shall feel the conflict going on between the two opposite principles of death and life. This brother Vanmeter says is attributable to the opposite inclinations of the flesh and spirit, and so say we. But what is the flesh? And what is the spirit that their inclinations should be so conflicting? Our Savior has settled this question. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The one wars against the other, for in the flesh dwells no good thing, and in the spirit dwells no evil thing. The one is of the earth, earthly; the other is born of God, and cannot sin, because it is born of God. But was there nothing but the material substance of our bodies born of the flesh? "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." To be like Adam, his son must have possessed all the faculties of his father. Had Cain, or Abel, or Seth, in their organizations, lacked the essential elements of a man: say had they been born without a soul, or mind, or the faculties which distinguish a man from a beast, he would not be begotten and born in the likeness and image of Adam. The word flesh, as used by our Lord, included all that is born of the flesh, just as much as the Spirit which is born of God includes all that is born of God. In our first or earthly birth were born all the elements, nature and faculties that we had before we were born again, and that they have who were never born again, and these all being born of the flesh are flesh, and although God has ordained to bring all these elements of the flesh to subserve his purpose. and give to the development of the new birth a controlling power over them; still, the flesh is flesh, and the spirit continues to be spirit, just as our Lord said to Nicodemus.

Now let us look after these subjugated faculties in the order in which our brother has presented them. We have noticed that the saints were dead but are quickened into life, or rather, life is given unto them. Blind, but now they see. What is blind? “The natural man.” The man who has all the faculties of a natural man, or a man that is not born again, such a man “receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.” Bring all the lights of nature, of reason, or science or education to bear upon that natural man with all his natural faculties, either before or after his new birth, and still the inability remains, the natural man *cannot see*, by any faculty, those things which God himself declares can only be discerned by a spiritual capacity. Can even a Christian, by searching, find out God? If they can, why do they “seek him oft, and find him not?”

Still, the *blind*, notwithstanding their own blindness, do see, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (II Corinthians 4:6).” How much does an earthen pot comprehend of the light, or understand of the power of the treasure which is put in it? It is put in the earthen vessel expressly that its excellency shall reflect all the honor to God, and not to the vessel. Christ is the true light. “In him was life, and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not (John 1:4,5).” This light is life, and this life is Christ, and this Christ is God, and this God is he that hath shined in the hearts of his people; as treasure to put in earthen vessels, and it is to the faith of those who are born of God that this revelation of light is made; for, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Not seen by human discernment. “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal (II Corinthians 4:18).” So this transition from darkness and blindness to marvelous light is not a revision of our natural powers. For with our natural sight no man hath seen the Father at any time; for he dwells in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. See I Timothy 6:16.

“They were *ignorant*, but made *wise*.” This is true as the book; but is their ignorance converted into wisdom? Their ignorance is just what it was before; but they are delivered from its power, and Christ is of God, made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. The Christian who has been made wise unto salvation can rise no higher above his native ignorance of divine and spiritual things by the exercise of his natural powers, or faculties, than he could before his translation from darkness to light. “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyed the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?” What then? Shall he try his own faculties, kindle a fire, compass himself about with sparks, walk in the light of his own fire and sparks which he has kindled? If he does, he shall, from the hand of God, lie down in sorrow. Instead of falling back on his own wisdom, faculties or works, “Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” See Isaiah 50:10,11. How many a child of God has learned by sad experience that his fleshly faculties have not become spiritual, that they cannot aid him in searching for spiritual things. Was it for lack of mental light that Job broke forth in his lamentation, “Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat,” etc. Is it for want of faculties the spouse is heard to cry:

“With long desire and anxious thought,
I seek him oft but find him not.”

Still it is true, though our fleshly perceptions are as blind to everything spiritual, as before, yet as born of God, they are children of the light, for God (not their improved faculties), is their light and their salvation. But he is never seen even by his own children, only in *his own light* (Psalm 36:9). By any effort of our own powers or faculties we can no more see God than by the light of a taper we can see the sun at midnight.

“We were afar off, but now made nigh.” This is a glorious truth where the inspired apostle applied it to us poor Gentile sinners, who are redeemed and made nigh unto God by the blood of Christ. But, let us ask brother Vanmeter if the disparity between the eternal perfections of God, and our groveling mortal faculties, is any less than has been at any previous time? Are not his thoughts and ways still as far transcending ours as heaven is arched above the earth? The nearer any of us are brought unto God in our spiritual exercises, the more fully we shall realize the weakness of all our mortal powers. When Isaiah in rapturous vision saw the glory of the Lord, he cried, “Wo is me, for I am undone.” The more we know of God, the less will be our confidence in the flesh.

Most heartily do we endorse the following sentiment of brother Vanmeter, “Indeed they are now *new creatures*; God, by his Spirit, having created these new desires, and feelings of heart and illuminated the understanding.”

This is the very point the editor and his brethren have been contending for; that, “If any man be of Christ Jesus, he is a new creature.” Old things are past away, all things are become new. “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new; and he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done! I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End (Revelation 21:5,6).” Not a revision of our poor old corrupt nature, but a new creature of desires and feelings, of heart, of light and understanding of spiritual things, which we never had or knew anything about until we were born of God. Those who are born again have reason to know the truth of brother Vanmeter’s remarks, that “Regeneration does not destroy any of the faculties of the mind or soul, but changes their course right about,” etc. The strong man armed that had kept the palace is overmatched by a stranger, who binds him and spoils his goods. These faculties are subordinate to the new creation, to the reign of grace which triumphs over all the evil propensities and carnal faculties of the old depraved nature. But these faculties, powers and passions, like the Canaanites of old, are left within the walls, for a trial to the people of God.

“The spirit impresses the image of God, or the divine nature in the heart.” Not on the old carnal heart of stone, but the new heart which God has covenanted to give them, and in which he has written his law. The faculties of the old fleshly heart, although subjugated, are nevertheless carnal still. God’s image cannot be found on any one of them, nor is the divine nature imparted to any one of them. Try them separately – sight, for instance – can the mere natural faculty of seeing perceive the things of the Spirit? If so, why are Christians ever in the dark? Our natural perception is no greater than it was before, for we walk not by sight, but by faith, which is *a faculty*, if we may so speak of the properties of the new man, a fruit of the Spirit and a gift of God. Our carnal mind has not become spiritual, for “it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Every Christian has a carnal and a spiritual mind; with the spiritual he serves the law, while to be carnally minded is death. The Christian is warned against adhering to his carnal mind, because it is enmity against God. The affections of our nature are not made spiritual and holy in our heavenly birth; for we are exhorted to put off the old man with its affections and lusts. We could have neither to put off if the image and nature of our God were enstamped on them; but we have the mind of Christ, the spirit of holiness, the love of God, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God; on all these the image of God and the divine nature appear. These

are not faculties belonging to the old man, either before or after the new birth; but they belong to the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. This new man must bear the image of God, because instead of being created after Adam, it is after God created, and in his righteousness made manifest.

The warfare is everywhere imputed to the opposite influences of the flesh and spirit; the former, under the influence of indwelling sin, and the renewed faculties of the heart, under the influence of the spirit. The former is called the *old man*; the latter the new; and these are as opposite as sin and holiness can make them. We may not fully comprehend the meaning of our brother, but certain we are that in the Scriptures, and in the experience of the saints, the Christian warfare is attributed to the opposite inclinations and powers of the flesh and spirit. The Christian being born first of the flesh, afterwards of the Spirit, the fleshly nature is of the earth earthy, and is, with all its faculties, called the old man. And that which is developed in the new birth is altogether unlike that which is born of the flesh, and it is called Spirit, and this newborn Spirit is called the new man, and these are contrary the one to the other, and this contrariety of nature and disposition is what occasions the Christian warfare. We have failed to find any of those places, either in the Scriptures or in the Christian's experience, where the renewed faculties of the heart are called the *new man*, or where they are even mentioned. We do not wish to impute to our brother what he does not intend to express, nor to criticize or cavil about words. But if it be intended that the natural faculties of our carnal nature have ceased to be carnal, have become holy, so as to partake of the divine nature of God, and to bear the image of the invisible God, and have become so distinct from and opposite to the fleshly nature, of which they formed that part which distinguish men from beasts, as to make the difference as great as the extremes of sin and holiness, we would ask what power there is in the flesh, in the absence of all its faculties, to maintain a warfare against the new man?

Paul's instructions on this subject seems to us more clear. In describing the nature and violence of the warfare, he admonishes the saints thus, "This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the Spirit," (not by the renewed faculties of the flesh) "ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts (Galatians 5:16-24)." Now, we ask, can any or all of these works of the flesh be performed independently of the faculties of the flesh? Brother Vanmeter has defined these faculties as embracing "soul, mind, understanding, conscience," etc. Can a man without a soul, if such a thing can be, or without a mind, or understanding, or a conscience, or any other faculty, commit adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strifes, seditions, heresies, envies, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like? Or can a Christian, if all the faculties of his earthly nature have become spiritual, and as holy as holiness can make them, possibly commit any or all these works of the flesh? If Christians cannot, why are they admonished against committing them? If in all their faculties they are partakers of the divine nature, and bear the image of God, how can the flesh, with all its faculties made pure, lust against the Spirit? If it cannot, then where is the warfare?

But we would rather charitably hope and believe that our brother means by *renewed faculties*, those graces which the apostle calls *fruits of the Spirit*. The Christian *loves*; not with that affection of the flesh which he is commanded to crucify, but with that love which is born of God, flowing from a pure heart, with fervency. He joys, but his rejoicings are in the Holy Ghost; he has peace, but it comes from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ; he is long suffering, but his patience and endurance is not of the flesh; he is petulant, fretful, and murmuring; he is meek, quiet and gentle; but all this he has learned of him whose yoke he wears; he has goodness, but it does not consist in the perfection of his fleshly faculties; it is among the spiritual blessings which were given him in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; he has faith, but it is the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him. And thus we may examine all the fruits, and we shall find that “every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.”

If we had not already extended our remarks to so great a length, we would notice the entire array of Scriptures brought forward by our brother with a seeming design to disprove what he regards as errors of the editor and contributors of the “Signs”. We have carefully examined these Scriptures, but fail to find in them any bearing against any sentiment held by us. For instance, brother Vanmeter proves clearly from plain Scripture testimony that the heart of man is deceitful, and desperately wicked; this we fully admit, and have never denied; but he says this *wicked heart* is purified by faith; but to prove that the natural heart of man is so changed as to become spiritual, pure, clean, and holy, he quotes Acts 15:9, in which the Gentiles have been purged from their idolatry, and have received the faith of the Son of God, equally with the primitive saints which were called from among the Jews. And further, that the “stony heart is taken away, and a heart of flesh is given.” To our mind this Scripture not only fails to sustain the position that the natural mind has become spiritual and holy, but proves rather what we have hitherto contended for, that the old heart is still the seat of natural vitality, affections and lusts, which are excluded from the spiritual kingdom, by the circumcision of Christ; and a new heart is given them, which is the seat of spiritual life, light, love, and purity. This new heart is born of God, as the old heart was born of the flesh, and is the seat and center of the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. We also wish to be understood by every little child in the kingdom of Christ; and we therefore ask, Is there a little child in the house of God who does not still find in his old carnal nature an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God? And again we ask of all the little children, When love, joy, and peace, with holy desires, grateful emotions, and heavenly exercises gush forth from the overflowing fountain of life which is in them as a well of water ever springing up to immortality, do you ever so far mistake, as to ascribe it to the present goodness of your natural heart?

But, at least for the present, we must bring our remarks to a close; and in conclusion will say that if brother Vanmeter, or any other brother or sister, can find in his or her fleshly nature, on in any thing thereunto pertaining, any good thing, whether it be called a faculty, or by any other name, then they can find in them what Paul could not find in himself. It is the Spirit only that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from Heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (II Corinthians 15:47-50).”

In his letter, brother Vanmeter has admitted all that we contend for; but he has rendered his views somewhat obscure by some forms of expression which seem to conflict with our views and his admissions; and as he has been frank to tell us that he differs from us in some things published in the

“Signs”, we have felt called on the review his letter, not, we trust, in a fault-finding spirit, or to provoke controversy, but rather to contend earnestly for what we understand to be the truth. We wish not to hurt his feelings, nor would we give offence to Jew or Gentile – nor to the church of God.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1868.

JAMES 5:14,15.

Ohio, Dec. 30, 1867.

Friend Beebe: – I have been a reader of the “Signs of the Times” about ten years, and have not asked for your views on any subject until now; I will ask your views on James 5:14,15.

A Subscriber.

Reply: – The passage referred to this reads thus: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

These instructions are given to, and enjoined upon the saints, by one divinely inspired by the Holy Ghost, and duly authorized by our Lord Jesus Christ to sit in judgment over the twelve tribes of Israel, to whom this epistle is specially and exclusively addressed. However dull to understand, or slack we may be to practice according to these instructions, we cannot doubt concerning their vital importance, for all the laws and instructions given by our Lord Jesus Christ, through his holy apostles, are of vital importance; and if we lack wisdom to comprehend them, this faithful apostle reminds us of our privilege to ask for wisdom of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him (Chapter 1:5). Some have supposed that this instruction was only indicating so little light, we will submit what we have written, until called on for further explanations of our views.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 1, 1868.

SECRET SOCIETIES: AUTHORITY OF ASSOCIATIONS.

Alabama, Feb. 3, 1868.

Brother Beebe: I hope you will not be offended if I tell you of some of the troubles the Old School Baptists encounter in this part of the country. A question has arisen in regard to the rights of members of our churches to connect themselves with secret societies, or worldly institutions of any other description. Some hold that if a church member joins a secret organization, he is out of order, and if a church of which he is a member tolerates it, she is also out of order, and will be until she withdraws fellowship from the offender (unless he be reclaimed).

Others claim that a member joining such societies or institutions will be in order so long as he does not allow his attachment for such institutions to draw him from his regular church meetings.

The question was laid before our Association, asking for advice, and the Association advised the churches to withdraw fellowship from all who visit secret organizations, called benevolent, etc. Now the question with me is, Can the Association sustain herself? Or, in other words, Is the Association a separate body, and above the churches? Some say she is, or is trying to be. Or is she a combination of churches, or saints, associated for the purpose of exhorting the saints to faithfulness?

As I am young in the cause, and desire to walk in the right path, I have felt inclined to ask you to point out the course pursued by the churches of your acquaintance. What I want is scriptural evidence, let it be for or against the advice of the Association. Your views on this subject will oblige

Your unworthy brother,
E.R. Jackson.

Reply: The consideration of each of the above named subjects seems to us to be involved with the questions submitted by our brother Jackson, of Alabama. Some of them, however, have been agitated in other localities, and all of them appear to be of sufficient importance to warrant a careful investigation. The legality or utility of any mere human institution of the world, for worldly purposes, may be settled upon worldly principles, by the people of the world, without the sanction either of the Scriptures or the church of God. But inasmuch as the church of God is the body and kingdom of Christ, over which he himself presides as Head, and supreme and only Potentate, the subjects of his kingdom must be in subordination to such rules only as bear the seal of his divine approval.

Whatever use the world may have for secret societies, as worldly institutions, we leave the world to decide; but for those who are called out of the world, and into the kingdom of Christ, which is not of the world, to patronize them conflicts with their holy calling to come out of the world, and their pledge to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil; and be satisfied with the fullness, fatness and goodness of the house of God. It implies a lack of social enjoyment in the house of God when those who profess to be of the household seek companionship, and look for society and social enjoyments in any other society; but there are more serious objections to church members going into secret societies, as all their mind should be open to their kindred in Christ. But such secret societies as bind their members by oaths or penalties to keep their secrets are in direct violation of the law of Christ, which expressly forbids them to forswear themselves; and therefore cannot be justified on any plea whatever.

The inducements generally urged for joining such oath-bound, or other secret institutions are, that it secures their friendship, and aid when in distress. But let it be remembered that the friendship of the

world is enmity to God; and to go to these institutions for aid or indemnity against suffering and want is manifestly to distrust God. It is to go down to Egypt for help; whereas, “God is the help of Israel, and the Savior thereof in the time of trouble.” “The Lord is my shepherd,” said the Psalmist, “I shall not want.” One more suggestion, and we will pass. Church members are solemnly pledged in covenant to watch over one another, and not to suffer sin to rest on one another. This solemn pledge must be violated if some of the members so pledged go in secret conclaves where their brethren have no access.

What are the Reserved Rights of Church Members? Much is said about the rights of members over which the church holds no dominion, or for the exercise of which they are not amenable to the church. Now if we have any such rights, they must be *reserved rights* which we retained when we gave ourselves to Christ, and by his will to one another. What are they? In searching the ancient records, we find but very few examples of the doctrine of reservation. When Naaman, the Syrian, was cured of his leprosy and professed faith in the God of Israel, and pledged himself to offer no more burnt offerings nor sacrifice to any other gods, but unto the Lord only, one reservation he proposed to make. “In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing (II Kings 5:18).” This, and perhaps the case of Ananias and Sapphira, recorded in Acts 5:1-10, will suffice for examples. We know of no other instances more in point than the seven women who proposed to be called by the name of one man, reserving the right to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel. (See Isaiah 4:1.) But neither in these nor in any other instances can we find any license given for admitting into the fellowship of the saints those who are not willing to forsake all, surrender all, and unreservedly bow their necks to the yoke of the Lord Jesus.

“As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in him.” Now come to the point at once, and tell us, Christian, how did you receive Jesus? When quickened to a sense of your guilty, condemned and perishing condition, when you stood arraigned at the bar of eternal Justice, and the sword of retribution was drawn, flaming and red, and vengeance could be no longer deferred, what then were your facilities for making a contract – for stipulating what you were, and what you were not to surrender? You were not in condition to say to the Lord, If thy salvation be extended to me, I will divide the control of myself with thee. And when Jesus was presented and you received him, did you feel inclined to reserve from him or to yourself any rights or privileges? And when you came to Zion’s pearly gates, and asked to be admitted to the fellowship and communion of the saints of the most high God, what were then and there your reservations? Did you then feel inclined to say, If admitted I will submit to the laws of Christ, to the order of his church, and to the institutions of his kingdom, whenever it suits my convenience? I will obey the precepts of the King of Zion when I can do so without crossing my fleshly inclinations, and when it will not involve my pecuniary or other worldly interests? Did you reserve the right to consult your own feelings or fleshly inclination as to when to attend her assemblies and when to forsake her courts? Did you reserve the right to serve another master beside the Lord Jesus? If not, what did you reserve? The primitive saints sold all they had, and laid the proceeds at the apostles’ feet. And no disciple among them called aught that he possessed his own. Is not that rule still in force? We do not understand that our possessions of earthly substance, of which God has made us stewards, should be laid at the feet of any but the real apostles of the Lamb, who sit enthroned to rule in judgment over all the affairs of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. If indeed we are of the true and spiritual Israel, all that we have and all that we are, spiritual or temporal, for time or eternity, lies at the feet of the apostles; and to be applied as they, in their divinely authorized interpretation of the laws of Christ, shall dictate. If at their bidding we are called to deny ourselves; to mortify the deeds of the

body; to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to forsake father, mother, wife, husband, parents or children; or to even lay down our life for the sake of our Redeemer, is there anything we have a right to withhold?

Among mere nominal professors of religion, nothing perhaps is more common than their boast of independence, to do every one that which is right in his own eyes; and they deny the authority which Christ has invested his church with, to enforce the laws and discipline of his house. Some claim the right to transgress the laws of Zion in one, and some in another, particular. But whence have Christians any such rights? They are not their own; they are bought with a price. They are members one of another, and so related one to all the others, that no one can be independent of all the others of the same body. If a brother, being a member of the church, has a right to disregard the order of the gospel, and unite with a secret, oath-bound league, or lodge, and bury himself a portion of his time out of the watch care of the church of which he is a member, has not another a right to gratify his carnal inclination in visiting the theater, the ball room, the billiard, or the card table; and where will this kind of self-indulgence stop?

None should take on them the sacred name of Jesus until they are willing to forsake all for him; and we will add, none who are ready and willing to give up all for Christ, should remain an hour out of the church of God. "If ye love me," says Jesus, "keep my commandments." But he has also told us that except we deny ourselves, and take our cross, and follow him, we cannot be his disciples.

But, what of the independence of churches? The bride of Christ cannot be independent of her husband; the body of Christ cannot be independent of her Head; nor can the members of Christ be independent one of another; nor can one member say to another, I have no need of thee. The various branches of the church of Christ are mutually dependent one on the others; for, they all are the branches of the same vine, they are quickened by the same life, governed by the same rules, and inseparably connected by joints and bands; one body, one spirit, and called in the same hope of their calling. No church, or branch of the church of God, has any separate interest, hence no separate authority.

Much has been said in modern times of the independence of the churches. This subject should be well defined; for although the church is independent of all human wisdom, aid and dominion, she is not independent of the laws of Christ. No higher grades of ecclesiastical or civil authority can hold dominion over the church; but when we consider the unity of the church as the body of Christ, we see that there can be no division of interest. If any organization, claiming to be a church of Christ, and recognized as such, shall depart from the faith and order of the gospel, she cannot, on the plea of independence, sustain herself in her disorderly course. All churches that adhere to, and are governed by the laws of Christ, will be compelled to drop such disorderly organizations from their connection, if they cannot reclaim them.

No church is invested with authority from Christ to act independently of the law which Christ has given for the government of his church in all her branches. Hence all the acts of any branch of the church, as defined by the apostles, who hold the keys of the kingdom, are bound on earth and bound in heaven; and every other branch of the church on earth must and will respect and abide by such action. If any other branches shall become dissatisfied with the acts, the faith or order of a sister branch, it is their right and duty to inquire of such church the ground and manner of their action, or concerning their faith and practice. And we hold it to be the duty of every branch to hold all their proceedings open to the investigation of all, or any of the sister churches; otherwise harmony and fellowship cannot be maintained among the churches of the saints. It is quite as essential that churches shall be in harmony as for the members of each branch to be united. If, therefore, one church becomes dissatisfied with

what they understand to be the proceedings of a sister church, let such churches correspond with each other on the subject, not in a haughty or dictatorial way, but in love; but let neither attempt to shield herself by a plea of church independence, for churches, no more than individuals, are vested with a right to do wrong.

When one church assumes the right to annul, or disregard the acts of another church, they not only break fellowship with each other, but trample upon the authority of Christ himself. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. But lastly, we will offer a few remarks on

The authority of Associations. Old School or Primitive Baptist Associations are designed to promote harmony and sweet fellowship, concert of action and unanimity of sentiment by meeting periodically for the worship of God, and for a friendly correspondence of such churches as are in full fellowship. At such convocations the several churches so uniting agree to send messengers, (not *delegates*, for churches have no power that is transferable, and therefore can delegate none) and by their messengers also send letters, showing the state of the churches, and of their steadfastness in the faith and order of the house of God. These associations are clothed with neither legislative nor executive power, to make laws, or rules, nor to hold dominion over the churches. Yet having all the authority of the laws of Christ, to regulate their worship, that they would have if not in association, to regulate their correspondence with the churches of which they are composed, and with sister associations.

The paramount object of such association is to cultivate love and fellowship among all who are of one heart and one mind, and by correspondence and personal acquaintance to restrict their fellowship and correspondence to those, and those only, who bear the yoke of him who is meek and lowly. All churches and brethren who do the truth, desire to see come to the light, that it may be manifest that their deeds are wrought in God. While associations, as such, disclaim the right to sit as an ecclesiastical court, or court of appeals, or to hold the least dominion over churches, they nevertheless hold the right to refuse to recognize any as being of our :ion faith and order, or entitled to our fellowship, who walk disorderly in faith whip or practice. They are competent to drop from their connection, apostatizing churches; and to refuse expressions of fellowship to those who depart mach from the faith: but let it be remembered that this right they have, not by virtue of their associational relations, but because all the saints are commanded to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. And to y or “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine by which they have received, and avoid them.” Thus it will be perceived that our duty to *mark*, and *avoid* and *withdraw from* and hold no fellowship with such as repudiate the laws of Christ, as defined by his inspired apostles, of is imperatively binding on all the saints and churches, whether associated or unassociated. If associations, lest they should infringe upon the rights and independence of churches, or from fear of any other evil, should not be allowed the right to obey the voice of the apostles, then such associations would be unlawful, inasmuch as it would disable those associated to obey the precepts of our King.

From what we have written, brother Jackson will understand us to be in hold that all secret societies, but more especially such as require an oath agree of secrecy, are unlawful for the disciples of Christ. No Christian can take hat is the pledge without disobedience to Christ. Of the merits or demerits of such lodges, leagues, or by whatever name they may be called, as worldly institutions, we have nothing to say or do, but those who would be Christ’s disciples, and enjoy the fellowship of the church of God must come out and be separate. “Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” The same rule which forbids our connection with the secret institutions alluded to, also in our judgment forbids a connection of Christians with any and all the popular religious institutions of “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.” “Wherefore

come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (II Corinthians 6:17,18).”

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1868.

WHAT OR WHO IS IT THAT IS BORN AGAIN?

Ogden, MD.
March 2, 1868.

Brother Beebe: – I do not wish to add much to your heavy labors, for I know that you have a great deal to bear; but in your editorial reply to brother Vanmeter, in the last number of the “Signs”, my mind is still confused on one point, on which I simply want a direct answer, affirmatively or negatively, in few words.

In the new birth, do you intend to convey the idea that there is another man born, or that it is the same man born again?

I think that some of our brethren have ventured too far, in reasoning beyond revelation on this mysteriously wonderful and important subject, as though we could solve by reason the works of the infinite God, and declare the way of his Spirit. But in this we will deceive ourselves, for secret things belong to God; and when we reflect, we are constrained to cry out with the apostle, “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” Therefore we ought to confine ourselves strictly to the word of the revelation given for our use, and profitable and full instruction in all things. But if we conclude or act as though we had concluded there were not words enough in the revelation made by the Spirit of eternal wisdom, or that they are not full enough of meaning to convey what was intended by that Spirit, as clearly and fully as it can be done, are we not following in this practice the very course of the Arminian world of building on, I think, I believe, or I infer, that revelation means more than it says, or that it does not mean just what it does say.

And now, brother Beebe, as I desire the success and prosperity of the “Signs”, and knowing that there is a wide-spread dissatisfaction among the Old School Baptists who have to battle against the Arminian world, to find a similar practice springing up among them, I do think that it ought to be carefully guarded against, and that we try to constantly follow the practice of the servants of God of old, saying, “Thus saith the Lord God.” Then there will be unity among the brethren. For then “the watchman shall lift up the voice together; with the voice they shall sing, for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.” Therefore we ought to speak, “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual,” and not with *natural*, and be willing to “become fools for Christ’s sake, that we may be wise.” For “He is of God made unto us wisdom.” Therefore, “Let us gird on the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of truth.” For “the weapons of our

warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.” Then we shall not exalt nor manifest ourselves and our opinions, but the Lord and his word, that we may be found standing in his strength, and not in our own. Then the Lord shall be our strength and our song. Then Zion shall have peace, and feel safe under the shadow of the Almighty, and her humble watchmen shall stand upon her walls to declare that “salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.” “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nations which keepeth the truth may enter in.”

And now, hoping that all God’s servants may in meekness speak just as the oracles of God, and that peace may abound, and brotherly love continue, I will now close this, with the earnest desire that the power of the Almighty may strengthen you in all your numerous conflicts, and his peace comfort you in all your afflictions, for Jesus sake.

Harvey Wright.

Reply: – We are pleased with the kind, brotherly tone of brother Wright’s inquiries, and as far as we are able, we will comply with his request; and in as brief, direct and unequivocal a manner as we can. He has failed to understand our position, and therefore asks for a direct answer, affirmatively or negatively to the question, in a few words. Brother Wright should remember that all have not the talent for condensing their thoughts into a small compass; we have long felt the need, and ardently desired the gift; but after all our efforts, we are still obliged to present such views as we have, in our own imperfect way. Trusting however that he will bear with our lack of perspicuity and brevity, we will do the best we can. The question is, “Do we intend to convey the idea that there is another man born? Or that it is the same man, born again?” We apprehend that inasmuch as the question stated contains two distinct and entirely opposite propositions, a direct affirmative or negative answer would not be appropriate. Indeed we could not clearly express our understanding of the words spoken by our Lord to Nicodemus, as recorded in the third chapter of John, by a direct “yes” or “no” to either of the two propositions of his inquiry. It is our desire to take the words of our blessed Lord precisely as he has spoken them, and to understand them in the exact sense that he used them on that occasion. When Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again,” etc., the mental powers of that learned rabbi could conceive of no other way for a man to be born again than that the same natural man should be born again, by entering his mother’s womb, and being born a second time. It is presumable that Nicodemus took what might be called a *common sense* view of the words used by the Lord, or such a view as human reason, and human intelligence would naturally take, and we may infer that the true import of our Savior’s words can only be correctly understood by the teaching of the Holy Spirit; that they were not to be literally construed.

We have inferred from our Savior’s words of explanation to Nicodemus that if a man should be born over again, in the manner suggested by Nicodemus, that he would be still but a fleshly man, as a birth cannot change the nature of the thing that is born; and that therefore the same man that has been born of the flesh, and is flesh, before he can see or enter the spiritual kingdom of God, must be born again of the Spirit. This view, in our mind, is strengthened by the declaration of Paul, that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” The new birth is not to qualify our fleshly nature to inherit the kingdom, or to comprehend the things of the Spirit of God; but rather to implant in the subjects of grace a life which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, in which they are identified with Christ, as by their natural birth they are with the earthly Adam. Greatly desiring to be understood, allow us to presume that our esteemed brother Wright believes, as do all sound Old School

Baptists, in the Bible doctrine of “eternal, personal election: that all the heirs of God were chosen of God in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world;” that as the elect of God they were all known, loved, and chosen in Christ, before they were born either of the flesh or of the Spirit. Are we right? If so, then the church, as chosen in Christ, stood in eternal, vital union with her glorious Head, before Adam’s dust was fashioned to a man, her life was hidden with Christ in God. Is this speculation? We appeal to the record: “This is the record,” as borne by “The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost.” What is the record? “That God hath given us eternal life and this life is in his Son (I John 5:7,11).” We cannot doubt that all who are taught of God to believe that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3,4);” appointed, predestinated and ordained, that all those whom he had thus chosen, should in fullness of the dispensation of times, be personally developed as children of Adam, by a natural or fleshly birth; and afterwards by a spiritual birth as the children of God, and heirs of immortality. Was the poet right when he sang,

“His decree, who formed the earth,
Fixed my first and second birth;
Parents, native place, and time,
All appointed were by him!”

If so, every one of the election of grace was personally known, loved and called, with an holy calling, and blessed with all spiritual blessings, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and consequently before they were born of the flesh or of the Spirit.

This then was the manifest order of God, that they should each and all of them be, in their manifestation, partakers, first of flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14), and afterwards of the divine life; and that this development should be made through a first and a second Adam. “The first Adam being of the earth earthy, but the second Adam is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.” In the first Adam we all die, in the last Adam the saints are all quickened, or made alive spiritually. Here are, if we understand this sublime subject, two seminal or progenitive heads, a natural and a spiritual; one is of the earth earthy, and the other is from heaven, and is spiritual and divine. That was not spiritual which was first, but natural; afterwards that which is spiritual. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly (I Corinthians 15). Through both the natural and the spiritual progenitors, God has ordained the development of his elect. In the earthly Adam was created the seed of all the human family, as such. In Christ was treasured all the spiritual seed. The seed of the natural man Adam is a corruptible seed, a natural seed, an earthly seed. But the seed that shall be counted to the Lord for a generation, according to Psalm 22:30, is an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:23). The difference between the earthy and the spiritual seed is as great as is the distance between earth and heaven. The earthly is called flesh. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. “All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever (Isaiah 40:6-8).” The apostle Peter makes the same distinction, and repeats the same prophetic declaration, in discriminating between the natural and the spiritual births. The natural is like the grass, produced from the earth by corruptible seed, but the spiritual birth is “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:23).” The seed in either case must produce its own kind. The corruptible seed cannot bring forth incorruptible fruit; nor is it in the nature of the incorruptible seed to bring forth corruptible fruits. Neither the flesh, nor that which is born of the flesh,

can bring forth incorruptible productions. And that which is born of God cannot commit sin; because his (God's) seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God (I John 3:9).

Now let us return to the third of John and carefully, prayerfully, and with humble reverence examine the words of our Lord. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3:3-8)."

Nicodemus was not prepared to understand the necessity of a preparation for the kingdom that was not of the flesh. If another birth was indispensable, he supposed it must be a repetition of his natural birth of the flesh, or as Dr. Watts would express it, to

"Remodel all the carnal mind,
And form the man afresh."

But if it were possible for a man to be born of the flesh a thousand times, the result each time would only be a reproduction of the same earthly, sensual and depraved nature; each and every time born of corruptible seed, on which mortality is indelibly enstamped. Like all other natural religionists, he evidently thought that cause and effect must be within the sphere of human understanding. The clearest light we have upon the subject we derive from the explanatory words of our Lord, which we regard as the key to the subject. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Of this we, in common with all mankind ever yet developed, have in ourselves the demonstration. Had we been born of angels, we would have been angels, but being born of flesh, we are flesh. Our flesh is corruptible and mortal; of the earth, and earthly. Now we submit to brother Wright, If this flesh were born again of the Spirit, what would it then be? Jesus says, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Again we ask our brother Wright, or any other brother, Is that nature in you which was born of the flesh, and which before you were born again was flesh, is it still flesh, or has it become spirit? If it is really born of the Spirit, it must now be Spirit; or otherwise how shall we understand the declaration of our Lord?

That the new birth has brought forth, in us who have passed from death unto life, that spirit of immortality, which we were strangers to before we were quickened, and by which we can see the kingdom of God, and receive the things of the Spirit of God, and by which we love God, love Holiness, love the saints, the truth, and the ordinances of the kingdom of God, for which we had no love before, we all have reliable evidence. That by the divine implantation of the Holy Spirit in us, we who were dead in sin are quickened, having Christ, who is our spiritual life (as Adam was our natural life), in us, our hope of glory, and all that change is effected in us, of which we wrote more fully in our reply to brother Vanmeter, in the fourth number of the current volume. But if any are still in doubt whether their old Adamic natures are born again, let them examine whether their flesh has become spirit, and be careful and not contradict what Christ has said. That which is born of the Spirit is born of incorruptible seed. Has your earthly nature become incorruptible? Are all the seeds of mortality removed? Has your mortal yet put on immortality, and is your corruptible yet clothed in incorruptibility? That which is born of the Spirit, and is spirit, can feed only on spiritual food; it lives alone by faith upon the Son of God; it eats his flesh and drinks his blood, and has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation. This is undoubtedly so in regard to that new life and spirit that is born of God, and now dwelleth in the

saints; but is it so with your earthly nature? However this subject may be regarded by our brethren, we have many unmistakable evidences that we are yet in the flesh, and our fleshly nature is the very same it always has been; and on a strict examination we find that in it there dwells no good thing.

Our flesh still lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one from the other, so that we cannot do the things which we would. For to will is present with us, but how to perform the things we would, we find not; and when we would do good, evil is present, and we are obliged to believe there is something about this old vile nature that is not born of the Spirit, or, as Christ is true, it would be spirit. Something that is not born of God, or as John testified truth, it would not, *could not*, commit sin. We find, to our grief that there is yet in us something still bearing the image of the earthly Adam, and producing the works of the flesh, and bitterly opposing all the fruits of the spirit, causing us to feel continually to cry and groan, “Oh wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

If that which is born of the Spirit, of which Jesus speaks in explanation of being born again, is spirit, then it follows unquestionably that if our fleshly natures are so born, they cease to be flesh, cease to require earthly food or medicine, cease to be corruptible, or capable of being corrupted, cease to be sinful or to have ability to sin, cease to produce the works of the flesh. For if it is not spirit, then it is not born of the Spirit, and if spirit it is no longer flesh. But where shall we find a Christian who does not find both natures still dwelling in him or her? The spirit is not the flesh, nor is the flesh the spirit; they are quite dissimilar; one is contrary to the other. The Christian is admonished to put off the one, and to put on the other. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

While all the testimony of the Scriptures, and all the experience of the saints bear the clearest testimony that, while we are here in the flesh there is, and will continue to be, an irreconcilable warfare in every Christian between the flesh and the spirit, it is strange that any should be found to contend that in being born again our fleshly nature has become spiritual. What more do they, or can we look for in the final resurrection of the children of God? The apostle has assured us that these vile bodies shall then be changed, and fashioned like Christ’s glorious body; but then he says, “It (the body of the Christian) is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit (I Corinthians 15:42-45).” Thus tracing our mortality to the first man, Adam, and our immortality to the Lord from heaven. Instead of our earthly bodies being from the time of our new birth spiritual, he consigns them to their graves as natural bodies, and in their resurrection, and not till then, does he declare them spiritual. Then, but not until then, shall these mortals put on immortality, and these corruptibles put on incorruption, and then, but not before, shall the saying be brought to pass that “death is swallowed up of victory.”

The saints are spoken of in the Scriptures as having an existence in Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4), and as having an existence in Adam as early as the creation of man: Consequently they did exist and were identified in some sense, before they were born, either of the flesh or of the Spirit. A birth gives no existence; it is the bringing into manifestation that which before existed. That which does not exist, cannot be born. Of the children of God, it was ordained of God that they should partake of flesh and blood (see Hebrews 3), for the accomplishment of which we were created in the earthly Adam, and that earthly or fleshly nature, by divine ordination was appointed to be made manifest in its proper time and place, by our being born of the flesh. And that having an existence

in Christ, our spiritual life should be brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth, through the quickening power of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is made a quickening Spirit.

The first birth is of the flesh, and that which is born of it is flesh, and only develops fleshly elements, adapted to an earthly state, and is incapable of producing any of the fruits of the Spirit of God. The second birth is of incorruptible seed, by the immortal Word of God; and being *incorruptible*, cannot sin, because *His* seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Now the works of the flesh, to which we have already alluded, are manifest, which are such as the productions of an *incorruptible* seed cannot perform. If, therefore, it were true, as some have contended, that the fleshly nature which is born of the flesh, and consequently is flesh, is born again of the Spirit, then the man who is born again can no longer perform the works of the flesh; for having become spirit, by being born of the Spirit, he can only produce the fruits of the Spirit.

In conclusion, let us ask, Can that which is born of God, and consequently cannot sin, commit adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, murders, or drunkenness? If that which is born of God can perform these works, how shall we understand I John 3:9? Or how can that of which they are born again be called an incorruptible seed, that liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:23)?

Again we ask those who are born again and have in them an incorruptible seed that cannot sin, if you do not find still remaining a fleshly nature, that is prone to sin, as the sparks fly upward; a nature lusting to do all the works of the flesh, and with a propensity so strongly inclined as to sometimes bring you into captivity to the law of sin which is in your fleshly members? If that is your case, as it was the case of Paul, how can you indulge the thought for a moment that your flesh, with all its carnal faculties and propensities, has been born again, and become spirit or spiritual?

If, as some have supposed, all our fleshly faculties are born again, and made spiritual, can they tell us, or can they tell themselves, how the fleshly bodies, in the absence of all but spiritual faculties, can do that which is evil, or sinful? Take from this mortal body the soul, the mind, the heart, the understanding, the strength, and all its natural faculties, and change them, purge out of them their carnality and corruptibility, and inspire them with the divine nature of a pure and heavenly vitality, separate them from all that is not of heavenly birth, can they then still perform what Paul has denominated the works of the flesh? Can the flesh with none but heaven-born faculties and powers which are born of God still lust against the Spirit, and cause the child of God to do the things which he would not? Is it true that all that is born of the Spirit is spirit? Or are we at liberty to say that our flesh, with all its faculties, may be born of the pure, incorruptible Spirit of the Living God, and still retain a liability to sin?

Our conviction is that the man who is born again was created and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; was in time born first of the flesh, and subsequently born again, of the Spirit; that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, is grass, is mortal, is corruptible, is depraved, is hostile to the spirit of holiness, and shall not be put off from us, until this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. And that that which is born of the Spirit only, is spiritual, pure and holy, and after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. Its fruits are such, and only such, as are named by the apostle in Galatians 5:22-23. It is known in distinction from the flesh, as the *new man*, the *inner man*, the spiritual man, etc.

We have no desire to press our views upon others who cannot see scriptural authority for them; nor strive for the mastery in a protracted controversy; for we know the time of our mortal sojourn is

drawing to a close, and we feel happy in the hope that shortly we shall realize in a resurrected immortal state, what some of our brethren profess to have already received, a spiritual body with only spiritual faculties, attuned to the songs of the redeemed, when free from the conflicts and pollutions of the flesh under which we now groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we shall see even as we are seen, and know as we are known.

If brother Wright will pardon us for using so many words in communicating so little light, we will submit what we have written, until called on for further explanations of our views.

Middletown, N. Y.

April 1, 1868.

REPLY TO ANOTHER STRANGER.

January 19, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe – Dear Sir: – Permit this feeble expression of one who hopes she feels thankful to you for your reply to “A Stranger,” and to that stranger for the brief relation of his or her troubles. How well does at least one fellow mortal know that state of feeling which have ever been at a loss to name – not hope, and yet not absolute despair – sometimes a kind of vibration between the two. How willing I felt when I finished your reply, to obey the exhortation at its close, trusting to him all my doubts of unworthiness. But alas! How many dark doubts bestrew the pathway that leads to its accomplishment, if, indeed, I shall ever have strength to reach it. How often have I, like this one, longed to appeal to you, or some other of the watchmen, for information in regard to my case, but have refrained because I believed that if God was not his own interpreter, the most lucid and gratifying reply to my questions would not afford me the relief I so desired. How precious also the letter you refer to in the LW” number, and how often reperused! So many of my own thoughts and feelings are embodied in it. Yet in them all there seems to be something a little more hopeful than in mine; none seem quite so dead, and I am confident I could not give full expression to the depraved emotions of my own heart.

But there is one thought which I had for a long time believed peculiar to myself; one which I deemed too base for utterance. I once heard it referred to by one esteemed by me, but beloved by you, yet not entirely explained away. I know it is carnal reasoning, which has no claim to gratification; but I cannot free myself from its power to annoy. It is this. If God has written upon our hearts his commands, where do we get the power to disobey? We cannot go forward in a single obedient step except we go in his strength, and can we exercise that strength at pleasure? I feel very much like a guilty criminal in writing this, I feel as if the rebuke, “Nay, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” was applicable to me; but this is not more base than the other emotions of my heart, which is “so deceitful and desperately wicked,” it seems to me that no one else with such a heart would dream of cherishing a hope.

Sometimes, if it is not wrong to enter the lists with carnal reasoning, would you please permit an answer to this thought to be embodied in some of your remarks to your tempted and doubting

readers. I do not ask or wish a lengthy reply, and do not wish any of this published. I will cheerfully bide your time, and not ascribe to you any censure, should you permit this request to remain unnoticed.

May God in mercy grant you strength to discharge the arduous duties of your position is the wish (can I say prayer – I who so seldom feel to have an audience at the throne of grace) of
Another Stranger.

We have received many private letters of inquiry from this class of strangers and pilgrims who manifest a strong desire to know whether they have indeed a right to hope that they have that kind of experience which distinguish the children of God from those who are dead in trespasses and sins. In our former attempts to reply to those anxious and earnest inquirers, we have but imperfectly pointed out what we understand to be the most reliable and demonstrative evidences of being in a quickened state. But all the evidences are of a spiritual nature, and consequently are only presented to, and perceived by, the faith of those to whom they belong. If it had been the pleasure of God that his children, while here in the flesh, should walk by sight, our perceptive faculties would have been so changed by our new and spiritual birth as to qualify us so to walk. But we are told in the word that we walk by faith and not by sight. It is this ordination of our heavenly Father that even the heaven-born children are so very slow to comprehend. All the reasoning faculties of our natural or fleshly mind are prone to dispute such testimony as they cannot understand. Hence as soon as we are born again, a warfare begins between the flesh and the spirit. To that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, the Savior is revealed as our Savior; our faith receives this revelation, is satisfied with it, and then, “Believing, we rejoice, with joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory.” Faith rising above the infidelity, darkness, fears and carnality of our old depraved nature, hold all our powers and reasonings in subjection, and we are then quite apt to think we shall be troubled with these old corruptions of our carnal nature no more. Faith holds her empire in and over us, and we say, as did the Psalmist in his prosperity, “I shall never be moved; Lord, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong.” But alas! How very soon he was compelled to add, “Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled (Psalm 30:6,7).” The wisdom and goodness of God in dealing in this way with his children can only be spiritually understood, even by the saints. Our turbulent and fretful passions impatiently cry out, “Lord, why hast thou caused us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear?” We conclude that if we have known anything experimentally of the mercy of the Lord, he has now forgotten to be gracious, and that his mercy is clean gone forever more. Such murmurings and lamentations never came from one who is not born of God, nor did they ever emanate or proceed from the faith of the child of God.

To these two propositions allow us to call the attention of those “strangers” who are searching for the footsteps of the flock of Christ.

First. Those who never knew the Lord have no desire for a knowledge of his ways. They can no more feel the sorrows, doubts, fears and temptations of the children of God than they can know their joys. “The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy (Proverbs 14:10).” We cannot mourn nor lament the absence of that of which we have no knowledge. Hence the impatience of which we speak is unknown, unfelt and unfeared by those who have never received from God the implantation of his Spirit in their hearts.

Second. The other proposition is equally true. Although none but the redeemed and heaven-born children of God are plagued with the doubts, fears, trials and temptations which cause them to murmur, fret and rebel; yet all these rebellious feelings arise from the fleshly nature of these vessels of mercy, who have received the word, the spirit and the life of the spiritual birth. From that implanted life, that

heaven-born spirit, no particle of this murmuring and rebellion can possibly proceed. "It cannot sin because it is born of God." Hence that faith which is in them always triumphs over the world; and this is the victory which overcomes the world, even their faith. We cannot conceive of a victory where there has been no conflict. That faith which shall ultimately triumph over all the corruptions of the flesh does encounter the most violent and determined opposition of the flesh, in every child of God, while in this mortal tabernacle; but this conflict is confined to them, and was never felt in any but the children of our God. Two parties or opposing principles must exist to produce a conflict. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. Here then are the belligerent elements; in the one dwells no good thing; in the other dwells no evil thing. The one is life; the other is death. The one is spiritual; the other is natural; the one is born of the flesh, and is flesh; the other is born of the Spirit, and is spirit. One loves God, truth and holiness, and desires above all things to serve the law of God; the other loves sin and self, and hates God, is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. In every *Shulamite* the company of these two armies is found. We have no right to recognize as a subject of the new birth any one in whom these opposing elements do not exist. Nor is it possible that both these elements can exist in any one who is not born of the flesh, and of the Spirit; for this good reason, the one is flesh, and the other is spirit. If we are controlled alone by the flesh, we shall die; but if we, through the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Let us ask "Another Stranger," Have you not witnessed the truth of this apostolic declaration? When from the spirit which God has given you, in your new birth, faith as its fruit has led you to believe in God, rely upon the blood and righteousness of Christ alone for justification and acceptance with God, when this has been your case, however short have been the seasons, has it not always led you into the enjoyment of life and peace? When faith has sensibly triumphed over all your doubts and fears, all selfish reasoning has been silenced, and instead of nursing your unbelief, you have felt unreservedly to commit the keeping and safety of your soul to God, and bid defiance to the powers of darkness to rend you from his protection. And, dear child, at such seasons of triumph did you not forget about your own self? Like Paul, when caught up to heaven, in his rapturous vision, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell. It was enough at that time for him that God knew all about his body, as well as about his spirit. In an experience of almost three-score years, the writer of this reply has never been without the most depressing and gloomy fears, when his attention has been engrossed in anxious inquiries as to his own personal interest in the things of the Spirit of God.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Fill'd with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

These anxieties about a personal interest are selfish, and always arise from our fleshly nature, and show a lamentable lack of confidence in God. Have we, as Christians, ever been instructed to look for the evidence of our spiritual standing with God in our fleshly nature? Paul himself could find nothing there to encourage his hope; for in him, that is, in his flesh, there dwelt no good thing, and with his flesh he served the law of sin; and his flesh was like ours, so very destitute of spiritual life that he pronounced it "the body of this death," making him a wretched man, as far as that was concerned; but faith, triumphant faith, broke forth in grateful praise. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord," there was deliverance secured. It is true that every one that is born of God has the witness in himself; but what is it? Not the flesh, for the flesh is not a truthful witness, and all who are "the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Why then call

up such a witness? One in whom you have no confidence? Why seek the living among the dead? But though the heaven-born have nothing reliable in the flesh, yet they all have an infallible witness in them; it is the spirit which beareth witness with their spirit that they are born of God. They are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and have the earnest of their heavenly inheritance in themselves; not in their flesh, for nothing good is there, but in the spirit that dwelleth in them.

Now if we inquire with the Psalmist, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me?” While the conflict between the old man and the new man, the flesh and the spirit is so severe, how prone we are to conclude there is but a step between us and death. Our old nature, which we once thought was cleansed and purged from depravity, and our natural faculties, which we verily thought were by being born over again, or by some other means, had become pure and spiritual, like frightful ghosts arise and show all the corruption they ever possessed.

Our vile affections in full vigor, our passions, stare upon us in malice, wrath, strife, seditions, covetousness, jealousy, selfishness, inordinate desires, and in all the works of the flesh. Amazed, we are petrified with horror. Where now is that change that we thought had so thoroughly changed our nature, and made spiritual our every faculty? Every vestige of hope arising from such delusion is cut off – it dies. And God grant it may be forever buried. We never shall know the sweetness of a hope in the living God until all confidence in the flesh is slain. We do not say that every one who has a good hope through grace may not enjoy it, as an anchor of his soul, sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the veil; but we do say that all the confidence we are permitted to retain in ourselves, that is, in our flesh, detracts from the sweetness of that hope, which is in God. “Hope thou in God,” says the inspired psalmist. He is the “Hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof in time of trouble.” Hope thou in God, not in self, or in any vain thing. “For I shall yet praise him who is the health of thy countenance, and my God.” The only hope that we can rely upon in the day of trial is Christ in you the hope of glory. “In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.” The more perfect enjoyment of our hope in God depends on the triumphs which our faith in God achieves over our doubts and fears. If we could always feel and realize the triumphs of the faith of the Son of God in us, as it was felt by that illustrious host of patriarchs, prophets and saints presented in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews; like them it would divest us of much of that selfishness which is so peculiar to our earthly nature, and triumphing over self, we would forget ourselves, and count not our own lives dear unto ourselves. The brightest flame of heavenly fire that ever made our hearts burn in love and gratitude to God, and filled our hearts with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, has always been felt by us when we have been thinking the very least of ourselves, when we have lost sight of our own individuality, and our faith has entered within the intervening veil which divides between earth and heaven.

Our anxious correspondent seems familiar with those “vibrations from fear to hope, and from hope to fear, which were described by the writer referred to, and also by every child of God while here in the flesh; yet because hope is opposed by fear, faith contested by unbelief, and joy succeeded by grief, she is led to count her trials and temptations as something strange, as though some strange thing had happened to her. These alternations are so universally felt by all who are born of the Spirit, that no experience could be recognized as genuine Christian experience in the total absence of them. Young converts may be so elated with the first manifestations of the pardoning love of God and the joys of his salvation, that for a time it may seem to them that their entire nature has become changed, that all their troubles are forever gone. How long they may feel this uninterrupted joy and gladness before the corruptions of the depraved nature arises, is as God may direct. There are some whose early joys are unspeakable and full of glory; but there are others whose spiritual birth is equally unquestionable, who

have never felt the ecstasy of that joy as others have; nor can they tell the precise time and place when and where they were delivered from bondage and set at liberty. It has not been the pleasure of the Lord that all his children should, in every circumstance connected with their experience, be led in the same way. The manner of Paul's first exercise differed widely from many others, but still there are marks by which every child of God may be known as having passed from death unto life. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; blessed are the meek; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." These are some of the evidences on which we are authorized to rely. The question is, with us, Are we poor in spirit? Do we mourn? Do we hunger and thirst after righteousness? It is not so important that we should be able to tell when and how we first came to see and feel our poverty, or how long we have mourned, or when the pride of our hearts was subdued, or when we first had a hungering and thirsting for righteousness. These are spiritual fruits, and if we have them, then are we "blessed." "If ye love me," says Jesus, "keep my commandments." His commandments are only applicable to those who love him. He is not here speaking of the commandments given to Israel in the flesh, or in thunder tones proclaimed from Sinai; but the commandments issued from his throne in Sion, and written in the hearts of his spiritual subjects. Do we love him? How long we have loved him is not the question. If we love him, then his commandment to follow him is addressed to us, and it is our privilege and our duty to obey him. When Paul received this evidence, "Straightway he conferred not with flesh and blood." "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." In reply to the question, If God has written his law upon our hearts, whence do we get the power to disobey? From the same source whence Paul and all others of God's children do. He attributes it to the warfare. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would (Galatians 5:17)." "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but that I hate that do I." "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me; I find then a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7:14-22)." The power or law to disobey the law which we love after the inward man is the law or power of sin which is in our members, in our flesh; this power is so great as to disable the saints to do the things which they desire. Although the spirit indeed is willing, the flesh is weak. It is our nature to sin, for sin dwelleth in our flesh, and all disobedience to God riseth by the power of sin, which is in our members, causing us to do the things which we hate, and preventing us from doing the things which we would. While therefore our fleshly powers cannot aid us to obey the spiritual law which is written in our hearts, it can bring us into captivity to the law or power of sin, which is in our members. Grace must abound to usward and the Spirit enable us to obey, but the indwelling sin of our nature requires no aid to disobey the commandments of Christ. Disobedience is but a failure to do what we are commanded to do, and although grace shall ultimately triumph over all our fleshly propensities, and God will finally give all his children the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord, yet it is his pleasure to leave us sometimes to feel the depravity of our nature, to be overcome by it, that we may the better appreciate his power and grace in our deliverance. Very true, "We cannot go forward in a single obedient step except we go in his strength." But our own strength is weakness, and therefore in it we always fail to obey. We cannot at *our pleasure* exercise the strength of God, or that strength by which alone we obey God; for if we could, we then could no longer say: "How to perform that which is good I find not." We say to this *other stranger*, In what school did you learn that you could not take a step in the pathway of holiness by any strength of your own? What has made you feel the sinfulness of those emotions of which you complain? How did you discover that your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked? Does it seem to you that one with such a heart would dream of cherishing a hope? Well, we frankly confess,

that if your heart did not to you appear so very vile, we could cherish no hope that you had ever been taught of God. It is only under his mighty hand and his tuition we can ever know, and feel, and mourn the deceitfulness and wickedness of our own hearts. But every one that hath learned of the Father cometh unto Christ. And him that cometh to Christ, he will in no wise cast out.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1868.

THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

Capeville, VA.
March 23, 1868.

Elder G. Beebe: – Was the command, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” given exclusively to the apostles, or is it applicable to the ministers of God in these days?

Yours sincerely,
Jesse S. Smith.

Reply: – This command was given to the eleven disciples, as they sat at meat, as stated in the preceding verse; and the eleven to whom it was immediately addressed were all of them apostles, and the same unto whom our Lord had, on a former occasion, given power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases, etc. But on that former occasion he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans; but he directed them to go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:1-15). But now their commission is extended to Gentiles and Samaritans, or, without limitation to all the world; their holy vocation, as on the former occasion, was also to be attested by signs following, in healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.

But the question is suggested, If this commission, or command, was given exclusively to the apostles, on what divine authority do the ministers of the gospel now preach and baptize?

When our great Redeemer arose from the dead, and ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, or to his church, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-13). The apostles, being filled with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, were seated in judgment on thrones of unquestionable authority to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; or the gospel church which answers to that figure. They were by the supreme Head of the church invested with authority to instruct the church in all things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them. In this investment of authority was included all the instructions requisite for the recognition of the gifts, which the exalted Savior received for, and gave to his church, and the rule by which the church should discriminate between the gifts bestowed, and

assign to each its appropriate place in the church. There is diversity of gifts, but they are all by but one spirit, and God has placed them in the body or church as it hath pleased him.

The apostles have decided that no man taketh this honor (of the gospel ministry) upon him, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron (to the priesthood). In the calling and qualification to the work, God by his Spirit makes such impressions on the mind of his chosen ones for that service, as are to them unmistakable, and at the same time, by the same spirit, it is made known also to the church, that such a gift is among them. As when it was said “Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.” The instructions for both ministers and church are carefully recorded by the apostles. Their relative duties and privileges are clearly stated. The special instructions to the ministers are found in the charge given by Paul to Timothy, Titus and the elders of the church at Ephesus, and in the concurrent instructions of the other apostles. And although none of the Lord’s ministers of our times can presume to occupy the places and infallible inspiration of the apostles, or to sit with them on thrones of judgment; yet they all have the apostles as examples, and are commanded to follow them, as they followed Christ. They are to continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer, and feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers.

Having frequently expressed our understanding of the apostolic commission, in its general bearings, in this article we have endeavored to restrict our remarks to the points on which our views were desired.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1868.

CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION.

When the Sadducees desired to embarrass our Lord in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, and to make that doctrine appear improbable and absurd, they exposed their own ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God by stating what they regarded as an insuperable difficulty of one woman who, according to the provisions of the law, had had seven husbands, and demanded, “Whose wife of them shall she be in the resurrection, for seven had her to wife?” If they had known the Scriptures, they would have understood that all fleshly relations are dissolved in death, and if they had known the power of God, as displayed in the power of the resurrection of Christ, and of his people, they would have known that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. That such a change was effected by his death and resurrection as to forbid the thought that he shall henceforth be known any more after the flesh. His risen body is spiritual and immortal, and in the resurrection of his people they also shall be raised up, spiritual, incorruptible and immortal. Their bodies shall be changed from corruptible to incorruptible, from terrestrial to celestial, from dishonor to glory, from weakness to power, from a natural body to a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:42,44); changed and fashioned like the glorious body of him who has risen indeed, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

In his reply to the caviling of the Sadducees, our Lord, after declaring their ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God, and their consequent error, speaks of the children of this world in distinction from the children of the resurrection. Now that we who contemplate this sublime and glorious subject

may escape the ignorance and error of the Sadducees, we propose to notice the classification of the two kinds of children – the children of this world and the children of the resurrection. These are distinct relations, and so distinct that only some of those who sustain the first shall be counted worthy of the other. The children of this world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. From these words of our Lord it is clearly inferred that some, but not all, who sustain the relation of children of this world will not obtain that world of which he is speaking, nor that resurrection which is therewith connected. That there will be a resurrection of both the just and of the unjust, and that the hour shall come when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, some to a resurrection of life, and others to a resurrection of damnation, is fully declared in the Scriptures. But the resurrection which is connected with that world where the children of the resurrection are the children of God, and equal unto the angels, is a resurrection to life and immortality. We do not know that those who shall rise to damnation will be any less children of this world in their resurrection than before it, or to what extent any relation they sustain now will be changed. But we wish to treat specially on the resurrection of which our Lord was speaking in our text.

Whatever may be the doom or destiny of the ungodly, we know there will be in their resurrection a very great change with the children of God. And although “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him (I John 3:2).” “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:4).” “They will behold his face in righteousness, and be satisfied when they awake with his likeness (Psalm 17:15).”

To know the Scriptures and the power of God on this subject so as to escape the error of the Sadducees, let us carefully examine what the Scriptures teach in regard to it. And

First. What is implied in the relationship wherein we are known as *children of this world*? The relation of children always implies parentage, generation, birth and development; and all children must necessarily partake of the nature, and be composed of the elements of their parents. In all these respects, all the family of Adam are in their relation to him the children of this world. Adam was made of the dust of the ground, and God said to him, and to us as we were all in him at that time, “For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” The dust is a part of the world. Jesus said to his Father, “I have manifested thy name unto them which thou gavest me out of the world.” “I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine (John 17:6,9).” They are redeemed from the world, but the apostle declares that they were by nature children of wrath, even as others. “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind (Ephesians 2:2,3).” As children of this world, our nature was, and is, adapted to the elements of the world, and like all the other children of the same family, we marry and are given in marriage; the natural relationship of parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, males and females, masters and servants, rulers and ruled, these all belong alike to the race of mankind as children of this world. We were created with the creation of the world, and in the travail and developments of the world we were brought forth in the order of nature. We breathe the air of the world, our food and sustenance is all of this world. But this world is destined to pass away, and our relation to it shall be dissolved, and the places which know us shall know us no more. Like a vesture, all these elements shall soon be folded and laid aside.

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, shall differ very essentially from what they are or were in this world, in all these respects:

1. Their relationship to this world shall cease, and the new relationship of children of the resurrection shall be developed.
2. All the social relations peculiar to the families and kindreds of this world shall be discontinued, so we shall no more marry or be given in marriage. And in that world we shall know no man after the flesh; and although Christ was, in the days of his incarnation, known after the flesh, yet henceforth shall he be known no more after the flesh, or as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.
3. “Neither can they die any more.” Mortality shall be swallowed up of life. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:53-57).”
4. The children of the resurrection shall be equal to the angels. Not only as pure, holy, incorruptible and immortal, but equally as ethereal, celestial and spiritual, equally far removed from earth and earthly propensities, worldly pollutions, and sensual proclivities. But more especially in the immediate sense of our subject, equal unto the angels in regard to such changes as are common to the children of this world, by marriages, births, deaths, or distinctions of sex, classes, conditions, etc. All alike, and always alike. No more sorrowing, sighing or grieving. No more doubts, fears, trials or temptations. No more likeness to the earthly, or unlikeness to the heavenly. As they have borne the image of the earthly, so shall they bear the image of the heavenly.
5. The saints in their immortal state shall all of them be perfectly like their Savior, and consequently like each other. What a wonderful change! Well may the apostle say, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” How much we mourn and lament our present unlikeness to him; but then every child of the resurrection shall shine in the perfect image of him who is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.

But thus far we have dwelt comparatively only on the outside of our subject. Oh, that we were able to plunge into its marrow and fatness, sound its depth, rise to its summit, and speak of the infinity of its breadth and length.

They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world are the children of the resurrection. Generation is indispensable to the development of children in nature; all the children of this world, as such, were created in one progenitive head; that head was not generated, but created with all his posterity in him; all that posterity obtained their development and position as children of this world by natural generation.

All who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, are children of God, being the children of the resurrection. As the relation of children can only be manifested by generation, in Genesis 5:1,2, we have the book of the generations of Adam; and in Matthew 1:1, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. The first is an earthly generation, the other is a spiritual and chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.

Adam’s posterity are called generations, in the plural number; for in their development a long succession of generations was required. Adam begat Seth, and Seth begat Enos, and so many generations were required. Of Christ it is written, “A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the

Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30).” Christ is the Everlasting Father, or immediate progenitor of all his seed, there being no grandchildren or intermediate parentage between him and them. They are all born of God. In their redemption from the world, the law, from sin, death and hell, this chosen generation, royal priesthood, and holy nation, was born in a day. That is, as we understand, that when Christ was made flesh, he was identified as the flesh of Abraham, which he took on him; when he was delivered up for our offenses, it was for the offenses of all his generation, and when he had put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and arose for our justification, his people as a church, a generation or nation, were redeemed from the former relations to the law, for they became dead to the law by his body, redeemed from the world, being no more of the world, as he is not of the world, redeemed from the flesh, being no more their own, but bought with a price. The body of the sins of the flesh being put away by the circumcision of Christ, all their relations being changed, they were, as his body (not in their individual personal experience), buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, we also should walk in newness of life.

Will any intelligent child of God dispute that when Christ suffered on the cross his body embodied all his people, whose sins were laid on him, and that he was so recognized by the divine law and justice of God? When that body, which embraced legally all his members, died, did not the law and justice of God regard the sentence of the law as being fully executed on the whole church, or body of Christ? Then was not that body dead? When Resurrection life came down from heaven, and Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, was not that resurrection life given to the church which he embodied? Was not the prophecy fulfilled, “My dead body shall they arise?” Was not the temple of his body raised up in three days? Was not the gracious promise verified, “After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight?” We do not ask our readers to say that this was the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, unless they can see it to be so. But if we were not washed then, the grand object of the sacrifice failed; for “Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and *cleanse it* with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing (Ephesians 5:26).” And if the church was not quickened, revived and raised up from under the wrath and dominion of the law when Christ arose for our justification, in what sense did he by that one offering forever perfect them that are sanctified? What does the apostle mean when he says that God hath quickened us *together with Christ*, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

We desire not to be wise above what is written, nor to insist on any point of doctrine that is not clearly demonstrated by the Scriptures of truth; but it really appears to us that when, as our Mediatorial Head, Christ was made flesh – made of a woman, he was made under a law which held dominion over his people, or members which were under the law, that his flesh which he took on him, and in which he suffered and died was the seed of Abraham, and embraced all of the family of mankind who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world of glory to which his resurrection opens the way, and in that flesh in which they were under the law, with all the infirmities, iniquities, sins and penalties; that when he died on the cross, he so died for us, that legally we were dead, the wrath of the law was executed in our flesh as it mantled and made incarnate our Mediatorial Head. In our flesh he died, our flesh was dead. Our relation was to an earthly Adam, to Moses, to the law of sin and death, to guilt and condemnation. Dead to the law by his body in which he suffered; the body of the sins of our flesh cut off forever by the circumcision of Christ, so that in him we are no more known in our fleshly relations, marrying or being given in marriage. No more fleshly distinctions of sex, classes or conditions, for we are all one in him. “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Now if Christ died our death

under the law which we had transgressed, and we with him are baptized into his death, has he risen from that death and left his members behind? Or did he not rather in his resurrection destroy death, and him that had the power of death; did he not completely abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light when he arose?

We have seen the people of God, in their legal relations, convicted of guilt, condemned and executed in their legal representative. But God has said, These, his dead men, shall live, together, with his dead body they shall arise. Christ, their second Adam, *is made* a quickening spirit (I Corinthians 15:45). He *was made flesh*, and in that flesh he *was made* a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death, that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man, by him represented as Captain of their salvation. And he *was made* perfect through suffering, and has forever perfected them that are sanctified (Hebrews 2:9; 10:14). And now, in his resurrection and exaltation, is he “of God *made unto us* wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30).” “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 at the last time.”

The children of the resurrection then are begotten children, and therefore the relationship is vital. Children may be recognized in a family by adoption, but adoption simply imparts none of the life of the foster parent to the adopted child. But the children of the resurrection are partakers of resurrection life and immortality. These children of the resurrection, being begotten by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, could not fail to be brought forth, quickened and animated by the power of the resurrection, by which they are begotten of God. Begotten of God, they are the children of God, and by him begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, makes them the children of the resurrection. So then they are children of God, being the children of the resurrection, just as our Savior said to the Sadducees. And as the children of God, and of the resurrection, they cannot fail to be accounted worthy of that world where all fleshly distinctions and earthly influences will be unknown, and where there will be no marrying or giving in marriage.

This text in Peter has a much deeper signification than some commentators have given it. We cannot believe, as some have said, that such language was used by the Holy Ghost merely to express the relief experienced by the desponding disciples, when they became convinced that their Lord has risen from the dead. Neither their despondency or their assurance could change the facts. Whether they were aware of it or not, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had by his resurrection begotten them, not only to a lively or vital hope, but to an immortal inheritance that can neither be corrupted nor fade away.

Resurrection life from the God and Father of our Mediatorial Head was implanted, conveyed beyond the possibility of failure, made certain to all the members of Christ by his resurrection from the dead. This communication of the life and immortality of God the Father, in quickening and raising him from the dead, is called a begetting him and them from the dead, in their own order: Christ the first fruits, and afterwards them that are Christ's at his coming. Paul, in presenting this subject to the saints, says, “Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you that feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent,” etc. He then speaks of his being put to death, and taken down from the tree, and laid in a sepulchre, and then adds, “But God raised him from the dead,” in fulfillment of what was written in the second Psalm. “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath

raised up Jesus, as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts 13:32-33).” This promise was made, not to Christ in distinction from his members, but to those children of the fathers who were included in the promise; and the resurrection of the crucified body of Christ was in fulfillment of it to these children. The same resurrection life and immortality which quickened his body, destroyed death, abolished death, and swallowed up death in victory, for all his members. Christ existed as the Son, or Word of God, before he was made flesh, or took on him the seed of Abraham, by being made of a woman, and under the law.

But the words, *begotten*, *born*, etc., in these Scriptures are expressly used in reference to his resurrection from the dead. As also, “first begotten (Hebrews 1:6);” “first begotten of the dead (Revelations 1:5);” “first born among many brethren (Romans 8:29);” “first born of every creature (Colossians 1:15).” All these words are applied to the resurrection of Christ, by the power, glory and immutability of the Father. Christ as the first begotten from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept, was raised up by the glory of the Father, as the perfect embodiment of the resurrection life and immortality of all his members. And so perfectly is that resurrection life embodied in him that the apostle declares that “He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light (I Timothy 6:16).” And he himself declares, “I am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25).” This resurrection life, begotten of the Eternal Father, brings immortality to all his church, and when this life from the Father brought him up from the dead, from under the law, and in the newness and immortality of an endless life, in that resurrection all the election of grace are and were begotten, and their eternal inheritance is and was secured to them, and they are kept by the power of God for it. Begotten of God and born of the resurrection, they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Lengthy as we have made this article, we have not expressed all we desire to say, and we propose to resume the subject soon, and show from the Scriptures that in our spiritual birth we are made partakers of the resurrection life which was begotten by his resurrection, and by the indwelling of this resurrection life, as the first fruits of the Spirit, we are sealed unto the day of redemption of our bodies, which by the power of this endless life shall, at the coming of our Lord, be changed and fashioned like his glorious body. “But if the Spirit of him who 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 which dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11).”

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1868.

CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION. (Concluded)

The word *children* always signifies relationship, derived and dependent existence, made manifest by the generation and birth of a life previously hidden in the loins of a progenitor, in the development of which the children derive their life from the parent. The children of the resurrection then derive their resurrection life and immortality from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by and through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. This resurrection life was given to all the members

of Christ's body, in him, their head, when he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father. It was typically prefigured by the exceedingly precious and costly ointment which was poured upon the head of Aaron; though poured on the head, its unctuous power was applied to all the body. It ran down his beard and descended to the skirts of his garments, so that his whole priestly body and all his members participated in the same anointing. So the resurrection life of the church of God was poured on our crucified Lord, as the Head of his body, the church, and from and through him descended to all who by him do believe in God who raised him from the dead. All therefore who are partakers of the resurrection life of Christ are the children of God, being children of the resurrection. As we have already shown from I Peter 1:3, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance of immortality, incorruptible, and which cannot fade away. Being begotten of God by this resurrection, they are all manifestly God's begotten children, who are born of the resurrection. This seed is incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Peter says, "God hath begotten us according to his abundant mercy," and Paul says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might shew the riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-7)." Begotten of God by the resurrection of Christ, ages to come are and were required to bring into manifestation that holy seed, that chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation, in their resurrection life and union with their risen and glorified head. "Ages to come" were necessary to develop, by a first and second birth, all the chosen and redeemed family of God. The first birth to manifest them in the flesh, and in their legal condemnation as sinners of Adam's race, dead in sins, and needing to be redeemed, washed from pollution and guilt, and cleansed by the blood of Christ: and in their second birth, by the Spirit, as children of the resurrection of Christ, in him raised up, from guilt, despair and death, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

In this development, as well as in that of their final resurrection, there is an established order, and every one of them shall be in his own order. "Christ the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming (I Corinthians 15:23)."

In the development of the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, in the quickening of his members, we receive the first fruits of this quickening or resurrection spirit when we are called by grace, and born of the Spirit. Resurrection life and power is given us in that new birth, and this spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead is implanted and dwells in us as an earnest of our spiritual inheritance in ultimate glory. By this spirit we are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is, to the redemption of our bodies, which are destined to be raised up and made spiritual and immortal, and like Christ's risen body in their final resurrection. "But, if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11)." The immortal spirit of the resurrection dwells in all the children of God from the time of their new birth, and seals them for the certain resurrection of their bodies. This apostles says further: "For as many as are led by the spirit of God," (the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, consequently the spirit of the resurrection), "they are the sons of God; for we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father." Now, although we have this Spirit which bears witness that we are sons of God and heirs of immortality, we have it as the first fruits, or as the earnest of a full and perfect inheritance which is reserved for us in heaven. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him (I John 3:2)." "The earnest

expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” “Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body (Romans 8:14-23).” The first fruits of the resurrection life is given when we are born of the Spirit and incorruptibility of the resurrection of Christ. “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”

Thus we are informed that the quickening power of God, by which we believe, is the same resurrection power which raised up Christ from the dead, and set him in the heavenly places. This quickening resurrection spirit is begotten of God, in the resurrection of Christ, and the power of his resurrection is developed in the new birth of every saint, and consummated in its power in the final quickening of the bodies of his saints, and in fashioning them like his own spiritual, immortal, resurrected and glorious body. Well might the apostle sum up the ultimatum of all that he desired for time and eternity, in the comprehensive words used by him in Philippians 3:8-14: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Having known the power of the Savior’s resurrection, in being raised up from a state of death in trespasses and sins, and from the curse and dominion of the law, and born into the resurrection life and liberty of the sons of God, there is still before the eye of his faith, far away in the distance, an object which he desires, a mark on which to keep his steadfast eye, and the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. In his risen and exalted Jesus he sees the mark, and to be conformed to that likeness is the highest aspiration of his desires. The certainty of the final attainment is presented to the faith of God’s people in the assurance that “Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.” The exaltation of the Son of God, from his humiliation and subordination in our flesh to the law, and from the legal place which he occupied when in the flesh, up to the heavenly places of the gospel, and to the honor, power, dominion and glory of the right hand of the majesty of the Father, presents to our faith the mark, and the predestinated conformity of all the saints to the image of him who is the brightness of his Father’s glory and the express image of his person. The image of the invisible God is the mark, the pattern, the point of glory secured to all the children of the resurrection. This security is found in their being begotten to this lively, or vital, hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. To be begotten of God implies the implantation of the living incorruptible seed of life and immortality to us, in Christ, when he raised him from the dead. Are we then children of the resurrection? If so, then are we the children of him who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, legitimately and vitally so, for all the children of the resurrection are begotten of him by the resurrection.

In the order of development of this generative resurrection life, Christ is the first born among many brethren. The first fruits of them that slept. The first born from the dead. (See Colossians 1:18; I

Corinthians 15:20; and Revelations 1:5.) In all things he must have the preeminence. But in him, as the first fruit, all the resurrection life of all his church has gone up to heaven, and there our life is hid with him in God. Begotten of God in him, we are preserved in him, and he is our resurrection and our Life, if we are the children of the resurrection.

None can be children of the resurrection but the children of God, because all such children are begotten of God and quickened from the dead by the resurrection, therefore all who are born of the Spirit become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and are married to him who is risen from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:4). In a legal marriage, in the flesh, the two become one flesh. But that which is joined unto the Lord is one spirit (I Corinthians 6:16,17). If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. But if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; created in Christ Jesus, born of his resurrection life, and partaker of his immortality, and so perfectly identified that because he lives they shall live also. He who was made flesh, in his incarnation, is made a quickening spirit in his resurrection, as all the spiritual life bestowed on them is given them in him, and was most gloriously illustrated in his resurrection. Hence is it declared, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As surely as all the children of the flesh were made sinners by the transgression of Adam, ages before any of us were born, so surely are all the children of the resurrection made righteous by the obedience of one, Jesus Christ. And as certainly as it is that death by sin has passed upon all the posterity of the earthly Adam, so certainly has life and immortality come upon all the spiritual posterity of our Lord Jesus Christ, by and through his resurrection. For he was delivered for our offenses, and raised from the dead for our justification. When he bore their griefs, and carried their sorrows, and bore the chastisement of their peace, with his stripes they were perfectly healed, when his soul was poured out unto death. He even then saw his seed, and knew them that are his, and by his knowledge, said the God of truth, shall my righteousness servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Seeing his seed, he saw also of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. Read Isaiah 53.

Now, whether the word *regeneration*, which occurs but barely twice in the Bible, refers to the begetting of the Son of God from the dead, and his being the first born from the dead, and the resurrection life of Christ secured to all his seed, constituting them the children of the resurrection, or not, is not so important for us to know and comprehend as it is that we should know and gratefully acknowledge that when Jesus arose from the dead, in his resurrection the portals of immortal glory were opened to all who are accounted worthy of that world, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

One word more. "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:1-4)."

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1868.



BROTHER STIPP, ON SHAKING OF HANDS.

As brother Stipp has felt it his duty to defend the practice of shaking of hands, we make room for his communication on the subject, although we had hoped that the subject had been sufficiently ventilated for all necessary purposes. We had said all that we desired to say in regard to it: and brother Vamner, as will be seen by a note from him in this paper, has declined to pursue the subject any further. We presumed the brethren generally would form their own judgment, and act accordingly. If in our remarks we implied a charge of idolatry on those who have indulged in the practice, we must have done so inadvertently, and will retract to that extent. We do not believe that those who have favored the practice have done so with any evil design; nor have we ever thought to make the matter a test of fellowship.

We would not now perpetuate the agitation on the subject, but to meet such appeals as brother Stipp has made directly to us; and to correct any misapprehensions any may entertain of our views or feelings on this, and on other subjects. Although we did not design to be understood that our only objection to shaking of hands in time of religious devotion was that it was not taught, or enjoined by the Scriptures, we do think that every thing should be avoided in our religious devotions which has neither precept nor example in the divine rule. But we gave other reasons for our objections, as will be seen by a re-perusal of what we wrote.

If we are indulging in any unscriptural religious practice, we are inexcusable, and we should be ready and willing to give it up; and if we know our own heart, we are. But we are yet to be convinced that the preaching of the gospel at any time or place where a door is opened for that purpose, and an assembly is convened and willing to give an orderly attendance, though at a funeral, a wedding, or at any other public gathering, provided that in doing so, we are not otherwise transgressing some divine rule. If brother Stipp is under the impression that we are in the habit of performing popish mummeries, saying mass for the dead, or pretending to pray souls out of purgatory, or that we are giving countenance to the notion that we are doing any thing for the purpose of changing the state and condition of the dead, or that we avail ourself of the time when relatives feel tender, to excite their passions, or any thing of the kind, he is greatly mistaken. If we have not mistaken the command of the Holy Ghost by Paul to Timothy, to “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season,” etc., we have found in it authority to preach the word on all occasions when and where an audience are desirous to hear and willing to listen. And we are inclined to believe that preaching at all times and places is either in season or out of season. We have often publicly protested that our only object in preaching at funerals is to preach the gospel, that we can do nothing to change the state of the dead. If, however, it can be shown that preaching at such times and places is unauthorized by the precepts of Christ, on being convinced we will certainly desist. But should it be fully proved and admitted that we have transcended all gospel authority, we cannot perceive that such a decision would justify any other wrong or unscriptural practice.

Brother Stipp thinks we have encouraged the practice of publishing the verses on the subject of giving and taking “the parting hand,” etc. Without attempting any justification of our own wrongs, which we confess are by far too many, we will remind brother Stipp that we have not designedly raised any objection to brethren and sisters shaking hands on meeting and on parting. Indeed, it is the common practice with the Old School Baptists in the East as well as in the West, and none have perhaps indulged in the practice more heartily than ourself. It is not the taking and parting hand that we object to; for when parting or meeting such greetings seem to us very appropriate. What we understand brother Williams to object to was the interruption of public devotion; as when in preaching a brother expresses a sentiment that is approved, for those who are pleased to offer him their hand to shake.

While, however, we feel partial to the hymn on taking the parting hand as suitable when closing our social meetings, we cannot say so much for the last couplet, copied from our Hymn Book, viz.:

“To meet you in glory I give you my hand,
Our Savior to praise in a pure social band.”

We do not know of any connection between our hands and the prospect of meeting our kindred in glory. If it is intended to express a pledge or a vow, it is presumptuous and wicked; but if it is only designed to express the giving the hand of Christian fellowship to such as we hope to meet in glory, the sentiment is correct.

On the subject of kissing, with the kiss of charity, we take rather a different view from that we understand brother Stipp to express. Where the apostle commands the saints to greet one another with a holy kiss of charity, we can defend no right to change the kiss for any other form of greeting. We object to receiving baptism as a substitute for circumcision, or sprinkling for baptism, or the first day for the seventh. Brother Stipp has judged us prematurely in his conclusion that we have not conformed to this apostolic injunction. If indeed we have failed, it has been from a lack of that holy unimpassioned fervor of charity which is required; for we have complied with the outward form. It is a common practice among our Scotch brethren in Canada, and when in their company we have conformed to the practice; also in other places, and among other brethren who are very dear to us. But we should think it disorderly and out of place to interrupt a minister while preaching, either to shake his hand or to kiss him.

We have now said about all we have to say on this subject. We have no desire to force our own peculiar views on our brethren. We will only admonish them in the words of sacred inspiration, to “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1868.

REGENERATION AND THE NEW BIRTH.

Dunkirk, Ind.,
April 17, 1867.

Brother Beebe: – Having finished the business part of my letter, and feeling a deep interest in the welfare of the Lord’s chosen ones, I feel disposed to present a few thoughts for their consideration on the subject of regeneration and the new birth, a subject on which many precious brethren have given their views, and on which there seems to be diversity of opinion, which, to me, seems to be more in the manner of expression with some, than in real sentiment.

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ, on a subject so sublime, and so fully taught in Christian experience, it seems to me, there should be no difference among Old School Baptists. I

conclude that instruction has taught nothing in the New Testament relating to the subject but what it teaches every child of grace. Hence Christian experience and the New Testament must harmonize. Christ says, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh (John 3:6)." Now a birth is the result of a precious cause (generate). Does Christian experience teach it? I answer, It does. Let us inquire? Go back, my dear brethren and sisters, to the time and place when and where you first got a sight and sense of your fleshly nature. Does not your experience teach you that, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" (that sin is hereditary) and that all your sins, whether in thought or act, proceeds from that corrupt fountain within your own nature, generated by the father of lies. Thus being generated or begotten in sin, we see the birth or fruit of sin in that which is born or produced by it, which is the fruit of the flesh. For the fruit, or works, of the flesh are manifest, which are these: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditious, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like (Galatians 5:19-21)." Now, dear kindred in Christ, are not all these the effects of a previous cause, which is sin? The first moving cause is interwoven in our Adamic nature, over which the child of grace mourns; because when he would do good, evil is present. Now, brethren, are not all the internal enemies of the child of God, and all the powers of anti-christ, and every species of heresy, from first to last, all the works of the flesh, proceeding from that natural generation, the influence of sin, called the *old man*? Why did you loathe your own person? Not because your own flesh was different from, or more corrupt than, the flesh of others whom you esteemed highly; but it was because of the works or fruits of the flesh which were so God-dishonoring in your estimation. But, lest I should be tedious, I will pass.

Regeneration and the New Birth. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 3:6)." Christ said to his disciples, "Ye that have followed me in the regeneration," etc. Now regeneration is the first flow in a child or subject of grace. The apostle says, "We love him because he first loved us." Dear brethren, was it not the love of God shed abroad in your poor hearts that made you love God, and hate yourself, and abhor the works of the flesh? Then the love of God the Father that was operating on your heart produced spiritual life and action in you. A hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and you became weary of sin, and heavy laden with guilt and condemnation.

Regenerating grace, or the love of God shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner, not only produces spiritual vitality, but gives him eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, alike with an appreciating conscience, and a feeling sense of his awful condition of condemnation which rests on him; guilt raving in his bosom, and vengeance pursuing to the utmost. The apostle says, "According to his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." O what a cleansing! Not the purifying of the flesh, but denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously and godly. For where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound. Those who are thus regenerated are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that they should walk therein. Being delivered from the power of darkness, they are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

We see in all this the fruits of the Spirit, by which they were quickened, or regenerated, which are love, love to God, to his word, to his ordinances, to his cause, and to his salvation by grace, and by grace alone. Joy fills his soul, for pardoned sins, and for a finished redemption. Peace flows like a river, to satiate a thirsty soul. Jesus appears, not only as a hiding place from the

wind, and covert from the storm, but also as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The love of God produces long-suffering, and humble submission to the will of high heaven. Gentleness also, no murmurings against the counsels of God, ever trusting alone in that grace which is sufficient for every emergency. These are fruits of the Spirit and evidences of the new birth.

Now, my dear kindred in Christ, I have penned a few thoughts on the subject of regeneration and the new birth. I do not understand them to be one and inseparable, regeneration proceeding and producing the new birth. As stated above, regeneration is the first flow or communication of divine life, which is effected alone by the quickening power of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. And the new birth is the effect of regeneration in delivering the redeemed from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son, with all the powers and peculiarities of the children of God.

Brother Beebe, this imperfect scribble is submitted to your disposal. Do with it as you think fit.

Yours as ever.

J. Buckles.

Reply: We agree with Elder Buckles in the opinion expressed by him, that much of the seeming difference of views recently expressed on the subject of regeneration and the new birth arises from a failure with brethren to perfectly understand each other. Much labor is, in some cases, lost in argument to prove what no one intends to dispute, and to establish points which belong not to the general issue. We presume that all Old School Baptists fully agree, so far as they understand each other, in what constitutes a genuine and reliable Christian experience, at least so far as the sensible demonstration of God's quickening power is felt and witnessed by all the children of God. So that in examining those who desire our fellowship, and apply for admission to the communion of the church, we have no trouble in understanding the relation they give of the dealings of the Lord with them. Even the tongue of the stammerer can pronounce the Shibboleth clear and distinctly.

We also, with brother Buckles, hold that regeneration, in the order of things, and according to the word, must precede the new birth. How can that be born of God that is not first begotten of him? And as the seed which alone can generate and bring forth the children of God must come from God, it must be an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and as the seed is incorruptible, and every seed, by the decree of God, must bring forth a chosen generation as incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading as the seed that produced them. That which is incorruptible is not only pure and uncorrupted, but absolutely insusceptible of corruption, therefore we are assured that, "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (I John 3:9)." Yet we are conscious that sin still remains in our flesh, which is born only of the flesh. The principal question at issue is in substance this: When the child of God is born of the Spirit, does his flesh, or any of his fleshly powers and faculties, then put on immortality and become incorruptible? Is his fleshly nature then delivered from the bonds of corruption, and is his mortality then swallowed up of life, or does his mortal powers and faculties still retain their mortality, and their corruptibles retain their corruption, until the resurrection of their bodies in the power of that endless life of which they are made partakers in the new birth? We all agree that the life which we receive in the new birth is born of God, and by it we are sealed to the resurrection, when this same life shall pervade and quicken, change and fashion all the bodies of the saints to the likeness of Christ's risen and glorious body. But can we say that our fleshly bodies are now spiritual? If others can, we know of some who cannot. We who have received the first fruits of the spirit (in our new birth), "even

we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body (Romans 8:23).”

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1868.

RISEN WITH CHRIST COLOSSIANS 3:1

“If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God (Colossians 3.1).”

Before we can with certainty determine that we are the people of whom this apostolic admonition is applied, it is important that we should know something experimentally of Christ, and of the power of his resurrection, and of the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death. We presume that no one of all the saints will dispute the necessity of a saving acquaintance with the crucified and risen Christ, before any sinner is competent even to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. In the depravity of our polluted nature we cannot see the kingdom of God, nor receive the things of the Spirit, which can only be spiritually discerned. Two questions are here involved. First, Has Christ risen? Second, Have we risen with him?

On the first question, we think there can be no doubt that allusion is made to his resurrection from the dead, and in that resurrection from under the law, to meet and cancel the demands of which, he was crucified and slain. When he was made flesh, we are told that he was made of a woman, made under the law. And being made under the law, he learned obedience, and in obedience to that law which he humbled himself to come under, he laid down his life, that is, he was put to death in the flesh, bearing our (all his people’s) sins in his own body on the tree. This body in which he suffered was a body which was prepared for the sufferings of death, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man; for every one whose sins were laid on him. For this mediatorial sacrifice he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not that seed which is merely the natural progeny of Abraham; for we are told that the children of the flesh are not the children of God; but in Isaac his seed should be called. “So then, if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” “We, then, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” These, then, which are Christ’s as the seed of Abraham, were under the law, involved in transgression and guilt, and required to be redeemed. These were the people of whom it was said, “He was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons.” In taking them on him he must needs take on him their sins; but this was done that he might put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. It was for this “The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.” And for this great and gracious end, “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief,” that with his stripes they might be healed. In this body then in which he was put to death, we see was embraced all those who by virtue of being Christ’s are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise; and the death which was inflicted on him in that body was inflicted on him as the seed of Abraham. How could it possibly have been otherwise? For what else could he have suffered? Had he not taken that seed on him, no sin could have been found on him; only in his relation to and identity with them could the sword of justice smite

him, nor could his sufferings and death have effected their redemption on any other conceivable ground. In this body “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death (Hebrews 2:9).” For this very purpose, for the nature of angels was not quite low enough to reach our case, he must needs take on him the seed of Abraham, that the grace of God to usward might abound.

In speaking of his ascension to glory it is said, In that he ascended, what is it but that he first descended into the lowest parts of the earth? So in that he has risen from the dead, what is it, or how could it be, except he had first bowed his sacred head in death?

The resurrection of Christ with which the apostle in our text connects the children of God, as having risen with him, must be his resurrection from the dead. He says in the preceding chapter, “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Colossians 2:10-14).” This same apostle, in writing on the same subject to the Romans, says, “How can we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God (Romans 6:2-10).”

Now, in the light of these Scriptures, shall we inquire, first, Was Christ buried (or immersed) into death when he died on the cross for the redemption of his people? Second, Were all the seed of Abraham which he took him, and for whose sins he was delivered up, buried with him by that baptism into his death? Both questions seem to us to be clearly met and settled in what we have copied from the apostle in the foregoing quotations. But in addition, let us accept what further light is given in the Scriptures on this subject.

First. That Christ’s baptism into death was accomplished by his death on the cross is still more fully confirmed by his own application of the figure of baptism. “But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished (Luke 12:50).” This baptism was prospective, and could not mean his baptism in Jordan by John, for that had been accomplished at the beginning of his public ministry. It was still to come, and he was pained until its fulfillment. It must have been that baptism described by the Psalmist, when he said, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me (Psalm 42:7).” Also in the sign of the prophet Jonah 2:3, “For thou hast cast me into the deep, into the midst of the seas, and the floods compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.” The ordinance of Christian baptism figuratively sets forth the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, together with the doctrine of salvation, the experience of the saints, and their final resurrection from the dead. All these strikingly impressive figures would be

rendered unmeaning to us if inapplicable to the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Second. Were the seed of Abraham, embracing all who are Christ's, baptized with him into this death? No person of common intelligence, we think, will understand us to inquire if we were all literally and personally put to death with Christ when he suffered on the cross. What we mean is, Were we as the seed of Abraham, which he took on him, embodied in him, so that the sins which he bore were our sins; the flesh in which he suffered the just penalty of our guilt was our flesh, or, in other words, was that our flesh against which the wrath of the divine law was poured out? If this question be answered negatively, how shall we understand the express declarations of the Scriptures already quoted? How, on any other ground, were we buried with him by baptism into his death? Jesus said of the sons of Zebudee, "Ye shall drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with (Matthew 20:22; Mark 10:38; and Luke 12:5)." Paul says, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." What! Dead; Paul? When did you die to the law? "I am crucified with Christ." Paul did not mean that his earthly body was defunct; for he adds, "Nevertheless I live." But does he mean that his fleshly body is, or was at the time when he made this declaration, animated by the resurrection life and immortality of Christ? Certainly he did not; for lest he should be so understood, he says, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh" (not the life of the flesh, but that living Christ which was in him) "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This death with Christ for him was indispensable to his salvation, that he might live unto God; being redeemed from the body of the sins of his flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, and his relationship to the law of sin and death annulled, and he "dead to the law by the body of Christ," that he might be married to him that is risen from the dead, and partaker of his immortal resurrection life; that in this new, regenerated state he might bring forth fruit unto God. "If one died for all, then were all dead." And henceforth it is said of all who are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

As we cannot think any of our brethren will dispute the position of the apostle, that the saints were buried with Christ by baptism into death, we will now inquire, Were they also raised with him by baptism into life? We say by baptism, for that word signifies not only immersion, or burial, but resurrection, or rising again. No one will deny that Jesus rose again from the dead on the third day; but did he leave those for whom he suffered still under the law, under the curse, and in the dominion of death? Or did he not rather destroy death, and him that had the power of death? The trump of triumph proclaims a victory over death, hell and sin, and loudly heralds forth the triumph of him who has abolished death, and hath brought immortality to light through the gospel. Hence the words of our text have meaning in them. "If ye then be risen with Christ." And those in the context, "And you being dead in your sins," etc., "hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." This accords with the testimony thus stated, "According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places;" "and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all." This fullness of the body of Christ, we are told, he hath quickened from a state of death in trespasses and sins. And let it be observed, this quickening is given by the apostle as exemplifying the mighty power of God in raising Jesus from the dead. There is a deep meaning in the words of I Peter 1:3, when read in connection with Paul's testimony in the first and second chapters of Ephesians, showing how "God, who is rich in mercy, for the 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.”

We are not disposed to dispute with brethren in regard to the application of the words washing and regeneration, as used in Matthew 19:28, and Titus 3:5. But certainly, whether these passages refer to it or not, baptism, to our mind, not only implies, figuratively, death, burial and resurrection to newness of life, but also a washing, cleansing and purging, by putting away the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, and also a regeneration or begetting of a new, spiritual and immortal life. If in the flesh and nature of the seed of Abraham Christ died, and that seed was buried with him by baptism into death, it was also quickened and raised up in new, resurrection life by his resurrection. Therefore, as Peter affirms, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom this immortal resurrection life proceeds, hath begotten us by his resurrection. That immortality which came from God the Father, and quickened and raised up Jesus from the dead, entered the body, the church, in the resurrection of Christ, just as sin had entered the posterity of Adam by the transgression of one man. Thus the church of God was begotten by the communication of life from God the Father to the body in which Christ had suffered death. The infallible conception of immortality in the body of flesh in which he suffered, it being the flesh of the seed of Abraham, embracing all who are Christ's, secures with unfailing certainty the spiritual birth, and manifestation of all his members into the life and liberty and perfection of the sons of God, in due time, all in their appropriate order; Christ the first fruits, as the First Born among many brethren, and afterwards them that are Christ's at his coming. The descent from God of this life and immortality to the body of Christ, is figuratively presented to John, thus: “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it (the city), and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life,” which is quickened and made fruitful by the river of life. See Revelation 22:1,2. “And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea, in summer and in winter it shall be. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth, in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name One (Zechariah 14:8,9).” This resurrection life in Christ, begotten of the Eternal Father, in his resurrection, raises up from the curse and dominion of the law, and from the power of sin and death, all the seed of Abraham, or in other words, all his saints under both dispensations, before and subsequently to his death and resurrection. And his resurrection life is developed alike in going towards the former and the latter or hinder sea.

Resulting from the begetting of the Father, by the resurrection of Christ, and the conception of the same in his mystical body, like leaven hidden in three measures of meal, until all is leavened, this river flows, broad and deep, excluding all gallant ships and galleys with oars, imparting immortal life, first, in the new birth, by which we receive the first fruits, and finally in the resurrection of the bodies of all the saints from natural to spiritual bodies, from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal bodies, from terrestrial to celestial, and from the image of the earthly to the image of the heavenly Adam. “For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren (Romans 8:29).”

We see no cause of strife or contention on this subject. All sound Old School Baptists believe that the children of God, in the regeneration, are begotten of God the Father, quickened and born by his begetting power by the Spirit, and that our new birth seals and secures to us our final deliverance from all corruption and corruptibility, in a glorious resurrection of our bodies, in which they shall be made spiritual, pure, holy and heavenly, and capacitated for the immortal joys of God's right hand.

In a subsequent number, we propose to urge on all the children of God, being the children of the Resurrection, the admonition of our text, “Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God,” etc.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1868

RISEN WITH CHRIST: THE HIGH VOCATION COLOSSIANS 3:1-4 (CONCLUDED)

“If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3.1-4).”

Having dwelt somewhat elaborately on the resurrection of our divine Redeemer from the dead, and of that immortality which he brought to light for all his members when he abolished death, and when he, having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Rising from the dead, he ascended up on high, bearing to the realms of glory the life and immortality of all his members, having obtained eternal redemption for them, is sat down on the right hand of God, angels and principalities being made subject to him. Fully accepted in the courts of glory in his mediatorial work, he forever lives as the Resurrection and Life of his people, all of whom, having part in his resurrection, in him have reached their heavenly places, are presented in him, are in him accepted of the Father; as under the law the whole harvest was accepted in the acceptance of the first fruits, or first ripened sheaf, so his people are in him presented without spot or blemish, and their resurrection, their life and immortality within the veil is hid with him in God, and so perfectly identified with him that when he shall appear they shall also appear with him in glory. We will in this article attempt to urge upon the consideration of the saints the admonitions of our text as based upon these divine assurances. “Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” In perusing this subject there are several inquiries suggested requiring to be answered, and among them, First, The place or seat which is occupied by our risen and exalted Prince and Savior, on the right hand of God. Secondly, The things which are with him, and after which we are to seek, and how they may be distinguished from the things which are on the earth. Thirdly, Why we should seek the things which are above, and why we should not seek the things which are on the earth. Fourth, How, or in what manner we are instructed to seek the things which are above, by setting our affection on things above, and by repudiating the things which are on the earth, and by mortifying our members which are upon the earth.

First. That our Lord Jesus Christ ascended up into the heaven of eternal glory, where all the glorified saints and holy angels dwell, and where all his children shall ultimately find the consummation of their happiness, the sacred Scriptures do not allow us to doubt. But still the seat which he now occupies at the right hand of God the Father is the seat of his Mediatorial glory. That seat is upon the throne of his spiritual kingdom. The inspiration of the Holy Ghost has testified through the apostle that God has “raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all

principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:20-23.) It is as the Mediatorial Head of the church that he is thus “exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins (Acts 5:31).” In his eternal Godhead he could not be exalted to any higher glory than that which he eternally possessed. But in his mediatorial relation to his church, he had bowed his heavens and come down; had descended to the lowest parts of the earth; was made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, had humbled himself; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross, had slumbered in the grave; but now being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, by the immortality of his own indwelling and eternal God-head, he is made both Lord and Christ. He is as the risen and exalted Savior inaugurated in his throne as King of saints and Priest unto the Most High God, and wears his imperial crown, and sways his sovereign and irresistible sceptre over all principality and power, having all power in heaven and in earth, extending over all flesh, that he may give eternal life unto as many as his Father has given him. God has given us the record of his Son. In that most sacred record we find it written that “the heathen raged, and the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed,” etc. “Yet,” saith God, “have I set my King over his holy hill of Zion, and hath given him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and he shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” (Read the second Psalm.) In his exaltation he ascends up where he was before, to the glory which he had with his Father before the world was made, and is made higher than the heavens. Unto him, as the Son, the Father has said, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Nor is this all. God hath said to him in the same connection, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, and, as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail (Hebrews 1:8-12).” But still in all this amazing exaltation, grandeur and supreme glory, he does not leave the precincts of his kingdom; all this indescribable glory is the glory of his kingdom, and the fullness of his mediatorial power. His kingdom being spiritual comprehends all his spiritual subjects in heaven and in earth, as he is from everlasting to everlasting and his throne is forever and ever. Those who are redeemed from the earth and quickened by his spirit are brought from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and sit down in this kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Our natural birth develops in us no capacity to see this spiritual kingdom; no human excellence can fit us to enter it: for “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom.” “Flesh and blood cannot inherit it (John 3:3; I Corinthians 15:50).” Those who are gathered into it do not leave it when they die. The Savior did not leave it when he ascended up to where he was before. The apostles are still in his kingdom, and still occupy their thrones of judgment. Their flesh may slumber in their graves, but no place can be vacated in the kingdom where the risen and exalted Jesus presides in the throne of his everlasting kingdom. Death shall depose all earthly kings and time sweeps all their thrones and powers away. The elements of nature must be dissolved, and even the natural heavens shall depart. But to the Son of God, and to him only is it said, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.”

In this spiritual kingdom are the heavenly places, or the many mansions, to which our exalted Savior has raised his people, and in which he makes them sit, in him. All whom he has redeemed and raised up have in their earthly relations occupied earthly places, legal places, places of pollution, sin,

condemnation, wrath and death; but in him who is our Resurrection and our Life, we are raised up from under the law, from guilt, from wrath, from death and from the grave, and with him we now occupy the place of his feet, which he has made glorious, the place where his honor dwelleth; these, in distinction from our places in the flesh and under the law, are truly heavenly places in Christ Jesus. All the vicissitude of the children of God, in being changed from glory to glory by the Spirit, all our spiritual emotions, enlargements and abasements, in the spiritual life, are heavenly places. In the closet, or in the banqueting house, in songs of praise, in the fellowship of the saints, in communion with God, and in all the order and ordinances of the gospel we find and fill our heavenly places in Christ Jesus now; and when we shall quit this militant state we hope to sit in heavenly places of more unmingled and uninterrupted bliss, and to be perfectly released from all the trials, sorrows, tribulations, doubts and fears to which we are now subject. But what pen shall describe the heavenly places of our final triumphant state, when leaving the streams which now make glad the city of our God, we shall bask in the fullness of immortal joys at the Fountain Head above? It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him. Then shall we reach the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord to which we now are pressing forward.

This heavenly kingdom where God has set his King is on the right hand of God. David in spirit saw the Queen, the bride, the Lamb's wife, brought to the King, all glorious within, with clothing of wrought gold, and shining in raiment of fine needle work, and standing at the right hand of the divine majesty, in gold of Ophir (Psalm 45:7-14). The seat of Christ on the right hand of God shows that all the perfections of eternal deity approve the Mediatorial work and government of our heavenly King, and where he is, there shall his children be.

Secondly. We are to speak of the things which are above, and after which we are exhorted to seek. What things are they? First of all in the order laid down, our Lord has instructed his disciples to seek the kingdom itself, and God's righteousness, and leave it for God, who knoweth all our need, to supply all of earthly comforts that in his wisdom we require. We have shown that the kingdom of God and his righteousness are above, and where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The imperative command to seek it first shows that with his saints it is to have the precedence of every thing else. Worldly cares, necessities, and wants for the body, as to what we shall eat, or drink, or wherewith we shall be clothed, can never be of sufficient importance to justify a disciple of Jesus Christ in neglecting the kingdom and government of our blessed Lord and Master. Therefore our obedience to Christ should always be first and paramount. As soon as we are born of the Spirit, this charge is upon us. Until we are born of the Spirit, we are destitute of the necessary capacity to seek the kingdom of God; because it is spiritual, and totally invisible to all who are not born again. "Verily, verily," saith Jesus, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The kingdom is spiritual, and all the things which are above in the heavenly places are spiritual, and the Scriptures positively testify that none of the faculties, senses, and avenues of intelligence to the natural understanding of man can possibly know the things of the Spirit. "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The things of the Spirit can only be known by revelation of the Spirit. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:9,14)." But as soon as a man is born again, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and all such children shall be taught of God; and God, who has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of mankind, has revealed them unto babes. As soon then as we are born of the Spirit, we are first of all things commanded to seek the

kingdom of God and his righteousness. As the new born babe requires the care, nurture and affection of its mother, so all who are born of the Spirit require the protection, watch care and maternal offices of that Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all. The direction is not to seek some kingdom, or some church, or some religious establishment organized by men, but the kingdom of God. There is no time to spare; not a moment can we delay without disobedience, and disloyalty to our King. The place to serve him is in his kingdom, and that kingdom is his church. He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." As soon as his love is shed abroad in our hearts, we have the reliable evidence that we are born again, and that it is time to fly to the arms of that Jerusalem which is the mother of all those who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But beware of her whose house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death; for "Now she is without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner (Proverbs 7:12,27)." The kingdom of God differs widely from all other kingdoms, as God's righteousness differs from filthy rags. When you find the kingdom of God, you will also find his righteousness. His kingdom is where he reigns, where he rules, where his laws, ordinances, doctrine, and order prevails, and no where else. Find his kingdom, and you will find there your best friends and kindred, and there God your Savior reigns. You are not to seek his kingdom and your own righteousness, for they will not agree. Some of the children have feared to take the yoke of Jesus, and obey their Savior's commands, because they are not satisfied with their own righteousness. Poor erring child, that is not the kind you are directed to seek. Could you find as much of your own righteousness as the old Pharisees boasted of, it would do you no good.

"Nothing in your hand you bring
Simply to his cross you cling."

Nothing short of God's own righteousness can justify us in his sight; and the more you accumulate of your own to prepare you for his kingdom, the worse off you will be. Cast from you all the filthy rags of your own righteousness, and if you be risen with Jesus, seek his kingdom and his righteousness, and strive to enter in, and to abide within her gates; for Jesus has said, Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. But, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelations 22:14)." The things which are above, and which all who are risen with Christ should seek for embrace all spiritual things, the bread of life, the waters of salvation, the light and liberty of the gospel, the fellowship of the saints, the laws, ordinances, and institutions of the house of God, the doctrine, discipline, walk and deportment enjoined upon the saints; these are all spiritual, and all pertain to the kingdom of heaven which is above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Finally, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus are above. And "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning." Abundant encouragement is given to the children of the resurrection to seek those things; for in rising with him, they are partakers of those characteristic marks which belong to and distinguish the heirs of promise from all others, as the blessed of the Lord. They are poor in spirit to whom the kingdom of heaven is given, for it is their Father's good pleasure to give it to them. They are mourners whom God has promised to comfort. They are the meek who shall inherit the earth. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and they shall be filled. They are merciful, and they shall obtain mercy. They are peace makers, and shall be called the children of God. They are persecuted and reviled for righteousness sake, but great is their reward in heaven. To the people thus described by our Lord, he gave the gracious assurance, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened (Matthew 5:3, and 7:7)." The things which are above are essential to our comfort, and to God's declarative glory; they are worthy of our highest aspirations; so that to seek them is a duty as well as a privilege to all who are risen with Christ. But those who are not

risen with him are still among the dead, and have neither the desire, knowledge, life nor ability to seek; therefore, to them no such command or encouragement is given.

Thirdly. Why should we seek those things which are above? Some of the reasons given are these: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” In what sense are we dead? We have not yet laid off the body of our flesh, for we are still subject to the strife and enmity of our fleshly passions, lusts, affections, and the vain desires of our old carnal and depraved nature, and still find a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our flesh. If we were delivered from this, and our mortality were already swallowed up of life, we should no longer require to be admonished to mortify our members which are upon the earth, or to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts. When freed from the body of this death, we shall require no exhortations to seek the things which are above.

Still, those who are risen with Christ are dead in the sense of what the apostle is dwelling in the context. They are crucified with Christ. “In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him,” etc. “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ, from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are subject to ordinances, which all are to perish with the using, (Colossians 2:11,12,20,22).” Elsewhere the same apostle has testified that the saints are dead to the law by the body of Christ, and married, and now under law to him that is risen from the dead; and now as risen with him, we are not to dig up Moses, the dead husband, whom God has buried, nor touch, nor taste, nor handle those ordinances which belonged, in their time, to a worldly sanctuary, as carnal ordinances, which all were to perish with the using. Dead, henceforth and forever to the law, and risen with Christ to a higher and more exalted state, we are above the rudiments of the world, and are to count ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto righteousness. By the circumcision of Christ, the flesh is cut off, and we who are of the circumcision are to worship God in the spirit (not in carnal ordinances), rejoice in Christ Jesus (not in Moses, or the law of carnal commandments represented by him), and have no confidence in the flesh. “Ye are dead,” possessing no quickened principle, faculty, or element of our fleshly nature by which it is possible for us to serve God acceptably; for the body is dead because of sin, and is put off by the circumcision of Christ. Without this circumcision we cannot arise with Christ into his spiritual kingdom; for with our flesh we always serve the law of sin; and “This I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the spirit of Christ dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:8-11).” Our flesh has not risen with Christ; it is still flesh, carnal nature, corrupt and mortal, and in it there can nothing good be found; but if in spirit we are risen with Christ, having the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus, as the quickening, resurrection life and spirit of God, then have we the assurance that our mortal bodies shall by that indwelling resurrection spirit be raised up from the dead a spiritual, incorruptible, and immortal body, changed and fashioned like his glorious body. Have we not, on this division of our subject, presented sufficient reasons why we that are dead unto sin should not continue in sin, or we that are dead to the law should not attempt to serve God in the oldness of the letter, or on any legal workmongrel principles, or why we who are risen with Christ to a higher, holier state should seek those things which are above? It may seem gratuitous and uncalled for to show or attempt to give any further

reason why we should obey the admonitions of the word; it is enough to know that it is enjoined by the authority of our King.

Fourthly. We close this extended article with a few remarks in which we call the attention of the saints to the manner of seeking, as marked out by the apostle. Both affirmatively and negatively, we are instructed as to the course enjoined. Affirmatively, "Set your affections on things above." On the very things which we are commanded to seek; things pertaining to the kingdom and exaltation of Christ, the things of the Spirit, in the enjoyment of which our carnal or fleshly nature cannot participate; cherish an affectionate regard for them; count them your peculiar treasure, more to be desired than choice gold. Bind them to your heart; let not the remembrance of them slip from your mind, or be displaced by the cares, trials, reproaches, crosses or persecutions which may intercept your pathway. Like Moses, choose rather to suffer the afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin; and esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. In setting our affections on Christ and the things of his kingdom, he has said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And we are to love one another with a pure heart fervently, love his courts, the assemblies of his saints, his house of prayer. Preferring Jerusalem above our chief joys. Preferring the society of our kindred in Christ to that of earthly society. Esteem our place in the church of God as more honorable, more sacred, more pleasant, and of infinitely greater worth than thrones of power or records of earthly fame. And with the psalmist, reducing and condensing all our desire in one, let that one thing be that we may dwell in the house of the Lord forever, enquiring in his holy temple.

"Not on things of the earth." If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us. True, we have a nature which is of the world, which has not risen with Christ, and which loves the world, and would allure, captivate and draw us away from God, and from the contemplation of those heavenly things which are above. But these are the vile affections of the flesh; and the love of the Father is not in our flesh. The carnal (fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Hence the Christian is admonished to put off the old man, crucify, mortify, and resist all the carnal propensities of our fleshly nature, deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The things of this life which are needful, we should receive from the hand of God with thanksgiving, and use them in his fear, as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passeth away. But we may not make idols of them by bestowing our affections on them, so as to neglect our high and holy vocation, or sell any of our birthright privileges in the house of God for their tempting pottage. How is it with us, brethren? Are we walking according to this divine rule? Are our affections withdrawn, as they should be, from the world and its vanities? Do we never neglect our spiritual privileges to secure some earthly object? Let us heed the admonition of the word, "Forsake our vain delights, and bid the world farewell." Renounce it with its alluring charms and vanities, and see that our affections rest on things which are above.

How desirable the state suggested by our subject. Our affections withdrawn from the earth, our conversation in heaven, swerved by no worldly attraction or allurement, from the pathway of holiness, and saying in our hearts,

"Our joys are all packed up and gone,
Our eager souls would follow them
To our eternal home."

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1868.

REMARKS ON THE LETTER OF BROTHER E. RITTENHOUSE.

Our personal acquaintance for many years with this beloved brother affords us assurance that he writes from the purest motives and expresses the honest convictions of his mind; and his views are entitled to our careful consideration. If any thing has been said or written on the subject of regeneration and the new birth that would lead any to even suspect that we dispute, or lightly esteem, the commonly received views of the saints of all ages on the subject of an experimental work of the Quickening Spirit of God in what is called the new birth, or being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; brother Rittenhouse has our sincere thanks for seasonable caution. To our mind there is no doctrine more clearly taught in the Bible, or exemplified in the experience of the children of God than that of the personal and experimental regeneration, and spiritual birth of all the children of God. With us, as with him, this doctrine is vital and fundamental, and second in importance to no other matter of revelation. As to the precise sense in which the word regeneration was used by our Savior, or by the apostle, in the only two passages where it occurs in the Bible, we will not contend for our own views in opposition to those entertained by others. But whatever may have been the sense in which they were used, we have and do believe that all the immortality which God has given to his church, to be personally and experimentally developed in the ages to come, both in their being born again and in the final resurrection of their bodies, was given to them in and through Christ as their spiritual Head, and was communicated to the church, as the body of Christ, through him when God raised him from the dead, and then and there a nation was born in a day. And when the members of his body are personally and experimentally quickened and born again and made to believe, it is by the power of the resurrection of Christ; or as Paul has said, “Which believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead (Ephesians 1:19).” Hence the Spirit of which we are born again, and which Spirit dwells in the saints is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and by which our mortal bodies shall in like manner be quickened and raised from the dead at the last day. (See Romans 8:11.)

Although the discussion of the subject has failed to edify our brother, many dear brethren have assured us that they have been edified and refreshed, and, if not deceived, our own mind has been enlightened also. As to the cause, nature, necessity, and personal experimental development of regeneration, no essential change has taken place with us, that we are aware of; but we confess we have discovered new beauties in the contemplation of the views of our brethren who have had greater light than ourself, and have in the discussion presented their views in a clearer manner than we could.

With no design of disparagement of the views of brother Rittenhouse on I Peter 1:3, we cannot perceive any application of the idea of generation, begetting, or birth, to the relief experienced by the saints from depression, from a knowledge of the fact that their crucified Lord was risen from the dead, as it implanted, generated, or begat no new relationship either to God or to the inheritance of glory; whereas Peter affirms not only that they were begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to a lively hope, but also to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the heirs. And in the same chapter he says that those who are so begotten are also “born again,” to that very incorruptible inheritance to which they were begotten by the resurrection, by, or, “of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” Whenever the sensible presence of our Lord is hidden from our faith by any intervening cloud, we are in heaviness, and

manifold temptations; and when the cloud is removed, our joys revive; but no new relationship is developed. When in our flesh Jesus bowed himself in death, he fully represented us in death as slain by the law. Had he failed to arise, no living or lively hope of immortality could ever have beamed on those for whom he died; but when he was begotten, and born from the dead, the vitality of that birth and resurrection life which quickened and brought up his crucified body from death, and from under the law, and curse which he sustained for us, was given to us in his resurrection. In what other way has he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light? In what other way are we risen with him? In what other way has God quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1868.

BAPTIST STATE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

Some one has sent us a slip taken, as we presume, from the Richmond, Virginia *Herald*, containing the following abridged account of some of their doings, viz.:

“Introductory Address by R. H. Bagby, D.D.

The Virginia Baptist State Sunday School Convention met last evening, in the Second Baptist Church.

Long before the hour appointed for the meeting, the church was crowded to suffocation.

The altar was neatly decorated with evergreens; in the centre of an arch formed by Magnolia leaves, was a shield designed by Mr. W. Montague, painter, with the motto, “Feed my lambs.” On the shield was painted an open Bible.

The exercises of the evening were opened with a beautiful hymn by the children of the Sunday Schools of the Second and Grace Church.

After which Mr. C. H. Ryland moved that the Rev. Dr. Burrows be appointed temporary chairman, and Rev. J. Hardy Hendren of Norfolk, secretary *pro. tem.* This motion was unanimously carried.

On taking the chair, Mr. Burrows, in the name of the Sunday Schools of Richmond, welcomed to the city the representatives of the Baptist Sunday Schools of the state of Virginia. He said that they were glad that there were so many present, and he was pleased to see such a spirit of unanimity throughout the state. They were cordially welcomed to this city, and to the deliberations which were about to commence. At the conclusion of Dr. Burrow’s remarks, Rev. Mr. Cornelius Tyree offered a most fervent prayer.

The Chair then announced that the Convention was ready to proceed to the election of permanent officers as the first business in order.

Mr. Ellyson suggested that previous to the permanent organization, Dr. Bagbee be requested to deliver the introductory address.

The suggestion was adopted by the Convention, and the Reverend Doctor was introduced by the Chair, and proceeded to deliver the address, of which we make the following brief synopsis:

He said, 'I need hardly say that I am not at all responsible for the position I now occupy. It has been assigned me by others who have a right to control, and I accept, with diffidence and with pleasure.'

The subject of the address has already been announced – 'The relation of the Sunday School to the Church.' He thought it was well in the introduction of a Sunday School Convention to enquire what authority the word of God furnished for such an institution? 'Since no mention is made of Sunday Schools in the Scriptures, what right have we to claim for them divine authority, or to expect upon them the blessing of heaven?' He said that in making it the duty of the church to convert the world, Christ had authorized and required the use of all agencies intelligent piety can adopt or invent for the accomplishment of this great end. Among these, the speaker said, the Sunday School stood pre-eminent. 'Sunday Schools, though not even mentioned in the Scriptures, are nevertheless scriptural.' He said there was no good excuse for the church that had not a Sunday School. If there were no children, the members of the church themselves should meet, and together study the word of God. He was also in favor that every church should hold monthly Sunday School prayer meetings."

Remarks: – In the earlier days of our editorial career, when the separation between the children of the bond woman and the children of the promise was progressing, in obedience to the command of God in Galatians 4:30 and Genesis 21:10-12, we were frequently brought into collision with the new order of professed Baptists on the subject of Sunday Schools, as well as other unscriptural innovations upon the faith and order of the Primitive Baptists; but since the separation has been consummated, and the lines of demarcation fully known, we have paid but little attention to their idolatrous progression in iniquity. Nor do we now propose to renew the discussion with them. They are joined to their idols, and we will let them alone. As the Baptist church of Christ, we are no longer responsible for their admonitions. The names which they assume are the number of the name of the apocalyptic beast; it is the number of a man, and by no means signifying the "remnant (which is) according to the election of grace (Romans 9:5)." *Baptist*, as a name, in its scriptural signification, has in all former ages from the days of John the Baptist, been used to identify the church of Christ, composed of his baptized followers, in distinction from all the sects and denominations of anti-christ. But when that sacred name has been desecrated by thieves who have entered, not by the door, into the sheepfold of Christ, but have climbed up some other way, and have come but to steal and to kill, and to destroy, their object in assuming a name which they hate, is obviously to take away their reproach (Isaiah 4:1). Yet lest that name should subject them to the persecutions and obloquy which the church of Christ has to endure, they have adopted also the number of the name of the beast, which, being interpreted, reads thus: "The Baptist State Sunday School Convention." The first expressing what they profess to be ecclesiastically, as religionists; the next is to show what they are politically, and in the adulterous connection of church and State; and the other name, Sunday School, for which institution, in this very extract they confess they have no Bible authority, they show that their reliance for success is not in God, but in a humanly devised institution; a strange conglomeration of religion, politics and worldly institutions.

Their description of their altar shows very clearly that it is consecrated to an "unknown god." Altogether unlike to any altar described in the Scriptures, or approved as an altar to the God of the Bible. Not like the altar of rough stones on which God forbid the Hebrews to apply any human tool or embellishment. This idol shrine is decorated, and made more attractive to unquickened children and

adults, than the altars of brick which the carnal Israelites built to provoke the God of heaven (Isaiah 65:3). “Decorated with evergreens,” comparing well with the offering of Cain, of the productions of the dust of the earth, yet attractive to the eyes of the uncircumcised. “In the centre an arch of Magnolia leaves,” produced from the earth groaning under the curse of God. However appropriate for an idol temple, it is insulting and defiant to the God of heaven. The painting, too, just look at it. A shield, a passage of Scripture, detached from its connection, and perverted, like a pearl cast among swine, or as a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout. And a painted Bible. How expressive! How much protection can the painted picture of a shield afford, when the earth and skies shall be removed, and the elements of nature melt with fervent heat? The picture of a Bible, a show of piety, a form of godliness; but the picture of a book in which the “Reverend Doctor” can find no authority for Sunday Schools. Just such a Bible as we suppose best suited to their purpose. A shade without the substance. The words of Christ to Peter are adopted as a *motto*, and so perverted as to make them seem to be applied to a vast assemblage of unconverted, or unquickened children, gathered by the attraction of Magnolia leaves, evergreens, fine paintings and heathen altars, and persuaded to trust their final and everlasting salvation to gods which their fathers did not know, to gods which have come newly up.

Our object in noticing this extract was more particularly to review the reasoning of the “Reverend Doctor,” on whose head is written names of blasphemy, by assuming a title which is the name of the supreme God alone. “Holy and Reverend is his name.”

The doctor admits that in the outset it is proper to show the relation of the Sunday School to the church. This, however, he has failed to do; but left us to infer that it is as the relation of Ishmael to Sarah. But he said, “Since there is no mention made of Sunday Schools in the Scriptures, what right have we to claim for them divine authority, or to expect for them the blessing of heaven?” He said, that in making it the duty of the church to convert the world, Christ had authorized and required the use of all agencies intelligent piety can adopt or invent for the accomplishment of this great end. This inference would have some force if the Doctor could show from the Scriptures where, when, or in what instructions, ordinances or commands, Christ has made it the duty of the church to convert the world. We challenge him, or any other being in earth or heaven, to prove that such a duty has ever been imposed on the church. Had such a duty been laid upon the church, with no specific instructions as to the *modus operandi*, we would then agree that the church might feel at liberty to tax her own ingenuity, and resort to such measures and agencies as she deemed most likely to effect the object, whether Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, infant sprinkling, thumb screws, racks, fire or sword. But no such duty is enjoined; nor is it possible for the church, or even for angels, to convert, savingly, a single soul of all the race of Adam. There is no name or power under heaven given among men whereby we might be saved, but the name of Christ. His name is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. It must certainly require the logic of a learned Doctor of divinity to show that Sunday Schools, though not even mentioned in the Scriptures, are nevertheless scriptural. Who would not build colleges and theological seminaries to produce such profound logicians? A learned Presbyterian in this county once argued in the same way. “True,” said he, “the Bible says nothing about infant sprinkling; but what does this silence say? Ah, it does not say we shall not sprinkle them.”

Middletown, N. Y
July 1, 1868.

MISSING MANUSCRIPTS.

Beloved Brother Beebe: – After so long a time I take the opportunity to address you a few lines. I am still upon the shores of time, an unchanging Old School Baptist, because I believe them spiritually right in the doctrine of God our Savior, and the only professing people on the face of the earth that implicitly take the word of God as the rule of faith and practice. Since first I commenced taking the “Signs of the Times,” most of the brethren in the ministry then have received their discharge, and have gone home to reap in the harvest-field of perfect love the trophies of victorious grace, and have left me and a few of my old beloved brethren to battle on in this present evil world with the man of sin, the fighting of flesh, and opposition of science, falsely so called. Never was anti-christ more potent, never more aroused earth and hell, to develop their characteristics than now. The fullness of his development will soon be attained, and then shall the end come, when the Lord shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming and the glory of his appearing. It is ours to wait with patience, and trust alone in God. I greet our beloved brethren of the South, who have suffered and are suffering so dire-fully. I too have suffered, God knows how much. My poor heart is made glad and joyful to hear from them through the “Signs,” and learn that they stand fast in the Lord. This is not our home; here we have no abiding city. Earth is not our inheritance, nor human governments our prop. Whoso leans upon it leans upon a broken staff that will pass away like the chaff from the summer threshing floor. But hope, saving hope, never faileth. The storm with its last fitful gust shall have passed away, and it abides still.

The communication on Revelation 11 which I sent you for publication has never appeared in the “Signs.” Well, it was your privilege to print, or not, as you thought best: but what objection you could have to sending it back, I cannot tell. I also sent you another piece for publication, viz.: I was appointed by the Western Association of Iowa, last year, to write a corresponding letter to the California Association, which I did. It was accepted, and I was requested to send it to brother Beebe for publication, which I did, but it has not appeared. The communication on Revelations has been so long ago that I am not particularly anxious now whether you send it to me or not.

I am sorry to have got so far in arrears for your paper, but, brother Beebe, I could not help it. I was broken up by thieves, robbers and murderers in Missouri, and have been disappointed since in collecting money due me two years ago. I feel thankful to you, brother Beebe, for your patience in waiting. I hope to do better for the future. The “Signs” I love to peruse. For thirty years they have been a family visitor, and I would feel worse to lose them than Micah did when they stole his gods. I enclose four dollars, which you will please credit on the label on my paper.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Elmore G. Terry.

Reply: – If brother Terry could spend a few weeks with us in our *sanctum*, count the number of letters constantly pouring in, many of them while we are absent, note the hasty manner in which we are compelled to examine and dispose of them, he would not be surprised that some possessing merit are overlooked and forgotten by us. Sometimes our correspondents request us to return their manuscripts, if we fail to publish them, or if we disapprove of them. Those who wish us to return their manuscript should so instruct us when they send them, as the accumulation of papers in our office would make it a very difficult task to overhaul barrels of old letters to find such as they wish us to return. It would be much easier for them to reserve a duplicate when they send the original.

We wish it to be distinctly understood that we cannot and do not hold ourselves obligated to return such letters as are sent us. Nor is it possible for us to write a review of such as we do not publish, pointing out what may seem to us objectionable in them. Many letters are from necessity laid aside, to which we have no particular objection. From the whole mass of communications placed in our hands, we deem it our duty and privilege to select such as in our judgment will give the greatest amount of edification and satisfaction to our readers. When we have plenty of space to spare, we have published the circulars and corresponding letters of associations, who do not publish them in their Minutes; and almost invariably insert in our columns the circulars and corresponding letters of such associations as have their Minutes printed at our office, before distributing the type; and these occupy about as much space in the “*Signs*” as we can spare for that purpose.

We recognize brother Terry as one of our oldest patrons, and an able writer, and would feel grieved to give him occasion to think we would neglect him from any lack on our part to appreciate him as a brother, a minister, a patron, or an able and talented writer; for we do esteem him in love for his work’s sake, and deeply sympathize with him and others in the serious losses they have sustained by the devastating war which has so terribly distracted and distressed our country.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1868.

THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST’S COMPLETE COMPENDIUM.

We have recently received letters of enquiry from brethren in various parts, asking information concerning a work said to bear the above title, published in Portland, Maine.

A circular has been sent to many of our Old School Baptist brethren, setting forth that this is “an invaluable book, and every Old School Baptist should have it.”

As we have no knowledge of either the book or its publishers, we are inclined to think the whole thing is a “Yankee Trick.” We know of but two or three persons in the city of Portland, that we recognize as Old School Baptists, neither of whom are publishers. From the fact that the author of the circular has not sent us a copy of his work to examine, nor of his circular, but has sent them broadcast to such of our subscribers as have given their names and address through the “*Signs*,” we presume it was not intended to give notice of the imposition until too late to prevent the hoax. The recommendation of the work by the “*Methodist Evangelist*,” and the so called “*Christian Observer*,” is strong presumptive evidence that the work is not designed for the approval of our order of Old School or Primitive Baptists.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1868.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

(Reply to brother J. F. White)

The text proposed for consideration is II Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." The italicized words are supplied by the translators. A general impression has prevailed that the judgment seat of Christ is a seat at present unoccupied, on which Christ shall be seated when the earth and heavens shall have passed away, and the graves of all the families of the earth shall deliver up their slumbering tenants. Then all the tribes of mankind shall be summoned to appear in his august presence; that then he shall vacate the mercy seat, and assume the judgment seat to adjudicate the case and determine the final destiny of all the children of men. In this theory is necessarily involved the supposition that the saints and glorified spirits in heaven, and all who are now, or shall at that period be suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, shall from heaven and hell assemble in resurrected bodies reproduced in form and nature as when they were on earth. Each shall then and there be subjected to a judicial examination, and receive from the Judge a reward for their righteous acts, or a sentence of wrath for their wickedness, proportioned in strict justice to the amount of merit or demerit in which they shall be found. The text on which we are requested to give our views has been relied on, perhaps more than any other, in support of the above stated theory. Christians being the only class that can find nothing at all meritorious in themselves to plead, and everything that is vile and sinful in their nature to loath and abhor, have been perplexed and sometimes even terror-stricken in the fearful apprehension that the heart-searching and rein-trying Judge, at that awful day, will find them as guilty and sinful as they now feel themselves to be, and will bid them depart from his presence to everlasting burnings. Nor would such dismal apprehensions be unwarranted if the views presented in the foregoing were sustained in the Scriptures of truth; for the Psalmist has said, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand (Psalm 130:3)." Again, "Blessed is he whom transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity (Psalm 32:1,2)."

The subject presented by our brother involves the following considerations: First, the judgment seat of Christ. Second, who must appear before it? When, and for what purpose? Our firm conviction on the subject is that our Lord Jesus Christ is now occupying his judgment seat, and all judgment is vested in him. "In righteousness he doth judge and make war (Revelation 19:11)." "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18)." "Power is given to him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him (John 17:2)." The judgment seat, however, of which the apostle is speaking in our text, is that on which he presides, as the Head over all things to his church. As it is written, "The Lord shall judge his people (Hebrews 10:30)." His judgment seat is his throne; and God has said, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2:6)." "For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King; he will save us (Isaiah 33:22)." "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 the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31,32)." When our Redeemer had finished transgressions and made an end of sin, when he had met and canceled all the demands of law and justice, redeemed his people from the curse and also from the dominion of the law, he was exalted with the right hand of the Father, sat down with him in his throne, and is forever sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He has received his kingdom, and is inaugurated in

power, and has ascended his mediatorial throne, which is the seat of his judgment. In his kingdom he spreads his throne. It stands in Zion, and justice and judgment are the habitation of it forever. In his gospel church he holds his court, and bringeth forth judgment unto victory. If the church of God is not the judgment seat of Christ, we know not where to find it. “Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops; he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the Judge of Israel with the rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1,2).” We cannot believe that he who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, changes from place to place, from seat to seat. He has set down forever upon his throne, and his throne is his mercy seat, and it is also his judgment seat, and all his decisions are as immutable, irrevocable and decisive now as they can ever be at any subsequent period. When he said unto the dear child of God, “Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,” that judgment was officially rendered, and firmly as the pillars of his throne shall that decision stand when earth and heaven shall have fled away.

Having, as we conceive, fully demonstrated that the church of God is the judgment seat of Christ; that Zion is the “Holy Hill” on which God has set his King, and that a glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary, we may contemplate with joy and gratitude its exalted altitude. Higher than the heavens, and lasting as eternity. “For unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”

Two. Let us now inquire to whom it is said in our text: “For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.” The epistle in which these words are written is thus addressed: “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in Achaia;” and these are still further described as a people who know that they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A people who groan in the earthly house of this tabernacle, and who earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven; and still further, a people whom God has wrought for this self-same purpose (to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven). A people who are always confident, knowing that whilst they are present in the body, they are absent from the Lord; and who would rather be absent from the body and present with the Lord. A people who walk by faith and not by sight. A people who labor, that whether present or absent, they may be accepted of him. And in the subsequent part of the same chapter, they are further described as a people for whom Christ died, and who were all dead with him, who are quickened together with Christ, and raised up together and made to sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. To these, and only to these, are the words of our text applied, or applicable. None but the members of this kingdom have access to the judgment seat of Christ. They have come unto Mount Sion, to this heavenly Jerusalem, and to God, the Judge of all. All others stand before the mountain that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the voice of words. But those who are redeemed to God, and from the dominion of the law, now stand in this peculiar relation to him, as subjects of his spiritual kingdom, and amenable to him as their Judge, and to them is secured the high and happy privilege of standing before his judgment seat. They have full confidence in the righteousness of his judgments, and confide in all his decisions; and their desire and prayer is: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:23,24).” As Christ is their Lord, their King and their Judge, they must all of them stand before his judgment seat. Of all that is wrought in them, by God working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, and of their working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, Christ is the only competent Judge. His foundation standeth sure, and hath this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. It is an invaluable birthright privilege of all the sons of God to stand before the

judgment seat of Christ. There is no other judgment seat to which they can so confidently appeal. God has wrought all their works in them, and of his own works he alone can judge with unerring righteousness. All others are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. He will not accuse them unto the Father, for they have one that accuseth them, even Moses in whom they trust.

Three. When, and for what purpose must they all appear before the judgment seat of Christ? The impression has generally prevailed, as we have already remarked, that the judgment seat will not be assumed by Christ until after the resurrection of the dead, and that immediately after the resurrection all the human family, in one promiscuous mass, shall be assembled before the bar of God, when the exact state of every one shall be ascertained and determined, and the final destiny of each shall be announced by the eternal Judge. That God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has appointed, and that that day or period shall be after the resurrection, we fully believe. But that judgment will not be a court of inquisition or investigation; for the dead shall all be judged according to the things which are already written in the books, which shall then be opened. The Lord already knows them that are his; the saints have already been judged and acquitted, and freely justified through the redemption that is Christ Jesus. God has already pronounced on them, and promised to remember their sins and iniquities no more. They are blotted out as a thick cloud, and shall never again come in remembrance. Nor will any investigation of the condition of the ungodly be required; for they are condemned already and the wrath of God (even now) abides on them. The judgment of both saints and sinners is already decided, pronounced and recorded in the books, and the day of judgment which shall be at the resurrection is the day when all that is now written, of the destiny of saints and sinners, shall be fully executed. The day of the judgment of Sodom, Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem, were not days of investigation, for their sins were summed up, and the amount of their punishment determined and written hundreds of years before the execution of their judgments on them, and the times of execution were called the days of their judgment. Can it be supposed that God has less knowledge of the state of mankind now than he will have at any future time? Or that he will find occasion to revoke, modify, or in the smallest degree recede from what he has already pronounced on all the sons of Adam? Already he knows them that are his; he has not to wait to be informed. He has put his seal upon the heirs of immortality, and has given them his Spirit to witness with their spirit that they are the sons of God. Christ has pledged his word, that he will raise them all up at the last day, and that they shall live and reign with him in glory. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." They shall never come into condemnation, world without end.

Instead then of indulging fearful apprehensions of a future day of inquisition, and liability of being repelled from the presence of our God and Savior, let us rejoice that the Judgment Seat of Christ is in his Holy Hill of Zion, in his church, and that he now presides, that he now sits in judgment, and now all his judgments are decisive and irrevocable. He now calls his own sheep by name, and none but his own, and leadeth them out from all wrath and condemnation. He now says unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." If this view of the subject be accepted, what does the apostle mean by reminding the saints that "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ?"

We understand Paul to mean that the saints, to whom these words are exclusively addressed, being redeemed from that law which consigned them to wrath and damnation, are no more under it, and can never again be tried and condemned by it. We are dead to it, by the body of Christ. No more under it, but under Christ, who is himself the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Now therefore being under law to Christ, we stand before his judgment seat, and not before the seat of

Moses, or the law of sin and death. Being now under law to Christ, we are amenable to him, subject to his law, which he has written in our hearts and in our minds, and accountable to him for all that is done in our body, good or bad. The context describes the saints in the body. The new man which is born of God is now living in an earthly tabernacle, which is soon to be dissolved; this tabernacle he calls a body, a house, etc., which is so radically distinct and dissimilar from the new man, that to be present with, and at home in it, is to be absent from Christ; yet while in it we groan, and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our heavenly house, or spiritual body, we are subject to trials, temptations, doubts, fears, distrust and disobedience. While in the body or earthly tabernacle, the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death; so also another law which is in our members warring against the spirit, brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. Thus in our body things good and bad are constantly transpiring. In this state we stand before the church of God, which is the judgment seat of Christ, where every vain thought and idle word is judged and condemned. And there Christ by his Spirit sits in judgment to approve of all the works of the Spirit which are wrought in us. When the heaven-born child comes to relate to the church his experience of the quickening operation of the Spirit, he stands before the judgment seat, to give an account of what God has wrought in him, and to receive from the judgment seat a decision, according to what God has done for him, and when gathered into the church he is no more his own, being bought with a price. He is there subject to the laws of the Kingdom and the discipline of the House of God, from which judgment seat shall be awarded to him either approval or censure, according to the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad.

When, therefore, and so long as we stand in the church of God, we are before the judgment seat of Christ, and all our walk and conversation must be tested by the laws of Christ, and all the decisions from the judgment seat are bound on earth, and bound in heaven. The necessity of our standing before the judgment seat of Christ is because we are incompetent to judge for ourselves. The Lord is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our standing King, and his judgment seat is as indispensable to our good and his glory as his mercy seat. Remember, Christians, your holy calling, your birthright privilege, and submit to the authority of Christ in his church. None but Christians stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to be tried by the laws of his spiritual kingdom, and it is of God's abounding mercy and grace that we can appeal, in all our straits, to him who is not only our Judge, but also our Advocate. As in the words of the poet:

“Is there ambition in my heart?
Search, gracious God, and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee.”

Middletown, N. Y
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REPLY TO “A LITTLE ONE.”

When we speak of the existence of the people of God in Christ before the world began, we speak of their spiritual life. They had no other existence until the world began. Their earthly existence had its origin in Adam, who was made of the dust of the ground. Our earthly bodies and carnal nature were created in him, and from the date of his creation existed seminally in him; as the oak existed in the acorn. As the tree could not exist anterior to the acorn from which it is developed, so our earthly existence did not exist until Adam was created. Our spiritual existence, if we are the children of God, is an existence of life, and that life is eternal; and that eternal life is in Christ, and that life is Christ. Christ, as the life of all his members, is eternal life. John says, “And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (I John 5:11,12).” In this one “eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us (I John 1:2),” was the eternal life of all the children of God; for, “They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:8).” The identification of the children of God is in their identification with Christ, as their Eternal Life. Hence the election of grace is an election, not in the earthly Adam, but in Christ, “According as he (God) hath chosen us in him (Christ,) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Ephesians 1:4,5).” Now predestination does not relate to that which is absolutely eternal. The Eternal Life, which is Christ, does not exist by predestination, for nothing can pre-exist that which is eternal. Christ is eternal, and he is eternal life; and the predestination to the adoption of children relates to the people of God in their relation to the earthly Adam, who were predestinated, in the order of time, to the adoption of children; and by virtue of that predestination, in the time appointed, they receive the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father.

In the elucidation of this election *IN* Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestination of us as children of men, to the adoption of children *BY* Christ, after the foundation of the world, the apostle speaks of a *mystery*. A most profound mystery, linking eternity with time, heaven with earth, God with man. “According to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded to usward in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the *mystery of his will*; according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself.” Here let us pause and enquire, What is this *mystery of his will*? It is no less than this: “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him (Ephesians 1:7-10).” Here are things in heaven, and things in earth. How wide apart! Yet both belonging to Christ, and, although so widely distant, predestinated to be gathered together in one, even in him. That Eternal Life which was with the Father, was never out of Christ, never out of heaven. The subjects of his predestination unto the adoption of children, embracing untold millions of the human family, are in the ample provisions of his grace, wherein he hath abounded to usward in all wisdom and prudence, provided with redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. In which redemption they are redeemed from the earth, from death, from guilt, wrath and condemnation. Redeemed unto God, to an identity with the risen and glorified Savior, and their mortality to be swallowed up of life; so that ultimately all things embraced in this mystery of the will of God, which are in heaven (including our spiritual eternal life, which is hid with Christ in God, and all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ), and all his *purchased* or redeemed possession on the earth (including all that the Father has

given him, of the sons of men, and embracing all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call), shall be gathered together in one, even in Jesus Christ our Lord.

When Christ, who is the eternal life of his church and body, was made of a woman, and under the law, in his advent and incarnation, God was manifest in the flesh; and in the mysterious connection, exemplified the great design of his Mediatorial relations and work. In his wonderful conception, by the overshadowing Spirit, that holy thing should be called the Son of God. Made, by the same conception and birth, under the law. Heaven and earth, eternity and time, the divine and the human natures, were identified in his person, as the one Mediator between God and man; equally related to, and identified with both. On the one point, embodying all the fullness of the infinite and eternal Godhead; and on the other, he took on him the seed of Abraham, with all our infirmities, liabilities and responsibilities. In these two distinct, yet consolidated, natures he fully represented and embodied all things which are in him in heaven, and all things on earth that belong to his mystical body. Thus was made manifest the child born, the Son given, and his name is Wonderful. In this unparalleled mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. In legal oneness with his people under the law, he is recognized by the fiery law, and the inflexible justice of God, as Shepherd for his sheep, as Husband of his bride, and as Head of his body the church, he sank in death under the weight of the transgressions of his people, which were all laid upon him. In his circumcision, he put away the body of the sins of the flesh, burying the seed of Abraham by baptism into his death, reproducing, regenerating, and rescuing from the power of sin, death, and the dominion of the law, all his members; they rise with him to newness of life. Death is abolished, sin removed, righteousness brought in, and all his redeemed members freely justified through the redemption that is in him.

Having now removed all legal impediments out of the way, he shall now gather his sheep with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. He has ascended up on high, the heavens have received him; and in testimony to us that his Mediatorial work is accepted, the Holy Ghost is sent down, and the dispensation of the fullness of times shall witness the ingathering into his kingdom all his members. The kingdom is in Christ; therefore, all who are gathered into his kingdom are gathered into him. All must come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. In that identity they are all one; where “there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all (Colossians 3:11).”

In the gathering into the kingdom, by the new birth, we are made partakers of that eternal life which Christ is unto his people. And although our fleshly nature is excluded from this spiritual kingdom, and flesh and blood cannot come into, or inherit it, we still rely upon the infallible promise that our vile bodies shall be changed, and fashioned like his glorious body; and in that promised change, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. It is sown a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body; and the saying that is written shall be fulfilled, and these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption; and all for whom this glorious resurrection is secured, by the resurrection of our blessed Redeemer, shall be fully gathered together in one, even in him.

Whether we have succeeded in making this subject clear to A Little One, or not, if we have understood his views, as stated in his letter, they express substantially what we contend for. That eternal life, which he speaks of as being given to the saints when they are born again, is what constitutes us the children of God; and in that life we were chosen in Christ before the world began. And when we receive that life experimentally, by it our whole persons are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and sealed unto the

redemption (or deliverance) of the purchased possession; when “the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God;” and then shall we be satisfied, when we awake with his likeness.

In reply to the enquirer, as to the signification of John 3:5, we do not understand that the being born of the water alludes to the ordinance of baptism, only figuratively. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.

In being born again, the Spirit quickens the sinner that was dead in sins; the water of life, clear as crystal, from the throne of God and the Lamb, flows freely to the newborn child of God, and the blood of Christ is applied in all its power to cleanse us from all sin. Christian baptism is emblematic of this, as it sets forth our death, burial, and resurrection to a newness of life.

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TEMPTATIONS.

It is not unusual with the children of God in their early experience of the boundless goodness and saving grace of God, in their deliverance from guilt and condemnation, and the joyful flow of the love of God shed abroad in them, as they are made to loath and abhor sin, and to love holiness, to conclude that sin, folly and vanity can never have any more charms or attractions for them. Also, they are henceforth strongly fortified and entrenched securely from all the wiles of the adversary, and from the alluring vanities of the world. Against the former they are firmly resolved that they will die rather than yield; while at the latter they have already had their fill; and have no fear that for them they will never thirst again. As to the law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, they have not yet felt it, and flatter themselves that the fountain of evil in their earthly nature is dried up forever, and they will have no trouble from evil propensities, vain thoughts, or vile passions. With sincere, but child-like simplicity they sing,

“My soul forsakes her vain delights
And bids the world farewell;
Base as the dirt beneath my feet,
And mischievous as hell.
No longer will I ask your love,
Or seek your friendship more.” Etc.

Their rapture seems a pleasing dream; for it is truly a mere dream, as they will painfully discover when they awake to the reality of their real situation. Their hour of sore conflict and fiery trials, of midnight darkness and fierce temptations, has not yet come; nor do they apprehend that it will ever come to them. Their mountain now stands firm and strong, and they are ready to say they will never be moved. How little they know, and less they fear the trying day to which they hasten. Nor would we utter a word or suggest a thought to dampen their joy, or to abate their trust and confidence in God. And truly while trusting in God, they are perfectly secure; they shall never be moved, they are like Mount Zion which

cannot be moved; but they are strangely led to rely, at least to some extent, on their own resolutions, even to trust in the Lord; and they see no danger in forming their resolutions until they find them as the cords with which Delilah bound Samson, like flax that has been burned. After having sailed for a time upon a smooth, unruffled sea, the clouds begin to lower, their heavens are darkened, the cheerful radiance of their sun is hidden by the intervening clouds, the winds arise, the billows swell, and the tempest rages. They are filled with alarm, and fear that their trembling hope will fail them in the trying hour; that their frail bark can never outride the fearful storm. Could they at such times remember that their heavenly Father is at the helm, and that he controls the storms, and only intends these trials for their good and his glory, what comfort they would feel to bear them up.

We are apt to enquire when under trial and temptations, Why, and from whence do they come to us? We cannot doubt the power of God to shield and perfectly secure his children from them. Else why has he taught us thus to pray? We could not in faith ask him to “Lead us not into temptation,” if we doubted his ability to do so. And it would be mockery to pray him to do for us what we doubt his power to do, for whatsoever is without faith is sin. But the petition by the Savior taught to his disciples, suggests the thought that God leads his children into temptation; and yet an inspired apostle has warned us against saying, when we are tempted to do evil, that we are so tempted of God; but rather know and acknowledge that every unhallowed thought, vain desire, or temptation to sin, that a Christian ever has or can feel, proceeds from the depravity of our own sinful nature. Yet it is said, God tempted Abraham, when he commanded him to offer up his son Isaac. Also that our divine Lord and Master was himself led by the Spirit (not of Satan, but by the Spirit of the Lord God, which was upon him) into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. These Scriptures may seem paradoxical and unreconcilable, when only superficially viewed; but when properly understood, they are perfectly harmonious. God did not tempt Abraham to do evil. It was perfectly right that Abraham should, in obedience to the mandate of his God, lead forth his only son to the appointed altar, and there witness that deliverance which God had in store, and of which he had not told the faithful patriarch. In no case can we commit sin by obeying any special command of God. His command in all cases is our warrant. And his will is the supreme standard of right. Had Abraham hesitated, and listened to carnal reasoning, he might have plead: To take the life of my only son, and that son too, in whom all nations are to be blessed, that child of promise, whose seed is ordained to be more than the stars of heaven, will be a violation of the law, which forbids to kill. But waving all these perplexing thoughts and dismissing all human reasoning on the subject, he staggered not at the promise, which his obedience to this command would seem to cut off, he believing God would provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering, or even restore the lad from death, and from the ashes of the altar, bowed in humble obedience to his God. In like manner, God in wisdom, and for their good, often leads his children into such trials as he has appointed, to test their faith and confidence in him; but the spirit of holiness never inclines one to sin.

The temptations of which James was speaking were those wherein our carnal lusts tempt us to transgress the laws of Christ. Although, as we propose to show, God does lead his children into temptation, and through the most trying temptations, for the trial of their faith, and where they are exposed to the severe buffetings and fiery temptations of Satan, no wicked emotion or unrighteous desire in them proceeds from God. That is, from the Spirit of Holiness, which is God. He dwells in them, and walks in them, as his children; and in them works both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. So also exists in them (that is in their flesh) a fountain of corruption; and as no holy aspiration of the child of God may be attributed to the flesh, so neither can any unholy lusting, or wicked thoughts, by which a Christian is so much perplexed and sorely oppressed, be attributed to God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and in that fleshly nature lurks all the seeds of sin; but that which is

born of the Spirit is spirit; and that spirit being incorruptible, and born of incorruptible seed, cannot sin, because it is born of God, and his (God's) seed abideth in him.

That God leads or directs the pathway of his children, for wise and necessary purposes, into temptations, subjecting them to the fiery ordeal for their special benefit, will appear from James 1:2,3,4. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye 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." And that God has a perfect control of all things, temptations included, that can effect us appears from I Corinthians 10:13. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to men; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." It was necessary that Peter should be tempted, and sifted as wheat, to cut down his self-confidence, and qualify him afterward to comfort the brethren.

But, after all, the brightest, clearest, and most wonderful illustration of our subject is found in the temptations which were felt and endured by the holy, harmless Lamb of God, when in his flesh he was made experimentally acquainted with the feelings of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points as his children are, and yet without sin; that is, without being captivated or overcome by the tempter.

That our Lord Jesus Christ, while in the flesh, was subject to the temptations of the devil has filled us with amazement; but it is nevertheless true, not only that he was assaulted by the tempter, but that he actually felt the full power of temptation, and that he was tempted in all points, as we are, and knows by personal experience the feelings of our infirmities. True, in his Godhead he was not tempted, for James says God cannot be tempted with evil: neither tempteth he any man. But he was as perfectly man as he was perfectly God, and in that fleshly nature which was made of a woman, came to bear the infirmities, as well as the chastisement of the peace of his people. It is consoling to the tried and tempest-tossed children of God to know that we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but one who is fully qualified to sympathize with us in all our trials; knowing exactly how we feel when we are tempted.

"He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he hath felt the same."

In all his temptations we must regard him as our Leader, and all his people must follow him in his temptations, as in all his footsteps. And as surely as we know him, and the power of his resurrection, we shall also know him in the fellowship of his sufferings. The disciples who had followed him in the regeneration, had been with him in his temptations; and so it shall continue to be with all his saints throughout all time.

Since writing the foregoing, we have received an article from our son, Elder William L. Beebe, addressed to our sister Eggleston, on the subject of Temptations, in which the subject is more fully discussed; and as we fully agree with his views on the subject, we will let what we have written, together with his letter, suffice, at least for the present. Hereafter, if the Lord will, we propose to treat more particularly on the temptations of our Lord as stated in Matthew 4:1-11, and attempt to show that in all the temptations of that trying hour, all his followers are made partakers.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1868.

TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matthew 3:1).”

“*Then.*” It seems to be more remarkable that Christ should at that particular time have been tempted, and especially in regard to his sonship. In the preceding chapter we are informed of his baptism by John, in Jordan, and of the incontestable demonstration of that relationship. The Eternal Father, in an audible voice from heaven, had testified that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. And the heavens were opened unto him, and “he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.” But even then “was Jesus led up of the Spirit.” We are not to understand that Jesus was led at any time by any other spirit than that which had at his baptism descended on him like a dove. And this was the same of which he testified, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me,” etc. Although he encountered the wicked spirits of men and devils, he was never led by any unholy power or influence.

In all this let us notice as we pass, Jesus, as the Leader of his people, goeth before them, and they follow him. As followers of Jesus the heavens were first opened to us, or when being born of the Spirit we first had a view of the kingdom of God, and the Dove-like Spirit of our God descended upon us. By that Spirit we were enabled to rejoice in God our Savior, and we received from God the testimony of our sonship, not in an audible voice, but in a still small whisper to our hearts, by which the spirit of adoption was given and received, and by which we cried Abba, Father. And when with all this evidence of our relationship to God, through Christ, our cup was full, we followed our Savior’s footsteps to the baptismal waters, and there enjoyed in our measure the same approving testimony of divine approbation of our obedience to Christ our Lord. We little thought that we were also to follow him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; but so we have found it.

Let us carefully look over the pathway marked out by our Lord, and as we note the manner of his temptations, let us inquire whether we have been with him in any or in all of them.

Mark the wondrous feast at Jordan, when the bread of Heaven came down in rich abundance, and when John saw and bore witness of him. But how very soon fastings and sore temptations were to succeed. “Immediately,” according to Mark 1:12. That is immediately after his baptism, at which the Spirit descended upon him, and the Father from heaven proclaimed, “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” “And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness, and he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts,” etc. An apostle says, “He was in all points tempted like as we are.” We are not therefore to understand that the devil literally had power to place his person on the pinnacle of the temple, or in one moment to show him all the glories of the world, but in the temptation, the same as when we are tempted of him. How frequently and how painfully has this been illustrated in our own experience. When we have had a clear, full and satisfactory evidence of our acceptance with God, through Christ, and the Dove-like Spirit from above has descended upon us, and the voice of God in melting expressions has assured us that we are his sons. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.” As in the day of our espousal and of the gladness of our hearts, as when we followed him into the baptismal waters, and were cordially welcomed into the fellowship of the saints, and to all the privileges of the church of God. When we received such evidences of our relationship to God as we thought would last us all our days. How were we surprised when we passed into the wilderness state, and the wild beasts of the forest, or to speak without a parable, or figure, the corruptions of our own carnal nature, like wild,

untamed and furious beasts, began to show their hideous forms; when we had to cry out in the words of the psalmist, “Thou makest darkness, and it is night; wherein all the beasts of the forests creep forth.” Lurking in the dark places of our fleshly nature were hidden evils, which we thought were dead, or tamed – pride, passion, envy, wrath, strife, seditions, and unbelief, infidelity, carnal lusts, all warring against the newborn principles of love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc. How like a waste-howling wilderness did this state of things appear to us! How tedious and tiresome were our hours, and yet hour after hour, and day after day passed and still we fasted. No cheering streams to allay our thirst, nor heavenly manna came down, and we were still fasting, doubting, fearing, desponding, despairing. And then, to take advantage of our weak and trembling condition, came the sly and treacherous adversary, saying to us, as he had said to our dear Lord, “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” This suggestion would scarcely have the power to tempt if presented to a full soul. Our Savior had fasted forty days and as many tedious nights, and was hungry; and could, in the weakness of that nature which he had taken on him, feel the force of the temptation; but he was able successfully to resist it. But how has it been with us, when in a spiritual sense we have been long fasting and fainting in our wilderness condition, combating the wild beasts of our carnal nature, and starving for the bread of life to revive and strengthen us? How has the cruel tempter hurled his fiery darts, saying to us, If ye be the children of God, why thus tried? Test this matter at once; command these stones to be made bread. The sons of God have no occasion to hunger; if you were a son, you would have bread. These stones, on which the fiery precepts of the Sinai covenant were written, by a little means-using, would become food to sustain and comfort you. You cannot be a Christian, or you would be able to live on bread of your own procuring. You would have all the religion you live for; or all the food you need could be easily procured by the use of means. How often has the devil tempted the children of God by insinuating to them that if they were indeed what they hoped they were – Christians, they could feed and grow, and rejoice in the works of their own hands – that they could gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles – that they could feed and feast as deliciously upon the doctrines of men, and the institutions of anti-christ, as do others who profess to be Christians. These are severe trials and temptations to God’s children; but it is cheering to know that our great High Priest has felt the full force of them in the days of his flesh; and that he will bring them all off more than conquerors, and bruise Satan under their feet.

But as we understand the statement of the temptations endured by our Lord in his person, to indicate every variety of temptations encountered by him, in his mystical body, we will speak of them in their order.

Unsuccessful in attempting to take advantage of the hungry and fainting condition of our Lord, the wily tempter next attempts to carry his point by tempting him to test his sonship by casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. This temptation he urged on the ground that it was written that God had given his angels charge, in their hands, to bear him up lest at any time he should dash his foot against a stone. This temptation was successfully repelled by a quotation from the law, forbidding to tempt the Lord our God, thus evidently implying that a compliance with the suggestion of Satan would involve a transgression of the law of God.

The people of God have not been free from temptation of the same kind. Perhaps no suggestion is more frequently made to them by their adversaries than that of presumption. Says the Arminian, If I believed the doctrine of predestination, election and salvation wholly by grace, I would indulge in sin. If you are to be saved, you will be saved, and if you are to be lost, you will be lost. But they are not aware that God has put his fear in the hearts of his children, that they shall not depart from him; and that they would shudder at the thought of sinning in order that grace might abound. With the apostle they would

rather say, “How can we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Although the perfect love of God shed abroad in them has cast out the slavish fear of hell, the fear of the Lord still abides with love in their hearts. Not as a servile fear that hath torment, but a reverential and filial fear which is the beginning of wisdom, and which trembles at the word of God. Still we are mistaken if God’s dear children are not sometimes beguiled by the tempter to cast themselves down from some pinnacle of the temple, on some very similar plea.

Let us suppose a few cases for illustration. Christ has commanded all who love him to keep his commandments, among which is that which requires them all to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. But here is one who has received the love of God, and feels its power, causing him to love God, to love his word, his ordinances and his people; but Satan suggests that there is a very potent *if* in his way. If I only knew I were a son or child of God, I would delight to go forward, but if I am indeed a child of God, and an heir of glory, baptism is not a saving ordinance, and I shall be saved notwithstanding my disobedience. I will therefore cast myself down from birthright privileges in the church of God, live in disobedience to his holy commands, and trust that I shall not be permitted to dash my foot against a stone. Or, if baptized and in membership in the church of God, loose and careless about assembling with the saints, for the Lord can provide for me as well at home. If my brother has offended me, I will not tell him his fault, as I am commanded to; the angels or provisions of mercy will bear me up, and also my offending brother; I may neglect the ordinance of the Supper, if it be inconvenient to attend to it; and I will leave others, better qualified, to attend to the order, discipline and ordinances of the church than I am; for my salvation does not depend on my obedience.

Once more. I am a member of the church of God, and have a hope in Christ, and desire to serve him faithfully, but an opportunity is presented to gratify my carnal desire for the vanities of the world; the accumulation of riches, or the satisfaction of my passions in some unlawful gratification, now presuming on the boundless mercy of God to bear me up and bring me through, I yield to the tempter, and cast myself down, presumptuously relying on God to prevent my sin from sealing my final and everlasting ruin.

The pinnacle of the temple is a dangerous place for a poor weak and trembling child of God, who is easily beset with temptations; yet Satan will be sure to elevate us to such giddy and dazzling eminencies, if permitted, that he may get an advantage over us. It is far better and safer for the saints to lay hold of the horns of the altar and pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” than to tempt the Lord our God by our presumption.

“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” The version in Luke 4:5-7 reads, “And the devil taketh him up into a high mountain, and showeth unto him all the kingdoms of the world, in a moment of time: and the devil saith unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.” We have often heard it said that the devil had no power or right to dispose of what he was offering; but we are free to confess that Satan has done much to vindicate his claim. As prince of the power of the air, he has generally managed to fulfill his engagements with all who do fall down and worship him; and we are not prepared to dispute that the power to lavish the glories of this world on his worshipers has been given him for that purpose. And although he could not, and did not, succeed in tempting the Son of God to take him at his word, it can scarcely be denied that he has a very large and respectable host of devout worshipers, scattered abroad throughout all the kingdoms of this world, who hold the power and glory

of this world as their reward. And today, if any class or denomination of professed religionists desire the wealth, the splendor, the applause, or the friendship of this world, or the power and patronage of the kingdoms of this world, they know the *price*.

The *standing offer* still holds good; and all who will reject the truth of God, and embrace the doctrines of devils; ascribe the miracles of Christ to Beelzebub, the prince of devils, ascribe salvation to men and means, which are under his direction, pervert the truth of God, and drink of the cup of devils, and worship in any one of his numerous synagogues, they can secure the glories of this world, the mammon of unrighteousness, splendid and costly church edifices, tall and towering steeples, fine musical instruments, and the admiration and applause of an ungodly world. But if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. They, and only they, of all the religious professions on earth who worship Satan, receive these rewards of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are, and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings. Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children (see II Peter 2).

All who worship the true God worship him in spirit and in truth, and must all worship in the same way, and constitute but one church; and they are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. These only are true worshipers; all other worshipers are false worshipers; and as all false worship and falsehood of every kind is of the devil, who is a liar, and the father of it, there is but barely one church and religious order of people on earth who worship God in spirit and in truth. All others worship by another spirit, and are in falsehood and error; and instead of worshipping the true God, they are the worshipers of devils; and if they do not get their pay according to contract, it is because Satan has deceived and swindled them.

When the deluded sons of Belial proudly point the humble followers of the meek and lowly Lamb to the splendor of their lofty domes, their worldly grandeur, and human applause, we tell them that all this was offered to the Old Primitive Baptists by their master more than eighteen hundred years ago, at the same price which he exacts of them; and his offer was rejected.

Still as this temptation of worldly honor and glory was presented to our divine Lord when he was here in the flesh, we may rest assured that, as a temptation, it will be presented to his children, who, although born of God, and led by his Spirit, still have unslain elements in their earthly nature, lusting after these earthly glories, and willing to accept them on the terms which Satan proposed to our Lord. And were it not for his preventing grace, they also with the world lying in wickedness, would all go in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam for a reward, and perish in the gainsayings of Core. How often are God's children subjected to the trial and temptation as Moses was, when he by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter – choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

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THE REGENERATION AND THE NEW BIRTH.

From what has been written and published in our columns on these two very important points of the doctrine of God our Savior, there seems to us to be a failure on the part of some of our dear brethren, either to understand the scriptural import of these words, or to comprehend the meaning of each other; and we are confident that the difference is much greater in appearance than in reality. The divine command to the saints of God requires of them to be of one mind; and it is therefore of great importance that on subjects of vital moment, we should all labor to obviate every seeming difference, and to see eye to eye. Every proposition should be carefully tested by the only infallible standard, the Scriptures. Nothing can redound to the glory of God, or conduce to the edification of the saints, that is not sustained by the Scriptures of truth. That even the saints, while in the flesh, should fail to understand every portion of the word alike is not surprising; for we can only perfectly understand the inspired testimony of the Bible so far as it is opened to us by the Spirit, which Christ has given to lead his disciples into all truth. When any difference, or seeming difference, arises, and we are drawn into any thing like controversy, we should carefully avoid all fleshly ambition to excel, or strive for mastery; and above all, that we inflict no unnecessary wound on those of God's children who may fail to appreciate the force of our arguments. In reviewing the communications of brethren, before we indulge in any severe animadversions, we should be sure that we understand the positions assumed by them. It is true, whatever is published by any brother is open to the careful examination and criticism of all who read it, and should be candidly, but kindly, scrutinized; that we may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. All who write with the single desire to elucidate truth for the edification and comfort of the saints will desire to have their views tested by the divinely authorized standard; and if any thing be detected which the Scriptures will not sustain, especially any thing conflicting with divine testimony, its detection and exposure should be regarded as a favor equally to the writer and the readers.

Recently some difference has been obvious in the views of brethren in regard to the scriptural signification of the word *regeneration*, as used in the New Testament; some holding that it is, and others that it is not, the same in signification and application with what is called the *new birth*. Some applying the word *regeneration* to the resurrection power of God which brought again from the dead the crucified body of Christ, and in him the resurrection life and immortality of all his mystical body and members, from under the law which was the ministration of death, into the resurrection life and immortality of the Son of God.

Now, as a birth, either natural or spiritual, always implies a generation, because without generation there can be no birth; and whatever is born is the development of that which was generated, it is not strange that the two terms have been thought by many to mean one and the same thing. Such indeed had been our view for years; but as we now conceive, because we had not been led to closely investigate the subject until it was presented for consideration by some of the brethren. Here let us observe that those who take the position that the terms *regeneration* and *the new birth* mean one and the same, and that both apply to the experimental quickening of the children of God, do not deny that all the saints are redeemed and quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Nor, on the other hand, do those brethren who apply the word *regeneration* to the quickening of the whole elect family of God by the resurrection of Christ hold with less tenacity the vital importance of the new birth, as it has always been held by the church of God, in its personal application to all the saints in their individual experience, in being quickened by the Spirit, and born into the liberty of the sons of God.

While, so far as we understand them, we agree with our brethren that the regeneration which is mentioned but twice in the Bible, in both cases refers to the *reproduction* from death of the whole mystical body of Christ, by his resurrection, we at the same time hold, as we have ever held, that every member of the body of Christ must experience the new and spiritual birth, of which Christ spake to Nicodemus in John 3:3-10.

Still in perfect harmony with that vitally important sentiment, we also believe that Christ in his incarnation took on him the seed of Abraham, and that all who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; and that they were so identified with him in his assumption of our flesh, that when he died, they were legally dead with him; and when he arose from the dead, they were quickened together with him, and they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. The whole church, as the body of Christ, was buried with him by baptism into death, regenerated, or reproduced from death, by the resurrection life of his resurrection; so that in like manner as they were buried with him into his death, they were raised from the dead with him to newness of life; married and identified with him in resurrection, or regeneration life. How else can it be said we are quickened, and raised up together with him; that we are risen with Christ, and dead to the law by his body? How else shall we understand that we are raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, to walk in newness of life? Raised up from under that law which holds dominion over a man as long as he lives; being by that law crucified with Christ, dead with him to the law by his body, and regenerated in a new life, and reproduced in a new relationship, over the which the law of wrath and condemnation has no dominion. And being thus risen with Christ, now instead of continuing to seek for righteousness by the works of the law, or for those things which belong to the legal dispensation or worldly sanctuary, we who are risen with Christ are instructed to seek those things which are above, even in the heavenly places of the regeneration, which are the heavenly places of the spiritual kingdom, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

If it be conceded that our participation of flesh and blood by our creation and generation in the first Adam placed us in and with him under the law that he was created under, which he transgressed, and by the transgression of which he involved us in guilt and death, from which Christ, the second Adam, to redeem us was required to be made flesh, and to dwell among us, under the same law, and that in doing this, he took on him the seed of Abraham, that seed of Abraham which was reckoned in Isaac (not seeds, as of many, but *to thy seed*, Abraham's seed, which is Christ), and that in being made flesh, he was to suffer in the flesh, bear our sins in the body of his flesh, be put to death in the flesh; then not only was he put to death in the flesh, but the flesh in which he suffered was also put to death. Now observe, the reproduction of those thus buried in death by his baptism of suffering was not a mere resuscitation, or recovering to that life which was put away, but a resurrection to immortal life, and to a spiritual state perfectly free from guilt, condemnation and death. Hence it is said that God hath begotten us again to a lively (or vital, immortal) hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is (like the seed by which this immortality is generated) incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. Is it heresy to call this regeneration? Redeemed from the generation of the earthly Adam, reproduced in the life and immortality of the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, our relation to earth, to the flesh, to the law, to sin, corruption and death is dissolved and we are identified with the risen Savior in his resurrection life, is not this regeneration?

But, in other words, was not that life which quickened and resurrected the crucified body of our Lord, the same resurrection life of which we are made experimentally the partakers when we are born again? If so, was it not communicated to the whole church of God, in her spiritual Head, when he was raised from the dead? If not, at what period was it communicated from God the Father, through Christ, the

Mediator, to his mystical body and members? But why apply the terms *generation*, *regeneration*, *begetting* and *birth*, to this reproduction of the church in her spiritual life? Because the Bible uses terms which, in our judgment, fully warrant us. That his resurrection was a regeneration will appear from the record. He was begotten in the flesh by the Holy Ghost, conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, and that holy thing which should be born of her should and was called the Son of God. Thus by generation he was made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, that in this flesh he should be put to death. In his resurrection divine inspiration has used similar terms. “Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten thee (Psalm 2:7).” And in Acts 13:32, 33, these very words are applied to the resurrection of Christ. “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” If these Scriptures, together with those which declare him to be “the first begotten of the dead (Revelation 1:5);” “The first born from the dead (Colossians 1:18),” do not imply a regeneration, then we are at a complete loss to find words in our language to express the idea. Generated, in being made flesh, circumcised, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and begotten again from the dead, and born from the dead, in immortal life, over which death hath no power; and to be known no more in the flesh, but to be known henceforth as the Resurrection and the Life of all his members.

But, admitting the application of the term, to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, some may ask why we include it in the regeneration of the church.

Well, let us see. Did Christ arise from the dead and leave his church, or any part thereof, behind him, and under the curse of the law, the guilt of sin and dominion of death, or did he not rather abolish death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection? When he went forth weeping and bearing precious seed, did he not return again rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:6)? In what other sense, or by what other generation, does Christ claim his members as the children of the resurrection? Can the relationship of children exist without generation? It is written, “A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done it (Psalm 22:30,31).” Is it not presumptuous to deny that the church was quickened together with Christ, and that they were raised up together? In what other sense can we understand that impressive and striking illustration which he himself gave of his death and resurrection? “Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit (John 12:24).” The context proves that this double asseveration was used to impress deeply on the minds of his disciples the application of the figure, as illustrative of his death, and the quickening and reproduction of his seed, whom he would redeem from the earth, and bring up with him, and in him, as their Resurrection. A very similar figure is used in illustration of the resurrection of the saints (see I Corinthians 15:36-38). “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.” If Christ is that corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, what is *his own body* which God has given him in his resurrection? Let the inspired apostle answer: “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:19-23).”

“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead (Isaiah 26:19).” Compare with Hosea 6:1,2; “Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will also bind us up. After two days will he revive us; and in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.” Ages and generations may pass before all the members of Christ’s mystical body shall be quickened and live in the sight of any but God. But in the sight of the omniscient eye, when his soul was poured out unto death, all his seed was clearly seen, as living in his sight, and in that life which is hid with Christ in God, and which in the absence of Christ can never be seen. When, and wherever he, who is their life, appears, then, and there, do all his members appear with him in glory. In his death, the corn of wheat containing the germ of all the harvest fell into the ground and died. Here is the planting in the likeness of his death, which is set forth by Christian baptism; and resurrection with him to newness of life. By death this relation to the earth is dissolved. We have known him in the flesh, as a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief, subject to pain and death: but henceforth know we him no more. “He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare *his generation*; for he is cut off out of the land of the living (Isaiah 53:8).” “Thou sowest not that body which shall be.” Before his death he was under the law, laden with all the sins of his people, for God hath laid on him the iniquities of all his people, prepared him for the sufferings of death, and made him a little lower than the angels. “But God giveth it a body as hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.” Now, in *his own body*, the church, quickened and immortal, or resurrection life, he dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. The greatness of God’s mighty power is displayed, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him up from the dead. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, which were on him when he was put to death in the flesh. He has nailed them to his cross, and leaving these all behind, he has arisen from the dead in a spiritual resurrection body, begotten by the Father from the dead, he is exalted in his resurrection body, “far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” The seed which fell into the ground and died has burst the bands of death, and triumphed over the grave. Bearing his sheaves with him, he enters the portals of immortality as our triumphant Prince and Savior. “God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.”

“Lift up your heads,
Ye everlasting doors, fly wide
Make ready to receive my bride;
Ye harps of heaven, come sound aloud,
Here comes the purchase of my blood.”

Now tune your sweetest harps, ye ransomed sons of God, and without a jarring note, swell the immortal notes written by Peter, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath *begotten us again*.” Don’t falter at that strain – heaven shall resound with its melody; sing it loud, sound it clearly, and high as the heavens your voices raise when you repeat the chorus. Blessed God, who hath begotten us in this resurrection regeneration, “to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is 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.”

Now, brethren, does this doctrine of resurrection regeneration alarm any of you? Examine it closely, carefully, and prayerfully, and compare it with the Scriptures and with your experience.

We have called your attention to the Scriptures on the subject; now suffer us to appeal to your own experience. You are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. What think you; was that incorruptible seed in Christ when like a corn of wheat he fell into the earth and died for you? Were you quickened by the power of the resurrection of the Son of God when you passed from death unto life? If not, from what begetting did your new birth proceed? To what generation do you by it belong? Do you really think the Head of the church was begotten from the dead at one time, and the body and fullness of Christ at another? Has your new birth brought you forth as children of the resurrection? Is the life of the Head of the church the same that is the life of his body? Is Jesus Christ your resurrection and your life?

But, say you, Jesus arose from the dead eighteen hundred years ago; and our birth transpired but recently. True, but can you ascribe it to anything short of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? Had he failed to have risen from the dead, could you have been born again? Was not the very first gleam of hope that cheered your desponding heart a view, by faith, of the risen Savior? Could you rest upon any other hope than that power which God wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead? Were you quickened and made to believe in God, as were the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead? If you were born of the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, then rest assured that he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11).

Now let us review the decree, in the second psalm, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee," and the inspired explanation of it in Acts 13:32,33; "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." How is the resurrection of Jesus Christ the fulfillment of the promise made to the fathers, unto us their children? This risen Jesus is our resurrection and our life. The day of this decree of God was ushered in by the resurrection of Christ, and cannot terminate until all who are begotten by his resurrection shall be born of the Spirit that raised him from the dead. It has been rightly said by some of our brethren that generation must always precede a birth; begetting and quickening are always before the new birth. This generation chosen in Christ, as a seed that shall serve him, which shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation, shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born (Psalm 22:30,31). Paul declares to us the gracious purpose of God in quickening, and raising us up together (or simultaneously) with Christ; and it is "That in the ages to come," for in order of time, ages are required for the development of this regeneration, and the personal development of that people, who, being already regenerated in Christ, shall be born of his resurrection life and spirit; yet all this shall certainly be accomplished in the one day, in which God will make up his jewels, and in which a nation shall be born. So in the ages to come, the ages which have come, and the ages yet in the future, God will shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7).

One further consideration. Our Lord Jesus Christ is expressly called the Only Begotten of the Father; how then is it possible for us to be brought into the vital relationship of sons of God, unless we were begotten and regenerated in him, as sons of God, and heirs of immortality? We have supposed that the eternal deity or Godhead of Christ is unbegotten, underived, self-existent and eternal; and that his Sonship has reference to his Mediatorial Headship of the church over which he presides, and that the members of the church, as being the members of his body, have their sonship in his Sonship, their life in his life, their righteousness in his righteousness, and their heirship jointly with his, to an inheritance of glory. In what other way we can be sons or heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, we cannot

conceive. In the election of grace all his people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and their eternal life was and still is hid with him in God. In the divine purpose, so far as that purpose is made known to us, our God ordained to manifest the body of Christ in all its members, by a first and second birth; provided for them through the first and second Adam. Through the generations of the first (in the order of their development) in Adam, they were partakers of flesh and blood, in which they were subjects of the law under which Adam was created and under which he fell; so that in Adam all die; and in their Adamic nature they were all children of wrath, even as others; but in their regeneration and new birth by, and through the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, they are made partakers of the divine nature, are washed from all pollutions, and cleansed from all guilt, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Hereafter, we propose to treat on the new birth as taught in the word and experienced personally by the saints.

Middletown, N. Y
September 1, 1868.

BAPTISM.

Elder Beebe: – Is it according to the order of the gospel for an Old Baptist Church to receive as members those who have been baptized by any other denomination of religionists, not recognized by them as the church of Christ, without baptizing them in the fellowship of the Old Order of Baptists?

Your views on the above will oblige
An Inquirer After Truth.

Reply: – To the law, and to the testimony. Whatever is not authorized by the laws of Christ, in relation to the faith or practice of a gospel church, is forbidden. Those who dispute this proposition cannot regard the New Testament as a perfect and complete rule for the government of the kingdom of Christ. If we accept the New Testament as our rule, as the Old Order of Baptists have always professed to do, we must decide this and all other questions as that rule directs. If then a person offers to become a member with us, on condition that we accept as valid baptism administered by denominations not recognized as the church of Christ, such application must be declined, unless we can find authority for it in the New Testament; otherwise we reject that Testament as a complete and infallible rule. We have carefully examined the Scriptures on this subject, and have failed to find either precept or example for any baptism that has not been administered by a gospel administrator, to a gospel subject, in fellowship, at the time of administering, with a gospel church.

By a gospel administrator we mean a member of the church of Christ, fully recognized by the church at the time of administering, as one who is called to the work by the Holy Ghost, and duly set apart to the work of the ministry by solemn ordination to preach the gospel, administer baptism, and break bread to the church or churches of the saints. If the Scriptures authorize any others to baptize, it also authorizes them to preach and to break bread to the churches; and we cannot consistently recognize them as competent to baptize without also allowing them to preach for and break bread to the same. If there be

any such rule given to the church, we have failed to find it, either expressed or implied in the precepts or examples of the apostles and usage of the primitive church.

In the Jewish ritual under the ceremonial law, the carnal Israelites had among their ordinances “*divers washings*,” some of which probably required immersion in water; and the pagans also probably performed similar washings; they were religious denominations. These religious denominations stood in the same relative position to the primitive church as those of modern times do to the church of Christ. Is it supposable that the primitive church would have recognized any of those Jewish or heathen ablutions as Christian baptism?

To admit to our communion any upon what other denominations call baptism is to remove one of the discriminating institutions of the church and inaugurate what is called “Open Communion.” Almost all the different denominations now practice (occasionally at least) immersion; even the Mormons; and if any one denomination of them may immerse for us, then so may all. If the precise order of the gospel, and the fellowship of the gospel church may be dispensed with in one thing, why not in all things? And if so, what use shall we have for our Bibles?

By a gospel candidate we mean one who has been born of the Spirit, and is a believer, with all his or her heart in the Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to honor and obey Christ, and to take his yoke, and follow him through evil as well as through good report. Such an one, on profession of his or her faith, and in obedience to the command of Christ, should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by one who, like the apostles, is commanded by the Lord Jesus to baptize.

A person professing to be converted, reformed, or desirous to make a public profession of religion, but satisfied to receive what is called baptism by one who is not duly authorized to administer for the gospel church, we cannot recognize as a gospel subject. It is sometimes urged that such an one has been baptized *in good faith*. But how can that be *good faith* which has misled him and wedded him to any branch of anti-christ? Again, the candidate, it is said, was sincere: let this be admitted, and are not others sincere who are sprinkled, or poured, or who regard the ordinance as unimportant? If sincere when doing wrong, after being convinced of the error, should they not be sincere in abandoning the error, and in doing what Christ has commanded them? Saul of Tarsus was probably as sincere when persecuting the church as when feeding the flock of God. Sincerity cannot supply the place of righteousness.

By a gospel church we mean a regularly organized company of regularly baptized believers, walking in the faith and order of the gospel as laid down in the New Testament; standing apart and altogether separate from all other professed religionists on earth, supporting by their fellowship the regular ministers of Christ, as a candlestick supports and holds up a lighted candle, that it may give light to all who are in the house.

It is a fearful thing to tamper with the laws of Christ; who, in the last chapter of the New Testament, says, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.” “For I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophesy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.”

If any are satisfied that in having been baptized into any body or organization of anti-christ, they have done right, why do they not remain where they are? Why attempt to defile the temple of God by exacting an endorsement of their errors?

It may be argued that some have stood in the fellowship of the church as competent administrators, and have administered while so standing, but afterwards have proved to be hypocrites; and that our position if admitted, would invalidate the baptism administered by them when in good standing. This conclusion is wrong. We are to carefully avoid, so far as in us lies, receiving into the ministry unworthy characters, and to withdraw our support and fellowship from all such, as soon as they develop their true character; but we are not required, nor endued with wisdom to search the hearts, or try the reins of men. Had Judas Iscariot baptized any while he was an apostle, it would have been apostolic baptism; but when he apostatized from that standing he was no longer qualified for the work.

Now if there be any who feel disposed to dispute our position, let such ask themselves which of what we hold to be indispensable requisites for gospel baptism may be omitted, and the baptism be according to the laws of Christ and order of the gospel?

If the baptism administered by a minister of a denomination which is not in fellowship with us is valid gospel baptism, then we may with propriety call on a Mormon, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, or a New School Baptist minister to baptize for us, when candidates apply to us for baptism and membership. Is it not equally as valid when the candidate applies to our church for baptism, if we call on a minister of Satan to administer the ordinance, as when the candidate receives the ordinance at their hands, in the fellowship of some branch of anti-christ? If such a course can be regarded as gospel order, then our churches may at any time call on ministers of the various unscriptural denominations to preach, baptize and break bread; and it would be schismatic for us to organize a Baptist church in any place where there already exists a denomination of a different order, who are willing to preach, baptize and break bread for us. But if this is not the order of the gospel, and sustained by the Scriptures, it should not be allowed.

What we have written on this subject we respectfully submit, not only to the consideration of an Inquirer after Truth, but also to all who belong to the household of faith.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1868.

REPLY TO JOSEPH CROOM AND THOMAS H. SMITH.

As the inquiries of both of these correspondents relate to about the same things, we will reply to them both in this one article.

We do not know of any reliable history of the Baptists from the apostles' days down to the present. Of all the books which have been published on ecclesiastical history that have come under our observation, we have seen none that traces our history from the organization of the Primitive Baptist church on the day of Pentecost to the present time. All that we have read, after tracing the church a few

centuries and basing their account on very doubtful data, become confused, and leaving the track of the true church, give us account of the nominal church, which usurped the name when the true church was driven by persecution into the wilderness, and there hidden from sight of her enemies for a time, and times, and half a time (Revelation 12:14). From the flight of the church into the wilderness, all the popular historians have lost her track, and have given us instead some historical account of the anti-Christian beasts (papal and Protestant) which had assumed her name. The most that we can glean from historical records is an occasional allusion made by them to a people, answering to some extent our description, despised, persecuted and derided by all other classes of religionists. This persecuted people described by popular historians as non-conformists to the decrees of Popes, councils or monarchs, in religious things, and holding the doctrine of the Bible, practicing baptism of believers only, by immersion, and repudiating all popish perversions of that ordinance; a people that could not be exterminated by all the violence of persecution. This is about as much as can be gathered of the history of the church of God, by any of the uninspired histories of which we have any knowledge.

When we consider that during the dark ages of papal persecution, all the records and writings of nonconformists were seized and, with their authors, were committed to the flames, we shall not be surprised that no direct authentic history can be found.

Let us suppose that even at the present time the world should write a history of the Baptist church to transmit to succeeding ages. Would they not all of them, like that of Benedict and others, represent the popular Missionary Baptists as the true church, and only allude to the Old School Baptists as a mere off-shoot from the true church, and as a people opposed to every thing that is good? Woe unto us when the world shall speak well of us. We have good reason to believe that God has not designed that the true church should be manifested to the world by uninspired history. "Except a man be born again he cannot see it." It cometh not by observation, nor can it be traced by observation. The sun that shines in the natural heavens was never seen by any other than its own light. No light of history or of nature can reveal the church of the living God. The Lord God himself, and the Lamb, is the light of it, and until God and the Lamb are revealed in our hearts, the kingdom of Christ is invisible to us.

The true and faithful history of the church is given in the Scriptures of truth by him who has declared the end from the beginning. Prophecy records all that is necessary for the saints to know of her history, and if we would know whence she is, revelation informs us she is from heaven. If we ask where she is, we are told she is in Christ Jesus, her Lord. All that we require to know of her is found in the inspired record which God has given. John was instructed, and commanded to arise and measure the temple (or church of God), and the altar, and them that worship therein, and for that purpose there was given him a reed like unto a rod (Revelation 11:1). If we would know all the proportions of the church of Christ, the Scriptures are the rule by which we are to ascertain what are her peculiar characteristics, for her height, depth, length and breadth are equal. And all that comes not within the measurement of Scripture rule is given to the heathen, and is not to be measured by any Scripture rule, nor recognized as belonging to the temple, altar or people of our God.

As to the church in the United States, the first regular Old School or Primitive church in America, that we have any knowledge of, was constituted and organized in Wales, and embarked in a ship from the old country, with pastor, deacons, and members, and in a body landed in Philadelphia, in the early settlement of Pennsylvania, and purchased land and settled near that city. Welsh Tract Church, in Delaware, and many other churches in that and neighboring States, were branches of this Welsh church. Roger Williams came to Massachusetts a member of the Puritan church and state establishment; he became dissatisfied with and protested against the puritanic persecutions, was expelled and banished by

them; went to England and obtained a charter for the Providence Plantations, which now comprise the State of Rhode Island, effected a treaty with the Indians, and proclaimed full liberty of conscience to all who wished to settle there, to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. Subsequently, he professed to be a Baptist, but there is much disputation as to the manner and validity of his baptism.

On the grounds of difference which led to the separation of the New School, or Missionary, Baptists from the old apostolic order, we know of no record extant that will give a more full account than that contained in the first book of Editorials, recently published by B. L. Beebe, which contain the statements of both parties, and give the arguments used by both parties from and embracing the separation for ten years thereafter.

We have no disposition to dispute with the New School as to whether they left us, or we left them. It is fully conceded that we are separated, and hold no fellowship for each other. Of our respective claims to antiquity, or to be of the old apostolic order of Baptists, nothing can be settled by a discussion of the time, or manner, of the division. The principal grounds of difference on which we separated were, first, that they embraced the doctrine of Andrew Fuller, and we protested against it as heresy. Secondly, they embraced the popular religious institutions, such as Theological Schools, Sunday Schools, Missionary, Bible and Tract Societies, and other modern inventions for the professed object of converting the heathen, and evangelizing the world and ushering in the millennium. We refused to recognize or fellowship any of these new institutions. And after long forbearance and expostulations with them, we, in the year 1832, declared a withdrawal of fellowship with them. Thus the division took place, and we have from that time been separated from each other.

Now every honest inquirer who desires to know who, if any, of us are entitled to be distinguished as apostolic Baptists, should use the “reed which is like unto a rod.” Or, in other words, search the Scriptures, and if it can be found that the old apostles taught Fullerism, and founded Theological Seminaries, or instituted Sabbath Schools, and infant or Bible classes, or Missionary Societies, or any other religious societies except the church of God, then it will be clear that the Missionary Baptists (so called) are apostolic Baptists, and we anti-mission, or Old School (so called) are schismatics.

But if it be found that we hold, contend for, and practice all the apostolic church held, taught, and practiced, and protest against every innovation on or departure from the primitive faith and practice according to the New Testament, it must follow that we are right, and all who differ from us are wrong.

“To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:20).”

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1868.

I CORINTHIANS 3:10-15.

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For

other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by *fire*.”

As an apostle, Paul was a wise masterbuilder; and his gift for the apostleship, and wisdom in establishing the fundamental principles of the gospel among the Gentiles was precisely according to the grace which God had bestowed on him to qualify him for the work. By the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as an apostle of Christ, he had, in all his apostolic teachings, presented doctrinally and practically, Christ as the only foundation; first, on which the eternal salvation of the church is built up, Christ having obtained eternal redemption for his people. Their deliverance from wrath, from guilt and condemnation, and their full, free and complete justification is all founded on him. Secondly, and in the immediate sense of this text, he has shown that all the doctrine taught, all the works performed, all the hopes inspired, with every theory entertained by the saints, if not founded on him, must come to naught. If our faith should lead us to believe what Christ by his word and Spirit has not taught, it is hay, wood, or stubble, that cannot endure the fiery ordeal that shall try every man's faith. What will it avail for a Christian to persuade himself or others to believe any proposition which is not founded on truth? For a time the theory may seem plausible, and pass for truth; but when tested by fire, the delusion is exposed, and all the labor and ingenuity that has been employed in its propagation is lost. In building up the saints in their most holy faith, the apostles have testified that unless our faith be in Christ, on Christ, and the faith of the Son of God, it will be consumed in the day of trial. All the works also of the children of God must be wrought in God, and rest on Christ, as our Commander, or they will be burned up. Whatsoever he has not commanded us, he has forbidden. If then we do the works which he has commanded, these works are founded and rest on him; if they do not rest on him, they are without authority or foundation; for other foundation can no man lay; and if without foundation, they cannot stand. Read the concluding paragraph of Christ's sermon on the mount. “Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.” But quite the reverse is the case of those who hear his words, and do them not. See Matthew 7:24-27. Whatever we may do religiously, if Christ's words have not authorized us, will be labor in vain; unprofitable, and subjecting us to loss.

We have an exemplification of these words of the apostle in the Corinthian church, to whom they were addressed. Paul had been laboring among them, and as a wise masterbuilder had preached Christ to them, as the only foundation. They had accepted his doctrine, discarded their former idolatry, and had in many things walked orderly. By conforming to his laws obediently, they had been building on that foundation, but they had also been building on the same Christian foundation many things for which the apostle reprov'd them. That which they had done by the authority of Christ was like gold, silver, and precious stones, which could endure the fire; but what they had done without his authority was like hay, wood, and stubble, all to be burned, and all that labor lost. The churches also of Galatia, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them, had run well, began right, had built on that foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones; but listening to Judaizing teachers, they who had begun in the spirit were so foolish as to suppose they might be made perfect by the flesh; and had been building with hay, wood and stubble. We have numerous examples in the present day. Churches and individuals who have once received Christ as their only foundation have, in some instances, thought they could build faster, and get up their building quicker, and make it much larger,

by working in some materials which will make a fair show when there is no fire to try their works. See churches gathering in front-bench converts, suppressing unpopular truth, embracing popular error, and construing their wonderful enlargement as evidence of divine approbation. All seems to go on well until the day of trial comes when their works are tried by fire; then all that have come in by any other way than the door go out without divine favor.

It is hardly to be supposed that there lives a saint on earth who has not, in any way, at any time, been building on this foundation to some extent with hay, wood and stubble. But the admonition is, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth upon this foundation."

We take the inspired testimony and instructions of the apostles as the basis of our doctrine and practice. They, as wise master workmen, have preached Christ to us as our foundation; on the apostolic platform, or foundation, we go on to build. All our works which are supported by a "Thus saith the Lord," will stand the fiery test; but all we do without that authority will burn like stubble in the day of trial.

We have reason to fear that many of God's children have spent years in trying to establish theories and works which shall at last be given to the flames, and they shall suffer loss. But although all the vain works, and unwise, unauthorized building of the children of God shall be consumed, and they shall suffer loss, yet they themselves shall be saved from themselves, from their works, and from their follies; yet so as by fire. He who sitteth as a refiner and purifier of silver, shall consume their dross, burn up their hay, and wood, and stubble, and bring them out of the fiery furnace like gold that is seven times tried in the fire. "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1868.

THE NEW BIRTH JOHN 3:7.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

At the conclusion of our article on "Regeneration," in No. 17 of the current volume, we proposed to give a more full expression in a subsequent number on the subject of the New Birth. This we have felt inclined to do in order to correct the impression entertained by some of our readers that we have changed our views on this vitally important subject.

The very emphatic manner of our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus forbids the thought that any one of all the race of Adam can ever see the kingdom of God except he be qualified for such perfection by a spiritual birth. Our natural birth capacities us only for a knowledge of natural things, but cannot qualify us for an understanding of things beyond the sphere of nature. If it were possible for the natural faculties and perceptive power of a natural man to be so improved by education, moral, intellectual or religious culture as to enable him to see the kingdom of God, or comprehend, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God, our Lord would not have thus positively declared its utter impossibility. Nor would the Holy Ghost, by the inspired apostle, have corroborated the testimony, as in I Corinthians

2:14. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

By a natural man we understand is intended a man that is born of the flesh, or an earthly man, possessing all the natural elements and properties of a man. Adam, both before and after his transgression, was a natural man. The qualifying adjective is used in a scriptural sense to distinguish a man who is made of the dust of the ground, and inspired with vitality and intelligence, from a spiritual man who is born of the Spirit. The distinction between the natural man and the spiritual is fully set forth in the two distinct headships, from whom the two distinct natures are derived. These two distinct progenitive heads are called, as such, the first and the second Adam: the one of the earth earthy, the other is the Lord from heaven. The first was made a living soul; the second Adam is a quickening Spirit. From the first or natural Adam emanates all our natural or earthly being; from the second Adam emanates all that spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life in which we are manifested as the sons or children of God. As our natural life, or natural man, or nature, descended from the earthly Adam by natural generation, and was developed by a natural birth wherein we were born of the flesh, even so our spiritual, eternal life is developed and brought into manifestation by a spiritual birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. As we were totally ignorant and unconscious of all that was transpiring in this world in the development of the things of nature until we were born of the flesh, so that it could in truth be said of us, Except we were born of the flesh we could not see or know the things of nature. So it is most positively declared of all who are born of the flesh that, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

If, without a natural birth, we could not come into this world nor see the things of this world, must it not follow that a birth of the Spirit is an indispensable prerequisite to capacitate us to either see or know the things of the kingdom which is purely a spiritual kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit? Then, let us not marvel that Jesus has said, "Ye must be born again."

As neither spiritual life or spiritual capacity can be born of the flesh, so neither can natural life and natural capacity be born of the Spirit. No amount of spiritual gifts can change, enlarge or perpetuate our natural man, or shield the earthly man from hunger, thirst, disease or death. Neither can any development of our natural powers, either physical or mental, contribute in the smallest degree to our spiritual life, perception or enjoyment. That nature in the Christian which is born of the flesh must, as well after the new birth as before, subsist on the productions of the same earth out of which our mortal bodies were fashioned; and that spiritual life or nature which is born of God must subsist on bread that cometh down from heaven, from whence that life proceeded. If spiritual consolation would sustain our earthly nature, Stephen would not have died in the full and rapturous view of the opened heavens, and of his exalted Savior; and if earthly comforts could sustain our spiritual nature, no child of God would ever despond while abounding in wealth and luxury.

In contemplating the gospel doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, we should not confound the birth either with redemption or remission of sins. As transgressors of the divine law, we could not possibly be saved from sin and wrath without redemption; but even redemption by the blood of Christ, and the forgiveness of all our sins, would not supply the place of being born again. Redemption has met the demands of eternal justice, borne the pains and penalties which are due to our transgressions and so secured for us the remission of our sins. All this was accomplished for us, if we are interested in it, many centuries ago; but still, until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, or feel the joys of his salvation, or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. If it were even possible for us to put away from us all our transgressions, and perfectly obey the holy law of God, that

would free us from condemnation, but could by no means make us any more spiritual than we were in Adam before sin entered into the world. For we are expressly informed that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; but the second Adam is spiritual.

It is true, if we were not sinners we could not leave this present world, for the sting of death is sin; we could not be sinners if we were not subjects of God's government, for sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law, there can be no transgression. Hence we are told, "The strength of sin is the law." Nothing short of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus could deliver us from the power or strength of sin but a power fully equal to that of sin; and that must be equal to the law which is the strength of sin, therefore if we are saved, we may well exclaim in the inspired language of the apostle, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Redemption has removed the insuperable impediment which forbid our exemption from everlasting wrath, abolished death, opened the everlasting doors which were closed upon us, and bade the everlasting gates of life and immortality be lifted up, and thus brought immortality to light through the gospel. All this belongs to our redemption, but to qualify the redeemed of the Lord to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and see the kingdom of God, and to behold the King in his beauty, and feel the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, and to enter into his resurrection life and immortality, we must be born again.

The question has been repeatedly asked and urged, "What is it that must be born again?" We would not dare attempt to improve on the words of our Lord: "Except a *man* be born again." The man that has been born of the flesh and is flesh cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again. This is necessary, not to make him a *man*, nor to change him from a man to an angel, but to bestow on him a new spiritual, immortal and eternal life, which he never before had, and which he could never have without being born of the Spirit, as he had been before born of the flesh. That man who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and consequently before he was manifestly the subject of any birth, before he was born either of the flesh or of the Spirit.

We think it will not be disputed by any intelligent Christian that all the children of God were personally elected or chosen of God, in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians 1:4. If this be admitted, it must follow that they all had a personal identity and existence as members of the mystical body of Christ before Adam's dust was fashioned to a man, and therefore prior to their first or second birth. The developments of time have demonstrated to us that it was the purpose of God that every one of his elect should, in the fullness of the dispensations of times, be born first of the flesh, and then be born again of the Spirit. Both of these births were ordained and provided for by the wisdom and decree of God, not to give them being or identity, for these they had in Christ before the world began. By the first birth they were to be developed in their earthly and fleshly nature in common with the whole natural posterity of the earthly Adam. This first birth was necessary that they might see and know the things of nature; for except they were born of the flesh, they could never have known the things of the flesh. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?"

In the stupendous mystery of the hidden counsel and purpose of God, this fleshly birth and identification of God's elect with the family of mankind was indispensable to the development of the great eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began, that in the first Adam they should all die, and in Christ they should all be made alive. If we admit that God has saved us and called us according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, then we cannot consistently deny that that purpose and grace provided for our being born of the flesh, and identified with all the rest of Adam's posterity, and with them sink into death by the

transgression of Adam, and be quickened from the dead, and raised up from condemnation and wrath, be washed, cleansed and purified, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Whether brethren can agree with us that the absolute purpose and immutable decree of God embraced our fallen state and condition, as well as our salvation from sin, death and hell, through his dear Son, or whether they regard our fallen condition as an after thought, occasioned by some unavoidable failure of his purpose, if it be admitted that our redemption from sin and death was predestinated, we must also, and unavoidably (we think) admit the indispensable necessity for the fleshly birth of all the children of God which were from everlasting identified and personally chosen unto salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. By our natural birth then we enter into, and become a part of this world, are capacitated to see it, and to sojourn in it until, like a hireling, we shall have fulfilled our allotted number of days; but our first, or fleshly birth, while it capacitates us for knowledge of the things of nature, can supply us with no capacity for any thing beyond the bounds of this world; and hence the necessity that we should be born again in order that we may see the kingdom of God, and know the things of the Spirit of God.

In being born again, then, this man, who was chosen of God in Christ *before* the foundation of the world, and was born of the flesh *since* the foundation of the world, must, at some period still later than his fleshly birth, be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; he must be born of water and of the Spirit, or he cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

As our first or natural birth belongs to, and results from, natural generation, so our being born again belongs to, and results from, regeneration. The seminal life of all the posterity of Adam was created in him in the day when *they* were created. So the spiritual eternal life of the generation of our Lord Jesus Christ was given and secured to all the children of God in Christ when he was given to be the Head over all things to his church. The words of our Lord which we have placed at the head of this article were addressed to one who was already born of the flesh; and they are applicable to such only as are born of the flesh. A birth can only develop, or bring forth into manifestation, the same nature of which it is generated and born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The first birth brings forth that life, flesh and nature in which we were created in the earthly Adam; but the second birth brings forth into manifestation that life, spirit and immortality which was given to us in Christ Jesus, as the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven.

Having thus briefly considered the subject doctrinally, we will now offer some remarks on the personal experience of this birth by the children of God, and point out some of the prominent evidences by which we know that we have experienced it, if indeed we are of that happy number. These evidences are discovered by comparing and contrasting the state, condition, capacities, elements and exercises of those who are, with those of them who are not, born again; as also by the peculiar exercises produced by the birth, while under the quickening operation of the Spirit in our passage from death unto life.

Before we were born again, we were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others (Ephesians 2:1-3); in the full possession of all the elements of a carnal, depraved and sinning nature, and totally destitute of any spiritual life or knowledge. The carnal mind, which was all the mind we had, was enmity against God. Our selfish depraved propensities, with every imagination of our hearts, were evil, and only evil continually. Possessing at the same time exalted views of our own imaginary virtues, and of our ability to commend ourselves to the favor of God, and to secure for ourselves an inheritance of glory by our own works. Held under chains of darkness and strong delusion, believing

lies, and sporting with our own deceivings. Every ray of divine truth shut out from our mind, and our mind totally incapable of receiving, appreciating, or even desiring a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; hating that truth, and hating all who love or contend for it. Condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on us, yet boasting of our goodness, and holding that God was obliged in justice to view things as we viewed them, and to save us on such terms as we proposed. In love with sin, at enmity against holiness, at war with heaven, and in league with hell. Calling light darkness, and darkness light; truth error, and error truth; and altogether ignorant of our real condition.

In this wretched state we all were by nature, and nothing belonging to, or emanating from our earthly birth could by any possibility comprehend or know the condition we were in.

By the new birth, a new life is implanted in us, and that life is light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before. Quickened by Christ, the Second Adam, who is a quickening spirit, we are made to see and feel our sinfulness, and our lost and helpless condition. We are alarmed to find that we are much worse than we had ever before supposed. The law enters, and sin revives; the purity as well as the inflexible severity of the divine law appears, and the same light which reveals this also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation, and the impossibility of salvation by the law. All our boasted abilities to save ourselves was withered and vain. Lost, helpless and despairing, our legal hopes yield up the ghost. The commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The incorruptible seed, by the word of God is deposited in our heart, and all that is felt of conviction and despair are but the legitimate consequence. The light of life now begotten in us reveals a holy God, a righteous law, and a poor guilt-stricken, helpless, and despairing sinner, justly sinking into everlasting perdition.

All this is, however, the effect of life. All this is a struggling for deliverance. As the birth into liberty draws near, the conflict becomes the more intense. “God, be merciful to me, a sinner,” is now uttered in the most terrible earnestness, as quivering under the unsheathed flaming sword, which justice has raised to strike the decisive blow; when lo! the birth reveals the Almighty Savior, who has died for our offenses, and arisen for our justification. The fiery sword was quenched in his blood. “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

Lo! Now the guilt is all removed, the terror is gone, the darkness vanquished by bursting light and refulgent glory. God’s method of saving sinners now appears, and the sinner is *born again*.

This is the birth, and that which is born is spirit. It is not flesh. It is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being begotten and born of God, it manifests not only a new life, but a new relationship. The life which is manifested by this birth is not a revision of our Adamic life, but it is the life of the Father, by whom it is begotten; and it is the vitality of that which is born; hence in this new and heavenly birth, we are made partakers of the divine nature.

Christ, who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality is born in us, and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born spirit flows all the fruits of the Spirit which testify that we are born of God. As we have shown what are the works of the flesh which characterize the fleshly birth; so the new and heavenly birth is demonstrated by all the fruits of the Spirit of Christ which is given to us. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, brotherly kindness, charity, etc., are some of the living fruits of this heaven-born child, this *new man*, which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now in the man who is born again two natures appear. The one is born of the flesh, and is flesh, full of lust, and in opposition to holiness, warring against the spirit, and

constantly performing the works of the flesh, as described by Paul in Galatians 5:19,20. The other is born of God, and yields the fruits of the Spirit, as described above.

A conflict between the old man and the new, between that which is born of the flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, a love for holiness, and hatred of sin; a love to God, and loathing of self; a love for the truth and aversion to error; a love to the saints, and desire to be in company and communion with them; an appreciation of the beauty of the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper; a veneration for the order and laws of the kingdom of Christ, and a desire to walk in them, with a deep sense of our own unworthiness, an ardent desire for the peace of Jerusalem, and prosperity of the church of God, with a relish for the doctrine of the gospel, and willingness to suffer reproach for defending it.

These are all scriptural, and therefore reliable evidences that those who possess them are born of God, and heirs of immortal glory, and joint heirs with Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade away.

As our earthly nature which is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, nothing pure and heavenly can proceed from it; and so that life which is born of God is pure and heavenly, no evil can proceed from it. "It cannot sin, because it is born of God."

The conclusion is inevitable, that all that is unholy and sinful in us is of the flesh which is born of the flesh; and all that is spiritual, pure and heavenly in us is born of God; born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. No man can therefore glory in the flesh; for in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. He that glorieth must glory in the Lord, in that which God hath done for us. Every spiritual emotion, aspiration or thought is of that spirit which is born of the Spirit, by which we are qualified to see the kingdom of God.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high theme, still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of our songs."

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1868.

REMARKS ON BROTHER VANMETER'S LETTER.

We do not feel inclined to prolong the discussion of the points involved by an attempt to review what is contained in his letter which we publish in this number. We simply refer our readers to those articles and communications to which his present letter purports to be a reply, for our views, and for the views of our brethren, on the subject of regeneration and the new birth. If we have, any of us, contended that Christ is the mother of his members, or if any thing published in the "Signs of the Times," by any fair inference involves any such absurdity, we have been, and still are, unable to perceive it. It has been our design to set forth the scriptural doctrine that Christ is the Everlasting Father of all his spiritual seed; the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven. We have, in common with all our brethren, understood that

our natural seminal existence was given us in the earthly Adam, that we were in him when he sinned, and that death passed upon all, in him, and that in him we all die; but we did not know that that doctrine of seminal relation would make Adam the mother of mankind. We have understood, also, that the Second Adam is the Lord from heaven, a spiritual head, in whom as our spiritual seminal head, that spiritual life which was with the Eternal Father and was manifest, was given to us. And according as we have read the record of the three that bear record in heaven, attested by the concurrent testimony of the three that bear witness on earth, that this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son, so that he that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. Consequently we found ourselves obliged to believe that all who have eternal life have the Son of God; we had therefore accepted the inference that our eternal life, and all spiritual blessings were given us in Christ, according as God had chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, and that all spiritual blessings, including our relation to God through the Spirit, as sons of Christ's sonship, as heirs through and by virtue of his heirship. And as Christ himself declares that he is the resurrection and the life of his people, we had really believed that our resurrection, life, regeneration, new birth, and all things that qualify us for a spiritual inheritance in glory were spiritual blessings, which were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; and that God had provided no other medium through which any spiritual blessing ever did, or possibly could, descend from God to men; or by or through which any man can come to the Father. But after all, if this involves the conclusion that Christ is our mother, we will only say we had not so understood it. Our extreme dullness of comprehension may, however, result from the fact that our carnal mind has not been remodeled, nor our old man revised, nor any of our earthly faculties born over again, nor made spiritual and pure: for it is ours still to go bowed down with a sense of inbred depravity and indwelling sin. And if our eternal destiny depended on our finding in us, that is in our flesh including all in us that is born of the flesh, one good thing, we could not find it; we should certainly be lost. If brother Vanmeter, and the host of those who hold his views on this subject, who are urging him to defend the theory, have the faculties of their earthly nature made spiritual and holy, we would not deprive them of all the comfort it affords them. We will only say it is not so with us; they are far more holy than we. We groan, being burdened; and what in them is made spiritual and holy, in us is but the body of this death from which we look for no deliverance until our mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

We had never before been informed of our maternal relation to the covenant. We had supposed that the Jerusalem, which John saw descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride prepared for her husband, was the mother of all those who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise. We had been led to so understand it from the frequency of their being in the Scriptures spoken of as being her children, the sons of Zion, children of the kingdom, and we had also inferred it from the declarations of the Scriptures that she is the wife of him whom we believed was, and is, the only spiritual progenitor of all the spiritual posterity.

With the exception of what we have noticed, we have discovered nothing in this communication that was not as fully expressed in the former, and that has been repeatedly met.

The note which brother Vanmeter did not design for publication was not marked as private or confidential; and as we gathered from it that he also felt the infirmities of a fleshly nature, and hoping that we were not so widely separated in our views as we had feared, we were elated, and hastened to make it known to the brethren. But as he has now resumed his first position, we feel disposed to close the discussion on the subject. As many brethren seem opposed to controversy in the "Signs," we leave our readers to compare what has been written on all sides, and may God grant us light and counsel from above, and lead us all into the way of truth and righteousness, for our Redeemer's sake.

We are not conscious of any unkind feeling towards brother Vanmeter, and feel inclined to believe that the difference in our views arises from his attributing to the faculties of our old depraved, sinful, dying nature, what we regard as the development of the new man which is born of God. But should we prolong this discussion, it is feared that both of us may demonstrate some traits in our natural faculties, minds, understandings and feelings that could hardly be thought were born of God, or come directly from heaven. That which is born of God cannot commit sin. If born of incorruptible seed, that seed can produce nothing but what is as pure and incorruptible as the seed; we must of necessity conclude that all impurities, betrayed by us after that birth, arises from our fleshly nature. However others may think, we dare not impute them to any thing that is born of God.

The foregoing remarks were written soon after we received brother Vanmeter's letter, which drew them forth, and it was then our design to publish both the letter and the remarks as soon as we could conveniently make room for them in our columns. But on after reflection, it occurred to us that a protraction of the discussion was causing excitement among the brethren who are strongly averse to controversy, and we feared that the insertion of the letter, with or without our editorial remarks, would have a tendency to make the difference between Elder Vanmeter and ourself seem to be far greater than it really is. We cannot persuade ourself that our personal experience differs; although we have so differently construed each other's use of words.

Brother Vanmeter speaks of the same warfare in his own experience which we find raging in us, between our flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new man, in us. We have differed very widely in our interpretation of the meaning of some words which have been used by both of us. As, for instance, regeneration, the new birth, soul, faculties, etc. But avoiding our manner of employing these words, we are probably as well agreed, in regard to the experience of the children of God, as it is common for brethren of the same faith to be. Let us then avoid "doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife," etc., and we shall the better promote each other's peace, and more sacredly keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1868.

NEHEMIAH 4:2.

Dear Brother Beebe: – Please give your views, through the "Signs", on Nehemiah 4:2, and especially this clause: "What do these feeble Jews?" The reason of my asking your views on that passage is the way in which it was brought to my mind. I awoke from my sleep one morning, and the first thought that came to my mind was, What do these feeble Jews? I knew it was Scripture, but where it was I did not know, neither what it was speaking of; neither did I remember of ever noticing it more than any other passage. I soon sought it out. It is a dark passage to my mind, and I shall be much obliged if you will give your views on it.

P. Barnes.

Reply: – We have neither the time, space, nor ability to enter fully into the subject presented for our consideration. The city of Jerusalem was typical of the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The desolation of that city by the Babylonish army, when her inhabitants were carried away into captivity, their temple demolished, and their walls and gates thrown down, and the few who remained within her precincts intermingled unlawfully with Ashdod, Moab, and Ammon, and in league with Sanballat, Tobiah, and with the armies of Samaria, the book of the law of their God lost among the rubbish, and the chambers of the temple desecrated with the household stuff of Tobiah, shows what desolation and confusion should come upon any portion of the church of Christ when the law of the Lord is disregarded, and unlawful alliances are formed with the aliens.

Nehemiah was doubtless in many respects a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may also represent those whom God has from time to time raised up to labor in building up the waste places of Zion. While Sanballat and all his associates represent the advocates of error against whom the faithful servants of the Lord have to contend.

The words of Sanballat, on which brother Barnes desires us to comment were evidently uttered in derision, maliciously, and with a design to discourage the workmen, and hinder the progress of the work; as were also the words of Tobiah, the Ammorite, who said, "Even that which they builded, if a fox go up he shall even break down their wall."

The very spirit of their taunting falls thickly on those of the present day who labor faithfully in building up the walls of Zion, who urge a faithful and undeviating adherence to the laws and institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ, and protest against any affinity with other religious bodies.

How often have our adversaries, during the last forty years, spoken in the same taunting manner, of the comparatively few Old School Baptists who refuse to devote to their use the chambers of the consecrated house of our God for storing their household stuff. How frequently has the spirit of their language concerning us been, "What do these feeble Jews?" Feeble in numbers when compared with the multitude of their adversaries; and still more feeble in their confidence in the flesh. Having none of the elements of what their enemies regard as strength. The principal wealth, literature, State patronage, worldly honors, popular doctrines and carnal attractions on which all the numerous branches of anti-christ rely for support. As Jews, who are not so outwardly, and whose circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, whose praise is not of men, but of God; they claim to be "the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." In the eyes of their enemies they are feeble indeed; and it is astonishing to their enemies how it is that without Mission Societies, or Sabbath Schools, or protracted meetings, or modern revivalists to supply them with converts, Theological Schools to supply them with preachers, they are not utterly consumed. Trusting only in the Lord, our opponents cannot see how our existence has been thus far continued; and still their cry is that "If a fox go up on our walls, it will throw them down." It is true we have a dread of foxes, not however from fear of their throwing down our wall, but because of their depredations on our vines; for our vines have tender grapes. Feeble as Nehemiah and his band of faithful companions were in the estimation of their adversaries, the Lord was their strength; in him they trusted, and his arm was stretched out for their protection; and in the church of God they that trust in the Lord shall be like Mount Zion that cannot be moved. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early."

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1868.

PORTENTOUS SIGNS.

Preceding the most terrible judgments which the righteous sin-avenging God has ever executed on the inhabitants of the world, signs of the approaching wrath have been given to those who feared the Lord. Before the bottles of heaven were unstopped, and the Waters poured forth to utterly deluge the world, and sweep away the guilty inhabitants thereof, God made known to Noah the near approach of that impending storm of wrath, and provided for the salvation of him and his family. But while the lowering clouds were gathering for the day of wrath, all signs and solemn warnings were utterly disregarded by the inhabitants of the world, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and swallowed them up.

Who would believe the descendants of Noah would ever to their latest generations have forgotten that terrible demonstration, or ever again disregarded the signs and solemn warnings of approaching destruction? Scarcely however had the destructive waters of the deluge become assuaged, and the bright token of peace and safety painted on the retiring cloud, and men began again to be multiplied on the earth, when, in defiance of the thunderbolts of heaven, divine protection was repudiated, and the building of a tower whose top should reach to heaven was commenced, with the evident design to defy the wrath of God, should another flood be gathered upon the earth. Their tower was designed to rise above its destructive waters, and afford safety to its builders.

When the time approached for the terrible destruction of Sodom, there came an angel from God to give the necessary warning, and to hurry Lot and his family from the impending ruin; and God also made known to Abraham what he was about to do. But all these warnings were only like idle tales, an uncalled for alarm to the devoted victims of the lowering storm of wrath. The gathering clouds of flaming wrath were unheeded by the Sodomites, until its sulfurous fire came down with sure and quick destruction on their devoted heads.

When God was about to destroy the house of Belshazzar, and wipe out the imperial power of the Chaldeans, and give the dominion to the Medes and Persians, many signs, great and portentous, foretold the coming events; but all were unheeded, until the hand-writing upon the walls of the palace surprised with consternation the sacrilegious monarch in the hour in which he was slain.

Predictions by the prophets throughout the Old Testament had long foretold the great and terrible day of the Lord, in which great wrath, more terrible judgments than the earth had ever witnessed, should overwhelm in ruin the city of Jerusalem. Signs in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, should indicate its near approach. There should be wars, and rumors of wars, famines and earthquakes in various places, the sun should be darkened, and the moon turned into blood, and the stars of heaven fall. The abomination that maketh desolate should be seen standing in the consecrated city and temple. All these with many other fearful signs preceded the destruction of Jerusalem.

And all the signs which were given before the destruction of Jerusalem, if we have correctly understood the Scriptures, shall be repeated immediately before the final and everlasting overthrow of "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth." Read carefully the signs which foreshadowed the destruction of Jerusalem; compare them with what Paul, and Peter and John have, by inspiration, told us should be the signs of the destruction of the organized ecclesiastic powers of the man of sin, the son of perdition, and mark the perfect similarity of the signs; and then look upwards to the heavens above, look downward to the trembling earth on which you stand, look at the crumbling thrones of empires, and the quaking basis of all human governments; the wars now

raging, and rumors of wars impending and imminent, look which way you will, your eyes are greeted with the most appalling and fearful signs of great and fearful coming events.

It is not our design to excite, alarm or to appeal to the fears of the timid; for the apostle gave this charge to the Thessalonians in his second epistle: “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God (II Thessalonians 2:1-4).” Whether by the approaching day of Christ the apostle referred to the time when Jerusalem should be destroyed, or to the final destruction of Mystery, Babylon the Great, is not clear to our mind; but of this we are confident, the preliminary signs which should precede the one, should also precede the other; and some of the signs spoken of in this chapter seem to us to have a very evident allusion to the developments of anti-christ as a much later period than that in which Jerusalem was destroyed.

If we may understand these instructions as applicable to the modern anti-christ, we see that the apostle would not have the saints of God prematurely agitated or troubled on the subject. The warning given in the third verse, against imposition of false alarmists, shows that various *means* would be used by deceivers to produce panic and excitement on the subject, for base and deceptive purposes. Still the people of God should watch the passing events, and carefully observe the signs which we are authorized to accept as coming by spirit, by word, and by letter, from the inspired apostles.

It is true that before the destruction of Jerusalem there were many anti-christs, more or less developed. (See I John 2:18.) But the same apostle informs us in the fourth chapter of the same epistle, and third verse, that the spirit that confesseth not that Christ is come in the flesh, “Is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof they had heard that it should come.” The manner of his coming we are told by Paul, “is after the working of Satan, with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish,” etc. Regarding as we do the premonitory signs given by Paul in II Thessalonians 2, as applicable to the final and everlasting overthrow of the present anti-christ, we will call attention to some of the signs which we are divinely warranted to regard as indications of the very near approach of her impending ruin.

First. “That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first.” This falling away must have reference to some particular apostasy from the doctrine and order of the gospel; for in every age of the church, not excepting the apostolic, there have been some departures. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to fix our mind with any degree of certainty on the particular falling away intended, were we not more definitely instructed in these words. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy: having their conscience seared with a hot iron (I Timothy 3:1-3).” And in II Timothy 3:1-7, what is in the former text called the *latter times*, is called the *last days*. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” If it be admitted that the *latter times*, and the *last days*, in the meaning of the apostle, points to the times and days immediately preceding the downfall of modern anti-christ, it

will become us to enquire whether the abominations by which these times and days are distinguished are now to be found.

Has there come a falling away? There have been, more or less, a falling away from the doctrine of the apostles and primitive order of the church of Christ, as we have already intimated, at different periods since the day of Pentecost. But within the present century, there has been a far greater apostasy from the Baptist church than any that has ever preceded it. Through the darkest ages of pagan, papal and Protestant wickedness, while the earth has been drenched with blood, the church of Christ has maintained her integrity, and in no age has the Primitive Baptist church stood more firm and erect than when suffering cruel persecution at the hands of her enemies. The organized powers of anti-christ have never broken our ranks. Though driven into the wilderness, and protected from the flood which issued from the dragon, and obscured her in *sackcloth* for the forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years, of papal opposition, there has never been any extraordinary apostasy, or “falling away,” from the faith and order of the gospel by the Baptists until the present century. Neither the papists nor the Protestants have departed from the faith of the gospel, for they never held it. But in the separation of the New School, or Missionary Baptists, from our faith, order and communion, we have a *falling away*, answering in every particular to that described by the apostle. The faith and order which has characterized the Baptist church from the day of Pentecost to the present time was by them repudiated when they went out from us; for we stated to them distinctly that if they would adhere to the Scriptures as our only rule of faith and practice we would still retain them in our fellowship. But they turned away their ears from the truth, and were turned unto fables. Led away from us by seducing spirits, they went out after doctrines of devils, and were soon seen in all the regalia of anti-christ described by the apostle in I Timothy 4:1-3 and I Timothy 3:1-7. In that separation, it seems to us the let was removed, and the way opened for the more full and complete manifestation of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose coming, or manifestation, is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. Since the great falling away, when those who are known as Missionary Baptists abandoned our faith, and united with the other branches of modern anti-christ, there have been other cases of apostasy, in which many who once stood highly esteemed in our ranks, have turned their backs upon us, and are now mingling with “heady, high-minded *truce breakers*.”

Secondly. Were we endued with sufficient light and ability to explain all the mystic imagery presented in the vision which John saw on Patmos, as wrapped up in the sealed book, and disclosed in the opening of the seven seals in their regular succession, by the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and to give a clear and faithful interpretation of the seven trumpets, the seven thunders, and the seven vials which were filled with the last plagues, and to show the precise time and manner of the rising of the beasts from the sea, and out of the earth, and of the making and giving life to the image of the beast, – could we fully, clearly and truthfully explain their true signification, and their bearing upon the subject under consideration, all would go to admonish us that the hour of the destruction of Mystery, Babylon the Great is near at hand.

“Her cup of wrath is ready mixed,
And she must drink the dregs;
Strong is the Lord, her sovereign Judge,
And will fulfill her plagues.”

Thirdly. The external signs of the near approach of the great and terrible day of the Lord should not be overlooked, nor underrated. At what period have we heard of so many wars, and rumors of wars?

Scarcely any organized nation or government of the earth that is not shaking, and in commotion and turmoil. The prophecy of the downfall of the temporal power of the Roman Pontiff in 1866 was fulfilled. Earthly thrones are crumbling beneath their occupants. Revolutions are numerous; and nothing short of divine interposition can rescue our own beloved country from anarchy and ruin. The phenomena of the heavens surprise our astronomers. Pestilence rages with deadly effect in many parts of the world, sweeping off men and beasts. The seas have exhibited fearful commotion, and millions of the scaly tribes have died and risen to the surface. Famines are prevailing in many places, while earthquakes are literally rocking the world. The appalling accounts from our Pacific coasts tell of the swallowing up of thirty towns within the last few weeks, and extending along the coast over two thousand miles, and many thousands of the inhabitants have perished; and our latest dispatches report that severe shocks are still being felt. Quite recently, shocks have been felt in Canada, New York, Vermont, California, and in several other states. And yet it is with the great masses of the people, as it was in the days of Noah; eating and drinking incessantly, marrying and being given in marriage.

Admidst all these premonitions of impending storms of wrath, on flaming wings approaching, vice and wickedness is most frightfully increasing throughout the breadth of our land. Never have we been startled with accounts of so many horrid crimes as are reported in our daily newspapers. Men have become more and more selfish, “Lovers of their own selves.” Proud, arrogant and vain. Blasphemers, defying the thunderbolts of heaven. From the rulers in high places, and the priests at their altars, down to the most humble walks of life, such admonitions are wrought, as our guilty world has seldom, if ever before, witnessed.

If these fearful signs are not indications of the approaching destruction of modern anti-christ, they certainly portend some important judgments at hand, as “coming events cast their shadows before.”

May the voice of God be heard by all his people who may yet linger in Babylon, saying unto them, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:4).” And may those who have not received any of the marks of the beast hear and heed the admonition recorded in Isaiah 26:20,21, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1868.

EPHESIANS 6:1-5.

If it is not asking too much, I will request you to give your views through the “Signs” on Ephesians 6:1-5. Who are the children and the parents there spoken of? As I have heard different views on the subject, I should be glad to have yours, and there are others in this vicinity who also desire your views on the subject.

M. E. King

Reply: – The apostle had nothing to do with laying down rules for the government of any outside of the church of Christ. As apostles of Christ they were officially seated on twelve thrones, with authority from above to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Not the carnal Israelites, for they are not all Israel that are of Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Neither the children of the flesh, for they are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are the children recognized under the gospel for the true spiritual anti-typical Israel, over whom the apostles on thrones of judgment were to preside. Christ had said of and to them, “When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory” (that is, when he should have finished transgressions and made an end of sin, risen from the dead, and shall have set upon its kingdom in its gospel organization, and ascended his throne., in his spiritual kingdom), then they should also sit on the twelve thrones: according to the prophecy, “Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” The installation of the apostles in power to judge the subjects of the kingdom, over which Christ reigns as the blessed and only potentate, invested them with no more power or authority over any that were or are not in the kingdom of Christ, than the inauguration of a president over the States of America, gives to such a president to preside over the affairs of England, France, or Russia. His kingdom is not of this world, consequently the officers, princes, or judges in it have no power or dominion beyond her legitimate boundaries.

The subjects of Christ’s kingdom over which the apostles hold authority are those, and only those, who are born of water and of the Spirit; for Jesus has said expressly that none other can enter his kingdom. Of those who are born of God, taught by the Spirit, and gathered into the kingdom, and brought under the judgment of the apostles, there are of all the classes, kindreds and tribes of mankind, redeemed unto God, and duly admitted as fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. Of these, there are some parents, and some children; some husbands and some wives, some masters, and some servants, called by grace, born of the Spirit and received into the church. But while their new spiritual birth brings them into a new relation to the church, it does not annul their fleshly relations in which they before existed. A parent in nature, in being born again and baptized into an apostolic church, does not thereby cease to be a parent, nor is he thereby released from any responsibility to faithfully fulfill every obligation which was before binding on him to his children in the flesh. Nor does the conversion and admission of a child, son or daughter, into the church release him or her from their obligation to honor or obey their parents; and if both children and parents are members of the church of God, although as church members they are on a perfect equality, yet as parents and children are fleshly relations, they are still held under all the obligations in that relationship which existed before. And this rule is also applied to the relationship of husbands and wives, whether married or betrothed; to masters and servants, magistrates or citizens, their new relationship to each other in the church by no means abrogates their old relationship. In the primitive churches there were frequently instances of whole families and households being born again and brought together into the same church, and it was necessary for the apostles on their thrones of judgment to settle what were their relative obligations to each other.

In the case before us (Ephesians 6:1-5), the apostle limits the application of his administration to those children and parents which were *in the Lord*; that is, in the church, which is the body of our Lord; as he had no right to extend his judgment beyond the body of Christ. Children which were in the Lord, and parents also in the Lord, were alike subject, in all things, to the laws of the Lord, as expounded and applied by the apostles. As in the preceding chapter, Paul had given authoritative instructions as to the relative duties of husbands and wives, which were under his direction, being in the church, and to the Corinthians to those who were espoused, or betrothed; so, in this chapter he admonishes the children of the Lord, or church, to obey their parents, which were also in the Lord, or church, and the parents are

also admonished in regard to their duty to their children in the Lord, and the servants in the church, to their masters which were in the church, and the masters to their servants which were in the church.

In evidence that Paul's admonitions in this chapter were restricted to such children, parents, servants and masters as were members of the church, in the fourth verse he admonished the fathers in the Lord to bring up their children in the Lord in the *nurture and admonition* of the Lord. *Nurture* is food, and the nurture of the Lord is spiritual food or nourishment, and this is connected with the admonition of the Lord, or church. Now neither spiritual food or gospel admonitions can be applicable to any who are not in the Lord. But how suitable the instructions to the godly fathers and mothers, who with their sons and daughters, were gathered into the church, that the fathers should feel a special charge devolving on them to give wholesome spiritual instruction to their Christian children. But should we attempt to feed our carnal unconverted children on gospel food, they would trample our pearls under their feet and turn and rend us.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1868.

MATTHEW 16:26; II THESSALONIANS 1:10.

Largie, Elgin Co.,
Providence of Ontario
October 28, 1868.

Dear Elder Beebe: – As I have never requested your views on any portion of scripture, you can greatly oblige me by giving your views through the “Signs of the Times” on Matthew 16:26 and also on II Thessalonians 1:10. Hoping you will comply with the above request, I remain,

Yours respectfully,
John A. Leitch.

Reply: – The interrogatory in the first named passage was used to impress the minds of the disciples most solemnly with a sense of the importance of adhering strictly to the instructions contained in the context. They were uttered by our Lord on a most solemn occasion. He had warned them to beware of the *leaven* (or doctrine) of the Pharisees and of the Saducees. He had also informed them that their knowledge of him as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, was a revelation immediately from God the Father, of what could never be revealed by man. And also that this immediate inspiration, as the keys of the kingdom, alone can open or reveal the glory of that kingdom to any of the sons of men. “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.” At this intelligence Peter began to rebuke him, and say that this should not be. But our Savior charged him with savoring the things that be of men, and not the things which be of God, and thereby he was an *offense* unto him; or as that word is used to signify a *temptation* unto him. He appealed to his passions with suggestions of human policy to avert the dreadful sufferings which were ordained of God, and on which depended the redemption of his people. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples.” On this most appropriate occasion in which Peter had proposed self indulgence instead of self denial. “If any man

will come after me.” Let him mark well the self denying way which must be pursued: He came not from heaven to do his own will, or seek for personal exemption from bitter sufferings. As though he had said, Behold the sufferings which I must endure, the racking cross on which I am about to suffer, the terrible death I am about to die, the cup which I must drain, the baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and learn in this an example of self denial and of cross bearing. When at his agonizing torture the heavens should be darkened, the rocks rent, and all nature convulsed; and then say, Who is he that will follow the suffering Lamb of God? Who will follow him beyond the gates of the city? Who will follow him without the camp, bearing his reproach? Are there any to be found to follow him in the fellowship of his sufferings? Let all such know, this is the test. “Let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” As Jesus led the way, took up his ponderous cross, and denied himself, he marked the way with suffering and blood, in which his followers must walk, if they would follow him.

“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” Mark well the illustration of this saying in the pattern. Had Jesus listened to the offense, or temptation of Peter, and sought to save his life, or to avoid the cross, the agony and death, he must have failed to accomplish our salvation. All, all would have been lost; forever lost. But he laid down his life that he might take it again. Blessed example! May God work in our hearts both to will and to do his good pleasure. His followers cannot be a self-indulging people. “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:27).” Whosoever of the children of God will shun the cross of Christ, avoid reproach and persecution for Christ’s sake, shall lose his life; that is, as we understand it, the life and enjoyment of spiritual things, according to Romans 8:5-14. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” To deny ourselves is to mortify the deeds of the body; and the body is dead, because of sin; and while we are at home in the body, we are absent from Christ who is our life. Take the illustration of the context, for example. When the time of trial, persecution or suffering for Jesus’ sake comes, like Peter, resolve that it should not be borne; seek to prevent it either by drawing a sword to fight it off, or by cowering before the damsel, and denying that we know the blessed Savior. In either case, we fail to secure our object. But when, like Paul, we die daily, and count not our own life or personal comfort dear unto ourselves, and are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, then we find our life, our peace, and our divinest comforts.

We come now to the words on which our friend desires our views. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Consider the question either in a temporal or spiritual application. Suppose any man could succeed in gaining all the world, and in coming into possession of it should have to immediately die and leave it; what has he gained, or rather what would it profit him? He cannot take it with him; he must leave it like the rich fool in the parable, to whom it was said, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” The soul as here used, means the life, or vitality. If a man has gained an undisputed title to the whole world, and ghastly death comes to cut him down, with what part of the whole world will he compromise with death? Should he offer it all, can death be bribed? Will death relent? Or can he carry any part of what he has gained with him to the world to which he is hurried away? Surely he cannot. Then he is profited nothing.

Now let us apply this figure where our Lord applied it – to his disciples. What will they be profited should they seek to avoid the cross of Christ, to escape persecution, or to hoard up the treasures of this world at the expense of their spiritual privileges? Alas! How many of them have tried the fearful experiment of selling their birthright privileges in the house of God, or in the enjoyment of their most sacred comforts in spiritual things, for worldly honors, fame, or wealth; or who to gratify present

lustings or carnal gratifications would forego the pleasures of the Savior's smiles, and for a mess of pottage barter away their birthright in the kingdom and patience of our Lord.

The application of our subject opens before us. The closing verses of the chapter give special force to our application of the text to Christians who transgress the laws of Christ, either to avoid persecution, losses or crosses, or to gain treasures of earth or carnal gratifications. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels." When? Shall we say after the destruction of this material world, as the popular doctrine is? No; for Jesus said there were some standing there in the assembly before him who should not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. The coming of which he spake was when he should arise from the dead and ascend his Mediatorial throne, and preside in all his Father's glory, power and Godhead, over his kingdom which was at that time about to be set up in its gospel organization, when his holy angels, the apostles, should sit on twelve thrones, and all his ministers should be with him. When he would judge his people, and award to every one of them according to their works.

Let then this lesson of profit and loss be duly pondered by all the children of our God; in regard to savoring the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. We may begin our application with the newborn child of God. How frequently his savoring of things which are of men, carnal reasoning, or self indulgence, incline him to live in disobedience to the Savior's great command to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. How many plausible reasons he will frame as excuses. One is inclined to wait for brighter evidences of a saving change; and continues to wait for the depravity of his old carnal nature to die out. He doesn't want to profess to be a Christian until he is sure he will be a very good one. He will disobey the command of his Lord, and perhaps may flatter himself that he is not savoring the things which be of men, while he is in reality substituting his own carnal wisdom and prudence in place of the wisdom of God. What a plea! Don't love Jesus enough to obey him, and yet waiting and hoping to grow better, and more worthy. Another is deterred from fear of more persecution or opposition than he feels able to bear. We have known some who have from some reason or another lived, or rather continued to disobey for many years. If we ask them concerning loss and profit, they have to confess they have lost the sweet privilege of communion and fellowship with the saints, but have gained nothing. They find themselves no better, no more worthy, and perhaps at last have to come out under the rod. The same carnal reasoning which savors not the things that be of God is not only betrayed in the young converts, but is often discovered in those of riper age. Its tendency always is to disobey the command of Christ in which he enjoins on all who love him to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and to rely with implicit confidence on his gracious promise to supply all things else that we need. Instead of this, our fleshly wisdom inclines us to seek first for what we shall eat, drink, or be clothed, and first make provisions for earthly ease, comfort and convenience, and when our obedience to Christ will not require any sacrifice of carnal enjoyments, attend to the things of the kingdom. Self denial and cross bearing are involved in the pursuit of the things that be of God. But self indulgence and the gratification of carnal desires are present with us to oppose our obedience to the law of Christ. How lamentable to see the house of prayer forsaken by those who profess to be the followers of the cross-bearing Savior. Do we enquire of them the reason of their absence from the assemblies of the saints, we are told by some they have toiled so hard through the week to provide for their worldly gratification, they must indulge in rest, in order to so recuperate their physical powers that with renewed vigor they may resume their worldly pursuits and accumulate more treasures of the earth. Others have not found it convenient to attend, visitors have called, and it would not be considered polite to leave them. Or perhaps the weather is such that they cannot attend and fill their place without self denial. The law of Christ requires that we who know and love him shall hold all that we are, and all

we possess as stewards in trust, considering that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and that all we possess should be subject to his orders. But when we have set our hearts on earthly gains, and idolize the mammon of this world, how self denying it is for us to impart of our abundance to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and look after the comfort of the widows and the fatherless, or to bear our part in meeting the pecuniary expenses of the church. But human prudence pleads the cause of the covetous delinquents thus: It is necessary to be close, saving, and penurious, or we will have to curtail our own extravagance, and make a less show; or if we are not very close, we shall come to want; in short, seeking to save our lives requires that we shall reverse the mandate from the throne of Zion, and make it read, Seek first what ye shall eat and drink, and wherewith to be clothed, and secure a competency, so that you will not have to trust in God to provide for your temporal wants, and after you have laid up all you desire for this world, then attend to the things of the kingdom. In this perversion of the laws of Christ, how about profit and loss? You have gained the world, and have become a slave to it; but your poor, lean, starving soul is perishing for the consolations of the gospel, and with all the treasures of earth which you have accumulated you cannot procure the exchange for it one ray of spiritual light, or one drop of spiritual consolation. “Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:7-10).” “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above; not on things on the earth. For ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth (Colossians 3:1-5).”

There is yet another sense in which the disciples may seek to save their lives, and which to their sorrow they have found to be profitless. Yielding to the fear of persecution. We are informed that “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Timothy 3:12).” Our carnal nature shrinks from persecution, and our vain ambition aspires after the applause of the world, rather than its censures. We naturally dread to have our names cast out as evil, and that dread has too often ensnared some of the timid ones. To follow Jesus, they find they must associate with his poor despised followers, bear reproach and suffer mortification and shame. Near and dear friends and kindred in the flesh despise the company of those in whom we see the image of our Lord; but the trial comes, and can we break loose from all these earthly ties, forsake father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife, husband, or children, house and home? Will not some other way do? Can we not compromise this matter so as to save our lives in regard to the trial? As surely as we are the children of God, in doing so we shall lose what we are seeking to gain. The Lord himself has spoken it. Our only safety is to follow Jesus through evil as well as through good report, and obey his voice in all things.

“He will restore what we resign,
Or grant us blessings more divine.”

The admonition of our subject commends itself to all the children of God; to the public ministers of the gospel, they are not to shun to declare all the counsel of God, from any fear of consequences, but strictly obey Christ, and leave all the consequences with him. Exhorters should wait faithfully on exhortation; and each in his calling use the gifts which God has given, and speak as with the ability which he has given, and bear in mind that there is nothing we can possibly gain by shunning the dear Redeemer’s cross, or seeking self indulgence that can possibly be profitable to us, or yield us any spiritual consolation or benefit. “If ye love me,” says Jesus, “keep my commandments.”

We will now pass to the consideration of the text in II Thessalonians 1:10, “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

We do not know on what part of this text our brother is perplexed, but we presume it is his desire to know what are our views in regard to the advent, or coming of our Lord, in the particular sense in which it is spoken of in this text, and its immediate connections. As the apostle speaks in his first epistle, prospectively of a day of the Lord, in which the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and then we that shall at that time be living on the earth shall be changed from natural to spiritual, from mortal to immortal, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up together with them in the clouds, and meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord. And yet in this text he speaks of the testimony of the apostles having been believed already among them. But if we observe the parenthesis in our text, it will relieve us from what would otherwise seem quite obscure. The text will admit of the following rendering, according to the accepted rules of our language: When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired, in that day, namely, that day when he shall come, he shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe: (for our testimony among you was believed). The testimony of Paul, and Timotheus, as contained in the first epistle, first chapter, and tenth verse, also in the fourth chapter, from the thirteenth verse to the end: this testimony was believed by the saints at Thessalonica, and now in the text under consideration, with its connection, is alluded to. But in the prospective day Christ will not only be revealed in his glory, and be admired by his saints, but he will also be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. And all this shall be accomplished at the very time embraced in the testimony which they had already heard and believed. In the time testified of, “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, in that day.” It is highly probable that the testimony in the first epistle concerning that particular day had been misinterpreted by some, and in a manner which had occasioned trouble to some others; therefore the apostle, in this second epistle, relieves their minds on the subject, and beseeches them by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that they should not be soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by the letters from him, or them, by inferring from what he or they had written, that the day alluded to was near at hand; for it could not come prematurely, or until a full development and revelation should be made of that man of sin, the son of perdition, which was to be destroyed simultaneously with the exaltation of the saints at the time of this particular advent of our Savior. “And now,” says he, “ye know what withholdeth, that he [the man of sin] might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming,” etc.

This explanation of the apostle was eminently calculated to allay the fears of the brethren, and to protect them from those panic vendors who were troubling them with appeals to their passions in regard to the coming of the day of the Lord.

Before we close this article, we wish to express a few thoughts on the subject of the several advents of our Redeemer, as set forth in the sacred record. First, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. When he was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem his people. In that he came to be humbled, to take on him our infirmities, to bear our sins, to carry our sorrows, and to suffer the chastisement of our peace, to bear a cross, and to be reviled of men, to be a man of sorrows and

acquainted with grief, to be despised of men, and in the weakness of that nature which he took on him to know the feelings of our infirmities, to humble himself and learn obedience, even unto death, to suffer, bleed and die upon the cross, to be put to death in the flesh, buried in the earth, and rise from the dead on the third day. Here was an astonishing display of the love of God. He spared not his own and only begotten Son, but delivered him up to die, the just for the unjust, to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. To accomplish all this, he bowed his heavens and came down to our guilty world to do and suffer all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. And having accomplished all that the Father gave him to do, he ascended up where he was before, and a cloud received him out of the sight of his disciples.

Again he came down on the day of Pentecost; not in a body of flesh; for though we have known him after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more. But according to his promise, “If I go away I will come again.” “I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Faithful and true is his word of promise, he came to them in the descent of his spirit on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in her gospel order, and took his seat upon his Mediatorial throne, as the child born, the Son given, whose name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace, bearing the government upon his shoulder, inaugurated upon the throne of his father David, to order and establish his kingdom with judgment and justice, from henceforth even forever, giving assurance that “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”

In another sense still, he comes in the quickening and manifestation of his saving power and grace, to every one of his dear children; and he comes to them when all their toils and pains are fulfilled, to bear their ransomed spirits home to their eternal inheritance in the heavens.

In the ministry of his everlasting gospel, “Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.” He is seen by his saints in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, riding on the wings of the wind, and making the bright clouds of his witnesses his chariots. He comes to avenge his saints, and to destroy their enemies; and lo! He comes to abide with them forever, to dwell in them, and to walk in them. But in the theme of the apostle, to which our attention is called by our brother, he comes in most transcendent power and indescribable glory, when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day.

Once, as we have seen, he came to bear a cross, but now he comes to wear a crown of dazzling splendor. Once he came to be humbled, to bear shame and reproach; but now in all the radiant glory of the Father, and all his mighty angels. Once he came forth weeping, and bearing precious seed; but now to harvest his sheaves and bear them in triumph to the highest heavens.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1868.



OUR EXISTENCE IN CHRIST BEFORE THE WORLD WAS.

Roadhouse Station, Ill.,
November 6, 1868.

Dear Brother Beebe: – I now sit down to write a few lines to you, and must say that your editorial in reply to brother Vanmeter has been a mystery to me in one or two points. I must say there is a contradiction abroad somewhere; and it is for instruction I write. You stated, and truly too, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh,” nothing else, “and that which is born of the spirit is spirit,” and nothing else. Now you say that the same that was born by ordinary generation is in time born of the spirit. If I understand you, it leaves me in the same fix that Nicodemus was in. I will say that if the same man is born again, it is spiritual and I suppose it is incorruptible, and if this is the case, sin cannot approach it. Then this mortal has put on immortality, in part, but I find no such Scripture; but find that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, if in us at all, and the excellency is not of men, but of God. This is the same leaven which a woman hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. Now if the Adamic man is born and made spiritual, it is all leavened and is not a progressive work, as I have thought, to be completed in the resurrection. Now I think this new birth is clearly set forth in the words, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” You made one point, that the inward man and the outward man are commensurate, and after the new birth there is but one man, and he is solely of the Lord, and I won't have such an idea. To be born is to develop. Now in developing godliness through the prepared or subjugated body, there is a manifestation of righteousness which was not there before. Now if it perfected the Adamic man, Paul did not understand it clearly when he said that with his flesh he served the law of sin, and “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” Now this same body that was born first is born again, and the second birth leaves it still a body of death. Being born again surely does not make it spiritual, or it would not die.

Dear brother, I would be well pleased if you would write me a letter and give me your views on the inward man, and what it is, and also the outward man and what he is, just in as short a way as you can, and direct it to Road House Station where you send the “Signs”. And as my time is up in December, I want you to stop it then. I write you in good feelings for instruction.

Yours truly,
A.W. Murray.

Reply to Brother Murray: – Dull and bungling as we are in expressing our views, we are surprised sometimes at our failure to make our views intelligible to our brethren, and still more surprised that any of them should understand us so very differently from what we mean. If we were as unsuccessful on all points in attempting to make ourself understood as we have been on the subject of the first and second birth of the children of God, we would return our pen to the wing of its mother goose, and leave the statement and defense of the truth to abler writers. We have not been without our fears that the late agitation on the regeneration and the new birth, at least to some of our readers, had a tendency to darken counsel, rather than to edify. Whatever we publish as our views on any subject, we give only as our views, holding none of our brethren responsible for them, only so far as they find them sustained by the Scriptures and made plain to their understanding. We neither ask nor desire any one to accept as true what we hold, or set forth, any further than our views are sustained by the unerring Scriptures of

truth. And we have confidence in the Old School, or Primitive Baptists, that they will carefully compare what we publish with that sacred standard before they endorse it. But we must request them to consider candidly what we say before they condemn it; and in no case allow themselves to misconstrue or misrepresent what we advance. By *our* words we are willing to be judged; whether by them we be condemned or justified.

In replying to our brother Murray, we will make this one more effort to express, as explicitly and plainly what are our views, as we can.

First. It is our firm conviction that all the men, women, and children who belong to the elect family of God had an existence in Christ Jesus before the world began, and consequently before they had any of them been born at all, either of the flesh or of the Spirit.

Secondly. That their existence in Christ before the world began was so personal that no change could possibly be made, the inheritance of every one of them, for time and eternity, was assigned to each personally, definitely and unchangeably. That they were all of them loved personally, blessed with all spiritual blessings personally, and personally chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that each and all were so definitely identified in the choice, love, grace, and gift of God that no one of them could possibly be misplaced, overlooked, or fail to fill the destiny appointed or to receive the spiritual blessings which were given them in Christ, or any one of them fill the place in the body of Christ which God hath ordained for another.

Thirdly. That they were all regarded as the children of God, and heirs of immortal glory before they were any of them made partakers of flesh and blood; and consequently before any of them were born of the flesh or of the spirit.

Fourthly. We hold that it was the counsel, purpose and ordination of God to bring all these heirs of glory into manifestation by a first and a second birth, preserving through both births the identity they had with him before the world began.

Fifthly. That their identity, individuality, and personality being anterior to their first and second birth, depended on neither the one nor the other, except to subserve the great purpose of God in their manifestation, which he ordained should be in the fullness of the dispensations of times.

Sixthly. That their first birth, or their being born of the flesh, was ordained for their manifestation in the flesh, as the children of the first Adam, of whose nature they were to partake, in whose transgression, depravity, and the mortality they were to be involved. And that until they were born of the flesh, they could not see the natural world into which they were to be born. And that when any one of them is born of the flesh, that man is born once. That man who was chosen of God, in Christ, is now born of the flesh, and can see the world into which he is born. That man, who was a man before he was born, now by his birth partakes of humanity, mortality, and corruption, and requires to be redeemed from sin, death and condemnation.

Seventhly. That very man, who was a man, as chosen of God in the election of grace, and whose name was written in heaven, in the book of the Lamb, and has been born of the flesh is by his one birth only revealed or manifested in the earthly nature which God ordained for him; but before he can be made manifest in a spiritual nature he must be born again. As there is natural life given to this man in his earthly birth; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, so there is nothing natural given to the same man when he is born again, as that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Eighthly. The vessel of mercy whom God afore prepared to glory by his first birth receives his mortality and in his being born again the same man receives his immortality. "I give unto them eternal

life (John 10:28).” “That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee,” etc. Now being born of the flesh, and born again of the Spirit possesses both flesh and spirit, which Paul says are contrary the one to the other; he now possesses both mortality and immortality; his mortality is born of the flesh, and the flesh continues to be mortal as long as the man, so born, remains in the flesh. The immortality is born of the Spirit of him who only hath immortality, and continues to abide in the man who has experienced both births and possesses both conflicting natures which must both continue in him until the one is swallowed up of the other; until the flesh shall yield to the spirit, until this mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Then, but not till then, shall this mortal put on immortality, and this corruptible put on incorruption, the spirit shall then triumph over the flesh, when the flesh shall go down to the grave, and there be sown a natural body, and thence be raised a spiritual body, changed and fashioned like the resurrected body of our Lord, who has already risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

1. Now let us consider Christ as the first fruits, the perfect sample of what his saints shall be in their resurrection! Was Christ the Son of God, and perfectly identified in that full relation to the Father before he was born of the virgin, or begotten from the dead in his resurrection? Did his being made of a woman, under the law, or his resurrection constitute him the Son of God, or did he exist in his Mediatorial glory with his Father before the world began, the same as he will when the world shall be no more? See John 17:5. Had he the same glory with the Father before the world was that he ascended to when he went up with a shout?

2. Did Christ in his incarnation possess two whole and yet distinct natures in his one person? Was he both God and man at the same time? Was he properly the Son of God, and the Son of Man; and did his Godhead compose any part of his humanity or his humanity compose any part of his Godhead?

3. Was he the subject of two births, one of the virgin, when he was made flesh, and the other when he was quickened from the dead by the Eternal Spirit, in his resurrection from the dead? Before answering these last interrogatives, read Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:35; and Acts 13:33.

If then it be admitted that Christ possessed two whole natures in his one person, the one called flesh, which could suffer and die, and the other Spirit, which could not die, but had power to quicken and raise the dead, is it hard to infer that those who bear his image can also, being born first of that flesh of which also in like manner he took part, and then being born again of an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever, be while here in the flesh, possess two distinct natures? The one born of the flesh, the other born of the Spirit, the one human, the other divine? One mortal, the other immortal; the one depraved and possessing in it “no good thing,” the other perfectly immaculate?

It is testified of our Savior, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1-3 & 14).” Would it now be proper for us to raise the question, What part of the Word was made flesh? We are told it was the Word which was God. No less the Word because it was made flesh, no less God because identified with flesh.

So with the men, or people, which were with, and in, Christ before the foundation of the world, they are no more, nor are they any less, the people of God because they are made flesh, born of the flesh, and are thereby partakers of the transgressions, pollutions and mortality of the flesh, than they were before the world began. The man who was chosen in Christ Jesus in eternity was in time born of the flesh, defiled and involved in guilt and transgression, and washed from pollution and guilt by the atoning sacrifice of Christ. That same man, who was a man chosen in Christ from everlasting, and who was

born of the flesh, and made flesh, is born again of a heavenly birth, receives a spiritual life from God, which is distinct from the life received by him in his first birth, and in his two-fold nature of flesh and spirit, dwells among us. Brother Murray has entirely mistaken, and misread us, in regard to our “making the point” which he condemns that the inward man, and the outward man are commensurate of the new birth. Such a thought never entered our heart; nor have we ever contended that our Adamic nature is born over again in the new birth, nor that it ever has or ever will be made spiritual. It is certainly not so now, and if it was it would cease to be Adamic; for Paul testified that Adam was not spiritual but natural; that Christ the second Adam is spiritual. To be spiritual then is to partake of the life and nature of Christ, not of Adam.

We have not time to discuss this subject in private correspondence with those who do not choose to patronize the “Signs”. We have about all we can do in addition to our pastoral and other ministerial labors to write for the “Signs”. We are very prone to be prolix in our articles, but the shortest way in which we can answer the last questions proposed we say: the outward man is the flesh, that is born of the flesh; and the inward man is the spirit, that is born of the spirit.

Brother Murray has mistaken us in regard to the old nature, which is born of the flesh, being born again of the spirit, and made spiritual. We hold, as we have tried to explain, that the subject of grace had an identity before he was born at all, either of the flesh or of the spirit; when born of the flesh, the fleshly nature produced by that birth became identified with him, so that he who before existed in Christ is now manifest in the flesh, and receives a fleshly corruptible, and depraved, dying nature. And the same person, man, or identity, who has received this earthly nature (it must be the same, or some other), also receives a spiritual, pure, incorruptible, imperishable and heavenly nature which is born of the Spirit, with which he also becomes identified; and that this man, person or identity retains both these antagonistic natures, and is identified with both, as long as he continues in the flesh, and until the one of them shall be swallowed up of the other, until the mortal shall put on immortality, when death shall be swallowed up of victory. In this complex state in which flesh and spirit are component parts the same person, we may properly speak of the man or person who is born, and born again, as a sinner, and of the same man or person in whom both natures now exist, as a saint. He is as black as the tents of Kedar; and at the same time, he is as white and comely as the curtains of Solomon. Or, as Erskine says:

“To good and evil, equal bent,
I'm both a devil and a saint.”

“I am crucified with Christ,” “I am dead with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Paul uses the personal pronouns, *I* and *me*, identifying him, in both natures, thus, For I know that in *me* (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing, for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is therefore no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I see another law [or governing power] in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing *me* into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I *myself* serve the law of Christ; but with the flesh the law of sin (Romans 7). Now when we can comprehend how the apostle could *himself*, with his mind serve the law of God without the concurrence of his fleshly nature, but in direct opposition to it; and how he *himself* could with his flesh serve the law of sin, without involving his spirit, in any participation in that service; and how he could say without contradiction, “I *myself* serve the law of sin, and yet it is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” I serve the law of sin; I *myself*, serve the law of God; but in such a way that it is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. I am a wretched man, involved in a body of death; nevertheless I

live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, etc. Then we shall have less trouble in distinguishing between the flesh and the spirit, the old man, and the new, the outer man and the inward man, the natural man and the spiritual man; and how these two opposite natures emanating from opposite sources and produced by distinct births, can form the elementary parts of a Christian. Then shall we all better understand the words of our Lord, in which he has informed us that “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;” and we shall be less likely to conclude that anything earthly is born of the Spirit, or anything spiritual is born of the flesh.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1868.

REPLY TO BROTHER E. D. VARNES.

The two passages on which brother Varnes desires our views are these: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (James 2:17);” and “What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice (Philippians 1:18).”

In the first of these passages, the apostle James is treating upon the practicable effects of faith by which its nature is to be tested. If the faith be genuine *living* faith, its vitality will be known by its activity, and its action will be in harmony with its nature. The apostle seems to admit that there are different kinds of faith; the faith of the Son of God, which *works* by love and purifies the heart, is a living faith. Being born of God, it partakes of the nature and vitality of its heavenly Author. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith if we have the faith of God’s elect. This faith being born of God, though it encounters the world, and is opposed by the world, will overcome the world, and triumph ultimately over all opposition. “And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” Natural faith, or the faith of the world, has no conflict with the world, and will not overcome the world, being in agreement with the world. But the faith of the Son of God, by which the children of God live, walk and stand, is essentially different in its origin, nature and development, from the faith of men, and from the faith of devils. Paul says of the living faith of the gospel, “And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20).” Hence we live by faith; not by a dead or nominal faith, but by a vital principle, even by the faith of the Son of God; a faith pertaining to his Sonship, because begotten and born of God, it partakes of his Sonship, of his spirit, purity and power. It can never therefore be dead or inactive. Those who possess it may not always feel its mighty power, because so far as they are led, or live after the flesh, they shall die, or fail to feel and enjoy its life inspiring power. They not only live by faith, as we have shown, but also walk by faith, not by sight. To walk by faith is to move on confidently trusting in God, when all is dark and inscrutable to our sight or to our natural judgment. As when Abraham staggered not at the promise which seemed so unreasonable and so unnatural; yet he staggered not at the promise, because God had made it, and his faith inspired implicit confidence in, and unflinching reliance on, God. At God’s command he went forth, not knowing whether he went; it was enough for him to know that God had commanded; and in the same confidence Enoch also walked with God. And all the saints shall know

that in all their walks with God, they walk by faith, and not by sight, having no confidence in the flesh. The nature, power and vitality of the faith of the Son of God is always the same; but we only enjoy it experimentally as the fruit of the Spirit, and as the gift of God; we only enjoy its saving manifestations when our spirit, which is born of the Spirit, triumphs over the flesh; and we are made fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who have this faith in them will assuredly know of the Christian warfare; for the flesh, and all our fleshly powers, are as full of infidelity as they ever were. All the doubts, fears and unbelief that rises in opposition to our implicit confidence in God comes from our flesh, and inclines us to endeavor to walk by sight and objects strenuously against taking a step in the dark. This conflict of flesh and spirit, nature and grace, faith and unbelief, is more or less illustrated in every child of God. Faith points the new-born child of God to the yoke of Jesus, to his example and precepts, and bids him move on in obedience to the Savior's great commands, saying, "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized," etc. But unbelief says, Better not be too fast; wait till this dark cloud shall pass; till you are satisfied that you are a fit subject for the ordinances and worthy to take a place in the church of God. Chided for his disobedience or tardiness in following his Lord by the spirit of faith, which relies alone on Jesus, the convert sees a beauty in the lovely ordinance; while unbelief insists that he shall wait until he has sufficient light to walk by sight. Carnal reason too, believes that it is safer to walk by sight than to walk by faith; but the faith of the Son of God in the believer looks through the thickest cloud, and sees with delight the things which are within the veil, whether the forerunner is for us entered; and fixing its steadfast eye on him who has entered within the veil, desires to fly away from all human reason and carnal understanding, and be governed in all things by him.

"Through floods or flames, where Jesus leads,
To follow where he directs."

Looking steadfastly not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal (or things of time); but the things which are not seen are eternal; and therefore only looked upon by faith.

But we presume our brother Varnes desires our views on the apostle's declaration, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." We have already intimated our firm conviction that the faith of the Son of God, which all who are born of the Spirit receive in that birth, is a vital and undying principle, which is never dead; nevertheless that vital principle in us may be dead practically, in the sense in which the apostle James has illustrated. "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed, and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body, what doth it profit?" If one of you who are recognized as brethren who possess the faith of the Son of God should thus treat a needy brother or sister, as to practical profit to the needy brother or sister, your faith would be dead to them in that particular sense. The life of genuine faith would fail to appear. Or, to express in other words, what we understand to be the meaning of the apostle, a professed disciple of the Lord Jesus, to treat a brother or sister in that heartless way would deny the faith, and act in opposition to all its teachings. Whatever we may believe, or whatever faith we may have, if it produces no action, is practically dead or dormant. To illustrate the apostle's meaning, he speaks of Abraham, and of Rahab the harlot. Abraham believed God and his faith was perfected, or demonstrated by his obedience to God. Rahab the harlot believed that the city of Jericho, in which she lived, was to be given to the Hebrews; but her faith, however strong and sincere, would neither have profited her nor the Hebrews, if it had not been practically demonstrated by her receiving the spies, and concealing them, and sending them out another way. It is only in this sense that we understand our apostle to be speaking of faith being dead; that is, destitute of

practicable results. What if we have faith to believe there is one God, if we do not love and serve him, devils are equally orthodox, for they also believe and tremble.

Again, we may understand James as speaking of the doctrine of the gospel; what though we vainly believe it to be the truth of God that shall stand forever, what practicable benefit have we from our correct, or orthodox, profession of faith, if we do not walk in it, and contend earnestly for it, as it was once delivered to the saints? All kinds of faith must be made manifest by works. The husbandman has faith in the order of nature, seed time and harvest, and his faith inclines him to plow his fields and sow his grain, because he has faith that the harvest will come when he shall reap, if he faints not.

In the application of the admonitions of the apostle to the children of God, we are not to understand that to profess faith in God, in Christ, while in works we deny him, such profession can be accepted by the saints as an evidence that those who so profess are entitled to their fellowship or confidence. The disciple who says he has faith in Jesus must show his faith, that is the evidence of it, by following him. In the commission to the apostles, as a mark by which they should know the called and quickened people of God, Jesus said to them, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Not merely he that believeth. Living faith will lead its possessor to obey, as well as to believe. How many there are in the vicinity of all our churches who give us every other evidence that they believe and love the truth, and love the people of God. The sincerity of their convictions and their love, we cannot discredit; but their faith is dead to us, that is, it is unavailing, because it is alone, not manifested by obedience to the gospel of the Son of God. Their faith is not so strong as to subdue their doubts, fears and unbelief; nor is their love so ardent as to draw them with willing feet to walk in the footsteps of our glorious Leader. "If ye love me, (says Jesus) keep my commandments." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." But where these evidences of love and obedience are not found, whatever of faith or love a person may have, it is dormant, or we may say, dead, as to the production of the true and legitimate fruits of vitality. In short, the church of God must judge of the vitality of one's faith, by his conduct. If one says he loves the cause, but on every occasion will betray it, that he believes our doctrine, but will not walk in it; that he regards us as the church of God, but walks with, builds up, and strengthens the hands of our adversaries; we may safely say to such, as the apostle has said, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." But we will pass to consider the text in Philippians 1:18.

In this text the apostle expresses his joy that Christ was preached, and in a variety of ways, and from different and conflicting motives; some even of envy and strife, and some of good will, or with pure motives. The one preaches Christ of contention, not sincerely, but maliciously, designing thereby to add affliction to Paul's bonds. Others of love, knowing that Paul was set for the defense of the gospel. Of all this, Paul says, "What then?" What if the enemies of the gospel are filled with envy and feel maliciously inclined towards Paul, and towards all the ministers of Christ who like Paul preach of love and good will? Shall their enmity, envy and malice retard the dissemination of the gospel? By no means. They can do nothing against the truth, but for it. Their wrath shall praise God, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. What then? If some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and others of good will, and some of contention, to afflict Paul, "Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached;" the tidings are spread far and wide, and the great purpose of God in publishing the gospel in every land is subserved; and in that Paul rejoiced; yea, and would rejoice.

The words of the apostle seem to imply that there were some preachers who really preached the gospel, and to the edification and profit of their hearers, who did it from the basest of motives, even from envy

and strife, and with a design to add affliction to Paul's bonds; and we have no right to doubt that such was the case then, and that there are even now some who with no better motives, have really preached Christ, and that to the profit of the saints, whose hearts have never been warmed by the love of God, who in their preaching have designed to gain the confidence of the saints, and finally to make division and trouble in the church, and to bring the true ministers of Christ into trouble and disrepute. If not greatly mistaken, we could now name a score of preachers of that description, some of whom we have once regarded as able ministers of the New Testament, and under whose ministry we have sat with delight and profit, until their real character has been developed, their mask has fallen off, and their hypocrisy has been exposed. These have added far more affliction to our bonds than all the open avowed enemies of the cause combined could do. Like the unclean ravens which carried food to Elijah, they have dealt food to the saints of which they themselves have never tasted; or like Balaam's ass, when speaking with a man's voice, they have uttered words which, while unintelligible to themselves, have been God's message of comfort and consolation to some of the saints.

But it is not, however, our understanding that those malicious enemies who desired to add affliction to Paul's bonds always preached Christ as Paul and other ministers of Christ did, by standing up in the public assemblies to expound the Scriptures, or to proclaim salvation in his name. But the manner in which their opposition to them, and to the gospel, was overruled by the Lord to the furtherance of the gospel, as explained in the context in which he adverts, first to the things which had happened to him, probably when he was in Macadonia, or at Philippi, and the bitter persecution which he had encountered, and by which his life seemed to be imperiled, had fallen out rather for the furtherance of the gospel. So that their wicked efforts to prevent the preaching of the gospel by raising a tumult against him, having him arrested and bound and imprisoned, and sent away to Rome, had given currency to the gospel, and they were themselves instruments in proclaiming it, instead of being able to conceal it. Their malicious persecution had stirred up the brethren, so that the brethren of Paul, or as he calls them, "Brethren in the Lord," waxing confident by Paul's bonds, in which he was held by their malice and envy, were much more bold to speak the word without fear. It is in this way that some preach Christ of envy and strife. Some of whom? Of the brethren in the Lord; but how of envy and strife? Of the envy and strife of their enemies; for certainly not of envy in their own hearts; but they were impelled, emboldened, and waxed confident, by the envy and strife of their enemies. While others of the dear disciples, less timid, did not need the enmity and persecution of their adversaries to stimulate them, but preached Christ of love and good will. It is certain that the envy and strife of the enemies stimulated the disciples with the greater boldness to preach Christ, and even the imprisonment and bonds of Paul had exemplified this truth. And the joy and exultation of Paul was in that the gospel of Christ was preached, by his brethren in the Lord, who were stimulated to preach, by the envy and strife of their cruel and malicious enemies, who were maliciously bent on surpressing the preaching of Christ, and adding affliction to Paul's bonds. Yet notwithstanding every way, through some of his brethren from love and good will, regardless of the opposition they encountered, and others, being timid, were stimulated by persecution; although persecution was used to embolden them, still, in the result, Christ was preached and Paul rejoiced.

It has been, and still is the wisdom of God to employ the envy and strife, and persecution of the world for the promulgation of the gospel from the beginning of the gospel dispensation. Instead of offering large bounties of worldly comfort, fame or treasure, to induce men to engage in the work of the gospel ministry, it has been the divine pleasure and wisdom of God to employ the rage, malice and persecution of his enemies to hasten his ministers to the field of their labor. A large number of God's chosen ministers were very pleasantly situated in a large upper room at Jerusalem, and being all of one accord,

it was delightful to be all of them in one place. But, “As an eagle stirreth up her nest,” so the Lord caused them to be scattered as soon as they were endued with power from above; and this was done by letting the powers of darkness loose upon them. Persecution arose against them in Jerusalem, and being severely persecuted, they were scattered by the persecution, and they that were scattered went every where, preaching the word. That is just where the Lord had told them to go and preach; and we have no right to doubt that persecution was by him ordained to enforce their obedience to his command. At all events the persecutions they endured were used, under the mighty hand which controls them, for the furtherance of the gospel. The experience of Paul himself is in point, from place to place, he was tossed about by the cruel persecutions which followed him everywhere, so that he knew whereof he affirmed, when he said that some indeed preach Christ of envy and strife; but all that envy and strife had resulted in the more abundant dissemination of the gospel of Christ. In our context, he says, “But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things (persecutions, etc.) which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places.” Heartily and cheerfully as the apostle labored, and more abundantly than all the other apostles, who can doubt that much of his labor was induced by persecution? Instead of Mission Boards, and Mission Societies, large salaries, and flattering titles, the apostles and primitive ministers were hurried from place to place by the lash of persecution; and thus of the envy and strife which rankled in the hearts of their bitterest enemies, Christ was preached, and more abundantly preached by the persecuted servants of God, and Paul rejoiced, and would rejoice. The things which had happened to him had finally resulted in taking him to the capitol of the Roman Empire, and before kings and rulers where he had opportunity to preach Christ, which otherwise he could not have had. And from the apostle’s days to the present, the envy and strife, opposition and persecution, endured by the faithful servants of Christ, under the overruling hand of God, who controls them all, has done more for the promulgation of the gospel of Christ than all the humanly devised institutions that have ever been invented for that ostensible purpose. And in the great result, with Paul, we do rejoice; yea, and we will rejoice.

Of course, Paul did not approve nor rejoice in the deceptive course of those who preached Christ insincerely, deceptively, or hypocritically, of envy and strife; nor did he sanction the spirit of persecution in the avowed enemies of Christ, though God had overruled all to the furtherance of the gospel. It was rather on the principle that we now rejoice in the crucified and risen Savior, though his crucifixion was by wicked hands. “Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain (Acts 2:23).” We rejoice not in the wickedness of his murderers, but in the accomplishment thereby of the gracious counsel and purpose of God. So Paul, and so we rejoice, that Christ is preached, notwithstanding every way.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1868.

REPLY TO SISTER DECAMP.

Although we have published such views as we have on the peculiar order of the priesthood of our Lord in some of the old volumes of the “Signs of the Times,” as those volumes are not accessible to all our

present readers, we are willing to repeat the effort to enlighten, and, if possible, edify those who feel interested. We do not, however, claim to have any new light upon the subject, and can only give such views as we have entertained for many years.

The first text named is Hebrews 7:1, “For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest unto the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him,” etc.

Both Aaron and Melchisedec were priests of the most high God, and both were typical of the great high priest of our profession, which is Jesus Christ. But in the order of their respective priesthoods, there was a very great difference. The order of the priesthood of Aaron was laid down in, and formed an important part of, the Levitical law. It was established in the tribe of Levi, and restricted to the house, or family, of Aaron; subsequently to his ordination it was unlawful for any one, however gifted or pious, to officiate in the priestly office which he held, but himself and his sons. In order to admit of any one who was not of that tribe and family officiating in that office which God had restricted and confined to Aaron and his sons, there must of necessity be a change of the law in which that peculiar order was provided (Hebrews 7:12). The peculiar order of Aaron’s priesthood precluded, and disqualified any priest of that order from being king, as it disallowed any of the other tribes from being priests. And almost the whole epistle to the Hebrews is devoted to the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as answering to all that was signified by the two dissimilar orders of the priesthood, as typified in Aaron and Melchisedec. The Aaronic priesthood, with its offerings, was faulty, inefficient, and could not make those for whom its offerings were made perfect. The offerings under it were such as bullocks and calves, lambs and kids, whose blood had no power to cleanse the consciences of those for whom they were offered continually, from dead works, or qualify them to serve the true God. The constant repetition of the offerings from year to year, as well as the transmission of the priesthood from sire to son, as long as that law should hold its dominion, is an evidence of its want of power to take away sin, or purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. It being typical was the shadow of good things to come. While in vindication of the inexorable law of God in its demand for blood, and in showing that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. The sins of those for whom the offerings were made were only remitted ceremonially, and remembrance was had of them again every year; yet this ceremonial, or typical atonement, inefficient though it was, pointed to the perfect priesthood and efficient offering of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, did alone offer himself unto God, and by one offering perfect forever them that are sanctified, or set apart (Hebrews 10:14). While the priesthood of Christ perfectly answered to that of Aaron so far as the type was designed to represent it, there were excellencies in the priesthood of Christ far superior, and which required a priesthood of a superior order to set them forth typically.

That which was lacking in the priesthood and order of Aaron is supplied in the order of Melchisedec. Some of the deficiencies of the one order which are supplied in the other are pointed out by the inspired writer of our text.

First, the order of Melchisedec was anterior to that of Aaron, and superior to it. It was anterior, for before Aaron was born, while his father Levi was in the loins of Abraham, Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec, and received the blessing of Melchisedec, wherein the less was blessed by the greater.

Secondly, it was superior because the order of Melchisedec united the dominion, or kingly, office with that of the priesthood, making it a royal priesthood; whereas there was no royalty belonging to the order of Aaron’s priesthood. But in the order of his priesthood designed to be typified, we “behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit

and rule upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (Zechariah 6:12,13).” Now to typify the King of Righteousness, and the Priest unto the Most High God, with the counsel (not council – as some have understood it) between them both, both King and Priest, with the counsel of peace between them, are embodied in the one person of him who sits a priest upon his throne. Here we see the harmony and suitableness of the type. “For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, and priest unto the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; unto whom Abraham gave a tenth of all, first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that king of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.” No part of this description applied to Melchisedec as a man, but as a priest and king. Observe the apostle calls him a man; but as to the peculiar order of his priesthood he had neither predecessor or successor. His descent, the apostle says, is not counted from them; that is, from the tribe of Levi, or from the house of Aaron. Nor is his descent counted at all. Nothing is given in the type of his entrance or exit. In the type he stands at once before Abraham a king and a priest, and is recognized as such by the patriarch; but nothing is said of whence he came, or whither he went. The type is perfect and complete; but it would be marred if his descent or demise were grouped into the type. All we have to do with Melchisedec is as a type, and therefore his descent is not given. Without father, not as a man, for he could not be a man if he had never had a father or mother; but he could be a man without having either father or mother embraced in the figure. It is not as a man this description of him is given, but it is of the peculiar order of his priesthood the apostle writes. He did not inherit his priesthood, as the sons of Aaron did, by being of priestly parentage; nor was his priesthood to descend from him, like that of the order of Aaron, to his sons, if he had any. It began with him, and revelation closes on this subject, leaving the priesthood not transmissible. This is one important particular in which the two orders of priesthood differed; that of Aaron and his sons necessarily required succession; while that of Melchisedec admitted of no succession.

While therefore the priesthood of our great Redeemer was foreshadowed in many particulars, and as far as it extended, by the Levitical priesthood: yet as our Lord was not of that tribe, and by the Levitical order was ineligible to the office; “For [says the apostle] it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of Melchisedec, there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (Hebrews 7:14-16.)”

There is something exceedingly beautiful in what is signified by the order of the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec (Psalm 110:4).” This order sets forth the spiritual government of Christ, as the supreme head over all things to his church. As Melchisedec was the king of Salem, the signification of which name is *peace*, so that the king of Salem is the King of Peace. And in order to establish that peace over which he was to preside, he must bring in everlasting righteousness, and reconcile his subjects to God by his priesthood; so the apostle gives precedence to this interpretation; explaining the type to signify first, king of righteousness, and after that – after having canceled all demands of the law and justice – after having put away, and made an end of sin, and being of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, he ascends his Mediatorial throne, reigns in righteousness, as King of Peace. “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isaiah 9:7).” This royal priesthood he holds, and this righteous sceptre he sways, not by the law of a carnal

commandment, as that law under which the order of Aaron's priesthood was established, but by the power of an endless life. By the power of his own immortality; by the law of the spirit of life; an endless life. "Because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:24,25)." Now Christ himself was not without father, or without mother, either as the Son of God, nor as the Son of man; but as the Priest unto the Most High God, and as the King of Righteousness, he is without descent, without father or mother, without predecessor or successor, without beginning of days, or end of life. He did not inherit either his priesthood or his throne from any progenitor, nor will he ever transmit it to another. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus (Hebrews 3:1)." "For such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests of the order of Aaron, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once when he offered up himself (Hebrews 7:26,27)."

The other text on which our sister desires our views is John 14:2, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." In the instructions which our Lord gave to his disciples, he used many parables, or figures, some of which they seemed readily to comprehend, and understand; others were obscure, and required explanation. But he told them that unto them it was given to know the things of the kingdom, while to those without, all these things were in parables. It had long been foretold in prophecy that "He would open his mouth in parables, and utter dark sayings." The time and occasion when these words were spoken by our Lord to his disciples were most awfully solemn and trying. The dreadful hour of his sufferings had come. The last valid Passover had been celebrated, the solemn sacramental supper, which was to perpetuate the remembrance of that agonizing hour, had been eaten; Judas had gone out to betray his Lord; deep waters had come into his soul, and billows of distress and anguish overwhelmed the suffering Lamb of God. His soul must now be poured out unto death, for the redemption of his people. His dear disciples were about to be scattered. Their faith and confidence in him, as the true Messiah, was now to be severely shaken. He who in their presence had healed the sick, given sight to the blind, restored the halt and the lame, cast out devils, raised the dead, hushed to silence the tempest, and subdued the frightful billows of the mighty deep, was now to be delivered up for our offenses, to be arrested, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, and stand like a sheep before its shearers, passive and silent. He who had bowed the heavens and come down to give life to the world was now himself to bow his awful head in death. As the time drew near, the lowering cloud still gathered blackness, the Savior knew full well what dreadful fear would assail the faith of his timid and trembling disciples; and to nerve them for the conflict, spake these words of comfort and encouragement to allay their fears. How soothing were his words! "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Just as certainly as their faith in Eternal Deity was well founded, their confidence and faith in him, as the Son of God, and Mediatorial Head of the church was sure, notwithstanding all they should witness of his sufferings and death. And so far as related to their hope for a safe abode for themselves, he assures them that ample provision is made. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. Three important considerations are here presented. The house, its many mansions, and the comfort this assurance should inspire in their heart. The house of God is frequently spoken of in the Scriptures, and is often referred to by our Redeemer as his Father's house. By it we understand the dwelling place of God, the place of his abode. We are told in the Scriptures by God himself that he dwelleth not in temples made with hands; that men cannot build a house for him; that his is a house not made with

hands, eternal in the heavens. His sanctuary is the place where his honor dwelleth. In the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, this house of God is figuratively thus presented: “For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it.” The tabernacle in the wilderness, and the temples in Jerusalem were figures of the house of God, the true tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not men. As the house of God is not made with hands, so neither is it made of earthly materials. The psalmist says, “His foundation is in the holy mountains.” “In Salem (peace) also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.” “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion; on the sides of the North, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces, for a refuge.” “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.” The apostle Paul says to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22).” And Peter also says, to the elect of God, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5,6).” The church of God is called the house of God, first, because it is his workmanship, and not made with hands. Secondly, because he dwells in it. Thirdly, because it contains mansions for all his children, for all who are of the household of God. Fourthly, because he presides over it, defends, provides for, and makes it none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven, to them who are made nigh by the blood of Christ and caused to enter into it.

The mansions of this house or church are very many, affording ample and appropriate room for all the members of the family who belong to the household. This is true if applied to the church of God in her numerous branches. It is the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High, including all places where God has recorded his name, and promised to come unto them and bless them. The figure may also be applied to all the individual members of his family, as each has a mansion or residence in the house of God. But in the more immediate sense in which the figure is used in this text, it seems to indicate a variety of states or conditions in the experience of the inmates of the house, as passing from one apartment of the house to another. Remember, this house is eternal in the heavens, all the children had their immortal life in God, hidden with Christ in God from everlasting. “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God (Psalm 90:1,2).” This life which was with the Father was given to them in his Son, and in him as the “secret place of the Most High, they had a mansion, in which they dwelt, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. See Psalm 91:1. As the temple and the tabernacle in the wilderness were typical of the house of God, they had their various mansions, or apartments. The place for the priests and Levites – for the congregation, and the most holy place; the place also for the altar and the sacrifices, for the tithes and offerings, for the ark and the mercy seat, etc. So the church has sojourned with her great High Priest under the law, and upon the altar, in his death and in his resurrection. Raised up from the dead with him, and are partakers of his resurrection life, with him they sit in all the heavenly places, or mansions of his church, in her gospel organization. Under the legal dispensation they sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit, even then, was sweet to their taste. But there were heavenly, or gospel, mansions in the house of God prepared for them, as it is testified. “He brought me to the banqueting house, and his

banner over me was love.” The many mansions, in our text, and the heavenly (or gospel) places in Christ Jesus, in which the redeemed children sit, we understand to mean the same.

This was an important matter for the disciples to know, at that most solemn hour, in which he was to (not leave his Father’s house, but pass to another mansion of it) die upon the cross, be buried in the earth, arise from the dead, ascend to the mansions or the upper regions of his Father’s house, and be seen no more in the legal places, no more in the flesh, no more to suffer, bleed or die, but ascend his Mediatorial throne, set up and organize his gospel kingdom, gather into it all the subjects of his grace, and reign with, and over, and in them forever more.

All the mansions were already in the house. If any had been lacking, he would have told his disciples. Especially if he depended on them, or on their successors, to enlarge his kingdom, by their devices or by their industry, he would have told them; he would have given them to understand what part of the house they were to build, and what mansions to make ready. His Father’s house will neither admit of enlargement nor improvement, for it is eternal in the heavens, and nothing *new* could be eternal.

“I go to prepare a place for you.” The place, the mansions, to which he was then going already existed in his Father’s house; but to prepare the heavenly places, the gospel mansions, for redeemed sinners to occupy, he their great High Priest, with his own blood, must, through the eternal Spirit, enter, not into a holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself, receive his kingdom and his coronation from his Father and their Father, from his God, and from their God, and then return to them again.

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” He had come to them in their low estate, under the law, in the legal places, or mansions of the worldly sanctuary; but there were other, brighter, better, and more heavenly mansions for them, thereafter, with him to inherit. To prepare those blessed blissful mansions of joy, which were set before them, he must endure the cross, despise the shame, and remove all legal obstructions out of the way; make an end of sin, abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light. He only could open the gates of life; to him alone could the everlasting doors lift up their heads, and his entrance alone could prepare the gospel mansions for “the righteous nation which keepeth the truth to enter in.” He has entered in, and he has come again to his disciples, by his spirit, and received them to himself, to dwell with them in mansions of unfading glory forever and ever. The many mansions are not to separate or keep the saints apart, for Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact. The church as the body of Christ has many members, yet but one body; an appropriate place for every member, and a member for every place, and his members are the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1868.

II TIMOTHY 1:9,10.

The substance of a discourse preached at a funeral of our aged sister, Rebecca Dorman, in the city of New York, November 29, 1868, by the editor, prepared and published by special request of the family and relatives of the deceased.

Text: – “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Timothy 1:9,10).”

We wish it understood that we do not attempt to give a literal or verbatim copy of the discourse alluded to, as that would be impossible, as we never use notes, or anything of the kind in preaching; we only design to present such views as we hold on the text, as they may occur to our mind. Much that we said in preaching may, without any design on our part, be now omitted, and some views may now be written which were not then uttered.

It may be remembered that in our first number for 1863 we published the substance of a discourse from part of the same text, preached at the funeral of Mr. William Sands, at Walikill, November 27, 1862. But while we trust that our present views will not conflict with what we then published, we hope to show that the text contains far more than we are able to present in one, or in one thousand, such discourses as we are able to preach.

But, to proceed. The apostle, in the context, has admonished Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of *me* his prisoner; but (he says) be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God. While the gospel of Christ is in itself a fountain of pure consolation, it is addressed only to that “poor and afflicted people who trust in the Lord,” and all who participate in its divine consolation must of necessity suffer afflictions, reproaches, and persecution. Jesus says, “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (John 17:14).” And we are also told, “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Timothy 3:12).” But neither reproach nor persecution for the gospel’s sake should ever tinge the face of the ministers of Jesus, nor deter them from faithfully proclaiming his truth, however unpopular, in the face of cherished and popular errors; for the gospel, though opposed to human power and human agency in the work of salvation, is according to the power and omnipotence of God, who hath already accomplished the eternal salvation of his people, including all that will ever be saved. For, “Salvation is of the Lord (Jonah 2:9).” The God to whom the apostle ascribes not only the power of the gospel, but also the power to succor and sustain his children under all their afflictions, is the God “Who hath saved us;” not made some provisions or efforts to do so, or offered terms, overtures and conditions on which he may be induced to undertake the work; for the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (See Hebrews 4:3.) Although men in blind infatuation may prate about saving themselves and one another, God from his awful throne proclaims, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm (Jeremiah 17:5).”

This perfect and complete salvation of all his chosen people was securely held in the purpose and grace of God, together with their holy calling, and given to them in and with the purpose and grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. In the fullness of the dispensation of times, all to whom salvation was provided and bestowed, in Christ, according to the eternal purpose and eternal grace of God, are by God’s own arm made bare for their salvation, rescued from sin, death, condemnation and wrath, according to but one standard, and that standard is not their works; but according to his own purpose and grace; not according to the purpose of somebody else suggested by men and adopted by God; but mark it is *his own* purpose and *his own* grace, and not a single one of all the sinful race of man shall ever be saved by any other rule or standard. To execute this eternal and immutable purpose and grace, which was wholly his own, purposed exclusively in himself before the world began, Christ made his advent to the world, and from heaven an angel from God came down to declare *his name*, and the

reason of his name. “And thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).” The angel of the Lord declares, “He shall;” the apostle in our text avers, “He hath;” while from the cross the Son of God proclaims, “It is finished.” Not only has he accomplished the salvation of his people from their sins, but he has also called, and is still calling, them with an holy calling, according to the purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. The nature of the calling is here explicitly declared, “An holy calling.” Not because it is a calling from sin to holiness, from death to life, and from darkness to light, but, first, because it proceeds from God himself, “saying to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back. Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him (Isaiah 43:6,7).” It is holy also being consecrated in Christ Jesus. And, thirdly, it is holy because it is efficient to secure the accomplishment of the purpose and grace of God; “For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:29,30).” Surely an inefficient call which may fail to secure obedience must be defective and not holy, or perfect. Should one of us call our son, or our servant, our effort may be vain and abortive from a lack of power to make it availing. Should we call on the dead to rise, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, we would lack the power to make ours an holy calling. But our God speaks the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done! He said, let there be light, and there was light. He called the world from emptiness, and the world obeyed and came. He calls the slumbering nations of the dead, and at his call they shall all come forth. But knowing the strong propensity of men to cavil, and to claim that the calling and salvation of men, in some way, or to some extent, depends upon the purpose, will or works of the called, the apostle meets, refutes, and forever vetoes all their cavils, both negatively and affirmatively. “Not according to our works!” Can language be more plain or positive? “Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:9).” “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand.” Stand how? “Not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her [Rebecca], the elder shall serve the younger, as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated (Romans 9:11-13).” The dispute is clearly between men and God. God has frequently declared most emphatically, “It is not of works.” But man, infidel man, profanely and persistently affirms that it is of works nevertheless.

“But is now made man fest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ.” Although God’s own purpose and grace were as eternal as their divine Author, yet for long ages the secret was locked up in the cabinet of the Holy One, and the scrutiny of man, with all his boasted light, could not pry into the secret, nor even now can any man by searching find it out. Still it is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, and can only be known by immediate revelation from God himself. All the schools in New York, in Christendom, or in the world, including Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, or Theological Seminaries, can impart to man no light upon the subject. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it: none but God can reveal, or make it manifest, as he did to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, in the apostles’ day. The sovereign God who has hidden it from the wise and prudent reveals it unto babes; for so it seemeth good in his sight. But let it be remembered that it is never manifested in but one way, and that is by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ. The Galatian churches never comprehended the glorious mystery until after “Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them (Galatians 3:1).” The writer of our text, although a profound scholar, and graduate from Gamaliel’s Theological School, was totally ignorant of the purpose and grace of God, until God, who

gave him being and called him by his grace, revealed his Son in him, that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. This proposition is clearly exemplified in the individual experience of every child of God. Why does the quickened, called subject of this surprising grace go mourning through many tedious days and wearisome nights despairing? It is because he cannot see how God can sustain his justice and truth, and save one so vile. But the very moment God is pleased to reveal, or manifest, Jesus Christ to and in him, that very moment all is clear. Mercy and truth in him have met together, and in him have righteousness and peace kissed each other (Psalm 85:10). But what is true of every individual member of Christ is equally true of the whole church as a body. From the creation of the world to the advent of our Savior Jesus Christ, this mystery was hidden in types and shadows. Darkness lay upon the world, and gross darkness upon the people. Involved in darkness and clouds, he rode upon the heavens in the help of his people, and amidst the smoke and flames of Sinai, God spake in thunder tones to Israel, that under the ministration of wrath and death, they might know their need of a Mediator, or Days Man, to stand between them and God. God had a people in all these lingering ages, and though he met and communed with them from time to time, through their high priest, from between the cherubim of glory which shadowed the mercy seat which covered the Ark of the Testimony, yet their eyes were never blessed with a clear and open vision of the things which the disciples of Christ saw. “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to the saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory (Colossians 1:26,27).” “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory (I Timothy 3:16).”

The great purpose and grace, embracing the salvation and calling of all the people of God, both Jew and Gentile, having been given us, not in Adam, but in Christ, could not be revealed by any possible development of the earthly Adam, for it was not there. It was and is in Christ, and therefore its manifestation is confined to those, and only those, unto whom Christ is revealed.

Let it be understood that a revelation of Christ does not mean an exhibition of him in the flesh to the natural sight of men, for if that were so, none but those who lived in the days of his incarnation could receive the manifestation. So far from this being the case, there were but comparatively very few who saw him as a man, to whom he was manifested as the Son of God, and Mediatorial head of his body, the church. “The world was made by him, yet the world knew him not.” “None of the princes of this world knew him; for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (I Corinthians 2:8).” “And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him (Matthew 11:27).” “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).” A manifestation of him as the Son of God and repository of spiritual blessings given to his people in him can only be received by immediate revelation of God. And the manifestation of God’s own purpose and grace which holds and secures the salvation and holy calling of all the saints can be made to none who have not that knowledge of Christ, which is eternal life. All who thus savingly know him know that he, not we, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Let us now enquire, What death is abolished, and what life and immortality is brought to light through the gospel? The cherished form of our dear departed sister, prostrate and cold in death before us, demonstrates to us the sad reality that the mortality which, by an irrevocable decree of God, has passed upon all the posterity of Adam, is not abolished; nor does the gospel flatter us with any prospect that it

ever will be so abolished as to exempt any of us from the stern decree which says, Dust we are, and unto dust we must return.

The death which our Savior Jesus Christ has abolished is the opposite of the life and immortality which he has brought to light through the gospel. An inspired illustration of it, and of the immortality which he has manifested, is found in the first and second chapters of the epistle to the Ephesians. The death of which he speaks is a death in trespasses and sins. Not an extinction of our natural vitality, for while dead in sins, we were still active in all the elements of this world. "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." To be dead in sins is to be dead in a legal sense, or in a law sense. For, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." Why our deeds are sinful is because they are unlawful; for "sin is the transgression of the law." If there were no law, there could be no transgression; and if there were no transgressions and sins, we could not be dead in them. In discriminating between law and gospel, the apostle says that the former is the ministration of death; but the latter is the ministration of life. But, says he, "If the ministration of death, written and engraved in stones [as was the decalogue] was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious (II Corinthians 3:7,8)?" In this state of death all the chosen people of God were involved. Death had passed upon all men, because all had sinned. Thus were all the members of Christ's mystical body dead in the sense expressed, Ephesians 2:1,5, for in these chapters he is speaking to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, who had been thus dead, and were quickened. For these he ceased not to give thanks, and pray that the Father of glory might give to them the spirit of revelation in the knowledge of him; "the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, to know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places; far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." To the church, whose members were dead in trespasses and sins. To the church which is quickened by him, who is risen thus by the glory of the Father. Quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ, he is given to be the head. Should the eyes of our understanding be so enlightened according to the apostle's prayer, we shall also see in the hope of his calling, that just as Christ in taking on him the seed of Abraham, took on him their sins, and put them away, by the sacrifice of himself, so he took on him the inevitable consequence or penalty of the law for our transgressions, and in his death as the legal identification and embodiment of all the seed of Abraham, all that seed legally went down with him into the deep waters, and were buried with him by baptism into his death, sojourned with him in the grave, were quickened with him, and raised up together with him, and are with him quickened with the Spirit and immortality of his resurrection life. In these heavenly, or gospel places in Christ (in his body, as the seed of Abraham), they are made to believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he (God) wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. Thus embodying in himself all the seed of Abraham, he was delivered up for our (the seed of Abraham's) transgressions, and raised again for our justification. Sin, which is the sting of death, is destroyed; the law which is the strength of sin, is honored and satisfied. It asked for blood, and blood was shed; it demanded life, and life was laid

down. It demanded a perfect law righteousness, and every jot and tittle of its rigorous demands were fulfilled; its claims upon the seed of Abraham were all canceled, and the law could impart to death no more power, the sting was taken away, death was abolished by him who destroyed death and him who had the power of death. The doors of death, and the gates of the grave for all the seed of Abraham, are unbarred. And he that went forth weeping, bearing precious seed [the seed of Abraham] returned again rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126).

Death is abolished. Life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel, which proclaims the risen, exalted, glorious and glorified Redeemer. "Father," he says, "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world (John 17:4,24)."

As the seed of Abraham, embracing all his people ("If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise"), Christ was delivered to bear their sins, and consequently their death in his own body (which is the church, or seed of Abraham) on the cross. That death then, of which sin is the sting, and of which the law was the strength, was executed to its utmost extent upon Christ as the lawful embodiment of all his people, and rising from the dead, not like Lazarus, or the widow's son, by the mere resumption of suspended mortal life, but being now quickened by the glory, or immortality of the Father, death is swallowed up in his perfect victory, and is forever abolished; for now having risen from the dead by the power of an endless or immortal life, he dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over him; and as his seed, the seed of Abraham, are raised up from sin, death, and the dominion of the law, being lawfully identified with him, so they are partakers of his resurrection life and immortality, and because he lives, they shall live also. Death is abolished in him, and they are in him; he is therefore their Resurrection and their Life. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law [or controlling power] of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me [them] free from the law [or controlling power] of sin and death."

All this is brought to light through the gospel. The gospel is distinct from the law; for the law made nothing perfect; but a better hope is brought in; that better hope to which all the people of God are begotten by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The theme, and substance, and power of the gospel is Christ, and him crucified; Christ and the resurrection. The preaching of the gospel by the apostles and primitive ministers of Jesus was a proclamation of Christ, his death, resurrection, exaltation, and dominion over all his redeemed subjects, in his spiritual kingdom. The gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe, brings life and immortality to light. The life and immortality of all the seed of Abraham, the church of God, was *hid* with Christ in God, from everlasting, or it could not be *eternal* life. John testifies that it was with the Father, and was manifested (I John 1:2). "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (I John 5:2)." "Which in his times he shall shew who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." This life was hidden in God. It could only be manifested by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, for he is our life; it cannot be separated from him. He that hath the Son hath life, for the Son is the life. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life (I John 5:12). The eternal life of all the church of God was manifested in the person of Christ, by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, rising in immortal life from the dead. The gospel brought this life and immortality to light to the faith of all the Old Testament saints,

so that they all had the same clear perception of it in Christ as those to whom the gospel brings it to light now. To the saints individually and experimentally, the gospel brings life and immortality to light by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, when he is manifested to them in the new birth. And when the Savior Jesus Christ shall appear to raise the dead, and judge the world in the last day, then all who sleep in Jesus shall God [Jesus] bring with him; then the saints shall be raised up in spiritual, incorruptible and immortal bodies, changed from the image of the earthly, and fashioned like the resurrected and glorious body of the First Born from the dead. Their mortality shall then, as it is written, put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up of life. Then shall our dear departed sister, whose slumbering relics we are now about to commit to a peaceful grave to rest in hope of a glorious resurrection and immortality beyond the grave, put on that immortal life which she received in her heavenly birth more than half a century ago. It is not dead. Neither death nor life can separate it from Christ. Her disencumbered spirit is now before the throne of God and the Lamb, and in all the pleasures of God's right hand in full participation. Departed saints are not waiting – they have passed from a time to their eternal state. No days nor years are there to intervene. All is present; so differs time from eternity.

Weeping friends, bereaved kindred, with loving brethren and sisters of her church connection, will feel the stroke, and grieve that they shall see her no more in the flesh; but her tears have forever ceased to flow, her conflicts are over; she beholds her Savior in righteousness, and is satisfied. May we bow in submission to our Lord, and be still and know that he is God. Let us look to him for consolation, for support and comfort in this and every trying hour. Amen.

In the foregoing we have not attempted to rehearse what we said at the funeral, for that we could not possibly do; we have only, in compliance with the desire of dear friends of the deceased, written on the same text, and in doing so have simply followed the leadings of our mind while writing. Such as it is we submit it, in hope that some, at least, of our numerous readers may be edified.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 1, 1869.

THE NEW YEAR

The gay festivities of the season of the year on which we are now entering, the cheerful greetings of all around us, as the lightning speed our years are hurrying us onward to the destiny which awaits us, would seem to indicate that mortals have nothing to dread in the unseen future—that tomorrow shall be as today and much more abundant. Mortals rejoice that another year is numbered with the past, as though this world were indeed our continuing city, our permanent abode, and we secure from age, infirmities and mortality. “A Merry Christmas,” “A Happy New Year,” are the common salutations of all classes. But our passing years, however unheeded by the multitudes, are fraught with great and startling events, and what this new year is to develop, none but God himself can fully know. We have been astonished by the desolations and terrible disclosures of the past, especially in the last decade. Hundreds of thousands of our sons have perished in fratricidal war, in our own country, and not for the improvement of society; for unless we may regard devastation, proscription, heavy debt, and

insupportable taxation, with demoralization, fearful increase of crime and brutality, an improvement, we have fallen far below the prosperity enjoyed before the maddening passions of the people culminated in the dreadful ravages of war. But not alone in our States, and on our continent, in which we were wont to boast that freedom and posterity had made their lasting home, but in all parts of the world, wars and rumors of wars have shaken all the thrones and governments of centuries past, and turmoil and strife have spread a universal empire from the rivers to the ends of the earth. While also from his high imperial throne in heaven the God of justice has sent forth angels of wrath to pour out their vials upon the earth and seas, who in the execution of their dread commission are even now literally rocking the world with more terrible earthquakes and volcanic convulsions than have ever before been felt or heard of. Diseases and plagues, before unknown, in epidemic forms, are walking through our guilt-stricken world, with most deadly effect, on both men and beasts. Is it not time to enquire seriously, what does all this mean? The remedy for all fearful judgments which are abroad in our land prescribed by the popular teachers of what are called morality and religion, is to repeat, but with renewed energy, the very abominations, which have thus far provoked the wrath of God, and called down the bolts of retribution under which we are now sinking. For half a century past religious fanatics with arrant hypocrites have been engaged in what they call “Evangelizing the world.” Repudiating the supreme government of God, and trampling under foot all the institutions of his word, they have drawn from their own imaginations what they regard as improvements on his method of salvation, have assumed the occupancy of his temple, exalting themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; and by signs and lying wonders, shewing themselves to be God, or in God’s stead. Although, in the face of the world all their plans and doings have in every case directly or indirectly increased the evils which they profess to cure, and instead of extending an influence tending to the great cause of peace on earth and good will to men, have made their appeals to the pride and passions of the human family, and have caused more bitter strife and bloody war than open infidelity ever produced. Open infidelity could never gain such control of the minds and passions of men, as covert infidelity, disguised by a profession of godliness. All kinds of vice and abomination have increased at even pace with the pretended success of the schemes of priestcraft for the conversion of the world. Not a dollar has been expended to further their objects that has not proved detrimental to the well being of mankind. How can it be otherwise? Has not the God of heaven declared that he will take vengeance on their inventions, and that “He that sitteth in the heavens will have them in derision (Psalm 99:8, and 2:4)?” The fearful increase of wickedness both in the so called church and in the world for the last forty or fifty years has been so great that no candid observer who has been living for that length of time can have failed to perceive it. Truly, “Evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” Religiously, men have become more heaven-defying, in denouncing the teachings of the word and Spirit of our God, and in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The pure and unadulterated doctrine of the gospel, salvation by grace alone, the election of God’s people unto salvation, their predestination to the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of God’s will, the sovereign efficacy of the precious blood of Christ in their redemption, the necessity of the new birth, and the preservation of all the saints through grace unto final and everlasting glory are proclaimed from no popular pulpit or press in our country. Preaching what is profanely called the gospel has become a science. Young men serve an apprenticeship at the business at some Theological Seminary, and enter it as a scientific profession. Preachers are qualified to order, for the dissemination of any doctrine that will bring a paying price in the market. A Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Universalist, or Catholic, or New School Baptist can be procured at the market price. But the indispensable qualifications for preaching the gospel of Christ can be obtained from no human institution. The gifts of the Spirit of truth cannot be bought with money. Those who are

called, and qualified, and employed by the world will invariably preach the doctrine of the world, and our Savior says, the world will love its own. But they will oppose the truth, and persecute those who preach or receive it.

The degeneracy of the age in which we live has not come upon us without precious warnings in the Scriptures of truth. Christ faithfully warned his disciples of the opposition they should encounter from the world, and from Satan. And his apostles have faithfully reiterated the solemn warnings. Paul has told us in II Thessalonians 2:3, that the end cannot come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; and that his coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. And I Timothy 4, in the most solemn manner, declares the same as a warning of more than ordinary importance to the children of God. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron,” etc. Let it be duly considered, this is an *express* message to the church, from the God of heaven. Expressly uttered by the Holy Ghost, to the apostle Paul, and by him authoritatively communicated to Timothy, and to all the ministers of the gospel, and pastors of the churches, for an express or specific purpose, in which Timothy and all the ministers of Christ are charged to “Put the brethren in remembrance of these things, for in doing so they shall be good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine (I Timothy 4:6).” If Timothy in his day, so long before the fulfillment of these predictions, could not be a good and faithful minister of Jesus Christ unless he put the brethren in remembrance of these things, how can we who live in the latter times which are so expressly spoken of, be approved, if we forbear to call the attention of the saints to the same things? This doctrine is good, not because it is pleasant to know of the apostasy of those who depart from the faith, and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, but because it comes from God, and is expressly spoken by the Holy Ghost, and because its tendency is salutary, first, in warning the saints against surprise at the fulfillment, so that that day shall not come upon them as a thief, and secondly, that they may recognize even in the apostasy of others, the fulfillment of prophecy. Concerning these things Paul has said, “But of the times and of the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, etc., and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober (II Thessalonians 5:1-6).” The apostolic admonition to the saints, in view of these predictions, is in harmony with that given by our Lord to the disciples in Matthew 24, to watch and be sober. Let us consider the admonitions.

First, *Watch*. A vigilant and constant observance of the instructions given by Christ and the apostles is more than implied, is positively enjoined. Many shall come in Christ’s name, professing to be his ministers, and to be sent by him; but “Let no man deceive you.” It is necessary for the saints to watch against deception; for “they shall deceive many.” And as the apostle says of those who depart from the faith, “Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” How very important it is then that we should watch, and try the spirits, whether they be of God; for all other spirits are false and seductive, alluring and captivating. And we should watch for the signs which are given to warn us of the approach of the things which are predicted. “Behold,” says Jesus, “I have told you before.” He has told us that there shall be false christs, and false prophets, and they shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch

that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Watch them, look out for them. “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them (Romans 16:17).” Watch the signs which the Scriptures assure us shall precede the coming of our Lord to execute his judgments on Anti-christ.

The increase of vice and iniquity in the world, the unrestrained passions of men, breaking out in acts of violence, wars, murders, robbery, and among them who profess godliness, apostasy, departure from the faith, false signs, lying wonders, spiritual wickedness in high places, the prevalence of the most abominable heresies, delusions and blasphemies. Earthquakes and other convulsions of nature are also to be watched, as authorized indications that the day of the Lord is at hand.

Who that has studiously watched the developments can have failed to discover in the last decade of years the finger of God, pointing us to the approaching day of the Lord, in which Babylon shall sink like a mill stone, and the nations, states and governments of the world which have so freely and abundantly drank of her cup, and become drunken and maddened thereby, shall stagger and fall beneath the uplifted hand of our sin-avenging God. But they that are drunken are drunken in the night. The darkness of death is upon them. But, ye, brethren, are children of the light, and of the day, and are called upon to be sober. Touch not, taste not, handle not the inebriating cup of Mystery, Babylon the Great, for sobriety becomes the saints, who are “Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God.”

Every successive year shortens the space which intervenes between the predictions and their fulfillment, and yet it shall be in the hearts of the scoffers of the last days to say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” But we know that our Lord is not slack, nor negligent, to fulfill his promises. On those who scoff, that day shall come as a thief in the night; but unto them that look for him shall he appear without sin unto salvation. The signs of the near approach of the day of the Lord appear all around us. The falling away from the faith, which was to appear, has come, and many have departed from the faith of the gospel. Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils prevail to an alarming degree. Scoffers of the last days are upon us. Signs and lying wonders abound, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. While all the extraordinary phenomena of the heavens, earth and seas, with the shaking of the powers of the nations of the world, to which we have before alluded, are clearly manifested. We see the day approaching, and, as we have before remarked, the apostle admonishes the saints to exhort one another, and so much the more (Hebrews 10:25).

Of the day, and the hour, knoweth no man; it is not a matter of revelation; we do not pretend to know, but of the signs which portend its approach, we do know. They are revealed in the Scriptures, and all the children of the light and of the day are solemnly admonished to heed them, and to watch and be sober. What wonderful discoveries the year on which we enter today shall make, no man can foresee; but from the signs which appear we are impressed that we are on the verge of the most stupendous events the world has ever witnessed.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 1, 1869.

INTERCESSION.

In the rich and ample variety of spiritual things which are embraced in and revealed by the gospel of the grace of God, the doctrine of Intercession is very prominently set forth as most vitally important to be understood, and implicitly relied upon by all the children of God; not only because it sustains and bears them up under all the pressing weight of trials, conflicts, temptations and tribulations to which they are exposed while here in the house of their pilgrimage, but also for their protection from the false and pernicious errors which abound in our sin-smitten world. The prevalent notion among will-worshippers and Arminians is that after the resurrection of the Savior, he ascended up into heaven, which place they regard as a locality somewhere very remote from the church, and that he there at the right hand of the Father labors continually to prevail upon the Father to lay aside his vengeful thunderbolts of wrath, and allow grace and salvation to flow down to penitent sinners. And that he is ready and willing to be employed to intercede for any sinner, however vile, who may choose to employ him to do so, and when so employed will use all the influence he has to prevail on the Father to forego his burning wrath, lay aside his purpose, and allow sinners to be saved. This theory, with but little enlargement held by papists, is so extended to include with Christ the holy virgin and departed saints, with priests and others on earth in the same intercession. The people are taught to believe that their priests and patron saints can be induced to bring an influence to bear, directly or indirectly, upon the immutable God, and prevail on him to do what he had never designed to do for them. While the various Protestant orders are very little, if any, less extravagant in making their deluded millions believe that their prayers and the prayers of their expert revivalists, at their anxious benches, or monthly concerts, can make efficient intercession for sinners, and prevail on God himself to lay aside his purpose and adopt theirs. Hence they boastfully proclaim that prayer in their hands is a *lever* by which they can move the power that moves the world.

The positive declaration of the Scriptures of truth is that “God is of one mind, and none can turn him.” That he is the Lord and he changes not. That with him there is no variation nor shadow of turning; and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; these solemn and emphatic declarations from the throne of God in tones of peeling thunder, have no weight with them, for they do not believe what God the Lord has spoken. They fear not God, nor do they tremble at his word. Some of the modern revivalists, as they are called, and as they profess to be, have been heard to preach to sinners that Christ has been interceding a long time for them, and the Holy Ghost has as long been unsuccessfully wooing, striving and entreating them to yield their opposition and consent to be saved, but all in vain. And yet they assure them that if they will come up to their altar and be prayed for, they shall be saved; thus presumptuously and blasphemously assuming that they can do what Christ and the Holy Ghost has tried but failed to do. This delusion is greedily received by the world generally; for infatuated mortals love dearly to be deceived. We have not the faintest expectation that any thing we can write or say will make the slightest impression on them to convince them of their delusion. Our exposition may make them angry, or mad; but nothing less than the power of God can turn them from the error of their ways, as the rivers of water are turned.

Our labor is not with them, we leave them where we find them, in the hands of that God whom we trust has translated us from the power of the same darkness, into his marvelous light. Our object is to elucidate the subject of divine intercession, so far as the God of truth may enable us, to the understanding of all who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The great object of divine intercession for the saints cannot be regarded, consistently with divine revelation, as intended to produce any change in the immutable God, in his purpose, love, grace, or any

other fixed purpose or counsel of his will. To suppose that God could change, would unavoidably involve the absurdity, that such a change must either be for the better or the worse. If we say for the better, then we imply that before the change he was not absolutely perfect; if we say it is for the worse, then we take the other horn of the dilemma, and conclude that subsequently to such a change he is not as perfect as before.

Nor can we understand that there is, or ever was, the slightest disagreement between the will, design or desire of the Father and the Son. In the Godhead they are One, and in his Mediatorial Sonship, as the Head of the church, his work is not to reconcile the Father to sinners, but to reconcile us unto God. Hence in his advent to our world, he himself declares that he came by his Father's will; and that he came to do the will of the Father, and to finish the work which the Father gave him to do. And so far from any discord or discrepancy between his will and the will of his Father, it was his meat and his drink to do the will of the Father, for their will was identically the same. "And this is the will of the Father, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise them up at the last day." Does the will of our adorable Redeemer differ from this? Hear him. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," etc. So far is our adorable Intercessor from desiring any change in his Father, or in his will; he has instructed all his saints to pray, saying, "Thy will be done." How could we rely on him to reconcile us unto God, if he were himself unreconciled, and desirous for a change?

So far is he from importuning the Father to save more than the Father has eternally designed to save, he says expressly that he prays not for the world, but for those whom the Father has given him out of the world, embracing precisely those of whom Paul assures us that God hath saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. And we are also told that "Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ for and in behalf of his people pertains to, and is performed under, his priestly office, and is therefore restricted to those of his priesthood, and to them exclusively. As the names of all the tribes of Israel for whom Aaron and his sons officiated, were borne upon their breastplate when they made intercession by sacrifice at the Jewish altars, so the "Great High Priest of our profession" has carried and borne all his people all the days of old, and in his one offering he was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification. They are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people." But of the work of intercession, we may speak in a two fold sense.

First, his priestly intervention between his people and God; and secondly, that intercession which he by the indwelling of his Spirit makes unto God in them.

As their Advocate with the Father, and the Propitiation for their sins, he has met all the demands of the law and justice of God, which no other could have done, "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh, through death to present you holy and unblamable, and unreprouvable in his sight (Colossians 1:20-22)." Having put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, he has entered into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake, in which he has magnified and honored the divine law, and brought in everlasting righteousness for us.

Now, not to overcome or obviate an unwillingness on the part of the Father, but in perfect accordance with the eternal and immutable will of the Father, as all his prayers and intercessions have always been; on our behalf, he says, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto them which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word, now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mind; and I am glorified in them (John 18:4-10)." The nature and extent of his priestly intercession is clearly expressed in Isaiah 53:10-12. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The infallible success of his intercession rests on this, that it is always according to the will of the Father; whereas, if we were compelled to believe that his intercession was intended to overcome any opposition on the part of the Father, we should not only despair of its success, but the thought would fill our mind with horror.

But secondly, we may contemplate the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, as carried on in the hearts of all his children. He is our High Priest, not by the law of a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life. "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." The power of an endless life is the power of that immortality which is brought to light through the gospel, by his resurrection from the dead, and in this immortality all his people are made partakers; for he says, "I give unto them eternal life." And again, I am the Resurrection and the Life, the way, the truth and the life. He dwells in them, and they in him, and by his Spirit which dwells in them, he makes intercession in, as well as for, them. What would our prayers amount to, if they were not inspired by the Spirit of Christ, by which he dwells in us? "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is only by this Spirit we can worship God in the beauty of holiness. If left to express our desires without the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ, we would only ask for carnal or fleshly gratifications, for things to be consumed on our carnal lusts. Christians may indeed, and sometimes do, "ask and receive not, because they ask amiss." And we would always ask amiss if the Spirit were withheld from us. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 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* (Romans 8:26,27)." Every holy aspiration that arises from the saints of God is inspired by the Spirit of Christ in them. All their prayers and songs, their confessions, thanksgivings and supplications, uttered or unuttered, to be acceptable to God must be led, indited and directed by the spirit of our Intercessor, and then they cannot fail to be according to the will of God. This Spirit searcheth all things; even the deep things of God. And it is by this Spirit of Christ in us that God worketh in us, both to will and to do his good pleasure. How often

have the children of God, in their experience, felt this unutterable groaning within them, while their lips were sealed with a death-like silence, when no language at their command could express the emotions which were felt within. Such groanings do not arise within us from any desire that the will of God should yield to our gratification; but it is rather a struggle for language to express in prayer and praise what we are feeling at the time of the blessed Spirit's work in our hearts.

It is thus by the power of an endless life our great High Priest, our risen and glorified Savior, our dear Redeemer, Advocate with the Father, and divine Intercessor, ever lives to make intercession for us, and in us. He not only lives for us, but he lives in us, and living in us, by his Spirit (for we know him no more after the flesh) carries on this intercession in all his children. "No man can come unto the Father but by me." No intercession can prevail with God, but that which he makes continually for and in the saints. Forms of prayer may be poured forth in flowing eloquence, with fluent utterance, and may even be expressed in unobjectionable words, and yet being uttered in empty sounds, with cringing formality, are rejected by taking the sacred name of God in vain; while the heart burdened, humble sinner, like the poor publican, with downcast eyes feels the power of the divine intercession within him, which maketh the intercession, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

How vitally important then is the intercession of Christ, by his Spirit, for and in us; not a desire can go up from us to God with acceptance without it. No heavenly blessing can come down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, but through it. Since the world began no man has ever uttered without hypocrisy the words, "Thy will be done," unless prompted thereto by the intercessory Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

While writing this article, our mind has reverted to our early experience, and the traditional views we entertained of the intercession of Christ. More than fifty-six years ago, when we were a child, a deep sense of guilt and condemnation pressed us down with crushing weight, and while in this condition imagination described to us an offended Father, incensed against us, and ready to hurl his fiery vengeance upon our guilty head, in an everlasting storm, and truly we felt a consciousness that we deserved his wrath; but in our thoughts the Father was austere and exacting; we imagined the Intercessor, as pleading anxiously in our behalf, trying to prevail with the Father to spare us at least a little longer. There seemed to us to be a wide difference between them in regard to us. But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in us, we beheld the light of the glory of God in the face of our dear Redeemer, and we were amazed to find that it was the love of God to us, when we were dead in sins that provided a Savior for us. And we shall never be able fully to express what was our transport and joy to know that God was in Christ reconciling us to himself, and that the salvation of all the redeemed people of God is according to God's own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the world began.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 15, 1869.



DEUTERONOMY 34:4.

Patterson, Juniata Co., Pa.
January, 1869.

Brother Beebe: – We would like to have your views on Deuteronomy 34:4. “And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed; I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.”

Yours in love,
John P. Shitz.

Reply: – The Old Testament is replete with types and figures, parables and dark sayings, in which are portrayed “good things” which were to come. The imagery was drawn by the Holy Ghost, and in such mystic lines as baffled the wisdom of even the patriarchs and prophets who searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow. This cabinet of magnificent types were sealed from human scrutiny, and covered with that cloud in which God has involved his throne, so that men who were used as types and prophets of our God who spake and wrote as they were inspired were as dependent on God to unseal the sacred book and disclose to them its hidden treasures, as are the feeblest of the saints at the present time. The handy work of God in the creation, as written by Moses more than two thousand years after the works of creation were finished, which we have in the book of Genesis, contains the outlines of the new creation, in a depth of emblematic beauty too deep and profound for uninspired wisdom to trace, and in ample abundance to fill the enlightened mind of all the saints with glowing admiration while time endures, which shall survive the dissolution of all created things, and be the theme of praise to God in boundless eternity. The sweet singer of Israel, with all his inspiration, could not contemplate the glittering hosts of the firmament above without humiliating thoughts of man. He is filled with amazement that so great and glorious a God should be mindful of man. But the infinity of God descends to and embraces the most minute, as well as the most magnificent of all his works. Sparrows are provided for and protected, so that not one of them can fall to the ground without your heavenly Father: the hairs of our head he has numbered, and suns and stars can as soon be hurled from their orbits as our hairs can fall independently of God. The animalculine tribes that people a single drop of water are as firmly secured in their being and destiny as are angels or men. But we are wandering from the subject on which our dear old brother desires our views. As in the surpassing glories of the creation, and the inscrutable labyrinths of divine providence, the glory of our God appears in radiant glory to those who are taught of God; so in the refulgent glory of the “New heavens and new earth” as revealed by the Spirit, the saints in rapture cry, “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

Of the life and death of Moses, the account given in the Scriptures is plain and simple, requiring no explanation from us, but of the typical position which he filled, in all the recorded incidents of his life, an interesting and instructing field is open for the contemplation of all who are quickened and taught by the Spirit. As a prophet and as a leader, he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ; for he said, “A prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up unto you; him shall ye hear in all things.”

But we are to regard him as presented in the text under consideration, as the impersonation of the law which God gave by him to the children of Israel. In this character he is spoken of by the inspired expounders of the word. (See II Corinthians 3:15 and Hebrews 3:5,6.) Representing the law which

could make nothing perfect, he held dominion over them in their wilderness state; but he could neither make them perfect, nor give them rest. Yet as the law foreshadowed good things which were to come, so Moses spake to the people of Israel of a land of rest into which God would bring them.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom the oath of God confirmed with infallible certainty the promise that their seed should possess by inheritance the land of Canaan, represent the whole family of God, which under the three dispensations should be gathered according to the oath and promise of God, into the gospel kingdom. Like Noah, Daniel and Job, or like Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, in the burning furnace with the form of the Son of God in their midst, and many other figures, represent the family of God, as brought into manifestation under the several dispensations of the fullness of times. Like the Hebrew children, they are chosen in a furnace of afflictions, yet preserved by the presence of Christ from being utterly consumed. Not only was it true of the patriarchs and Old Testament saints, that they were held under the dominion of the law until the fullness of time came for their redemption and deliverance, but all the children of God throughout all time and all nations, when quickened by the Spirit, have to make a pilgrimage from Egypt, through the dreary wilderness, under Moses, who holds them under rigorous discipline until they have passed the flaming mountain where the voice of words and the terrific sound of a trumpet fills them with dismay, and makes them feel the need of one to stand between them and the awful majesty of God, and until they come to Mount Nebo, which is as far as Moses can go with them. The reason why Moses was not permitted to go over Jordan and into the promised land with Israel is given in Numbers 20:12, because he smote the rock in Horeb, and did not sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the children of Israel. In this transaction we have a rich cluster of the most important types and figures contained in the Old Testament. The chosen tribes of Israel under Moses, or the law, are in the wilderness, far from the land of promise, in a rebellious, murmuring state, and in a dying condition. Neither Moses nor Aaron could supply them with the waters on which their life depended. "For if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Neither the law represented by Moses, nor the priesthood represented by Aaron, could give them life. "And God said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel, and thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go. Behold I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink (Exodus 17:5,6)." And in Numbers 20:7-12, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together; thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

An inspired apostle assures us that that Rock was Christ; "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ (I Corinthians 10:4)." That is, the Rock, in its spiritual signification, was Christ. As Moses in this figure is the law, Aaron, the Levitical priesthood, the congregation of Israel, the chosen or elect people of God. And God himself stood before Moses, on the rock in Horeb; so God was manifest in the person of his Son; and as Moses smote the rock with his rod, in anger, so fell the rod of the law, the sword of divine justice, in indignant wrath on Christ the Rock of our Salvation. Here all the wrath of Moses which burned against

the rebels was exhausted, and he could curse them no longer; so this conflict secured the redemption and deliverance of all the people of God from the dominion of the law; and from the Levitical priesthood, and being so redeemed they all drank of that spiritual water which flows so abundantly from Christ the smitten Rock. And although justly charged by Moses (the law) with rebellion, they are saved from death, delivered from wrath, and cleansed from all pollution by the streaming waters of salvation flowing from the smitten Savior, which stream has followed them with ample supplies into the promised land.

As the wilderness represents the legal state of the people of God, Moses, or the law, never held dominion over them any where else, so the land of Canaan represents them in their gospel relation to Christ, who is the Rock of their salvation. We are aware that some have supposed the wilderness state represented the saints in the militant state of the church, and that Jordan signifies the stream of death, through which the saints are to pass when they enter heaven as the place of their ultimate rest and glory. There are many important reasons why we reject that application of the figure. There was much fighting to be done after entering that land, and a certainty that the conflicts of the Israelites should continue as long as Israel dwelt there with the remaining Canaanites; but we know that in the final consummation of the glory of the saints, they shall be free from all turmoil and strife.

In the true application of these figures, Canaan represents the gospel state of the church. Jordan divided that state from the wilderness – of the administration of Moses. The law and the prophets were until John. John came in the wilderness of Judah, preaching repentance, and baptizing in the river Jordan, such as brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and on their profession of faith in him who came after John, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Here God was manifest in the flesh, as standing there upon the rock in Horeb. Here the Rock, which was Christ in the figure, received the smittings of the rod of the law, met all its requisitions, suffered all its penalties, bore all its wrath and indignation, and obtained eternal redemption for his people. Then rising from the dead, as our spiritual Joshua, he calls all his own sheep, or people, by name, and leads them to living fountains of water; receives his kingdom, enters into his glory, ascends his Mediatorial throne, while the eternal Father proclaims, “Moses, my servant, is dead; arise go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel (Joshua 1:2).” Our risen Savior, our anti-typical Joshua, rising from the dead, assumes his reigning power, and God the Father from high heaven proclaims his inauguration, saying, “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2:6).” “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of thy hand (Hebrews 1:8).”

Now, to return to our text. Moses, for reasons which we have seen, had been previously informed, could hold his dominion no longer; now from the heights of Nebo, from the top of Pisgah, he surveys the landscape, and is assured that this is the inheritance secured by oath and promise to the people of Israel. “And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed.” The gospel kingdom, the gospel state, and all gospel blessings, and gospel privileges, were secured to the heirs of promise, “by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie.” “For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying [unto Abraham], Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee (Hebrews 6:13,14).” And all this assurance is given, “that we 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 stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 6:18-20).” Moses, or the law, certainly foresaw and foreshadowed the glorious

kingdom of our spiritual Joshua. All the landmarks of the heavenly Jerusalem were seen in the distance by the eye of the law; for “his eye was not dim, nor was his natural force abated.” But he could not extend his dominion into the gospel precincts. He has smitten the Rock with the rod, and now his mission is fulfilled. Israel is now dead unto the law, to Moses, by the body of Christ, and Israel is married to another, even unto him that is risen from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God, that being dead in which they were held. They were no more under the law, but under grace; under law not to Moses, but unto Christ. “Thou shalt not go over thither.” Blessed prohibition. Neither we nor our fathers were able to bear his yoke. If the law could follow us into the kingdom of our Lord, who could stand before it? Moses is not only dead, but God has buried him, and after the diligent research of all the workmongrel world for nearly four thousand years, his sepulchre has not been found. Satan has long disputed with Michael our prince about the body of Moses, and all the children of the devil still dispute with the subjects of that glorious Prince on the same subject. They desire to be under the law because they do not hear the law; “but the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.” Moses’ law was a ministration of death; but the gospel is the ministration of life; how then could we be under both at the same time? The precepts of Moses were written and engraven on tables of stone, but the law of the spirit of life is written in our heart. The yoke of Moses is called the yoke of bondage. (See Galatians 5:1.) But the law of Christ, our spiritual Joshua, is called “the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25).”

Whether we have succeeded in satisfying the inquiries of our aged brother or not, we have so far complied with his request as to give him, at least, some of our views upon the subject. Volumes might be written without exhausting so rich a subject. We hope that none who are dead to the law and married to Christ will feel inclined to dishonor their living Husband by attempting to search for or dig up the body of Moses, from whom they are redeemed. The dead husband when living demanded every thing but furnished nothing; the living husband furnishes every thing and demands nothing. The former always cursed and never blessed; the latter always blesses but never curses. How unreasonable to give the preference to Moses over Christ.

“Israel rejoice, now Joshua leads,
He’ll bring your tribes to rest;
So far the Savior’s name exceeds
The ruler and the priest.”

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1869.

MATTHEW 24:42.

Meriwether Co., Ga.
November 20, 1868.

Brother Beebe: – I was much interested in your editorial on the “Portentous Signs,” and would like to have your views more extensively on that subject. The minds of the Lord’s people in this section of the country are exercised on the subject. Will you please give us your views on Matthew 24:42, through the “Signs of the Times.”

Yours in hope of eternal life,
George W. Gersham.

Reply: – The text proposed contains a very appropriate admonition to the saints, especially to the ministers of the gospel, which although never unopportune, is peculiarly applicable when unusual and portentous signs are given to warn the children of God of approaching events of fearful import. The words were addressed to the disciples by our Lord after he had told them of the signs which should precede the destruction of Jerusalem, his coming, and the end of the world. He said to them, “Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” They could not know the hour until it should arrive, because it was not a matter of revelation. “Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” The wisdom of God in withholding this knowledge from his saints and from his angels, or messengers, is unquestionable; and while the profound secret was thus locked up in the inscrutable counsel of his own sovereign will, the signs of near approach to that day and hour were clearly stated. “Behold [says Jesus] I have told you before.” Knowing therefore what should be the signs, and being ignorant of the day and hour was calculated to impress their minds with the importance of the admonition to watch. And as he has elsewhere added, “and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” Our exposure to temptation at such times, when iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, and when the fearful judgments of the Lord are about to surprise the ungodly, all urge the necessity of watchfulness, and prayer to him who alone can shield us from all harm. To illustrate the necessity of watching, our Lord says, “But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Then he applies these warnings to his servants, or ministers, who like stewards are put in trust over their Lord’s household, to give them meat in due season. “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” The stewards in the household of our Lord have a solemn charge over all the men servants and maid servants of the house of God, to take the oversight thereof, and to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood: and it shall be blessed for them to be found at all times so doing; instant in season, out of season; rightly dividing the word, and giving to every one an appropriate portion in due season. But in the day of temptation we have reason to apprehend that some even of the Lord’s servants who have been set apart to feed the sheep and lambs will be found remiss in the discharge of the duties enjoined on them. This we infer from the following: “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The temporal calamities which came upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah must have involved the heedless and disobedient disciples, as well as the hypocrites, if any of them were lingering there after the signs were given, until the storm of wrath came down; and so it shall undoubtedly be when

Babylon shall receive her doom, with such of the servants of Christ, if any there shall be who disregard the signs and warnings given, and say in their heart there is no danger; my Lord delayeth his coming; and abuse their fellow servants – when the judgments clearly indicated shall come, they will with the hypocrites and unbelievers receive of the temporal plagues, in common with others, and they shall weep, while the hypocrites shall gnash their teeth. John “heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:4).” If the children of God, the stewards, and servants, who have received a charge to give to those of the household of God their meat in due season, drink and become drunken with the cup of Babylon, and eat and drink with the enemies of the truth, and use their influence against the advocates of the truth and righteousness, in disregard of the warning that comes from heaven, they shall as surely be cut asunder from the church, from her fellowship, and the protection from temporal judgments which are thrown around the church, as that the mouth of God has spoken it.

Watch, therefore, from these solemn considerations, and know ye there is a necessity for watching, diligently, vigilantly, and prayerfully. If it had pleased the Lord to inform us of the day and the hour, we would have no occasion to watch for the premonitory signs; but we know not the day nor the hour, and therefore our Lord has commanded us to watch, and not only to watch, but also to admonish one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching; and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, for that purpose, as the manner of some is.

“For ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” We are fully satisfied that our Lord is to come, will come, and will not tarry; and we are further instructed that when he shall come, he will be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. (See II Thessalonians 1:8-10.)

The coming of our Lord should not be regarded with any dread by those who love and obey him. His coming will be a glorious jubilee of triumph and rest to them. When in all the power, majesty and glory of the Father, he shall come with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch Angel, and with the trump of God, they shall hail him with joy, saying, “Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him.” It shall be sudden. “For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.” How instantaneous will be the change. As the vivid lightning darts from the cloud, shall be his advent; and who can stand when he appeareth?

Could we but realize that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, sudden as the lightning’s flash, and that, from the numerous indications by signs on which we are instructed to rely, it may be very near at hand, may we not conclude that many a wayward Christian would be this moment hastening to confess his faults to his offended brother; that many a delinquent child would make haste to find the footsteps of the dear flock of Christ; that many a quickened child of God who has long delayed to obey the precepts of Christ, and to take his yoke in the sacred ordinance of baptism, would rally to Jordan’s banks in anxious haste to own his Lord and Master? How it would allay our thirst for the treasures and vanities of this vain and transitory world. How easily then they could find more time for frequenting the house of prayer, and for mingling in sweet devotion with the children of God. “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and

love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 5:4-9).”

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1869.

TO WHOM IS THE GOSPEL ADDRESSED?

There is, and long has been, much controversy between legalists and the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only as to what the gospel is, but also in regard to whom it is or should be addressed. If all the parties engaged in the controversy could understand the scriptural signification of the word, those who are now zealously contending for a universal application of it to all mankind indiscriminately, would desire rather to restrict than to extend its application, as they have ever exerted themselves to suppress its publication. What they call gospel differs very widely from what Christ and the holy apostles proclaimed in the primitive days of the gospel church. Our Redeemer encountered the same class of zealous fanatics, who compassed sea and land to disseminate their false gospel, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ; and exposing and denouncing their hypocrisy charged them with teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men. The voluntary religious institutions originated and enjoined by men without any divine authority from God are now very widely taught and greedily received by graceless men, and such teaching is by them dignified with the name of gospel. Their preachers may entertain conflicting opinions in regard to what is contained in the Scriptures, for the doctrine of the Bible and the laws and institutions of Christ are regarded by them as minor points, while opposite sects can freely unite in opposing the doctrine of Christ, and in the propagation of any or all of the inventions of men. They can and do, with much seeming cordiality, take each other by the hand, and with wonderful reciprocity compliment each other as “truly evangelical,” while in truth there are but two points in which they are really agreed among themselves; the one is that salvation is attainable by works, and the other is in denouncing the Old Primitive order of Baptists. As to precisely what works will secure salvation, and by what mode of warfare they should fight the Old Baptists, they may differ widely without interruption of fellowship. What they call gospel may be obtained in any quantity from the schools of men, in which every man is engaged in teaching his brother and neighbor, saying, “Know the Lord.” From Infant and Sabbath Schools, and Bible Classes, as well as from Theological Seminaries; from books and tracts, and various other sources, they can procure all of that kind of delusion which they call gospel in indefinite quantities. We would by no means misrepresent them; but we have failed to understand their language, if what they call gospel is not with them an article of commerce. Do they not propose to send it to the heathen; to Burma, Hindostan, and to all the distant islands where they can find a profitable market? They gravely tell us, in a business way, what amount of capital must be invested, what number of men and amount of money, how many ships and seamen must be employed, and how long it will take to supply the world.

What of their falsely called gospel they retain for home consumption, if we may judge from ruling prices, ought to be superior to what they ship to foreign markets, as those who retail it from their pulpits at home frequently amass large sums by this traffic.

To make their false gospel salable, they must, of course, adapt it to the taste of all. Those who have no ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches, have no difficulty in hearing the doctrines of men; hence there is a great cry about preaching to sinners. Their doctrine is precisely what unconverted sinners can feast upon; for instead of being told that they are condemned already and the wrath of God abideth on them, they are told that they are probationers, free agents, and have ability to move by their prayers the power that moves the world. Instead of being told that “No man can come to the Father but by Christ,” and that “No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him,” they are told that they can do a great deal for the Lord. And this is profanely called preaching the gospel to sinners. While with an air of affected superiority, they charge the Old order of Baptists, that we do not preach the gospel to sinners, while they themselves do not preach a word of gospel to saints or sinners. It is not gospel to utter falsehood in the name of the Lord; there is no gospel in telling men what they can and must do, or be damned. To call on dead sinners to repent and believe the gospel implies ability in them to do so, whereas the gospel proclaims that Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. It is as exclusively the work of our exalted Savior to give repentance as it is to forgive sins, and the dead sinner can no more do the one than the other. True repentance which is unto life and needeth not to be repented of, must proceed from life. If the repentance be spiritual, it proceeds from a spiritual source, and must be preceded by the quickening Spirit of God. The sorrow of the world worketh death; but godly sorrow worketh repentance unto life; and to be godly, in distinction from the sorrow of the world, it must come from God, it must be given by the exalted Prince and Savior. Faith is also the gift of God, Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of it, if it be genuine; for it is not the faith of the creature, but it is the faith of the Son of God, and without it no man can please God. Paul says, It is not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. To preach the opposite to what the inspired Scriptures teach, is not preaching the gospel to saints, nor to sinners.

But we propose to show how the Scriptures define the word *gospel*. Compare Isaiah 61:1, with Luke 4:18, and you will see that what is by the prophet called *good tidings*, is by our Lord rendered *gospel*, and to prevent any caviling, the *good tidings* in the prophecy, and the *gospel* in its fulfillment, are defined to mean, good tidings to the meek – “to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, 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 might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” Observe who these *meek, poor, brokenhearted*, prisoners are, and what *gospel* is preached to them. The Spirit of the Lord God qualifies those on whom it is poured, to follow the blessed Savior in preaching good tidings, or *gospel*, to the meek; not to the proud, haughty, and self-righteous. It proclaims liberty, not to free agents who were never in bondage, who have all the religion they live for, and could have as much more if they pleased to work for it. The poor broken hearted, helpless prisoner hails with joy the tidings that proclaims his release from prison. But how could the same tidings be joyful, or *gospel*, to those who are not poor, nor captive, nor broken hearted, nor meek? When Jesus said to the poor dying thief, “This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise,” we cannot doubt it was good tidings to him. But would the same words, if spoken to his murderers who were reviling him, been appreciated as *gospel* tidings? The *gospel* is discriminating; it finds out the “humbled sinner in whose

breast a thousand thoughts revolve.” You who complain of the Old Baptists, that we do not preach the gospel to sinners, would you have us, if we meet a band of robbers, pirates or murderers, say to them, in gospel terms, “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom?” Or to a company of Atheists, “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Jesus?” If this is not what they mean by preaching the gospel to sinners, how far short of this do they come, when they address the most blessed and sacred assurances which Christ gave to the meek, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the peace makers, and the persecuted saints, to unconverted sinners, as an inducement to them to “get religion,” saying to them, Seek, and ye shall find; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you; Ask, and it shall be given to you? Not one of these gracious promises were ever addressed by our Lord or any minister of his to any but to quickened subjects of his saving grace. Instead then of preaching the gospel to saints or sinners, they pervert the gospel, in attempting to give the children’s bread unto dogs, in direct defiance of the special command of Jesus Christ, who positively forbid that that which is holy should be given to the dogs. By their artful misapplication of the Scriptures, they are charged by an apostle with “turning the truth of God into a lie,” by making the Scriptures seem to say what they do not say; and so by handling the word of God deceitfully, they not only lead the blind into the ditch, but frequently perplex and worry many of the unsuspecting honest-hearted enquirers after truth. We have at this moment a case before us that is in point. An esteemed and dear friend who has long been held in captivity among the New School Baptists, has recently withdrawn from their communion, writes us that there is still one point of difference in which she cannot yet feel satisfied that the Old order of Baptists are right, and that is the point which we are now discussing; namely, that our pastors confine their addresses to the churches, or in other words, do not preach the gospel to sinners, and she refers us to the parable of the king’s son as favoring her position, or as being in the way of her accepting the views supposed to be held by us.

Without digression from the theme of this article, we will examine the objection to what is supposed to be our views, and the bearing of the parable upon the subject.

First, we will correct a misapprehension of the position and practice of the ministers of our order. While we believe and preach the gospel, as Christ and his apostles did, wherever a door is open for that purpose, openly addressing our preaching to every one within the sound of our voice, the gospel which we preach discriminates between the living and the dead. It is a savor of life unto life, to those who are quickened by the Holy Ghost, and a savor of death unto death, to them that perish. It is “to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And if our preaching is not a savor of death unto death to the ungodly, and a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks, and if it be not a savor of life to the quickened, and if it be not to them that are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, then it is not apostolic preaching. Who ever knew an Old School Baptist to refuse to preach the gospel to any but saints? We cannot search the hearts or try the reins of those to whom we preach; but the word which we preach makes the discrimination; for it is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (Hebrews 4:12,13.) The gospel which we preach is good tidings to the meek; but if any part of our audience are not meek, it is not gospel, or good tidings to them. All who have an ear to hear, are more than welcome to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. But if any have not hearing ears, the preachers cannot supply them; for the hearing ear and understanding heart are of the Lord. The Son of God alone has power to cause the dead to hear his voice and live; for the words which he speaks to

them, they are spirit, and they are life. Therefore his sheep hear his voice, and he knows them, and they follow him; for he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He, and he alone, has power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. All this the Old Baptists preach to every creature. But we do not give the children's bread to any but the children, nor do we give what belongs to the dogs to the children.

But let us examine the parable of the marriage of the king's son. (Matthew 22:1-14.) Unto whom, and for what purpose was it spoken by our Lord, and why spoken in parable? The context will show that it was addressed to the Jews, including the Pharisees, who were so much enraged on hearing it, that they went and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. See verse 15. As whatsoever God speaks is certain to secure the object for which it is spoken, see Isaiah 55:11. What was accomplished by this parable shows conclusively for what purpose it was spoken. And the reason why he spake to all but his saints in parables is given in his own words to his disciples in Luke 8:10. "And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?" Alluding to the parable of a sower, "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." We must reject Christ's own explanation of his reason for using parables, or admit that this parable was spoken expressly to discriminate between his disciples to whom was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and all others from whom that gift was withheld, and by the inscrutable purpose of God all but the disciples, in seeing should not see, and hearing should not understand. Instead of his parables being used to elucidate, illustrate, and make the mysteries of the kingdom of God clear and plain to the understanding of the ungodly, they were designed to make them the more obscure, that they might be a stumbling block to the Jews, and folly to the Greeks. "Therefore Jesus rejoiced in spirit, when he said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Perhaps our esteemed friend will perceive that neither this nor any other parable, correctly understood, will sustain the position taken, that the address of the ministers of Christ should be indiscriminate. The same gospel preaching which elucidates the mysteries to the saints on whom the heavenly gift is bestowed, involves them in parabolic obscurity to all but such. Still the question may return, What does the parable mean? We have already shown that it was intended like all the parables to baffle the wisdom of the scribes, pharisees and work mongers of that and of all subsequent ages, and bring down their lofty imagination, humble the pride of man, and cause that none should glory, only in the Lord. It was nevertheless full of wholesome instruction to those to whom it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom. The kingdom of God, which in this parable or similitude is compared to a king who made a marriage for his son, embraces Christ and his people in both the legal and then prospective dispensations. The marriage of the king's son represents the public espousal, and marriage of Christ and his bride, the church, which was then about to be consummated, according to prophecy. The oxen and fatlings, representing all the sacrifices under the law, had been killed, and the Bridegroom had come to redeem his bride from under the law, that she might be identified with him in his resurrection from the dead. The marriage festivities, or feast, was now about to be spread, in the opening of the gospel dispensation. The Jews, as a nation or people, had been notified and bidden to the marriage by the prophets, and they had professed to be anxiously awaiting the coming of the Bridegroom and announcement of the feast. "The law and the prophets were until John." John the Baptist had announced the advent of Christ as the Bridegroom, saying, "He that hath the bride, is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom rejoiceth because of the Bridegroom's voice: thus my joy is fulfilled." John's mission was to make ready a people prepared of the Lord. Seventy servants had been sent to announce to the commonwealth

of Israel that the feast was prepared; but they were not ready to leave Judaism, nor had they any disposition to embrace Christianity. These servants had been forbidden to go with this proclamation to any but those Jews which had been bidden by the prophets. "Go ye not in the way of the Gentiles," nor into any city, even of the Samaritans were they not to enter, but to go exclusively to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "But they made light of it." He came to his own, and his own received him not. He grew up among them as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground; he hath no form, nor comeliness; and when they saw him there was no beauty or attraction for them to desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (Isaiah 53:1-3.) Again other servants, the apostles, were sent out, with the same charge to go only to the Jews which were bidden; but they made no serious matter of it; and they slew the servants. This was literally true of the disciples and apostles which were sent with this message to the Jews; they not only rejected their message, but put the messengers to death. All this preceded the wrath which was brought upon the Jewish nation, when nationally they were destroyed, and Jerusalem and other cities were terribly destroyed.

Then said the king to his servants, or ministers: The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden, the carnal Israelites, were not worthy. The law could make nothing perfect. Their legal self-righteousness was but filthy rags, and would not answer for a wedding garment. They with all their filthy rags, or legal works, were now utterly rejected, and the decree of the king is published, that none of them which were bidden, or to whom the prophets had been sent, should taste of the supper, the gospel feast. And now the servants are sent forth to the Gentiles, who had not been bidden to the feast as were the Jews. Comparing the version of Luke 16 of this same parable with that of Matthew, we perceive that when those who were whole had declined the feast, the servants were instructed to gather from the streets and lanes of Jerusalem, or Israel, the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind; quite a different description of guests; yet the very description to whom the gospel is good tidings; and of this description there were gathered by the apostles from the secluded lanes and streets of Israel all the original constituent members of the gospel organization. And the apostles reported to their Lord, saying, "It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." Poor, helpless, halt and blind sinners who felt their poverty, and had no works or merits of their own to plead, were gathered to the gospel feast; but those of that character called from the Jews did not exhaust the provisions of grace, and the gospel proclamation is by divine command extended to the high-way and hedges of the Gentile world. "Go ye," the ministers of the everlasting gospel, who had received a "Go ye" from their King, "and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage." Certainly not as many of the self-righteous work-mongers, but as many as they should find of the character already gathered into the marriage, of the poor, lame, broken hearted, helpless and guilt-stricken; bid them welcome, in the name of the King to the marriage. But none others should partake of the feast, as we see how he fared who came in not having on the wedding garment. The broad phylacteries of self-righteous pharisees would not do; the guest must be clothed with garments of salvation, as sinners saved by grace alone, and covered with the robe of Christ's own righteousness, that is the wedding dress; and a profession of religion without it will avail nothing. All who come in without God's grace will be thrust out without his favor.

Again, permit us to ask, What is there in this parable that can be justly construed to favor an indiscriminate address of the gospel ministry to all mankind?

The work of the gospel ministry is very clearly and fully stated in the words of our risen Savior to the apostles immediately before he ascended to heaven. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." This is a most vitally important introduction to their commission. If there are any sinners who have power to resist his will, or to secure their own salvation,

or to prevent their own salvation, then *all power* in earth is not in him. If ministers have power to save souls, to quicken dead sinners, or to prevent their quickening and salvation, then there is power besides what is vested in him. Or if Theological Schools have power to prepare men for the gospel ministry, or Mission Boards have power to commission men to preach, then that power is not exclusively found in him. The fact is not only in itself important, but it is also important that all who are called by him to the work should know it; for it is upon this very *therefore* that they are commanded to go. Go ye *therefore*, or from this consideration. It does not allow the alternative to them to tarry at home, and send somebody else. “Go ye therefore.” And what? “Teach all nations.” He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, having all power in both worlds, has a right to send them over every state, territory, and division of the universe; and no king, potentate or ruler of the earth has any legitimate right to forbid, or throw impediments in their way. *All nations*. The command of Christ is no longer restricted to the Jews; now the middle wall of partition is taken down, and the messengers of Christ are commanded to go into all the world, and preach *the gospel* to every creature. For God has a people in every tribe and nation, and his gospel shall search and find them out, and call them out; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. That is as was understood and practiced by the apostles, baptizing all who gladly receive the word, and who believe with all their heart on the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus by baptism adding them manifestively to the apostles, and to the apostolic church. “Teaching them.” They need instruction, and Christ has by his supreme authority authorized this manner of instruction, by and through the diversified gifts which he has received for and given to them. But what are they to teach them? Not the arts and sciences of this world; for in the knowledge of them the ministers of Christ are generally quite limited themselves. But the orders of the King are very plain and definite. “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” No new lessons that Jesus has not commanded the apostles. No progression beyond the commands of Christ. Nothing that he has commanded may be omitted. Nothing that he has not commanded may be added. If any man shall add to the words of the book of this prophecy, or instruction, God shall add to him the plagues written in this book; and if any man shall take from the words of his instructions, he shall be expelled from the church of God, the communion of the saints, and from the privileges of the Holy City, New Jerusalem. But, “Blessed and happy are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs.”

We have been the more particular in showing what the gospel is, by whom, and to whom Christ has commanded it be preached, that not only our friend, but all who read may see that very much of what passes currently for gospel at our day, is but the teaching for doctrines the commandments and institutions of men, instead of the all things whatsoever Christ commanded his apostles to teach.

In conclusion of this extended article we wish to add a few words in regard to the object and utility of the gospel ministry. The apostle, who is commanded to teach us, defines it thus: “Feed the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.” Jesus commanded Peter, saying, Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs. None but the flock of God can feed upon the gospel; none but they can live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The beloved disciple and inspired apostle John says, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” (I John 4:4-6) Finally, as the sun in the heavens can only be seen in its own light, so the light and glory of the everlasting gospel can only be discerned in its own divine radiance. Until God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our

hearts, we cannot comprehend the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1869.

A MACEDONIAN CRY.

Dear Brother Beebe: Through the well directed providence of God I am spared to see the time again roll around to renew my subscription, and it is with pleasure I take the opportunity to write to those whom I trust are the same family, and have, as I hope, the same spiritual Father. For, when I read the editorials of your paper, and the communications of the dear brethren and sisters, I feel strengthened in my convictions that we are all led by the same spirit, although we are many miles apart. I have none near me who preach the same doctrine, unmixed; their theory is means. I have seen the time when I thought I was like the old prophet Elijah, when he said, They have thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets, and I only am left alone. But when I get the "Signs," I find that there are still a remnant of the Lord's poor and afflicted people who trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon their God.

Now, dear brother, I will extend to you and other ministering brethren, as it were, a Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us;" for it is surely a time of need. The church where I formerly was a member has been led off by the Missionary Baptists. She was organized by the Old Regular Baptists, and I think there is still the root remaining; for I hope it was of the Lord's own right hand's planting, although perhaps sadly mangled by the wolves who came to her in sheep's clothing. I think there are still a goodly number among them who are longing to feed on the sincere milk of the word, and who can thrive on no other. As such, I think I can represent my own family, which consists of six sons, all married and having families, and living near me.

And, now I would once more entreat you to hear my feeble request; for I think there is a great field open here in this part of the country. Please publish this, and oblige your unworthy sister,

Mary Stewart
Greene Co., Pa.
December 27, 1868.

P.S. – Please give your views on Matthew 22: 12,13, also on Luke 24:25,26, and oblige an enquirer after truth,
Isaac Stewart

Reply: We have neither time, space, nor ability to meet the desires of all our friends who call on us for our views on various portions of the Scriptures. We have now on hand many applications for our views, which it would afford us much pleasure, were we able to write and present satisfactory and edifying views. But if we were favored with a clear light on every obscure portion of the word, and could wield the pen of a far more expert and ready writer, it would require many volumes of the "Signs of the Times" to contain all that would require to be written. To make a careful and minute record of all that

our Redeemer did, John supposed the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Still, we rejoice to witness an enquiring spirit after a clear understanding of the Scriptures. We are encouraged to search for the truth as for a hidden treasure; and if we lack wisdom, as we surely do, we should ask of God who giveth liberally. And it is proper also to avail ourselves of all the gifts, and all the light there is in the church. As a minister of the gospel, and as editor of the "Signs," it devolves on us the duty and delightful privilege to devote all the ability God has or may bestow on us, in elucidating the Scriptures, to the comfort and edification of the saints.

The first portion proposed by our friend, is a part of the parable of the marriage of the king's son, on which subject we have expressed our views to some extent in the leading editorial of this paper. The marriage we have understood to signify the new relation in which the redeemed of the Lord are brought by their death to Moses, and resurrection life with Christ, as exemplified in the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in its gospel organization. The last set of servants sent out to the highways, or to the Gentiles, gathered all that they found, both bad and good. This we sometimes witness in the present day, some are gathered into a religious profession, and are received into the church as guests, or members, whose utter destitution of the garments of praise, and robe of righteousness, cannot be detected until the guests are surveyed by the King himself. But "his fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." He shall sit as refiner's fire, and as fuller's soap. He will judge his people. The man that was found among the guests without the wedding garment may represent the whole class of those who think it quite unimportant, if they can get into the church, or into heaven, whether they come in by Christ as the door, or climb up some other way. They flatter themselves, and we have often heard them say, "If we are only sincere, it will make no difference how we get to heaven; it will not be asked us what way we came; but will be enough that we are there." How surprised, and speechless will all such easy souls be to hear the startling interrogatory: "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having the wedding garment?" "Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him in outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Those who are so infatuated as to think the king will be pleased to see them in the filthy rags of self-righteousness, and that they will even outshine those who are clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ, boast of their free will, free agency, and free volition, are exceedingly bitter at the commission given to the servants, to bind them, by a repudiation of their boasted ability. Say they, "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man; and how sayest thou, we shall be made free?" The faithful servants of the King who have the oversight of the flock shall give them place by subjection, no not for an hour. Binding them by a faithful exhibition of gospel truth, and rigid execution of the discipline of the church, shall effectually separate them from the communion of the church, and cast them outside her walls, where they shall find their own company of dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The condition of those who by the authority of our great King are expelled from the fellowship of the church shall be that of outer darkness, which differs from the *inner* darkness of which the humble followers of the Lamb are sometimes subjected, for it is called the darkness of this world, controlled by the rulers of the darkness of this world, and by the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. And they are thrown among a very different description of companions. When any of the children of God defile their garments, lay aside the garments of humility, and mask themselves in some other dress, and are cast out by the discipline of the house of God, they weep, as did the captives in Babylon when they remembered Zion; but those who have never known the love of God, when bound hand and foot and cast out from the fellowship of the saints, shall rave with gnashing of teeth.

The other passage on which our friend desires us to comment is Luke 24:25,26. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter his glory?" we must defer till our next.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1869.

ELDER ROBERT C. LEACHMAN HAS FALLEN ASLEEP.

Scarcely had we announced in our last paper the latest intelligence we had received, when we received the painful tidings that he was supposed to be dying, with a summons to hasten to his bedside. We took the first train on Friday morning the 9th, at 5 o'clock a.m., at about the very minute he breathed his last. We reached Alexandria, Va., at about 7 p.m. of the same day, where we were informed that his spirit had departed, and as we could get no farther that night, we took the train the next morning with many sorrowing brethren and sisters from Alexandria and Washington, and arrived at his house at Manassas, Prince Wm. Co., at about 11 o'clock a.m., and found arrangements were made for his funeral to be attended at half past one o'clock on Saturday, Feb. 20.

Our dear brother Leachman was born of the flesh, and born again of the incorruptible word, was baptized by the late Elder Samuel Trott, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem church, in about the year 1837, licensed to preach the gospel in 1838, and ordained to the work of the ministry, at Bethlehem, in 1839, and continued to hold his residence, except what time he was driven from his home during the late war, and finally died, all within five miles of the place of his birth. As a minister of the gospel he was truly one of Zion's sons that had grown up in his youth, and polished after the similitude of a palace. From the time of his first connection with the church of God, no blemish has soiled his character; as an humble devoted follower of the Lamb, and servant of the church, no one could be more devoted or indefatigable. Regardless of his own ease or pecuniary interests, he labored more abundantly than any of his contemporaries. Besides the pastoral charge of all the churches in Fairfax, Alexandria, Prince William., Fauquier and Loudoun counties [after the death of our lamented brother Trott], he traveled very extensively attending associations and other meetings in many and distant states.

All who are acquainted with him concede that his gifts for the ministry were of the very highest order. His manner was bold and fearless of man, and at the same time as meek, humble and tender in his feelings as any one we have ever known. His gift for arguments, illustration and elucidation of the doctrine were powerful, clear and unanswerable, and his address easy, and remarkably engaging. Thousands even of those who did not love the doctrine were fond of hearing him, and respected him for his talents while they had no relish for the truth which he so forcibly proclaimed.

During the late cruel war his house and farm were alternately occupied by the belligerent armies of the North and South, and he was driven from his home and his buildings destroyed, and he was reduced from comfortable circumstances, to an exile without where to lay his head. Although a man of peace,

and opposed to strife and bloodshed, he was arrested by the Federal powers, and incarcerated in loathsome and filthy prisons, because he could not conscientiously take an oath which they who demanded it of him would not allow him keep inviolate. After being liberated from prison he spent his time chiefly in the bounds of our churches in North Carolina until the war was over, and then returned to the churches of his pastoral charge, faithfully serving them until released from his excessive labors by death. Notwithstanding all the depressing circumstances he had to encounter, the churches greatly prospered under his labors, and now are left in a very destitute condition. But one ordained minister remains among the churches in that whole region. Our young brother, A.B. Francis, who was ordained to the work last August, whose standing and gifts are promising; but the field is exceedingly wide for one to occupy alone. May the Lord strengthen and sustain him and send others to his assistance.

Brother Leachman took a violent cold from riding on horseback some twenty-five or thirty miles through a very tedious storm, in January, which prostrated him and developed alarming symptoms, but from this prostration he partially recovered, and ventured out in the yard of his house to do some work which was needed; as the ground was wet, and the weather uncomfortable, he was taken down with more alarming symptoms than before, congestion and inflammation of the bowels, in which for weeks he could retain no nourishing food on his stomach. He suffered severe pain, and became very much reduced both in flesh and strength. But very slight hopes were entertained of his recovery for several weeks. Through his illness his mind was stayed on God, his hope and confidence were firm and unshaken to the end, and he remarked to us, when on our former visit, that during his sickness his principal comfort had been in the contemplation of the sovereignty of God. Before his death he selected to be sung at his funeral the 15th hymn of our Baptist Book:

“Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker’s nod,” etc.

He said to a brother, he had heard much said about it being hard to die; but he found it harder to live.

“Fearless he entered death’s cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus’ blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise.”

Sister Leachman, who had not left his bedside scarcely for a moment, seems broken down with grief and exhaustion. May God sustain and comfort her in this hour of deep affliction, and may those who so dearly loved our brother, remember his widow, and see that she lacks no comfort they are able to supply.

He leaves one brother, who attended faithfully on him, and two sisters, one of whom is in Georgia, the other has been with him throughout his sickness, showing a sisterly regard and rendering all the service in her power. He had no children. Of his other relatives in the flesh our knowledge is limited. But in the churches of our faith, no one has occupied a higher place, and his death has overwhelmed many in grief and sorrow.

At his funeral, in submission to the wishes expressed by the deceased and his family, we preached to a solemn assembly, from Revelation 20:11,12. “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in those books, according to their works.”

We have been intimately acquainted with our dead departed brother ever since he became a Baptist, about thirty years ago, and we are the only surviving minister who set him apart by solemn ordination to the gospel ministry more than thirty years ago. We have traveled thousands of miles in company, and, with the exception of the dark days of the late war, there has no year passed in which we have not been together at several of our associations. It has never been our unhappy lot to differ on any point of doctrine or order, nor has there ever existed between us the least dissatisfaction or abatement of sincere love and fellowship. Our dear brother was, since January, in the 58th year of his age.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1869.

LUKE 24:25,26.

Reply to our friend Isaac Stewart. Continued from our last number.

“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” Luke 24:25,26.

These words were spoken by our risen Savior immediately after his resurrection from the dead, to two of his disciples who, although they had heard a report that he was risen, still lacked a satisfactory evidence that the joy-inspiring assertion was true; for they still were communing in sadness on the subject of his sufferings and death. They were disciples of Jesus, and were by him recognized as such, and if their natural faculties had been made spiritual by their new birth, it is safe to suppose their hearts would not have been so slow to accredit the testimony of the witnesses who had announced his resurrection, or the testimony of the prophets, and the words which Christ had himself spoken to them before his crucifixion, in which he said he would rise from the dead on the third day. It seems to us, if their faculties had come by a spiritual birth directly from God, their recollection would have been less treacherous, and their hearts less foolish; still there was in them a spiritual vitality, burning in their hearts, while he talked with them by the way; although the natural faculty of seeing was strangely defective. That they were both of them subjects of saving grace, possessing in them an inner man that was born of God, is clear from the very fact that they were sad at the events which pleased wicked men and devils, and that their hearts could burn while Jesus expounded to them the Scriptures. We cannot admit the theory that they were in their new birth only begotten to a false or delusive hope, and that their sadness arose from a disappointment of their expectation that Jesus was to have delivered Israel from the Roman yoke, and advance them to political independence. We firmly believe they were by their new and spiritual birth born of God, made partakers of the divine nature, and had received the faith of the Son of God, so that, having in them the mind of Christ, with it they served the law of God, while with their flesh they served the law of sin.

Indeed we are unable to perceive any difference between the condition of these two disciples, experimentally, and the disciples of later times. If we are not altogether mistaken, there is in all the saints a principle of spiritual life that is begotten and born of God, which feeds on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, and that kindles to a burning flame of light, love and joy, when Jesus communes with them by the way, even when their natural eyes are holden, and all their natural faculties

are as closely holden from perceiving that it is Jesus who thus communes with them, as were the eyes of these two disciples. The spouse of Christ is heard to say, I sleep, but my heart awaketh; it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh. All our natural faculties may be locked in unconscious slumber or stupefied, while at the seat of vitality in the new heart, the voice is heard, recognized, and its awakening animation confessed. The Old Testament saints could say in truth, "Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." God himself, by his Spirit, shines in the hearts of his saints, to give them the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. But although this heavenly light shines in us, the darkness of our natural minds comprehends it not.

We do not understand our Lord as applying his words to the two disciples, in a reproachful way, nor as charging them with idiocy in regard to their natural faculties, or intelligence, nor does he use words to them which may not be with equal propriety applied to us. No idiot can be more slow to comprehend the things of nature than the Christian's natural intellect or reason is to comprehend the things which God is pleased to reveal to the faith of his spiritual children.

Before we condemn these two disciples, as requiring to be again begotten and born in order to be wise, or to have a good and vital hope of immortality, let us enquire if we are not all of us as great fools as they were, and as slow to believe all that the prophets have written. Let us take our Bible and sit down and read all that the prophets have said or written, and tax our intellectual faculties to unseal their spirituality to our understanding, and if we do not convince ourselves that we are fools and slow of heart to believe, comprehend and understand them, it will be simply because we are not Christians. As successfully may we search for the sun at midnight, with a penny taper, as to search for the sublime spiritualities of the Scriptures by the light of our natural reason, with all the commentaries and expositions of the learned doctors who set themselves up as teachers of divinity. Not one of all the heaven-born heirs of glory has ever received the first correct understanding of the things of the Spirit, until they had first become fools, that they might be wise. The wisdom of the world is earthly, sensual and devilish, but that wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Pure from its fountain in heaven there is nothing deceptive in it, for it is Christ, who of God is made unto us [his children, the children of wisdom] wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We are all fools and slow of heart to believe what the prophets have written, and none but Jesus can open the Scriptures to our understanding, or bestow on us a capacity to understand when they are rightly expounded. It is not necessary that Jesus, in order to open them to the understanding of our faith, should stand in our presence, revealed in his person to our natural eyes, or faculties. Shut up your eyes, and put out all the lights of intellect, and darken every avenue that brings natural intelligence to the natural understanding of natural men, and still the Christian's *new* heart will burn within him when Jesus draws near, by his Spirit, unperceived by reason, and communes with him by the way, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Now that Jesus is ascended up where he was before, enthroned in glory, to be known after the flesh no more, how often he draws nigh to his disciples as they journey and are sad; and unperceived by any reasoning faculty of their nature, by his Spirit, through the gifts bestowed on his church for mutual edification, or by the outpouring of his Spirit, with, or without those gifts, makes our hearts burn within us, opens so clearly the hidden treasures of his word, and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounds unto us in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, until the light of eternity breaks into our hearts in the most blessed refulgence of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ.

How lifeless and insipid to the heaven born soul, would even the Scriptures be, if no Jesus were there. It was the expounding of the things in the Scriptures concerning himself that set their hearts on fire.

As a fool in nature is one who has no capacity to comprehend the things of nature, so the term was applied to the two disciples, and may be to every disciple our Lord, in special reference to the total incapacity of our natural mind and faculties to comprehend the things contained in the Scriptures concerning the Lord Jesus, for it was clearly the case with these disciples. It was their natural eyes that failed to see, and their natural senses which failed to recognize the person of their risen Lord, while the new man of their heart was drinking in, feeding and feasting upon the spiritual import of every word. How striking is this exemplification of the total incapacity of the natural or outward man to comprehend the things of the Spirit, which things the eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man; but God hath revealed them to his spiritual children by his Spirit. For while it is emphatically declared that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and that the things of the Spirit are foolishness to the natural man, and that the natural man cannot know them, because they can only be spiritually discerned; it is as positively declared, that “He that is spiritual judgeth all things.” “But God hath revealed them [the things of the Spirit] unto us by his Spirit.”

In our experience we see not God or Christ with the natural eye. “No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed him.” John 1:18, and I John 4:12. Yet the same apostle says, “The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” It was not manifest to our natural eyes, but to the eyes of our understanding, which are the eyes of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it, neither can it be revealed to flesh and blood, but to the faith of those who have the faith of the Son of God; otherwise flesh and blood could inherit the kingdom, or the things of the spiritual kingdom. The Holy Ghost has declared by the inspired apostle, that “no man hath seen, nor can see,” nor approach unto him “who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light” I Timothy 6:15,16. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” I Peter 1:8. “This is life eternal, [not life mortal] that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3. Jesus said to Philip, and also to us, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” “I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.” But since the ascension of our risen Redeemer, no man has with his natural eyes, or life, or intellectual faculties, ever seen the Father or the Son; yet all who have eternal life have received a revelation of both the Father and the Son, to their faith, to the eyes of their spiritual understanding. Hence they who are born of the Spirit see the kingdom of God; behold the King in his beauty, and behold the land that is very far off, while all that nature, even in the saints which are born only of the flesh, remains in utter darkness; for no man, either saints or sinner, by searching, or by the light of nature or of reason can find out God. It is therefore unquestionably true that we are all fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken of the things concerning Jesus.

“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” This interrogatory was put to the disciples, and to us, that we may the more fully appreciate the necessity of the sufferings and death of the Redeemer. If viewed only as seen by men, and decided by human reason, and as expressed by the disciples, it would seem only as a triumph of the powers of darkness over the Son of God. To our carnal or fleshly minds it would seem as it did to the taunting Jews, when they said in derision, “He saved others, let him now save himself. If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe on him.” But the question presses home the solemn enquiry, Was there not a necessity for the sufferings and death of Christ? To meet and answer this question all that the prophets have

spoken, and all that is written in the books of Moses, and in the Psalms, must be brought to bear upon the subject, and Jesus, as the only efficient expounder of divine testimony going before, must open these Scriptures, in their testimony of him. With our natural senses we see, or read, the account of a man of sorrow, treacherously betrayed by a professed disciple who was numbered with the apostles, rudely seized by an armed band of men, led away unresistingly to Pilate, confronted by a clamorous mob, impeached by false testimony, condemned to die, and led to the place of execution as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. He was nailed to the cross, and crucified. Writhing in agony, he cried, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" He dies, and is taken down from the cross and laid away in the tomb, and a guard of soldiers watch his sepulchre, with a strict charge to keep him there. In the absence of the Scriptures on the subject, what more natural conclusion than that implied in the words of the disciples? "We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel." They had trusted, but now their confidence was shaken, and they were sad. Before we censure these two sad and sorrowing disciples for the weakness of their faith, let us enquire, how has it been with us? Has not Christ been evidently set forth crucified among us – have we not received the comfortable assurance in our hearts, by his word and by his Spirit, that "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," – that he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed; and after having rejoiced in the overflowing assurance that he has washed and cleansed us with his own blood, and shed his love abroad in us, have we not yielded in sadness many times to our fears, that we had mistaken him, and taken a shadow for a substance, an illusion for a reality; and have we not said in the sadness of our hearts, We trusted that the lovely Savior who once appeared to us as the chiefest among ten thousand, had redeemed us? But when our faith has been assailed by our fears, have we not faltered and doubted, and traveled on our weary way in gloomy depression, until our gracious Lord has come to us, communed with us, and made himself known to us in the breaking of bread? In his communion with us, in expounding to us the Scriptures, he has enabled us to see that all the painful discouragements we have met with were precisely what the Scriptures had before testified we must pass through. Instead of looking unto Jesus, we have had our eyes directed to ourselves, or to the angry billows which threaten to engulf us, and our confidence has yielded to fear. But when the Lord has vanquished from us our cruel doubts and fears, have we not reproached ourselves, saying, O fools, and slow of heart to believe. Ought not we to endure trials, and suffer with him who for the joy set before him endured the cross and despised the shame? The Scriptures have been opened to us, and we have read that "Unto us it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only that we should believe on him, but also that we should suffer for his sake." And when these Scriptures are applied by his Spirit with power to us, we again feel, as the apostle expressed, a desire; even at the utter loss of all that we once counted gain, that we may know him, and the power of his resurrection; yes, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death.

But to return to the question, – Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? Aside from the purpose of God, and the things written of him in the Scriptures, we confess we can see no just cause for his sufferings. He was holy and harmless, and separate from sinners. No guile could be detected in his mouth, or heart. There was nothing found to justify those who put him to death; they were charged with the crime of murder in his case, for they hated him without a cause, and with wicked hands crucified him. Short of the revelation which God has made in the Scriptures, we boldly challenge the wisdom of men to show any just cause for his crucifixion.

Yet there was a cause, a just, a righteous cause, which we can only comprehend when Jesus by his Spirit opens our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures. Then he says to us, as he said to

them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This settles the matter, and answers the question. He came down from heaven to do and suffer all things which were written, and heaven and earth should pass away, but not a jot or tittle of the Scriptures should fail till all was fulfilled. The Old Testament Scriptures had foretold of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. Moses in his law, and in all the ritual of Judaism, has declared this in the sacrifices and offerings which were under the law, and all the prophets had predicted his sufferings, and the Psalms dwelt largely on the same subject. Thus showing that he was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, to be put to death by wicked men and with wicked hands.

Again, it behooved him to suffer and to rise from the dead, to accomplish the redemption and salvation of his people. It was the will of the Father; and the Father’s will is the supreme and eternal law and standard of righteousness. Nothing but right can be entertained in his will, and therefore nothing in opposition to his will can be right, however it may seem to our feeble judgment. It was the Father’s will that of all that he had given to Christ he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. It therefore behooved Christ to suffer. It pleased the Father to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. He has laid on him the iniquities of all his chosen people, and he was delivered to die for our offences, and was raised from the dead for our justification. Without this suffering, repentance could not be granted unto them. The law that they had transgressed knew nothing of repentance nor of mercy. The transgressor died without mercy; for the law neither required nor accepted repentance. Its stern decree was, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Neither repentance nor remission of sins can be consistent with the nature of the law. In order then to open the prison to them that were bound, to redeem them from the dominion and wrath of the law, and bring them under law to Christ, it behooved him to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. And having risen from the dead he is exalted high upon his Mediatorial throne, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give [not demand] repentance unto Israel [not Esau], and remission of sins. Having by his one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified; he has sent his angels or messengers forth to the four winds of heaven, to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name. Not in the name or by the authority of any other. His name signifies the authority to which he is exalted as a Prince and a Savior, which is not only above, but *far* above all principality and power, and every name that is named in this world, or in that which is to come. And this name and supreme authority discriminates. No repentance or remission of sins can be preached in his name, only to Israel [his spiritual Israel], for he has given no authority to preach it to any other. Nor can this gift of repentance be separated from that of remission of sins: both are gifts; and repentance can no more be performed by any other name or power, than forgiveness of sins can be. To qualify even our Redeemer to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, it behooved him to suffer and die for their redemption, and to arise from the dead and enter his glory, as the exalted Prince, possessing all power in heaven and in earth, crowned with glory and honor as a Prince, and set upon his holy hill of Zion, to give gifts unto men, among which are prominently set forth that of repentance and forgiveness. It is not preaching repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins, in his name, or by his authority, when men in their own names, and on their own responsibility tell sinners to repent. This preaching in his name is by his authority, by his express command, by chosen and ordained messengers, called, qualified and sent forth by him, began at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and by his supreme power and authority it must extend to all nations whosoever he sends it, and execute precisely what he has ordained, and then shall the end come.

Lengthy as we have made this article, we could extend our remarks indefinitely, without any fear of exhausting the subject. But what we have written we submit to our friend Stewart, and to such of our readers as feel interested.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1869.

PROVERBS 4:23.

Dear Brother Beebe: I desire your views on Proverbs 4:23. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

As this is the first request I have made, I hope you will comply, and oblige,

J.W. Walker.

Morgan Co., Ga., Feb. 14, 1869.

Reply: As the mind of Elder Walker has been evidently exercised on this proverb, it is highly probable that he has clearer light in regard to its meaning than we can give. Still as he seems particularly anxious for our views, we will give him such as we have. The children of God being quickened and instructed in that wisdom which comes from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, and without partiality or hypocrisy; and being in their relation to Christ, who of God is made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, are known in the Scriptures as the children of wisdom, in distinction from all others of mankind, however proficient in the wisdom of this world, which the apostle says is from beneath, and is earthly, sensual and devilish. All the proverbs or maxims of divine wisdom recorded by inspiration in what we call the book of Proverbs are addressed by Wisdom to her children. Wisdom being personified as the parent of her children, deals instructing maxims, warnings and admonitions to her children, all of whom are made wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus; and in them all, "Wisdom is justified of her children." The Wisdom that cries aloud, and puts forth her voice in the Scriptures, is the Wisdom of God; it is repudiated by the wise and prudent of this world, and is foolishness to the Greeks, as it is a stumbling block to the Jews; and so also is the wisdom of this world foolishness with God; because it is from beneath, and is sensual and devilish.

Among the very numerous lessons addressed in the inspired proverbs to the children of Wisdom, we should not overlook the admonition of the text under consideration. 1st, the heart; 2nd, its issues; 3rd, the charge to keep it diligently.

As in the physical organization of our natural bodies, the heart is the seat of vitality, from whence the warm current of life is constantly sent through a thousand arterial and venous channels to every part of the body. No disease of the heart can be seated there without corrupting and impregnating with disease and death the issues, or emanations which are indispensable to the life and health of the body, and all its members. The heart is used figuratively to illustrate the seat and center of human affections, thoughts, passions, desires, hopes, resolutions. All flows out from one fountain or spring of vitality, as the vital fluid, or blood is by the pulsation of the heart made to go out and course through every artery

and vein, as God provided in our natural creation. In using this figure to illustrate spiritual things, that immortal life which the saints have received in their new and spiritual birth from the Second Adam, who is a quickening, or life giving Spirit, is called a new heart. “A new heart will I give unto them, and a new spirit will I put within them.” It is not a revision of the old heart; for that God has graciously promised to take away, and give them a new heart. New wine requires new bottles, and spiritual issues must flow from a spiritual spring. The Scriptures inform us of the natural heart, that it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Its issues are like the fountain; the thoughts, passions, affections, desires and devotions, are all deceptive: nothing else can be so deceitful.

While the natural man may believe that his motives are perfectly pure, his reasonings conclusive, his decisions just, and his affections holy, he is only the victim of a delusive infatuation; for no one can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. So when the apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” He does not mean the old natural and deceitful heart, for the same apostle has testified that the spiritual things which God has prepared for them that love him, has never entered into the heart of man; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. Not to our natural man, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things; yet he himself is judged of no man. I Corinthians 2. The natural heart is the heart of the natural man. It never has received, neither can it know, the things of the Spirit. But the spiritual man, and spiritual heart, is born of the Spirit; and the other is only born of the flesh.

The issues of the natural heart, or streams which flow therefrom, partake of the nature of the deceitful heart from which they flow. “An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor can a good tree bring forth evil fruit.” “A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” Luke 6:45. Thus all the emanations of the heart of either good or bad men are issues of life, and these issues show what is the nature and quality of the heart or life from which they flow. Every tree is known by his own fruit; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. The fruits of the natural heart are the fruits of the flesh, “which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like.” And these issues show what kind of life they proceed from. While the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc., are the streams of divine and spiritual life, issuing from the heart that is sprinkled from an evil conscience, as the seat of life to that spiritual body which is washed in pure water, the man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Now the Christian is in possession of both these entire natures; the old man, and the new man; the inner, and the outward man; the flesh and the Spirit. He is warned to put off the one, and to put on the other; to crucify the one, and to cherish the other. If he lives after the one he shall die, for the issues of *life* from the one are corrupt and mortal; but the issues of life from the new heart are incorruptible and immortal. Hence the admonitions of Wisdom to her children, in this proverb, “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” This closing admonition we will consider only in its application to the children of God, while here in the flesh. As from the heart are the issues of life, we may understand the charge to watch with all diligence the fountain from whence all the manifestations and evidences of spiritual vitality are ever flowing; nothing wrong in the fountain can be corrected in the stream. As we have observed the blood which animates the body in all its parts, and which is called the life, and is indispensable to the preservation of life, all flows through and from the heart of man; so

all the functions and developments of life, which are of a pure, spiritual and holy nature, proceed, or issue from the new heart which God has given to us, and in which God has shined, and in which God works both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. So we need to watch every emotion, and every sentiment, and every action, to know that they all issue from the new heart which God has given to us. To illustrate, suppose we profess to believe in God, or believe that salvation is of the Lord, and by grace, or that we in form walk in the ordinances of the gospel; if we have no heart in our professions and practice, what will it avail us? “With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness.” But if only with our head, or reasoning powers of mind, we entertain a rational, or mere traditional belief even of that which is sound and orthodox, such a dead faith cannot issue from a vital fountain.

To keep the heart with all diligence, as we understand, is to put off the *old man*, or old deceitful and desperately wicked heart, with its issues of natural life, as described, Galatians 5:19-21, and to put on the new man, by diligently cherishing those immortal principles of holiness, which we have received from God in our new and spiritual birth, from which issues the living fruits of the Spirit; as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. There is life or vitality in all these, and they are called the issues of life because they emanate, or issue, from that life which we have of God. The keeping of the heart does not mean that we are to trust in our vigilance, or power, but rather that we should watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. Diligently labor to suppress the corruptions of our evil heart, and cling to the hallowed principles of holiness which issue from the true heart with which we draw nigh unto God, in full assurance of faith, by the new and living way which our God has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.

Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, “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.” John 4:14. This water which Jesus giveth is eternal life; it is called “a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.” This, when given, shall be in its happy recipient a well of water, springing into everlasting life; and all its out flowings are of life; and the charge to keep it diligently is equivalent to the many admonitions given to the saints in the word, to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. To keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the flesh. To deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world.

These are some of the views which have occurred to us on the text, and such as they are, we pass them over to brother Walker, and to all who may feel interested in the investigation of the subject.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1869.

II KINGS 20:1-6.

Elder Beebe – Dear Brother: Will you, or some of your many correspondents, please give an explanation of II Kings 20:1-6. It has perplexed me so long that I feel now that I must have an explanation of it. Yet knowing, as I do, how you must be daily harassed by such enquiries, I

hesitate even now in sending my request. But if you, or any other kind brother, will grant me an answer, you will be favoring one who, at least, desires to know and to love the truth.

Owensville, Ind.

March 1, 1869.

Reply: To our unknown friend in Owensville, Ind. We have published our views on the text proposed in years which have passed, but as many of the present readers of the “Signs” were not then taking our paper, we will, briefly as we can, repeat substantially what have been our views for many years. The text proposed, and the whole chapter in which it is contained, with but little variation, is recorded in II Kings 20, and in Isaiah 38. In II Kings 20:1-5, it is thus written: “In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ‘Thin again and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold I will heal thee; and on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord.’”

Hezekiah, as the king of Israel, as the son of David, and as the captain of the people of the Lord, was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ; and only as a type in personating the Savior, could he have used the words of intercession, which were based upon his own personal righteousness, in an acceptable manner before the Lord. The house of Hezekiah, was his family, his affairs as the king of Israel. He was occupying the house of David, which figuratively means the people and church of the Lord. Isaiah, the son of Amoz, represents the law and the prophets which were until John; for all the prophets, and all the law had faithfully declared by the word of the Lord, that Jesus Christ, the anti-type of Hezekiah, should die, and not live. That he should be put to death in the flesh, and then be known no more in the flesh. And he was held by all the law and the prophets bound to set his house in order; whose house, the apostle says to the church, *ye are*; and in doing so his death was inevitable. Heaven and earth could sooner pass away, than the death of Christ could be avoided.

When the testimony of all the law and the prophets was brought to bear on him, showing that it behooved him to suffer all these things and then to enter into his glory, his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. With such overwhelming sufferings was he to be baptized, that he was straitened until that dreadful immersion should be accomplished. Like Hezekiah, he turned his face to the wall [Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks], and prayed. Thus in meeting the message of his God, as the High Priest of our profession, “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.” Hebrews 5:7. Thus answering to the deep emotion, and dreadful pressure of distress evinced by Hezekiah in the type, he plead with his heavenly Father, with fervency, and being in agony, cried, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass.” And he could plead as no other being could. In truth, the words of Hezekiah belonged alone to Jesus. “I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.” This language could only be used typically by Hezekiah, or only so far as he personated Christ; but in all their force they were used by our anti-typical Hezekiah, and they were heard and approved in heaven. He had loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even his God, anointed him with the oil of joy above his fellows.

Scarcely had the law and the prophets concentrated the full force of their message upon the devoted Lamb of God before a message was dispatched from heaven's high eternal throne announcing that his intercession was heard, and that the son of Amoz must not retire until he had declared from the mouth of God that Jesus our Lord should arise and go into the house of the Lord on the third day. It was not enough that the holy prophets should predict the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, but they must also tell of the glory that should follow. Thus when our risen Lord opened the understanding of his disciples, he explained to them in all the Old Testament Scriptures, the things concerning himself; that thus it was written, and therefore thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise on the third day.

In the type, Hezekiah came only to the doors of death; but Jesus, of whom he was the type, "Entered its iron gates, and took its bars away." The fifteen years added to the days of Hezekiah shows in the figurative import of the type that Jesus our Lord should arise from the dead on the third day, and go into his Father's house which hath many mansions, and that the gospel dispensation should be added to his Mediatorial days. "He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken, And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he bath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isaiah 53:8-11.

In these brief remarks we have not attempted to meet the silly lucubrations of Arminians, nor the daring presumption of those who dispute the immutability of God, by laboring to make it appear that the prayers of men have power to change the decrees of God; but we have labored rather to elucidate the subject so as to afford instruction and comfort to those who fear the Lord and delight in the knowledge of the truth.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1869.

REVELATION 20:11,12.

Reply to Brother John Barger: Although quite unaccustomed to sermon writing, we are willing to make an effort to comply with the desire of our brother. As Old School Baptists never preach by notes, or read manuscript sermons, they must have a far more retentive memory than we possess if any of them can give an accurate statement of them, either before or after preaching. What we shall now write must therefore be accepted by our readers, rather as a presentation of the present leading of our mind, than an accurate statement of the discourse delivered at the funeral of our dear departed brother.

Text: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead

were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:11,12.

In our last interview with brother Leachman, and during his last sickness, he said that his mind had been led through his painful illness to meditate sweetly and constantly on the sovereignty of God; which subject had opened to his mind in greater beauty than ever before. And being informed by those who were constantly with him in his last hours, that the government of God had continued to be his theme to the end; and his having selected to be sung at his funeral the hymn,

“Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker’s nod,”

suggested to our mind as peculiarly appropriate for the occasion the text which we announced.

The holy apostle John, secluded from the society of mankind, an exile on a desolate island, far from the noise, the strife and turmoil of the world, and out of the sight of his cruel persecutors, was at the very place where the power and wisdom of our sovereign God had appointed; and, as though in mockery of all their wicked and malicious designs, the deep counsel of the sovereign God was most clearly displayed. Wrapped in holy vision, he received, “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.” Revelation 1:1,2. This faithful record of the things which John saw, is endorsed by the Son of God himself, in these solemn and emphatic words: “I Jesus have sent mine angel, to testify unto you these things in the churches.” Revelation 22:16. Some of the popular, but false, expounders of the word, have, perhaps by way of compliment, called John the Revelator. But he was not the revelator, nor did he assume to be; but to him, the angel or Spirit of Christ made known the revelation of Christ which God has given, and John was a faithful witness of the things which he saw. And among the astonishing things which he saw, perhaps no manifestation was more sublime and glorious than that of which he bore record in the words of our text. It is true he had seen in the earlier part of his vision the form of the risen and immortal Savior, in the midst of the candlesticks, holding the stars in his right hand, and the keys of death and hell in his possession. He had seen the Lamb standing on mount Zion, with all his saints worshipping before him. He had seen and bore record of the mighty conflicts in which Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and his angels, and in which the latter were vanquished. He saw and bore record of the rising of the several beasts, the development of their rage and malice against the cause of God and truth. He had seen the souls of the martyred servants of God under the altar waiting the day and vengeance held in store for their enemies; and many other demonstrations of the wisdom, power and goodness of God, inspiring his ransomed saints to sing, “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” But in the text, he records the vision of the uncovered throne of God. That throne of which the royal psalmist sang, “He that keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.” Now to the eyes of John the cloud is rolled back, and the face, the greatness, power, majesty and purity of the eternal throne of God is uncovered, unclouded, and clearly seen, through the revelation which God gave to our Mediatorial Head, to show to his servants; it is now sent and signified by his angel [spirit] unto John, to be by him witnessed for the benefit of all the saints of the Most High.

A throne is a place of imperial power, a place of government, the seat of state occupied by a reigning king or sovereign; and when the word is used in reference to the government of God, it signifies to us his supreme power to govern, control, and dispose of all beings, events and worlds, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. The throne which John saw is described in two important particulars. First,

it was a *great* throne. Whether considered as descriptive of the throne, or supreme power of God in his universal providence, extending to all beings and all events, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, or especially applied here, as we understand it, to the Mediatorial throne of our exalted Prince and Savior, the description given in our text is equally appropriate and true. For John is evidently speaking of what he elsewhere calls the throne of God and the Lamb. Christ in his exaltation far above all heavens, has sat down with his Father on his throne, and all the power of heaven and earth is vested in him. Power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and power to control all events in both worlds, so that all the angels worship him, and kingdoms and empires arise and decline at his bidding.

He is not only in a spiritual sense, the “King of saints,” ruling in and reigning over them, and causing all things to work together for their good, but he is also the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. The greatness of a throne is estimated by the amount of power and dominion which it represents; in this view of the subject, the throne which John saw, embracing all the power of heaven and earth, and a dominion spreading from the rivers to the ends of the earth, and extending from everlasting to everlasting, must be inconceivably great. “A glorious high throne from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary.” Of the throne of our Redeemer, God has said, “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” Psalm 2:6. And “Unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”

“And, Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hand. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” Hebrews 1:8-12. A great throne, towering above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. “His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.” Psalm 89:29 & 36. How terribly sublime and glorious is the inspired testimony of the supreme power and majesty of the Holy One! “His throne is set in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all.” Examples of his eternal power and Godhead are visible whichever way we look. His hand has garnished the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth. In all the radiant brightness of his Father’s glory, and as the express and only true image of the invisible God, he rides upon the wings of the wind and makes the clouds his chariot. He doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.

“Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.”

Frankly confessing our utter inability to set forth in adequate terms the might and majesty of the throne, we can only adopt the descriptive word given in our text. A *great* throne! How great, no uninspired tongue can tell, no pen can write, nor finite mind conceive.

But we pass to notice the second descriptive word. It was a *white* throne. White is emblematic of purity, unsullied, unstained, and unblemished purity. The thrones of men may be comparatively great, when compared with other earthly powers; but none of them can be called pure, or white. Marks of defection have stained all earthly thrones and powers; and every organized government of this world has become defiled and drunken with the cup of Mystery, Babylon the Great. Christ is the only king that has ever reigned in righteousness, and whose princes have, and still do rule in judgment. His throne is white,

and from every blemish perfectly free. And although the heathen rage, and the kings of the earth set themselves against him, as the Anointed of the Father, they cannot detect the shadow of a spot upon his throne, or blemish in his government. But because of their own perverseness and unlikeness to his purity, they rage and blaspheme. Even the saints of God while here in the flesh, find in their carnal earthly nature a propensity to murmur, and complain of his dealings with them, because his judgments are too profound for them to comprehend, and his ways are past finding out by their reasoning powers; still when he restoreth their souls, they feel reprov'd, and chide themselves, and pray for grace to reconcile them to all his dealings with them. And when their faith in him triumphs over their depravity, they rejoice to know, that in all things, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," and then they would not for thousands of worlds have it otherwise. Then they say, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." Or with the ancient priest, "It is the Lord, let him do unto me what seemeth him good."

The crushing blow which God has dealt to us, in calling from us our dear brother, in the midst of his extraordinary usefulness, leaving so wide a field for his labors, to feel the painful stroke, seems dark and inscrutable to our finite minds. But has it stained his throne, has it sullied his government? May grace prevent the impious thought. It may indeed be hard for us to see why this deep affliction has come upon us. If for our sins, why were we not taken and our dear brother spared? If for the trial of our faith, why could we not been tried as effectually by some other trying ordeal? But hush! –

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives."

When thus we vent the gushing anguish of our sad and sorrowing hearts, we fail to see, as John saw, the glory of the great white throne on which our Lord presides. He keepeth back its face, and mantles it from our discernment with his cloud. This is in wholesome discipline to us, for we need those trials of our faith; and when he shall have sufficiently prepared us for the joy inspiring vision, he will roll back the darksome cloud, and let in upon us the light of his countenance; and then with admiration and ecstatic delight shall we be prepared to say, in view of the immaculate purity of his throne, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

But John saw not only the great white throne; he saw also him that sat upon it. It was not a vacant, abdicated or deserted throne. According to the glorious majesty and dazzling splendor of the throne, its holy occupant is described as the only being of sufficient excellence to sit upon such a place of power. Worshipping millions prostrate themselves before him, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor, and power for thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Revelation 4:11. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Revelation 4:9-13. How indescribably glorious must he be to command such homage and excellent glory. But greater still the wonder, the earth with all its charms, and the heavens with all its worlds of light retreat, and haste away; for, as we have seen, they shall wax old, they shall

be folded like a garment, they shall pass away. The retiring earth and fading heavens recede before his face, and there is no place found for them. His supreme glory demands all space. Nothing is permitted to remain to obscure his presence and supreme glory.

It has been even thus with all the saints of God, whenever they have beheld the King in his beauty; before his face everything else has disappeared. The world has become to us as nothing and vanity. Our own fleshly nature has sunk into nothingness, and whether we were ourselves in or out of the body, we could not tell; for he whom John saw sitting on the great white throne filled all things.

And yet we infer from the testimony of I John 3:2, that with all the glory of Christ that ever has been revealed to the saints while here in this vale of tears, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, as it will appear, when far removed from all terrestrial things, we shall see our Lord enthroned in that glory in which John saw him, and as we are fully persuaded our departed brother now sees him, where the glory of his face repels all other objects from our admiring eyes. When our God shall call us hence, to be with him, to behold the glory he had with the Father before the world began, could we take this world with us, or any part of it, could we find any place to put them? As to the dying saints, the old earth and heavens disappear, and the light and glory of the heavenly world breaks in upon their wondering eyes, they sing with the poet,

“The world recedes, it disappears,
Heaven opens to my eyes, my ears,
With sounds seraphic ring;
Lend, lend your wings, I mount, I fly,
O grave! Where is thy victory?
O death! Where is thy sting?”

Those who are looking for a heaven to consist in carnal enjoyments, fleshly relations, a reconstruction of nature, can have no adequate idea of the true and spiritual import of our subject. No place shall be found in the full orb'd glory of the great white throne, and the face of him that sits upon it, for this world or any of the appurtenances thereunto belonging.

“The earth and heavens shall pass away,
And the old rolling skies.”

“*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.*” They have always stood before God; nothing ever has or can be hidden from the sight of him with whom we have to do. But this to us will be a revelation, as it was to John. God is the Judge of both the quick [or living] and the dead, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

While the great white throne and him who sits upon is truly awe-inspiring, the refulgent glory of the throne and of the government, when thus unveiled is seen without the intervention of a cloud or shadow. The blazing sun grows dim, and all the lights of nature are put out, the earth and heavens retire, the sun, and moon, and stars give place, all their glory is absorbed, they flee from his presence, and in his uncovered glory no place for them can be found; his judgment but exemplifies the spotless splendor of the throne, and the inconceivable majesty and divine perfections of him whose is the power, the kingdom and the glory forever and ever. His royal mandate reaches the deepest grave, penetrates the strongest tomb; throughout all space, the winged summons flies. The dead have heard the voice of the Son of God, and they come forth, and death and hell, of which he holds the keys, by him unlocked, at once give up their dead. Of all the unnumbered millions not one is able to resist his call. The small, the great, they all are now before him. The everlasting destiny of every son or daughter

of Adam hangs on his lips. For that judgment which is final and irrevocable, they stand before the throne of God. How awfully solemn the thought. Kings and their subjects, tyrants who have oppressed, and victims of oppression, unmasked hypocrites and humble followers of the Lamb, the just and the unjust, the small and the great, they all stand before God. So John in vision saw them, and so they really stand and have forever stood before the rein-trying and heart-searching God. The eternal Judge is on the throne; that throne is pure and white, the Judge is perfectly competent. But not, as vain speculators have imagined, to hold a court of investigation. The final issue can supply the mind of God with nothing new. That day, that awful scene shall disclose no secret that was not known to God from everlasting. In that sealed book which none but the Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy to look upon, unseal, or make known, is “every angel’s form and size, written by the eternal pen.” The august Judge has “declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

“*And the books were opened.*” Not to make some new entry, or to record some newly discovered secret, but to disclose, or make manifest the records of eternity, what was known and established in the unchangeable counsel and prescience of God from everlasting. By the books figuratively considered, and as the figure is frequently used in the Scriptures, we may understand the purposes and decrees of God, as it is used in Psalm 139:15. “And in thy book all my members were written.” “Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God.” As in the hymn so valued by our brother.

“Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men.”

Or without doing violence to the figure we may understand the books in their plural number to mean the book of the law, and of the prophets; for what things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:19,20. The opening of the books of the law alone would seal the doom of all the sons of Adam, as by it no flesh can be justified. But, joy to the saints, “Another book is opened, which is the book of life [the gospel], in which all the members of Christ are written.”

“And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books.” Not out of *things* newly brought to the knowledge of the Judge. Long as the books of law and gospel have been held in the archives of the eternal world, they have contained the judgment of our God; and to those secret records Job appealed when grievously accused by his mistaken friends. “Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.” Job 16:19. No judgment shall or can be passed or executed that is not found in the books, without involving the immutability and the truth of God; for if he has found out anything new, or that he did not always know, his new discovery would imply a change; and if what the books declare should in one jot or tittle fail, his truth would fail. Should we understand the books to mean the counsels and decrees of God, all the dead must be judged out of, and according thereunto; for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Or if we understand them to be the books of the Bible, which are a transcript of the mind and will of God, in them the final, irrevocable and everlasting judgment, sentence and destiny of every being is recorded.

In these books, when opened, will be found the record of the judgment and decision of God. “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forgot God.” Have we a right to think this sentence will be revoked, or modified in the least? While in the book of life of the Lamb we have the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, – a record of his atoning sacrifice for the sins of his people; a faithful identification of his people, and a positive declaration that “all his saints are in his hand.”

Deuteronomy 33:3. “Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” John 10:28,29. For their sins he was delivered up, for them he drained the vials of almighty wrath, and having borne their sins in his own body on the tree, has put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and arisen from the dead for their justification. Having redeemed them unto God with his own blood, and washed and cleansed them from all guilt in the same, he has constituted them “the righteousness of God in him.” In the book of life of the Lamb slain, this record is found, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death: for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1-4.

The books out of which all the dead, both small and great, are judged, already contain the judgment and decision. Thus: “He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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 3:18 & 5:24. Although these decisions are plainly recorded, the books which contain them are sealed to the wise and prudent of this world. Nor is it possible for any man to pry between the folded leaves, until arraigned before the great white throne, and him that sits thereon.

Although the letter of the word may have been familiar to us from our infancy, how little did we know of its spirit and power, until we heard the voice of the Son of God, and were quickened; then the books to us were opened, and the great white throne appeared; then we stood trembling before the throne, the spirituality of the law, its stern demands with killing power convinced us of our guilt and condemnation. In our anguish and deep contrition we saw no stain upon the throne, it was spotless and pure, even in our condemnation. Nor could we see how the purity of that throne could be preserved in our salvation, until the other book, which is the book of life, was opened, and the gospel of our salvation brought to light. No new law required to be enacted to condemn us, nor was any new gospel or plan of grace required for our justification. Enough for all the purposes of justice and judgment was found in the books, when thus they were opened, and we were judged, and condemned, and our Surety appeared, canceled all demands, and clothed us with garments of salvation, and covered us with the robe of righteousness, and presented us before the great white throne, freely, fully and forever justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Out of those things which were written in these books all the dead were judged; and this judgment, to be out of the records of the books, must of necessity be according to their works.

A careful examination of those things which are written in the books will show beyond all cavil or contradiction that the works of every one will show to what class he belongs. Men do not gather grapes of thorns; nor figs of thistles. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Yet not for believing or for being baptized; for the faith by which alone any can believe the gospel is the gift of God, and hence an evidence that its possessor is a sinner saved by grace; and the baptism of an unbeliever is a desecration of the sacred ordinance. As the books of God contain a record of the destiny of all, so it is “God that worketh in all his children both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” God has wrought all their works in them. They who are of God hear Christ, and they that know God

hear the apostles. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. The sovereign Judge has already pronounced that they who are of their father the devil will do the works of their father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and their feet are swift to shed blood. He is a liar, and the father of it, and they make lies their refuge, and under falsehood do they hide themselves. So, while the fruit cannot change the nature of the tree, the tree gives character to its fruit, and its fruit demonstrates the character of the tree.

We have not to wait long ages for this throne to be planted in the heavens, nor for the Son of God to come and occupy it. God has declared the decree, "Yet have I set my King upon his holy hill of Zion." The God of heaven has set up the kingdom, and in the regeneration, his King already enthroned in power and judgment, is exalted to the throne of his glory, and the twelve apostles are seated with him on thrones of judgment. This glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary. The dead, both small and great, are now before him; and he is now separating the nations, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.

Some of the saints have been made sad by the delusive traditions which prevail in the world, that their final destiny is yet unsettled; that it cannot be decided until some period far off in the distant future, in which it is represented that all the saints, with all the kindreds of the earth, shall stand in a promiscuous assembly before the bar of God, and there be examined, or rather their works to be examined, to ascertain in weight and measure whether their good works shall over-balance their evil works; and whether they shall be saved or lost. Can we entertain that view and yet rely upon what our Judge has already told us? I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Can this pledge be revoked? "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life." John 6:47. The sins and iniquities of his people, God has promised to remember no more. As a thick cloud has he blotted them out, and they shall never again be brought to remembrance.

"Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness."

This very moment, while we weep around the cherished form of our dear departed brother, his spirit clothed with immortality mingles with the glorified saints in loud and blissful anthems, before the great white throne, and in the presence of him who sits upon it. Ransomed millions with him swell the notes of immortal songs of praise unto God and the Lamb. There is no intermediate state between mortality and immortality, no purgatory; no slumbering in the ground; no waiting for corruption; earth and worms to refine or otherwise improve our dust. They that are accounted worthy of that world, and of the resurrection of the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are equal to the angels, and are children of God, being the children of the resurrection. From the shores of time our brother has passed; beyond those shores there is no time; all, all is boundless eternity. All is present, all is one eternal now.

Of him the joy inspiring words of Paul are peculiarly applicable: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

In the foregoing article, although we may have gone over much of the ground occupied by us at the funeral of our brother, we have not aimed to give a statement of that discourse; for that we could not do; but in compliance with the desire of our beloved brother Barger, and others, we have labored rather

to present such views as have occurred to our mind while writing. Much, no doubt, that was said then is omitted here, and much contained in this article was not uttered on that occasion.

May the subject be carefully, prayerfully and profitably considered, the saints edified and comforted, and our God be glorified.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 1, 1869.

HEBREWS 4:1,2.

Reply to Sister Walker, on Hebrews 4:1,2.

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

The inspired writer in comparing the typical with the gospel dispensation, shows that the former, although a carnal people, having but a worldly sanctuary, were with their ordinances and service figurative. Having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very [or exact] image of the things to which they pointed, they could never make, with their perpetual sacrifices, the comers to their altars perfect; but still they bore a striking typical resemblance to the things which they prefigured.

Israel under the first covenant was typical of the spiritual Israel, whose circumcision is not outward in their flesh, but inward, in their hearts, not made with hands, but in the spirit, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Their consecration as the people of God, chosen in the flesh of Abraham, and heirs of the promised rest, in the land of Canaan, was beautifully emblematic of the spiritual seed of Christ, which were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in their relation to him, heirs of an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away. In all that is written of the carnal Israel, something may be found pointing to corresponding realities in the spiritual, or anti-typical Israel under the new covenant dispensation. Their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and their wearisome journey through the wilderness, and their final rest in the land of Canaan, with their constant inclination to murmur, and rebel against God, and the judgments visited upon them for their infidelity and idolatry, all foreshadowed the waywardness of the children of God under the gospel dispensation. The failure of the unbelieving Israelites, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, to enter and rest in the promised land of Canaan is urged as an admonition to the people of God, under the gospel dispensation, to “labor to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

The rest prefigured by the land of Canaan, and by the Jewish sabbaths, is not, as some have supposed, the state of ultimate happiness which awaits the saints in the consummation of glory, for that ultimatum cannot be dependent in any degree upon contingencies of any kind. Christ has engaged by irrevocable decree to raise up at the last day, to that divine abode, all that his Father has given him. Canaan could not prefigure such a state of uninterrupted blessedness; for there was much fighting, and many sore conflicts to be endured in that land; neither could the Jewish sabbaths, for they were often desecrated, subjecting those who violated them to pains and penalties, very unlike the perfect security of the saints

in glory. But we are informed in the connection of our subject that those times and places of rest under the old covenant pointed to and typified the rest which remains under the gospel dispensation to the people of God, into which they who believe have entered.

The argument of the inspired writer of our text is that in the type, the Lord swore in his wrath that the unbelieving Israelites should not enter into his rest, so that they could not enter in because of unbelief; thus representing that the rest which is enjoined in the gospel cannot possibly be entered or enjoyed in the absence of faith. As none but those who are born of God have, or possibly can have, that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, none but they can possibly know experimentally anything of spiritual or gospel rest. And even the saints can only enjoy it when their faith predominates over the infidelity of their nature. On this very account the admonition comes to the saints, to those holy brethren who are partakers of the heavenly calling, to “fear, lest a promise being left them, of entering into his rest, any of them should seem to come short of it.”

His rest, or the rest which God has promised to his people, is said to be glorious. Not only is it a respite from labor and bondage, but a confident reliance on Christ, as a full and sufficient Savior, on his atoning blood for the remission of our sins, on his perfect righteousness for our justification before God; his Spirit bestowed on us in our new birth, to qualify us to appreciate and enjoy spiritual things; a firm reliance on his promises, and a complete cessation from all our own legal works, and legal thoughts. Such a rest is promised to the people of God, and that promise is left on record for them. “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.” Matthew 11:28,29. While the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, our Lord giveth his beloved rest. That this rest is provided for the people of God, and that the promise of entering it is left for the comfort of the people of God, is certain.

Why then are we admonished to fear lest those unto whom it is promised should seem to come short of it? Every child of God, while in the flesh, knows what this liability means. Such is the nature of the rest, that it is only entered and enjoyed when and while we believe. Whenever our doubts and fears prevail, we are tossed with tempest, and not comforted; labor, toil and unrest, weariness, fainting and distress will certainly come upon us. How can we rest upon a promise which faith does lay hold on and appropriate to us? God gave a promise of rest in the land of Canaan to the Hebrews, but it was seldom they relied on that promise while in the wilderness. When God made for them a wondrous pathway through the Red Sea, or displayed some wonderful power in their deliverance, they were for the moment satisfied that God would fulfill his promises; but when their way was intercepted by dangers and difficulties, they invariably murmured and said that they were brought into the wilderness to die.

How very like the murmuring tribes are we, when by some signal display of God’s delivering power, our faith rises above our fears, we feel strong in the Lord, and confess how slow of heart we have been to believe. Yet while believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then we find the place where he feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon. But as soon as the gathering clouds appear, and hide the sun from our sight, we recall our doubts and fears, and sometimes even doubt that we have ever seen the sun, or known its light. Do we not at such times *seem to come short of the promised rest?*

The admonition, “Let us therefore fear,” is not that we should cherish doubts and nurse our unbelief; but resist them; for it is said in verse 11, “Let us labor therefore to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” The example referred to is that of the carnal Hebrews in the type; they could not enter into Canaan because of unbelief. Nor can we enter into our spiritual rest while we

cherish our doubts and fears. It is impossible for us to rest, only in a confident unwavering reliance on our God. Whether the people of God enjoy it or not, that rest remaineth for them. Do any of the tried and tempted, doubting, fearing, trembling saints enquire how they are to labor to enter into it? To such we say, it is not by searching for some good thing in your flesh, or fleshly nature; for Paul himself could not find it there. Not by looking to Mount Sinai; for if so much as a beast should touch that mountain it must die. The law is a ministration of death. Not by making a pilgrimage to the empty sepulchre of the dear Redeemer; you will not find him there; for he has risen. Seek not for the living among the dead. Our glorious Leader has given us directions. He says, "Come unto me." Come away from Sinai, come away from yourself, come away from everything else, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. To perform such labor as this, you not only need to have life, but he who calls you unto him commands you to take on you his yoke. You cannot rest under the yoke of bondage which entangled the Galatian saints; for no yoke but that of Jesus is easy, no burden but his is light. How can you labor to advantage unless you put on his yoke? And when in his yoke, equally yoked with believers, you have confessed your allegiance to him, then "learn of him." He will teach you as never man taught. He is meek, and will teach you to be meek; he is lowly, and will teach you lessons of humility; and in that meek and lowly spirit which you learn of Jesus, as God is true, you shall find rest to your soul.

Now remember all that faith which is indispensable to gospel rest is of God; it is the faith of the Son of God, and the fruit of his Spirit of which you are born again, and without which it is impossible to please God. And all that infidelity, unbelief, doubts, fears and lack of confidence which disturbs, disquiets and distresses you, is of your own carnal nature. When faith lifts up her eyes to the eternal hills, joy, peace and rest possesses your heart; you forget yourself, lost in the contemplation of eternal things, and like Paul when elevated to the third heaven, you are so perfectly stripped of all selfishness that you are unconscious of having a body, or whether in it or not you cannot tell. But when doubts and unbelief prevail, then you know where the body is, and you begin to worry and fret about yourself. The way of salvation by grace looks lovely and beautiful, but, O, says old self, how do I know that I have any interest in it? What is that to thee? Faith leaves that all with the Lord; and we venture the assertion that no child of grace ever entered into gospel rest, except when his faith was sufficiently strong to leave all personal interest with God. Faith says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isaiah 26:3,4.

When our confidence in God is firm and unshaken, we rest in that confidence. But when we doubt and fear, and even dispute all that he has ever done for us, we become restless and comfortless. In our firm reliance on God, on his promises, on his work that he has wrought in us, we sweetly and peacefully rest; but when we are tempted to distrust in God, and indulge our doubts and fears, we *seem* to come short of that rest. And when we consider the strong and constant tendency of our carnal minds to doubt and dispute what God has said and what he has done, do we not find that we have reason to fear that our rest will be broken? "Let us therefore fear" such insidious and treacherous propensities of our carnal or fleshly minds. These are what the word admonishes us to fear, for these are what invade, disturb and prevent our rest, so that although we have the promise and oath of God who cannot lie, to rest upon, we seem to come short, and do indeed often come far short of that rest which such gracious promises are sufficient to secure.

"For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them." To them the promise of temporal rest was preached; and the preaching of the gracious promises of God is gospel preaching; but gospel preaching cannot bring rest and assurance to those who do not believe. The Hebrews could not be profited by the

preaching of the promises when they had no faith in them, and did not believe them; they were not mixed with faith in them. It is even so with Christians now under the gospel dispensation. Unless we have faith and that faith predominating over our doubts, we cannot be profited in a way of rest when we hear the gospel preached. We will ask the doubting, fearing, trembling Christian, how has it been with you? You have heard the promises preached, they have seemed great and precious. Did they bring you rest? O no. Why? Because I could not believe they were for me. Well then you could not enter into rest, because of unbelief. You saw that they were blessed provisions for somebody, and longed to be that somebody. So instead of entering into rest, you seemed to come short of it. Can you find any other reason why you could not rest in the preached word, but your lack of faith and confidence to appropriate its consolation to your own case? The promise you heard preached to the weary and heavy laden, and you were weary and heavy laden; but you did not feel satisfied that it was for you. It was preached to all who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; you had an ear to hear it preached to the churches, you saw and were fully satisfied that it was for the churches of the saints; but your unbelief told you that it was not for you, and so you failed to rest upon it, or to be comforted by it, because of your unbelief. The promises to the carnal Israelites, which were typical of the gospel, did not profit that carnal people, because they had no faith to believe them, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness and they entered not into the goodly land of rest.

And have we not reason to fear there are thousands of God's dear children, who are born of the Spirit, who love the truth, who have an ear to hear, and who desire above all things to be numbered among, and in fellowship with the children of God, whose mortal bodies fall in the wilderness, without ever entering into the church in her gospel organization? Not so; not because the laws and order of the kingdom of Christ forbids them; not because they do not love her gates, and earnestly long for the milk and honey which forever flows within her sacred borders; but simply because they listen to and are swayed by the infidelity of their own carnal minds, and reject the testimony of God. To all such a promise is surely left of entering into his rest; and although we see them hugging their chains and fetters, and, like Rachel, refusing to be comforted, still the promise is none the less unto them, and to their children, and unto all them which are afar off; yet they seem to come short of it. That is, of resting upon it, by entering in through the gates into the city, where they may have right to the tree of life, but continue to remain without among the dogs and sorcerers, and other bad companions. But the enquiry may be, what is to become of them? We answer, although their unbelief may prevent them from the enjoyment of rest, while here in the flesh, and deprive them of the communion of the church of God, so far at least as to seem to come short of it, still their unbelief cannot make the promises of God of none effect. Notwithstanding all their shortcomings, their spiritual and immortal life is hid with Christ in God. Into the promised rest which their unbelief has disqualified them for the enjoyment while here below, they shall be brought when Christ our Lord, in fulfillment of his gracious pledge, shall raise them up at the last day.

We would not confine the application of the admonition of our subject to those timid, trembling, doubting children of our God, whose unbelieving doubts and fears prevail to keep them from the bosom of the church, and from the enjoyment of the rest into which believers have entered; for there are very many who have walked for many years in the fellowship of the churches, and who have often witnessed the sweet comfort of resting confidentially and steadfastly on the promises of the gospel, who at times are driven by their doubts, fears and unbelief from their resting place, and are tossed with tempests and not comforted. Their faith is sharply contested by their fears and unbelief; and at all such times they truly seem to come short of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And they learn

by experience that rest arises with the triumphs of their faith and confiding reliance on the God of their salvation, and declines with the prevalence of their doubts and fears.

Before we close this article, we will remark that, although there is no virtue in doubts and fears, no child of God, while in the flesh, is altogether free from them; nor is it possible that any but the heaven-born should ever be annoyed with such as we have described. They are the muddy streams which flow unbidden from our carnal nature, and war against the spirit of holiness which God has given to us. They are often excited by the tempter, and sometimes the saints are left to their buffetings, as a wholesome chastisement for our follies, or for the trial of our faith; but from whatever cause they may come, they disturb our repose, and disquiet and trouble the saints. But who ever heard of a hypocrite or unquickened person being troubled in this way? Should we meet with any who have long professed discipleship to Christ, who are strangers to the annoyance of doubts and fears, we could repose no confidence in their profession; and yet because we are troubled with them, what bitter things we write against ourselves.

We are to *strive* to enter into rest, by fighting valiantly the fight of faith, making war against our unbelief. "To you who are troubled," the apostle says, "rest with us." The apostles rested in God, and not in themselves. The direction of God is, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you. "Trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion that cannot be moved, but abideth forever." Do you believe what God the Lord hath spoken, that he rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky? Do you believe that "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms?"

"Then let the earth's old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steadfast souls shall fear no more,
Than solid rocks when billows roar."

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1869.

PSALM 16:10.

Brother Moody, of Maine, desires our views on the words, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Psalm 16:10.

The best and only reliable explanation of these words that can be given, are found recorded in Acts 2:25-32, inclusive. It is here shown by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that these words were applicable to David, only as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ; and were used to signify that Christ should certainly arise from the dead, and that his flesh should not see corruption, but that it should arise on the third day. The word *hell* in this text does not mean perdition, but is here, as in some other passages, used to mean the grave. The word *hell*, we are told by the learned, is from the Saxon *hillan*, or *helan*, which signifies *to hide*, or *roll*, a *cavern*, though elsewhere used to denote the place of torment, it is here used to signify *the concealed or unseen place of the dead*. Hence it is here used to show that our

Lord Jesus, in pouring out his soul unto death (Isaiah 53:12), was able to lay down his life and to take it up again. John 10:18. Hence the resurrection of our Redeemer from the dead was the verification and fulfillment of what David as a prophet said in our text.

“Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Wherefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2.22-36.

It would be presumptuous in us to attempt to improve on this divinely inspired interpretation of the subject.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1869.

HEBREWS 10:26-29.

Remarks on Hebrews 10:26-29.

By request of brother Hugh Johnson,
Middlesex Co., Ontario.

“For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

The great theme of the inspired writer of this epistle is to show, by comparing and contrasting the two covenants, the superiority of the latter, or gospel, over the former, or legal. The former, with its law of carnal commandments, its worldly sanctuary, and divine service, could make nothing perfect, was weak through the flesh; its ample variety of types, though strikingly analogous, were not the perfect images

of the things to which they pointed. The priesthood of Aaron, his service at the altar, and the perpetual offerings of the people through him, failed to purge their conscience from dead works, or to qualify them to worship the true God. Moses, their leader, and minister of the law, though faithful in all his house, as a servant, did not, and could not occupy it in the relation, dignity, nor inheritance of a son. The law which that covenant imposed on the tribes of Jacob, though holy, just and good, was a ministration of death, and could give them no life, because they were carnal, sold under sin. If it could by any possibility have given life, then verily righteousness should have been by the law. All who were, and as many as now are of the works of the law, are under the curse.

The blood of the victims which flowed continually from the altars, though ceremonially cleansing the transgressors, and showing that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, was but a ceremonial purging; for in them all, there was a remembrance again made of sins every year; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls, and of goats, should take away sins. “The Holy Ghost, thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all [the gospel] was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle [or legal covenant] was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.” That is, not of the Jewish, ceremonial, typical, ineffectual covenant. “And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions which were under the first testament [or covenant] they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”

The inspired writer, having thus clearly discriminated between the two covenants, and their respective priesthoods, offerings and dispensations, finds occasion to admonish those Hebrews, whom he distinguished from the carnal Israelites, as “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” and whom he exhorts to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Under the priesthood and apostleship of Christ Jesus, they were redeemed and delivered from the law of carnal commandments, washed, cleansed and justified freely through the redemption that was in him; “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,” or set apart, as the word *sanctified* here signifies; yet though redeemed from the law, and dead to it by the body of Christ, they are not without law, for they are under law to Christ; and his law is put in their hearts, and written in their minds. They are not therefore left to sin with impunity, for although the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, the law, which God has written in their hearts, requires obedience to all the precepts of Christ; so that if his children forsake his law, and walk not in his judgments, if they break his statutes and keep not his commandments, then will he visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Instead, therefore, of indulging their carnal propensities in any departure from the divine rule in the New Testament, they are told that, “We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,” or deliverance? The word of life under which the saints are born into the kingdom and come under the laws and ordinances of the gospel church, is the word which began to be spoken unto us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and was confirmed unto us by his apostles, who received their instruction and inspiration immediately from him. And inasmuch as Christ is evidently greater than Moses, or the angels, his words are to be observed with more sacred reverence. Not because our eternal salvation from death and hell depends on

our obedience; for that is not the case, as is shown by the covenant and oath under which the saints are gathered. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

"For by one offering he [Christ] hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Upon this assurance, the saints are faithfully admonished to approach the throne, and enter into the holiest of all by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Not by sacrifices and offerings, as under the former covenant, but through Christ, as our High Priest, over the house of God. "Let us draw nigh with a pure heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much more as ye see the day approaching."

"For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth." The pronoun *we* in this text includes the inspired writer with all his holy brethren, who are partakers of the heavenly calling, embracing all who have received the knowledge of the truth. They who know the truth are born and taught of God; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. If we know the truth, we have received that knowledge; and if we have received it, it is by revelation; for flesh and blood cannot reveal it. The knowledge of the truth here spoken of is the knowledge of the truth of which the inspired writer is speaking, the truth of a deliverance from the law of sin and death, and a knowledge of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus our Lord. A spotless perfection before God, by the one offering of our great High Priest, received in a true heart, in which the law of Christ is written by the finger of God. If this be admitted, the question may arise, Can those who have thus received the knowledge of the truth, who are forever perfected, who are called holy brethren, and partakers of the heavenly calling, for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, and in whose hearts the Holy Ghost has written the law of holiness, can they sin willfully after having received all this? With their mind, and with all these spiritual gifts, they invariably serve the law of God. With these they cannot commit sin, neither willfully, nor in any other way; for his [God's] seed remaineth in them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; but they who have received this seed, and this knowledge of the truth, if Paul was one of them, do find another law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. With their mind they truly serve the law of God; but with their flesh the law of sin. And now we ask for the man among all who have received the truth, either in ancient or in modern times, who has not sinned willfully after having received this experimental knowledge. The man who can lay his hand upon his heart, and in the presence of God who searches all hearts, say that he has never sinned willfully since he professed a hope in Christ, is a poor blind Pharisee, and does not have to go to the throne of grace with the petition, forgive my sins. But it is objected, Paul said, "If I do that which I allow not, it is no more I that do it; but sin that dwelleth in me." Very true, the spirit indeed is willing to serve God, and would never willingly, nor willfully, nor in any other way, sin, or offend against his God; but, as we have shown, while with the mind of Christ which every saint has, they invariably do serve the law of God, and delight in the spirit of holiness; still with their flesh they serve, and willfully serve the law of sin. In their flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that spirit in them which is born of God, there dwells no evil thing. Every sinful act is necessarily willful, for an involuntary act is not regarded as a

sin. Should a man much stronger than yourself take your hand in his and with it smite your friend or neighbor, in opposition to your will, in that case the act would be his and not yours. In every transgression of the children of God, they feel a consciousness that they have done it with the consent of their will, and that they have had the consent of their will in forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, is what burdens them with contrition and grief. The saint whose constant desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, but is hindered by providential circumstances over which he has no control, though deprived of a coveted privilege, is not conscious of guilt in having been detained. As the forsaking the assembling of ourselves together is named in the immediate context, we take that particular sin as an example of sinning willfully. The Christian who absents himself from the assembling of the church, either does it willfully, or against his will; if it be against his will and inclination, it is not sin; instead of reproof, he needs our sympathy; but if he absents himself from choice, having the ability and not the disposition, he sins willfully; and if he be a child of God, it is after he has received a knowledge of the truth. If there be any among our readers who have never, since they knew the truth, neglected this privilege willfully, or fully willing to do so, we will only exhort such not to be weary in well doing, for they shall, in due time, reap, if they faint not. But this one fault which the context tells us some are addicted to, is by no means the only fault wherein they sin willfully who have received the knowledge of the truth.

As under the old covenant, every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, so under the new covenant, a just recompense of reward for every transgression and disobedience of the saints is inevitable. But the justness of the recompense must be determined by the provisions of the law under which the transgression was committed. The Christian is not punished according to the merciless law of Moses; nor was the disciple of Moses punished according to the provisions of the law of Christ. Although the law of Moses inflicted the penalty of death upon the transgressor, yet it provided substitutional offerings, and sacrifices. The offender might bring his sin offering to the priest, and the priest would make for him an offering, or atonement; yet there was a remembrance again made of sins every year. But the transgressor of the law of Christ can make no atonement. The last, and only, offering for the people of God has already been made, and can never be repeated; therefore to the willful sinner in the new covenant there remains no more sacrifice for sins. If it were possible for the child of grace to fall away, or lose his interest in the one offering by which Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified, it would be impossible to renew him again to repentance; for to do so, Christ would require to be crucified again, and put to an open shame; as that is declared to be impossible, the conclusion is unavoidable, that for the Christian there remains no more sacrifice for sins. *No more* than what? In this same chapter in which we have our text, the record from the Psalms is copied, and put into the mouth of our High Priest, who when he cometh into the world, saith, “Sacrifices and offerings, thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo I come, [in the volume of the book it is written of me] to do thy will, O God.” “By the which will we are sanctified [or set apart] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all.” That is never to be repeated, or offered a second time. Under the law, “every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man [Christ] after he had made one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God; henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Sanctified, or set apart, by the same will which prepared for Christ a body, and which will Christ came to do. There is therefore no more sacrifice for sins, nor is it possible that any more sacrifice for sins shall ever be required, seeing that all the sins of all his people, past,

present or to come, were laid on him, and he bare them in his own body on the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and has obtained eternal redemption for them all.

Well, if the Christian then can make no expiation by any offering for his willful transgression, because there remaineth no more offering for sin, what does remain for him? Not a burning hell, nor a separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, nor can he possibly lose his interest in the atoning blood once offered for him by our great High Priest. These he cannot possibly lose; for Christ has said of all his sheep for whom he laid down his life, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none shall be able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. I, and my Father are one." But still there is something that remains for the willful transgressor, who is made manifest as an heir of immortality by receiving the knowledge of the truth. There remains for him "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." He who has received a knowledge of the truth, knows his God too well to believe that his willful transgressions will go unchastised. He knows full well that God will judge his people; and those who have felt his rod, will scarcely fail to understand the fitness of the descriptive language of our text in regard to the nature and manner of the stripes. Who of all the saints have traveled far in their spiritual pilgrimage without ever having experienced this peculiar exercise, called, "a certain fearful looking for of judgment?" Do any who have received the knowledge of the truth doubt that the Lord will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes? Do they doubt that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receives? Are any of them satisfied that they have never deserved that rod, and those stripes? If conscious then that we have been stubborn, willful, unruly, have not these convictions been followed with a deep sense of guiltiness, and fearful apprehensions of sore chastisement from the hand of the Lord? *A certain, indescribable fearful looking for of judgment.* The gracious smiles of the Lord are withdrawn; fearful clouds and darkness have gathered around and have fallen heavily upon us; even the hope that we have passed from death unto life recedes and is lost sight of. The tempter with all his cruel darts makes our troubles his sport. Not merely the faithful rod held in the hand of a heavenly parent and applied in the most tender parental love, are looked for; but such fiery indignation as God has prepared for the adversaries, or enemies of his government. They may be well satisfied that no fiery judgments brought with destruction can be in store for any of God's dear children; but that is the trying point. Am I a child of God, an heir of glory? Alas! The evidence is too far removed now to be available, and the disobedient, willful child is for the present cut asunder, and has his sad portion now with the hypocrites and unbelievers, where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

We know there can be no fiery indignation for any of God's children; for God has sworn with an oath that he will not be wroth with them, nor rebuke them in wrath; nor does our text imply even a possibility that they shall ever be subjected to that fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries; but they shall feel that they deserve it; and in the hidings of the gracious countenance of the Lord, and in the total absence of the evidence of their acceptance with God, they shall experience a *certain* fearful looking for it. The qualifying words *a certain*, express the idea that it is peculiar to the children of God, when under his chastening hand they feel the dreadful buffeting of Satan. It is *a certain*; for it is unlike the remorse and terror of devils and ungodly men, and so peculiar that none but the chastened saints can know anything about it. But O how sore the punishment to a child of grace to be left under these fearful apprehensions.

"What, to be banished from my God,
And yet forbid to die!"

“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses.” That is, they were put to death, by being stoned, or executed in some other way. But Moses was only a servant, faithful in all his house. Christ is a Son over his own house; if we consider the superior dignity of Christ above that of a servant, and admit the justice of the punishment inflicted on him, or them who despised his law, we are called to *suppose* how much sorer punishment they deserve, who despise, disobey, lightly regard or trifle with the authority of him who reigns enthroned in eternal glory. Now let this matter be tried at the bar of the conscience of the saints, and when every point has been duly weighed and maturely considered, what will be the judgment of our own conscience. Shall we not conclude the indignity, if offered to Christ, is infinitely greater than if it were only offered to Moses? And if we speak of punishment proportioned to the magnitude of the offence, will we not suppose the offence being so much greater, the punishment deserved by the offender would be as much sorer? Surely we will say, if God should deal with us according to our deserts, he would crush us beneath his fiery wrath forever. But God does not deal with his children according to their deserts; for we are told in this same chapter, “their sins and their iniquities he will remember no more.” He has engaged in covenant to “be merciful to their unrighteousness. And the saints are told in the conclusion of this same chapter, that “we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, [or utter ruin] but of them who believe to the saving of the soul.” And lest the saints should be overwhelmed by the searching scrutiny of this admonition, and in view of their short-comings, yield to despair, they are told to call to “remembrance the former days, in which they were illuminated, [or had received the knowledge of the truth] ye endured a great fight of affliction, partly while ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.” Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Trifling with the laws of Christ, and lightly regarding his authority in his church, is in our text, by the pen of holy inspiration, described as treading under foot the Son of God, as counting the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the spirit of grace. This is truly very strong language; but let us see if the enormity of the offence referred to are too highly colored.

Can we disregard the authority of his precepts, and the authority which he has invested his church with authority to enforce, without trampling under our feet his authority? If we forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, how does such neglect comport with his commands, and with our professed allegiance to him, as the Head over all things to his church? Our disregard of this or any other command is practically saying, He shall not reign over us; we will not be subject to his orders; we will trample his commandments under our feet, by allowing our carnal lusts to be gratified at the expense of his laws. This is called treading the Son of God under our feet. How dreadful the thought, how fragrant the indignity and insult to him.

Well might this same inspired writer give the solemn charge to all the saints, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we refuse him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”

In what other way is it possible for the subjects of his government to tread him under foot, than by despising, under-rating, repudiating, and disobeying his commands? Refusing him that speaketh from heaven. “We know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.” And again, “The Lord shall judge his people.” While stores of vengeance are held in reserve for all the ungodly, judgment is provided for the people of God; God will judge and chastise his children,

according to his word. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." He knows the thoughts and intents of every heart; from his all seeing eye nothing can be concealed, either of action or motive. His foundation standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

"And have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing." Aaron and his sons were sanctified, or set apart, for the priesthood by solemn consecration, but could not enter the holy place within the veil, without blood, on pain of instant death. Jesus Christ the High Priest, has by his own blood, according to the new covenant, entered within the veil for us, and is consecrated by his own blood, a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. With his own precious blood he has redeemed his chosen generation; as a holy priesthood unto God, and by virtue of that blood he has received his coronation as our King. We who are the subjects of his government cannot dispense with his yoke, and despise or transgress his authority, without practically calling that blood of consecration in the New Testament which was shed for many, an unholy thing. If we claim to be our own, we deny that we are bought with a price. If we glorify not God in our body and spirit which are his, we virtually say that blood is an unholy thing; we deny its power to cleanse, purify and consecrate us to God. And as such a rebellious course on the part of his redeemed is always resisted by the spirit of grace which God has given as in our heavenly birth, to disobey Christ is to do despite to that spirit of grace. All our fleshly powers lust and war against that spirit, and that spirit wars against our flesh and against all the corruptions of our flesh, and these corruptions can never predominate over the spirit of grace in us, by and in harmony with its dictates, but always in despite to it, and hence the willfulness of our sinning.

We are aware that some have contended that the words of our text were not designed to apply to the children of God; that they were used to describe the ungodly in distinction from the saints. Why then does the inspired writer include himself with those to whom he applies the admonition? When have the ungodly ever received the knowledge of the truth? How can they to whom the Son of God has given no law trample his authority under their feet, by neglecting to assemble themselves together as the manner of some is? Who of all the ungodly have ever felt or known that *certain* fearful looking for of judgment, seeing it is distinctly declared in the Scriptures, "There is no fear of God before their eyes?" Others there are who have admitted that the language applies to the children of God; who are born of the Spirit, but contend that the text involves the doctrine of falling from grace. But this doctrine cannot be intended, seeing that in the same chapter it is declared, that Christ has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, and the Eternal God has declared concerning them, in this same connection, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

While in the Lord they have righteousness and strength; in themselves, that is in their earthly nature, they are vile and polluted. The Lord is their righteousness, and he hath clothed them with his salvation, and they are made acceptable unto God, in the Beloved. They are both black and comely, black as the tents of Kedar in themselves, but in their Redeemer they are as white and pure as the curtains of Solomon. Christians wrong their own souls who try to shuffle off the force of these solemn admonitions on to some other class of beings. But whatever others may think or say, let those who have received the knowledge of the truth, regard it as the paramount business of their life to confess, obey, and follow the Lamb wherever he leads, through evil as well as through good report.

May we listen with profound reverence to the admonition of our subject, and hearken to, and not oppose or do despite to the spirit of grace. "For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, [all classes of men, Jews and Gentiles, bond and free] teaching us, that denying

ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.”

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1869.

REPLY TO BROTHER PURIFOY.

Question 1. Are not Baptists amenable to one another, whether they be members of the same church or not?

Answer: According to the order and usage of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, all are amenable to Christ, and by his laws required to be subject one to another; each esteeming others better than himself. All who are recognized as members of Christ’s mystical body, are required to observe all the laws of Christ, which regulate or enjoin the relative duties of each towards all others, whether they belong to the same distinct church organization or not. If one who is a brother has offended a brother who is a member of another church of the same faith and order, being aware of it, or remembering that his brother has aught against him, he is required to leave his gift before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift. And if one is offended with the other, he should go and tell him his fault in the spirit of meekness, and labor to restore his erring brother. If he fails to gain his brother by a private labor, he should take the next step; and if still unsuccessful, report the matter to the church of which the offending brother is a member, and submit to the decision of that church, whether it be the church in which one, or both, belong. Every distinctly organized branch of the church of Christ has jurisdiction over her own members. The member of one church cannot be tried by another church, without infringing on the rights and independence of the church to which the accused brother belongs. Yet the relations personally which one brother bears to another, as to relative duties, are the same throughout the kingdom of Christ.

Question 2. If I shall offend a brother of a sister church, or a sister church, is it not my duty to appear in person, and give satisfaction?

Answer: If a brother has committed an offence, whether it be against a church, a brother, or even against one who is not a brother, he should acknowledge his fault, make restoration, as far as possible, and ask forgiveness; but that this obligation requires in all cases the personal appearing of the offender before the offended, is not so clear, as cases may occur where a perfect satisfaction may be given by writing, or by messenger, or in some other way; besides it may not in all cases be in the power of the offender to appear personally.

Question 3. Is it Baptist usage to delegate their power to one or two members, especially where the whole church is concerned?

Answer: The church of God has no power to *delegate*. The churches of our order in the North, object to the use of the word *delegate*, for that very reason. We send no *delegates* to the *associations*, for a delegate is vested with power. We send messengers with especial instructions

from their respective churches, to bear messages, and to transact such business as the church directs, and hold them amenable to the church for their faithful performance of their specific duties. In the apostolic church we have several examples of messengers being sent by the churches, but no delegates. When a difficulty occurs between two members of two or more churches, the churches must either meet in convention, or send messengers to effect a reconciliation, and report to their respective churches. Churches sometimes send messengers to look after delinquent members, and to bear messages of admonition, or to summon them to appear before the church.

On the whole, we conclude, where the spirit of the gospel predominates, those who feel its sacred power will soon find a way to confess their faults one to another, and they will strive together to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But without that spirit no conformity to even Scripture rule will be of any avail; for the laws of Christ are spiritual, and unless they are written on our hearts, our forms of pretended obedience to the divine rule will lack the one thing most needful of all.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1869.

REPLY TO BROTHER MOSS.

Brother Beebe, we request your views on the point, viz., that if any are lost, is it their own fault?

It appears to us that the question involved is somewhat speculative, and belongs to that class of “endless genealogies and foolish questions about the law,” which the apostle has warned us to avoid. I Timothy 1:4 & Titus 3:9. It is enough for us to know that all mankind have sinned in the transgression in the garden of Eden, and that a righteous judgment from that moment has passed upon all to condemnation, that from the hour sin entered the world, judgment and death passed upon all the posterity of Adam, none of whom were then born, and for aught we know, millions of them are not yet born.

If by the word *fault*, those who use the term, mean *sin*, then the Scriptures settle the question; for by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, and that many includes all men, or all who were in Adam, it will be readily conceded that it is for our sins that we are judged and condemned. But when the word is used generally by Arminians, we understand them to mean that all sinners who are guilty and condemned already, can, if they please, evade the righteous sentence which is upon them, escape the punishment, close in with certain supposed overtures of mercy, and if they do not avail themselves of the power they have, it will be because they wilfully neglect to do so. This theory is flagrant infidelity, for it directly contradicts the Scriptures of truth, which positively declare that salvation from sin and wrath is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy; and that salvation is of the Lord, and not of works, but of grace. We are not held in fault for what we have not done, and could not do, but for what we have done, in sinning against God; and we are told in the word of “cursed children who cannot cease from sin.”

When those who profess to be Baptists use the words, “If any are lost it is their own fault,” we naturally understand them to use the words in the sense in which they are used by Arminians and other infidels,

of whom the apostle predicted, “Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?” Romans 9:19. And we should beware of them. Men are condemned and damned for their sins, and not for their lack of ability to atone for their guilt.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1869.

JAMES 5:19,20.

Remarks on James 5:19,20. “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.”

Our brother T.S. Hatton, of Indiana, has requested an expression of our views on this text, especially on, “What death is spoken of?” The epistle of James, like those of all the other apostles, was addressed to the saints, recognized as “brethren,” and exposed to “diverse temptations,” into which when they should fall, they are admonished to count it all joy, from the consideration that the trial of their faith by such exposure to temptations, worketh patience. And in this text, the Holy Ghost, speaking by this apostle, very explicitly identifies the subjects to whom the words are spoken. “*Brethren*, if any of you do err.” By no fair or logical construction can these words be applied to any but the saints of God. That those who are indisputably the saints of God, and brethren of the apostles, born of the same spiritual parentage, called by the same grace, and heirs of the same most glorious immortality, are liable to err from the truth, and commit sin by so doing, is by this text established beyond successful controversy. The relative duty enjoined on all this peculiar brotherhood, to labor to convert from the error of his way any one who has thus erred, and to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering their own liability also to err, and to require in turn the same faithful and fraternal service, is also very clearly inferred, from the encouraging assurance that they shall thereby save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. Let us examine the subject.

“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth.” To err is to be wrong, either in judgment or in practice; and as none of the saints while here in the flesh are infallible, they may and sometimes do conceive erroneous views, and are betrayed into forbidden practices. To err from the truth is to be allured or drawn into error, either in faith or practice. The truth as it is in Jesus is the standard of righteousness, and all who have received the love of the truth that they may be saved are required to walk in the truth; to all others “God shall send strong delusion, that they may believe a lie.” II Thessalonians 2:11. In the mighty delusion, predicted expressly by the Spirit, that shall prevail in the latter times, many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. And as we are told that *they* shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. None can depart from the faith who have never adhered to it; nor can any turn away from the truth who have never been recognized as walking in it. It, therefore, must mean such as have, at least professed the faith, and held the truth. Christ is the Truth; any departure therefore from him, or from his laws, or footsteps, under false impressions, allurements, or seductions, is to err from the truth. The gospel is Christ, and therefore is truth, and any departure, or divergence from the gospel, in its doctrine, order or ordinances,

is to err from the truth. The Scriptures are truth, and the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is especially given as the man of our counsel, standard of our faith, and rule of our practice as Christians, is the truth; to recede or diverge from that standard, from whatever motives, or under whatever impressions, is to err from the truth.

Again, the Spirit of truth which the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, is given as a Comforter to the saints, and shall lead them into all truth, by taking of the things of Jesus and shewing them to the saints, is also truth; the saints are therefore required to try the spirits, [which they meet with, and which may exert an influence over them] whether they be of God; for if the spirit by which we are actuated be of God, it is the spirit of truth; to depart from its holy and gentle control is to err from the truth. The saints do not always realize what manner of spirit may be holding an influence over them. If they wish to call down fire, or thunderbolts of wrath upon their enemies, however much or justly provoked, the spirit that stirs up their ire is not that spirit of truth which teaches us to pity and pray for such as persecute and despite-fully use us. To depart from the spirit of Christ is to err from the truth, and to *sin*, not against a law that we are redeemed from and are no longer under, but against the law of Christ which we are under. Sin is a transgression of the law; and where there is no law there is no transgression, no sin. Being dead to the law by the body of Christ, and brought by newness of life under law to Christ, his love shed abroad in us brings us within the range of his jurisdiction as our Prince and Savior; for his precepts are all restricted to such as love him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." His commandments are unto and upon all who love him; and if we depart from or disobey them, we err from the truth. Whatever may be the plausibility or sincerely entertained pretext or motive, if we feel unworthy to obey him, or neglect his mandates hoping for greater light or liberty, or if we believe some other thing, or some other way will please him fully as well, and perhaps better than a strict conformity to the precise precept or example he has given, still, from whatever may be the influence, motive or design, we err from the truth, and the nature of the error is the same, and calls for the faithful and brotherly watchcare and labor of our fellow members of the church of God.

"And one convert him." In obedience to the apostolic instruction and command. If a brother be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness. The conversion here is a reclamation, convincing him that he is in error, and by faithful admonition and instruction restore him to the right way; as Paul labored with the Galatian churches when they had erred from the truth, and with the church at Corinth, and as Priscilla and Aquilla converted Apollos from the error of his way. Jesus says, "If thy brother hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." To convert is to change. But it is God alone who can quicken dead sinners, and give them life and brotherhood with the saints; but James is explicit in telling us that the conversion of which he speaks is a conversion "from the error of his way." And he whose faithful labors shall be, by the blessing of God, successful in thus reclaiming an erring brother, "Let him know, that he which converteth the *sinner* [for as we are commanded to walk in the truth, by the law of Christ, to err from the truth is a transgression of the law that the saints are under, and transgression is sin, and he who commits the transgression is a sinner against whatever law he transgresses] from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death." That is, he shall save that soul, or brother, or person, as these words in this connection are used interchangeably as meaning the same. In the preceding verse the erring offender is called a brother, "Brethren, if any of *you* do err;" and in this verse he is called a *sinner* and a *soul*. But that sinner or that soul is a brother who has erred from the truth.

We approach now that part of our subject on which brother Hatton desires us to be more particular. "Shall save a soul from death." What death? Not from the perdition of the ungodly, which is called the

second death, and from which our Lord Jesus Christ has obtained for all his people “eternal redemption,” for his blood cleanseth us from all guilt, and his blood can never lose its power. None can pluck them out of his hands; for they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, and Jesus has pledged his sacred word that he will raise them up at the last day. The text cannot be construed so as to contradict the express declaration of Christ, “I give unto them *eternal life, and they shall never perish.*” Nor does it mean that they shall be put to death after the manner of Moses, by stoning, or in any other way to be literally deprived of their natural life. But the death from which they shall be saved, is that of which Paul testifies, as a consequence of erring from the truth. “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.” Romans 8:6 & 13. That vitality by which the saints are quickened is life; it is born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; but that which is born of the flesh, is that on which death hath passed, and that cannot inherit the kingdom of God. I Corinthians 15:50. “But if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.” Romans 8:10. “Knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; [for we walk by faith, not by sight]. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” II Corinthians 5:6-8. These Scriptures clearly, to our mind, point out what death we enter into when we depart from Christ who is our life, and walk after the flesh, and are at home in the body, and walking by sight, and looking on the things which are seen, and which are carnal, and being turned away from the visions of faith which looks on things which are not seen, and which are eternal. And in this sense, how many of us have so far out-traveled Paul, that we can in truth say, we do not, like him, die daily? Here are to be seen and contrasted flesh and spirit, the one born of the flesh, the other born of God; one of corruptible, the other of incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. On the one, death has passed, the other is immortality. One is darkness, the other is light in the Lord. One is natural, sensual, carnal; the other is spiritual, pure and incorruptible. One is death; the other is life, joy and peace. We cannot err from the truth without sowing to the flesh, and in sowing to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

When, instead of trusting in God and walking by faith, we appeal to our own carnal minds, and walk in the sight of our own natural understanding, we are sure to find that way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Death in the true sense of these Scriptures. Death to our spiritual comforts, in holy communion with God, and enjoyment of the things of the Spirit of God. It is a great error then for a child of God to walk after the flesh, think his own thoughts, and speak his own words, and rely upon his own understanding; and if any who are spiritual, that is who are being led by the Spirit, shall convert an erring brother from the error of his ways, he shall save his brother from that delusion and error, that is so certain, if persisted in, to plunge him in darkness, barrenness, depression and death.

But we presume the apostle James had some allusion to the types and figures of the old legal dispensation. He writes to the brethren whom he recognizes as the “twelve tribes,” showing that he takes the ancient tribes of Jacob, as figurative of the spiritual tribes over which the apostles preside in judgment, on twelve thrones. The circumcision which worship God in spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh. The covenant of works under which the carnal tribes served, consigned the soul that sinned to death. Whether put literally to death, or only separated by uncleanness from the congregation of the Lord, they were dead to the congregation of Israel until purged or purified by blood, or until an atonement was made for them. So the order of the church of Christ was typified, in which unruly or disorderly members are put away from the communion and fellowship of the church, until they be converted from the error of their way. How many who once walked in fellowship

with the churches, have thus been expelled from their privileges in the church, and to the church have become as dead as they were before they made a profession of discipleship? Eyes have been, by a faithful enforcement of the discipline of the church, plucked out, and cast away from the body; right hands, or feet have been cut off, where the law of Christ has required, that the body, the church, might enter into life, rather than by unlawfully retaining disaffected members, be cast into hell; that is into confusion, darkness, disorder, rebellion and destruction. It is in this definition of death that we understand the apostle John to speak of a sin that is unto death, which he does not say it shall be prayed for. I John 5:16. There were some false brethren in Paul's time, who came in privately to spy out the liberty of the saints; to whom he says, We give place by subjection, no, not for an hour. Galatians 2:4,5. In this sense too, the brother who converts his erring brother, may know that he has saved his brother from expulsion from the fellowship of the saints, so that his place and privileges are retained in the church.

“And shall hide a multitude of sins.” When a brother is being allured or drawn into error, in doctrine or practice, if seasonably reclaimed, and thoroughly converted from the error of his way, it requires not to be mentioned to even the church, or to any who do not already know it. “Thou hast gained thy brother.” But if the erring brother persists in the wrongs, others must know of it; one or two are to assist, and if unsuccessful, it must be told to the church. And if he refuse to hear the church, he must be put away; for the authority which Christ has invested in his church must be respected, acknowledged and submitted to, or the offender must be excluded from fellowship. But if any one of those obstinate offenders can be reclaimed, he is saved alive, and in standing, and his disorder is to be forgotten, or not made public.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1869.

AN ENQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

Brother Beebe: If you will give your views on the following enquiries, you will oblige an enquirer after truth:

1. Is it right to say the children of God were never exposed to eternal damnation?
2. Is it right to say that Adam's sin never exposed him to eternal death?
3. Is it right to say that if Adam fell at all, he fell upward?
4. Is it right to say that the non-elect never were under the law, and cannot sin?

Reply: We have never found any record of Christ or any of his inspired apostles making use of these or similar declarations, nor do they seem to us like the apostolic manner of preaching. Such dashing declarations are never heard from those whose paramount aim and desire is to edify and instruct the humble followers of the Lamb. Some young preachers, who, if they are not mistaken, know a great deal, and wish to exhibit all they know, are far more frequently heard in that strain; and like those novices of whom Paul wrote to Timothy, who being lifted up with pride, fall into the condemnation of

the devil. I Timothy 3:6. Such a strain of preaching or talking betrays a recklessness and self confidence not often found in those who have become fools, that they may be wise. They seem to say to their seniors, we know more than you all, and usually seem very anxious to provoke a debate in which they may display their own polemic smartness.

We know that the counsel and grace of God, in the eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began, secured his chosen people from eternal damnation, by providing for them a full and sufficient salvation in Jesus Christ. But the declaration in the first enquiry would imply that such provisions were unnecessary.

We are informed in the word that, “by one man, [whom we supposed to be Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” “Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation,” and “by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” Romans 5. Also in chapter 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The gift of eternal life must be a gift whereby we are saved from what is the opposite of eternal life. That gift does not save us from temporal death; for death still holds dominion over our natural bodies.

We are told that Christ has obtained eternal redemption for his people. But if they were never exposed to an opposite eternal or interminable state, what are they saved from? We know and rejoice to know that there was no liability of a failure in God’s purpose of salvation; but that salvation was to deliver us from death, in which we were fully and legally involved, and to save that which was lost.

We do not consider it right or scriptural to say that if Adam fell, he fell upward. For his fall never raised him or any of his posterity to any higher state; but hurled him down from the paradise to which he was adapted before he sinned. We are aware that in his primeval state of purity he was not qualified for the enjoyment of anything beyond the sphere of his existence as a pure natural man; and that in that state he could not see the kingdom of God; but we are equally sure that his transgression never supplied him with any spiritual qualification; nor could he be qualified for the kingdom of God in any other way than that which is revealed in the gospel.

Neither Adam’s good works nor his bad works could prepare him for the kingdom. Their sins, instead of raising them upward, imposed a necessity for the shedding of the blood of Christ to wash and cleanse them from sin, and purge them from guilt. And when redeemed from sin, they must be born of the Spirit, and made partakers of immortal life, before they could either see or enter into the kingdom of God. It is not truth therefore to say that Adam fell upward.

We do not understand that the Sinai, or ceremonial law, was given to any but the children of Israel. But the human family was involved in sin twenty-three hundred years before that law was given to Israel. Still sin is the transgression of the law of God. If Adam had not been created under law to God, or if he had been a *free agent*, he could not have sinned; but he did sin; and so all have sinned, and hence all have transgressed the law they were under to God.

Finally; our face is set against such imprudent and uncalled for declarations.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1869.



EFFICACIOUS POWER OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

An aged and esteemed brother has, through sister C.M. Johnson, desired our views on the great atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people; and especially on the efficacious power of the blood of Christ. This subject is so exceedingly comprehensive as to take in its grasp the whole system of redemption, and salvation by grace. The atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people, is that by which the law of God is honored and fulfilled, divine justice receives a perfect, complete and everlasting satisfaction for all the sins of the people of God, and in which they are redeemed from all iniquity, cleansed, purged, purified and made accepted in the Beloved, and are reconciled to God. Atonement not only means an offering made, a ransom price paid, and eternal redemption obtained, but it signifies satisfaction, reconciliation, or as the word expresses, at-one-ment. The subject opens for our contemplation a field too broad to be elucidated in one short essay, for volumes well written would leave the half untold. To know the value of the atonement would require a full knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in which they were involved for whom it is made, and their total depravity and just condemnation by the righteous law of God, and their utter inability and indisposition to help themselves, their alienation from, and deep and implacable enmity to him, and the impossibility of deliverance or salvation in any other way or by any other being in heaven or in earth. The atonement meets, cancels, and forever removes every impediment out of the way, pays every demand required, supplies every indispensable requisite, and so perfectly identifies him that sanctifieth with them that are sanctified, as to make him their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. This atonement was made for all the chosen people of God, when Jesus was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification, and each and all of them receive this atonement experimentally, and by faith, as soon as they are born of the Spirit. Not one of the millions for whom it was made can by any possibility fail to receive its effects, for with his stripes they are healed. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." None can lay anything to their charge, for it is God that justifieth; it is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen from the dead, and risen for their justification, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in him. In all this work, the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in its efficacious power is most gloriously displayed; the efficacious power of which we are called upon now to consider.

When we speak of the blood of Christ we mean something more than the fluid that coursed through his veins when here in the flesh, or that gushed from his side when pierced with the Roman spear. It is true that this was indispensable to the salvation of his people; for without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sins. And the perpetual tide of blood which flowed for ages from patriarchal and Hebrew altars, pointed as types to the great sacrifice, when Jesus should not only drain his veins of all the blood which they contained, but also pour out his soul unto death, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.

The blood of Christ is often referred to as meaning his life which he gave for his sheep, and as the fountain which he has opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. The saving virtue of his mediatorial work applied savingly to the hearts of his redeemed is called the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. By it their hearts were sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies are washed in pure water. The blood which gushed from his head, and hands, and feet and side, when bleeding on the cross, is not literally sprinided on us, but its saving virtue is applied by the Spirit to all for whom it was shed, for the remission of their sins.

And the wine which was set apart for the communion of saints, being emblematic, is called his blood in the New Testament, which was shed for many. To it allusion is made in Zechariah 9:11, and in Hebrews 10:29. For the New Testament and the New Covenant mean one and the same. When it is said that he has washed us in his blood, we understand an application of the sacred and saving efficacy of his atonement has been applied experimentally, for purging us from the defilement of sin.

Having thus briefly presented some outlines of the scriptural doctrine of the atonement, and the manner in which the blood of Christ is applied to the people of God, we will now attend to the special request of our venerable brother, in regard to its efficacious power. And this we propose to do by presenting such scriptural testimony as God has furnished in the sacred volume, testifying of its design and effects.

1. Its purging and cleansing power. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” Hebrews 9:13, 15. “And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” I John 1:7. “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.” I Corinthians 6:11. “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.” Revelation 7:14,15. “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:14.

2. Its efficacious power to redeem those for whom it was shed is fully demonstrated by inspired testimony. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him believe in God.” I Peter 1:18-20. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Ephesians 1:7. “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Revelation 5:9.

3. Its justifying power. “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to *declare* [demonstrate or exemplify] his righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:24,25. “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:33,34. The perfect and everlasting justification of all the people of God, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law, is predicated upon the virtue, power and infallible efficacy of his blood. “He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25. “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:11.

4. It has efficient power in transforming those to whom it is applied. “Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles.” “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood

of Christ.” Ephesians 2:11-13. Transformed by virtue of the blood of Christ, from enemies to friends, from hatred to love, from sin, condemnation and wrath, to holiness, justification and glory.

5. The powerful efficacy of the blood of Christ is demonstrated in sanctification, separation from the world and consecration to God. Redeemed out of the kingdoms and tribes of mankind, and unto God, by the blood of the Lamb slain. Bought with a price, and that price is his precious blood, we are not our own; but in our consecration, set apart for our Redeemer’s service, to be priests and kings unto God, and to reign with Christ forever. As the consecrated things for the service of the tabernacle and temple were all sanctified by blood, so by the matchless power and saving virtue of the blood of Christ we are washed, cleansed, purified, and made meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

In this consecration we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Hebrews 10:19,20. “Through sanctification of the spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” I Peter 1:2.

6. His blood is efficacious and omnipotent in making peace for, and in speaking peace to, those for whom it was shed. “Therefore being justified by faith, [in his blood, in distinction from works] we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:1,2. “And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight.” Colossians 1:18-22. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” Ephesians 2:14-17. But the language of his precious blood, to those who have received an application, differs from that of the blood even of righteous Abel; for the voice of the blood of Abel cried to God from the ground, for vengeance; but those who are come to the heavenly Jerusalem are come to the blood of sprinkling, or consecration, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; for it speaketh peace. It has hushed all the thunders of mount Sinai, quenched all the wrath of the divine law, abolished death, and destroyed him that had the power of death; having removed every impediment that stood in the way of our salvation, washed away all our pollutions, cleansed us from the guilt, as well as from the penalty, or punishment due to our transgressions; slain the enmity that rankled in us against God, and has made us white and pure and clean, and acceptable to God in the Beloved.

7. We may also speak of the triumphing power and infallible efficacy of our Redeemer’s blood. It has triumphed over sin, death and hell; it has led captivity captive, has become the destruction of death, and the plague of the grave. And it has secured a perfect and complete victory to all the people of God over all their enemies, and enabled them to say, with the apostle, “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.” I Corinthians 15:56,57. The mighty conflict described by John, in Revelation 12:1-11, between Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels, the former overcame the latter, “By the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” Verse 11. By his all-powerful blood the bars of death are

broken, the doors of the grave are opened, the prisoners are released, and liberty is proclaimed to the captives. A voice from the eternal throne bids the daughter of Zion to “rejoice greatly,” and the daughter of Jerusalem to shout, for her King cometh unto her. He is just, and having salvation. And, “as for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.” Zechariah 9:9 & 11. The daughter of Zion, and of Jerusalem are one and the same, and mean the gospel church, unto whom Christ is given for a Covenant, and in whom all the promises of God are, Yea, and Amen. The blood of the covenant is therefore the blood of Christ; as defined by our Lord himself in the cup of the communion of saints, of which he said to his disciples, “Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:27,28. Observe, the words covenant and testament mean the same. “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force, after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first was dedicated without blood.” Hebrews 9:16-18. The first testament, which was called a covenant, was dedicated by blood, but it was by the blood of beasts, and typical of the covenant of the daughter of Jerusalem, by the blood of which her prisoners are sent forth out of the pit; and by the blood of which all the blessings and promises of the new testament, or covenant, are dedicated, secured and made certain to all the redeemed of the Lord, and by which Christ is consecrated as the High Priest unto his people.

What would all the mediatorial work of Christ have availed us, if there had not been power and efficacy enough in the blood of Christ to redeem his people and secure their salvation?

The efficacious power of his blood may be inferred from his peculiar Priesthood. He was made a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, by the oath of God who sware and will not repent. Not by the law of a carnal commandment; but by the power of an endless life. The High Priest of a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.” No other blood but his could avail; or if offered by any other priest, it would not suffice. The Word, which was with God, was made flesh; and dressed in all his priestly garments, bearing the names of all for whom he officiated, in his breastplate, equally related to his Father and to his church, a Daysman who could lay his hands on both; identifying in his mediatorial person, the Son of God, and the Son of man; David’s son, and David’s Lord.

“Descended from the eternal God,
He bears the name of his own Son;
And dressed in human flesh and blood,
He puts his priestly garments on.
The mitred crown, the embroidered vest,
With graceful dignity he wears,
And, in full splendor, on his breast,
The sacred oracle appears.
So he presents his sacrifice,
And offering most divinely sweet;
While clouds of fragrant incense rise,
And cover o’er the mercy seat.”

To deny or doubt the sovereign efficacy of the blood of Christ, in the complete salvation of all for whom it was shed, is most presumptuously to call the blood of the Covenant, or testament, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and to do despite to the spirit of grace; from which presumption may the Lord keep us by his grace.

Our guilty world swarms with those who preach that Christ's blood was shed alike for everybody; but that it has not power to save anybody. That it can only be made efficacious by the will and works of men.

We have in this short article presented the testimony of God's holy word in plain and pointed declarations from the mouth of God, which cannot be successfully controverted, proving that the blood of Christ cleanseth all for whom it was shed, from all sin.

That it redeems them from all iniquity, that it redeems them from all condemnation and wrath, and redeems them to God, and makes them kings and priests to God, and they shall reign with Christ forever.

That it secures their justification from all things from which they could not be justified by the law, or in any other way.

That it transforms them, and translates them, from aliens, strangers and enemies, to fellow citizens with the saints, and makes them meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

That it sanctifies, or separates them from the kindreds of the earth out of which it redeems them, and consecrates them to God, as living members of the body of Christ.

That it makes and secures to them peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That by it they have the victory over sin, death and hell, and shall triumph over all their enemies through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

If this array of Scripture be admitted, then we ask what is deficient, to be supplied by men, or means, by human will or works?

“Go, ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble in despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross;
Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie.
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming red, shall pass me to'.”

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1869.

WHAT PART OF MAN IS QUICKENED INTO LIFE?

Reply to Brother Bradbury.

“What part of man is quickened into life?” We object to the form of the question; for we are nowhere informed that *any part* of man is quickened *into life*. God's people which were dead in sins, has God quickened, according to his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and

might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Paul addressed this epistle to the saints which were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; and the faithful in Christ Jesus, including the saints at Ephesus, are the fulness of the body, of which Christ is the Head. Those who are in him are members, or partides, of that body which has many members, which members being many are one body, even so is Christ. They are the fulness of Christ, as a perfectly organized body, and he as their Head presides over them all, and as their life and immortality, he fills them all, and is all, in all his members. As the constituents of his body or church, they were all chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and predestinated to the adoption of children, and to be made acceptable to God in the Beloved, in Christ, in the body of Christ, as members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. When that body was demanded by the law, and was delivered up to die, and died, then were all his members buried with him by baptism into death, and each member of his body can say, as the writer of our text has said, "I am crucified with Christ." "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more. "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature," or new creation. II Corinthians 5:14-17. If any man be in him, he is in him as a member of his body. Not in the body of the sins of the flesh, which is put away by the circumcision of Christ, but in the resurrection power and regeneration of the whole body, or church, from a carnal, or fleshly, to a quickened, spiritual, regenerated newness of life. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," which kingdom is the church and body of Christ. "Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." I Corinthians 15:50.

Those who are quickened by the resurrection life and immortality of him who is given to be their Head and their all, were in their earthly natures, or by that nature, children of wrath even as others, and walked according to the course of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, or elements of that nature, and were all of them dead in sins. But the apostle is treating upon what is the hope of the calling of the saints, and the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in his saints, and of the exceeding greatness of God's power to usward who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. It will not be disputed by brethren that it is the same power that quickened and raised up from the dead the crucified body of Christ, that quickens the saints and makes them believers; hence it is said, "to usward who believe according to his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." But that the church, the body of Christ, were all quickened in him, and with him, when he arose from the dead, is not so clear to the minds of all the brethren. Brother Bradbury quotes Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Who does the apostle mean by *you*? This personal pronoun has for its antecedent, the saints which are, or were, at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, including all who are and were in him before the foundation of the world, and who are in the verse immediately preceding this text defined to be Christ's body, and the fulness of the body to whom the risen Savior is given to be the Head. If it does not mean all who compose the body of Christ, let those who are wise above what is written, tell who they are who are quickened. If the *you* addressed does not mean all the members of Christ's body, which make up the entire fulness of it according to the verse next preceding, and the whole chapter preceding, will somebody tell us who of all that were

chosen in him before the foundation of the world are left out, and not included in the *you* who are quickened?

But when were they quickened? Let the same apostle tell. In the connection immediately following, he does tell in as clear and definite words as our language affords. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Then, not only the body and members were quickened, but Christ who was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, was also quickened. And this quickening of the head and body, and all the members, was *together*, or simultaneous.

To make the matter still more clear and plain, the apostle continues, "And hath *raised us up together*, and made us *sit together* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." We do not understand the apostle to say or to mean that all the members which compose the body and fulness of Christ, were at that time brought forth in manifest development, but that the spiritual and immortal life which quickens all the church or body of Christ was then and there, at the resurrection of Christ, given to every member in him who is their Head; according to the record of I John 5:11,12. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever." Psalm 21:4. This must relate to his Mediatorial intercession for his church and body, for in no other sense can we conceive of his asking for life. This life is figuratively set forth, by the exceedingly precious ointment in the consecration to the priesthood, which was poured on Aaron's head, and ran down his beard, and descended to the skirts of his garments. Psalm 133:2. So Christ is to his church a priest forever, by the power of an endless life. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon him," and that spirit is life, and through him as the head all the body has its anointing. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." I John 2:20 & 27. We have no difficulty in understanding that natural life was given to all the family of mankind when God breathed in Adam the breath of life, and man became a living soul. The book of the generations of Adam was complete, in the day that God created man, and called *their* name Adam, which was a hundred and thirty years before Seth was born. Genesis 5:1-3. This Adam is the figure of him that was to come. Romans 5:14. The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. I Corinthians 15:45 & 47. The Lord from heaven was made flesh and dwelt among us; he took on him the seed of Abraham; took part of the same flesh and blood that his children were partakers of, that through death he might destroy death. As in the first Adam, we all die, by Christ's death for us he has redeemed us from death, from our earthy relations to the law of sin and death, redeemed us from the kindreds of the earth, so that, being redeemed, his kingdom is not of the earth, we are no more known in the flesh, this relation to the earth being annulled by the death of Christ, we henceforth, or from the time of the death of Christ, as members of Christ's resurrected body, know no man after the flesh. The body of the sins of the flesh is put off by this circumcision of Christ, wherein he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit; so that we are dead to the law by his body, that we might be lawfully married to him that is risen from the dead, and identified with him in his resurrection life and immortality, and made manifest in due time as his body, his flesh and his bones. By his death we are buried with him by baptism into death, and are dead, and our life is hid with him in God.

Now, to return to the apostle's testimony in Ephesians 2, we observe that as he had shown the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and in that resurrection the quickening of the church which is his body, and the raising up of that body from under the law, and from sin and death, and from the kindreds of mankind, what he has secured. "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ

Jesus.” Ages to come, after the redemption of the church, in her resurrection in Christ from the dead, to develop all his members, and bring them manifestively and experimentally into the grace wherein we now stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. As all the ages of the existence of this world are required for the manifest development of that natural life which was breathed by the Creator into the nostrils of Adam, in the day that he was created, so all the ages to come, from the resurrection of Christ from the dead, are required for the development of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, and the Lord from heaven. To develop in the posterity of the earthy Adam that life which was given them in him in the day they were created, they must all of them be born of the flesh, and in their fleshly nature fill their day and generation, according to the decree of God, so to bring into manifestation all the members of Christ in the regeneration, all his chosen generation must be born again of his spirit, and receive personally the quickening power of his resurrection life and immortality.

In this quickening or spiritual birth of the members of Christ, we do not understand that some particular part of those who are the subjects of it are *quickened into life*; but rather as the apostle has shown, divine, spiritual, resurrection life is given to them who were dead in sins, and entirely destitute of it by their earthly nature. The life is one thing, and that, or they who are quickened by it, is quite another. When that body of Adam which God had formed of the dust of the ground was quickened, and man became a living soul, Adam could say, I live; but he could not say, *I am life*. He was not quickened or converted into life, but life was put in him. And to show that his quickened and animated dust was not life, though living, it was afterwards taken from him, and the dust returned to dust, and the life which had animated it returned to God who gave it. So they who are quickened by the Spirit possess life, and are quickened, though they were before being quickened, dead in sins; but the life is Christ in them the hope of glory; no part of what they were before becomes *life*, though quickened; for to quicken is to communicate life to that which was destitute of life. God has given eternal life to his children; but his children are the recipients, and not the gift. Paul could say in truth, “I live.” But none but Jesus could say, I am life. Hence Paul said, “The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me.” Yea, he is still more plain. “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Galatians 2:20. For him to live was Christ. “The body is dead because of sin,” even after we are born of the Spirit; but the spirit, which is born of God, is life because of righteousness. Our mortal has not put on immortality, although Christ our life dwells in us, and we live this life in the flesh; still our flesh itself is corruptible, and in it, its element, is found no good thing. Our mortal must put off mortality, and put on immortality, before death in us shall be swallowed up of victory. So it is as difficult or impossible for us, as it is for brother Bradbury, to find any part of our old sinful and depraved nature that has become life. But with Job, we will wait all our appointed time till our change come.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1869.



II PETER 2:20,21.

Elder Beebe: Will you please give us your views through the “Signs of the Times,” on II Peter 2:20,21. “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” If you will grant me an answer you will favor one who at least desires to know and love the truth. Yours truly,

M.J. Pierce.

Leavenworth, Ind., April 25, 1869.

Reply: The seeming obscurity in which this chapter is veiled to the minds of some honest enquirers after the truth, will be measurably removed by a careful observance of the different classes or description of characters spoken of by the apostle. While admonishing the saints to add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, with all diligence, and so to demonstrate their calling and election, he proposes to put them in remembrance of some things that should be of importance to them after his decease.

In thus stirring up their pure minds so that his admonitions might be held in perpetual remembrance throughout all time, he first assures them of the perfection of the Scriptures as a record of divine truth; not like the cunningly devised fables or doctrines of men, but a revelation from the immutable God, and so perfect and unchangeable that they can admit of no improvement, amendment or alteration, which men may deem necessary to adapt them to the state or condition of any succeeding ages or contingencies. God who has spoken by his prophets in times past, and through his dear Son, in the inspiration of the New Testament, is of one mind and none can turn him; therefore when he speaks the word, it stands fast, and cannot be altered in the least and still be his word. Not even the evidence of our eyes and ears, our frames or feelings, our depressions or transporting joys, are to be held by the saints as of equal authenticity with that more sure word of prophecy to which the saints shall do well that they take heed. The holy Scriptures are a light to the children of God, which shineth in a dark place, and shall continue to shine with ever increasing refulgence, until the perfect day.

In solemnly warning the saints to steadfastly adhere to the Scriptures as their only reliable rule of faith and practice, this apostle took occasion in the chapter from which our subject is selected, to apprise them, as the other inspired apostles had done, of the corruptions, false doctrines and apostasies that should come in the last days; and among the important things which he would have them remember when he should be with them no more in the flesh, was that there should be false teachers among them, even as there were false prophets among the people of Israel. And that these false teachers should bring in [into the church] damnable heresies, of the most revolting kind, even denying the Lord that bought the church to which they stood united, and into which they should bring their heresies. And these false teachers should come in privately, slyly, and deceptively, as the false prophets had, by subtlety and deception insinuated their falsehoods on the people of the old dispensation. So should these false teachers creep in privately into the churches, bringing in their heresies. The venders of palpable error seldom present their heresies openly at the first, but cautiously, watching the manner in which they are regarded, and when they have “by much wantonness beguiled those who were clean escaped from them who live in error,” they are then emboldened to press their pernicious doctrines with more effrontery, until unstable souls are corrupted and allured into their snares, and divisions and disorders are brought

into the church. In their wicked efforts they should succeed in drawing away, not only a few, but many shall follow their pernicious ways, and so many as to render the way of truth exceedingly unpopular, even with the professors of Christianity, so that the way of truth, as laid down in the holy Scriptures, and taught by the Spirit in the personal experience of all the saints, *shall be* evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they [the false teachers] make merchandise of you, [who are thus allured and led away from the truth] whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not; that is the judgment and damnation of false teachers, which shall infest the church of God.

Following the words of admonition and instruction through this chapter, we should be careful to observe the discrimination made between the false teachers, and those who are allured and deceived by them. The false teachers spoken of are no doubt all of them like the false prophets, by whom they were prefigured, impostors; but of those who are allured by them, there are many of the dear children of God, but not all; for nominal professors, and carnal hypocrites who have a nominal standing in the church, but no vital relish for the truth as it is in Jesus, will be the most ready to receive with greediness the heresies which shall be introduced, and to use their influence with the false teachers to beguile unstable souls, who, although they know and love the truth, are not sufficiently stable and firm to resist the pernicious influence of their cunning adversaries. Some who had clean escaped from them that live in error, and who had purified their souls by obeying the truth, should be captivated, and follow the pernicious ways of their betrayers.

Observe, the apostle speaks of all these, including the false teachers with all who are drawn away from the truth, as being among the people of God; members held in standing in the churches of the saints. Of course, they have all professed to receive, to know, and to love and walk in the truth as stated and established by Christ and his apostles. Not even the false teachers could have imposed so far upon the saints as to have got into the churches, if they had not renounced the corruptions of Judaism, Paganism, and all the other wicked isms which were prevalent, and to do so through a knowledge of the truth as taught by the apostles, and this was called “purging their souls, by obeying the truth.” As the errors of Paganism and Judaism had corrupted their souls, or minds, while they held them, when they renounced them, even though it were like the dog disgorging the filthy contents of a foul stomach, or a sow washed from the filth of the mire, but still retaining their peculiar natural propensities, yet the dog has ejected the filth, and has so far purified his stomach, and the sow being washed, has put off that defilement in which she was so polluted, still with their natural propensities unchanged, the one will soon return to his vomit, and the other to the mire, and thus demonstrate that in their cleansing there has been no radical change in their nature or propensities.

We do not believe that God’s people are either dogs or swine; but so far this true proverb is applied by the apostle, we are constrained to believe that they sometimes act like them, in the particulars to which the apostle applied the figure; and hence we regard the proverb as applicable to all, whether nominal or real disciples, who after having renounced the corruptions which had defiled them, relapse into them again.

A pagan who is rationally convinced of the absurdity of worshipping a god that he has made with his own hands, and renounces Paganism, or a Jew, who like the five thousand when they had eaten of the loaves and fishes, were rationally convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah that was to come, and enrolled themselves as his disciples, and desired to have him for their king; when they heard his doctrine, and learned that his subjects were to live alone on him, and eat his flesh and drink his blood, immediately relapsed into their former condition, returned to their ejected vomit, and to the filth of the mire.

Our country now fairly swarms with false teachers, who once publicly renounced the world and its pollutions, and professed faith in our Lord, who have gone to their vomit again, and are now zealously engaged in efforts to draw away disciples after them.

And is it our privilege to say that there are now none of the dear children of God, who after having received the knowledge and the love of the truth, have turned back to the beggarly elements of the world of which they were once so thoroughly sickened as to eject, and renounce them? And can it be said in truth that their course in this is altogether unlike the dog and the swine in the true proverb?

Let us now see how far the words of the apostle in our text will apply to these unstable characters described. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end of them is worse with them than the beginning." A spiritual knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ is eternal life. Matthew 11:27, John 17:3. But natural conviction, like that of Nicodemus, and those who crucified Christ, when they witnessed the wonderful demonstrations at his crucifixion, and such as devils evinced, when they confessed that he was the Son of God, may be brought home to the natural understanding of graceless men; as though the mental, or traditional convictions of the natural judgment of men, by external signs which they witness, they may be convinced of the absurdity of Judaism, or Paganism, or undisguised infidelity, and from that conviction, they may renounce some or all of these isms, reform their lives, so far as their outward practice is concerned, and thus escape the pollutions which are in the world; be orthodox in their creeds or professions of faith, and precise and circumspect in their deportment; the drunkard may quit his wine, the profane swearer may become more chaste in his language; and thus escape much of the pollution that is in the world; but when the day of trial comes, they will deny the faith to which they had subscribed, and apostatize from their profession, and their last end be worse than their beginning. They began by reformation, but have relapsed into the very abominations which they had discarded, and the canine proclivity of their unchanged nature will incline them back to their filthy vomit, and their swinish nature will desire the filthy slough. So that their last end is worse than their beginning.

And in the application of this admonition to those of the children of God who are unstable, irregular, and like children tossed about by every wind of doctrine, who, although they are not dogs, nor swine, are allured, deceived and betrayed by false teachers, until they are induced to act like them, their latter end is worse *with them* than the beginning. This is illustrated by many examples given in the Scriptures. The saints in the Galatian churches had begun well; but when false teachers had bewitched them, they were in a worse condition than when they were running well, at their beginning.

"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they had known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." We are told that, He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knoweth not, shall be beaten with fewer stripes. All who are received into the church of Christ assume the yoke of Jesus, receive the holy commandment which is given to all who are of the household of faith; and as long as they walk according to the holy commandment, they are held in fellowship; but when they depart from it, the discipline of the church, if faithfully administered, will cut them off, and cast them out, whether they be real or only nominal disciples. And they who do that which they know is a violation of the law of Christ, and a transgression of the holy commandment which they have received, are far more reprehensible than those who have only mistaken the track, and made a misstep through ignorance, or from want of better instruction. We may illustrate this by adverting to the case of many who stood with us, battling manfully against the pollutions which are in the world, and the innovations which were

being made upon our faith and order before the New School Baptists were expelled from the church of God, who with a full view of the abominations of anti-christ, which they once so clearly pointed out, with their eyes open, like those who count it pleasure to riot in the day-time, have plunged into the very depth of the wickedness against which they once so ably protested. Is not their case far worse than that of those who have been trained in Sunday Schools, and the like institutions of human invention, where every ray of the light of truth is excluded? “But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

The times foretold by the holy apostles of the Lamb, in which false teachers and false doctrines should abound, and in which many shall depart from the truth, and be turned unto fables, are now open to us, and it becomes us to seriously consider the solemn admonitions which are given us in the Scriptures. We know that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And that he will never suffer one of them to finally be lost; and that should only cheer and encourage us in this dark and trying hour, but it should stimulate us to give the more earnest heed to the admonitions given, lest at any time, or under any circumstance we should let them slip. Not to secure our final inheritance in glory, for that is secured already in the ample provisions of grace given us in Christ Jesus our Lord; but rather that we may escape the pollutions that are in the world and honor our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If indeed we have the spirit of Christ, it will be our meat and our drink to do his will; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. A mere profession will not suffice, to have a name to live, when we are dead, will avail us nothing; for all such will probably be soon scourged out of the church by the faithful administration of the laws of the kingdom, or allured by the spreading abominations which prevail. If we, or any of us love the wages of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to sport in the day-time, the mark is a fearful mark, for it is a mark of the beast. But if we love holiness for holiness sake, and mourn because of the depravity of our corrupt nature, it is a reliable evidence that we are born of God, taught by his Spirit and shall ultimately reign in glory.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1869.

ROMANS 9:11-13.

Brother Beebe: If it is not too much trouble, please give your views on Romans 9:11-13, and thereby oblige your sister in the Lord, if a sister at all.

Sarah J. ONeal.
Palmetto, Tennessee.
June 7, 1869.

Reply: The words on which we are requested to write are as follows: “[For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,] it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

The great theme of the apostle, in vindication and illustration of which he used the words proposed for consideration was the Righteousness of God, of which his Hebrew kindred after the flesh were so profoundly ignorant, as to excite his passionate sympathy as a man; for he says, They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have thereby repudiated the righteousness of God.

The righteousness of God, especially as it is demonstrated in his absolute sovereignty in the election, redemption, and everlasting salvation of his people, has never been palatable to the depraved taste of men in their fallen state; for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and they have a much more exalted appreciation of their own fancied righteousness than they have of the righteousness of God. In vindication of the supreme sovereignty of God, Paul did not attempt to apologize for God, or to soften down what God had said upon the subject, in order to make it seem less objectionable to carnal reason. Knowing perfectly well what would be the caviling and blasphemy of men, he could even anticipate their very words, which have been reiterated thousands of times since he foretold, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Such outbreaking blasphemy fully and fearfully demonstrate that they esteem their own righteousness as far superior to that of God, while they would arraign him at the bar of their carnal judgment and condemn his government, inconsiderate of who, and what they are; "things formed saying to him that formed them, Why hast thou formed me thus?" They are ignorant of God's righteousness, nor can they ever understand it but by immediate revelation. Should they be humbled under his mighty hand, and reconciled to him, by the death of his Son, then will they, with all the sanctified, gaze, admire and adore and praise him, and with humble reverence confess that, as the heavens are higher than the earth, even so God's ways and thoughts transcend our ways and thoughts. The righteousness of the sovereignty of God appears to the enlightened child of grace, in all his works, of creation, providence and grace; for it is right that he shall work all things after the counsel of his own will. This must be right unless it can be made to appear that he is bound to work all things after the counsel of some other will. How blindly infatuated must he be who fancies himself capable of suggesting an improvement upon the will or works of the supreme God. A more sublime subject than this, of the righteous sovereignty of God, has never been contemplated by men or angels. Go back with us, in thought, into the ancients of eternity, strike from existence all created beings and things, and what would remain? Only the self-existent, independent and eternal God. There being none with whom to take counsel, was it possible that he should consult any but his own will in creating all beings and worlds that he has called forth into being? Being alone, and having the power and the wisdom, was it his right to create all things? If so, can we deny that he had a right to create just such worlds and things as were in accordance with the counsel of his will? We are told that "For his pleasure all things are and were created." Was it right or wrong that he should work all things after the counsel of his own will? If it was right, then he is a rightful Sovereign. But if we say it was wrong, what law has he violated, and who shall call him to account? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"

"Shall the vile race of flesh and blood,
Contend with their Creator, God?
Shall mortal man presume to be,
More holy, wise, or just than he"

If the righteousness of God's sovereignty shines in such resplendence in creating all things, and it be admitted that God had a sovereign and unquestionable right to make all beings and things just as

seemed right to him, then let every mouth be sealed in silence that would complain because men were not angels, and angels were not gods.

Waving for this time, for lack of time and space, a discussion of the righteous sovereignty of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, in his works of providence, we will come to the subject more immediately embraced in the Scriptures on which our views are solicited. The righteousness of God's sovereignty cannot shine with less resplendence in the economy of grace, than it shines in creation and providence.

In the purpose of God according to election, the discrimination set forth by the apostle in our context, in the family of Abraham, between the children of the flesh, and the children of promise, and between the twin sons of Isaac, clearly shows the sovereignty of God in election, and rejection or reprobation. "For the children" [namely, Jacob and Esau] "being not yet born," [that is, they were not born when God told Rebecca that] "the elder of them should serve the younger." God's decision therefore was not influenced either by the good or bad works of the children, but upon his own unbiased decree. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." If we admit then that God had a purpose in the matter, and that his purpose was not influenced by the good or bad works of either the elected or the rejected, we cannot avoid the inevitable conclusion that God's purpose was a sovereign purpose. But here arises the enmity of the carnal mind of man. If God had rested the destiny of these two children on the purpose of their own will, Arminians would have been satisfied; but in resting his decision on the counsel of his own will, they rage and blaspheme.

Part of our text is marked by parenthesis. It is explanatory of the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, the decree of God fixing the irrevocable destiny of Jacob and Esau before they were born, or had done good or evil. This was the purpose of God according to election, and therefore a divinely established exemplification, or illustration of God's sovereign and immutable purpose in the election of his people in Christ Jesus, irrespective of their works, as influencing his choice of them.

2. As the purpose of God controlling the birthright privileges of Jacob and Esau was according to election, even so God's purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began, controls the election of grace, otherwise the case referred to could not be according to election.

3. The irrevocability of the purpose of God in assigning to Jacob and Esau respectively their place and position in the family of Isaac, was cited to illustrate the inflexible perpetuity of the purpose of God in the election of his people to salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. "That the purpose of God according to election *might stand*." God has provided against any or all opposing powers or influences, so that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. He is of one mind, and none can turn him; his purpose of election therefore must and will stand.

4. It is also infallibly provided as to how God's purpose in the election of his people shall stand, both negatively and positively. Negatively, "not of works." Neither the willing of Isaac, nor the vigorous running of Esau could shake or disturb the standing of God's purpose concerning them; and as the infallible standing of his purpose in their case is "according to election," so the election of grace shall stand unaffected by the will or works of men. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy."

In the affirmative, it is positively asserted that the purpose of God in election *stands*, and its unshaken standing is "of him that calleth." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified,

them he also glorified.” Chapter 8:29,30. All is of him that calleth, their predestination to be conformed is a conformity to the Son of God, their justification and ultimate glory is of him “who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” II Timothy 1:9. That which was done before the world began, could not have been induced by anything done by us after the world began. Then let earth rebel, and hell despair, the purpose of God in, and according to, election stands firmly as stands the throne and government of the eternal God, nor can the gates of hell prevail against it.

In further confirmation, the apostle repeats what is written of what God has said in Malachi Chapter 1. It is addressed to Jacob as the type of his elect people. “I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and I laid his mountain and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever.” Here the discriminating love of God to his children or Israel is strikingly contrasted with his hatred to the persistent workmongrel Edomites, or children of Esau, at which they murmur, and complain that they are impoverished, but not disinclined to build up the works which God abhors and which he will ultimately and forever throw down.

In answering the request of sister Oneal, it has not been our aim to palliate or apologize for the Supreme Potentate of the Universe, nor dare we. God will vindicate the righteousness of eternal sovereignty, and crush beneath his wrath all opposing powers. His secret is with them that fear him, and to them he will show his covenant. They who love this doctrine and rejoice that the Lord absolutely reigns, have the unmistakable evidence that God has chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. He has reconciled them to himself, [not become reconciled to them; for there is no change in him] and being reconciled to him, he cannot be exalted too high, nor invested with too much power and majesty to suit them. The doctrine that exalts their God and Savior and abases the creature, feeds and feasts their spiritual appetites; and their most exalted theme is to exclaim with all the heaven-born saints, “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1869.

II TIMOTHY 2:20,21.

Dear Brother Beebe: I am permitted this once more, through the mercy of God, to write you a few lines. I have received two numbers of the “Signs.” They were gladly received, and as long as I can raise the means I wish them continued to me, although I hardly feel worthy to read them. I hear very little of the doctrine they contain, but much about the *do and live* doctrine. I am surrounded by Arminians of different kinds, and I seem to be like one alone, and they seek

my life also. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

Brother Beebe, when it is so that you can, I wish you to give your views on II Timothy 2:20,21. I have but very little satisfaction in conversing with Baptist brethren, which would be a great comfort to me. I believe the all-seeing eye and the protecting hand of God is over his children wherever they may be. I cannot think our Savior suffered all that he did to redeem his bride, and then will finally leave her in bondage. Some of the heirs may stray afar off; but all who are born of his spirit will desire, like the prodigal, to return, and to fill even a servant’s place. I can say, that is my case. I will close by asking you to remember me when it is well with thee.

Granville B. Hickey.

Oakhurst, Mo.

April 7, 1869.

Reply: The passage on which brother Hickey desires our views, reads, “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and made meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

The apostle in this connection was exhorting Timothy, as a minister of the gospel, and as a bishop, [or pastor] in the church of Christ, to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and also in reference to those faithful men unto whom he should commit those things which he had heard of Paul among many witnesses, that they might be able to teach others also. Not that Timothy had any power to call or qualify men for the ministry, but as an Elder he would have occasion to lay hands, by solemn ordination, on faithful brethren, such as God had called and made faithful. And in this, he was instructed not to lay hands suddenly on any man. He also instructs Timothy in regard to the indispensable qualifications of a faithful gospel minister. In his first epistle, the third chapter is devoted almost exclusively to a description of the characters, gifts, and general characteristics of those who should be thus recognized and set apart to the work. And in this chapter in which our present subject is written, he says, They should not be entangled with the affairs of this life; and they must be partakers of the fruits of the gospel which they are to proclaim. That is, they must be themselves experimentally partakers of the power and consolations of the gospel; and they must suffer cheerfully for the sake of the gospel. And in so setting them apart to the work, he says “Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” He then tells Timothy of some things which are to be refused, or shunned, carefully avoided, such as profane and vain babblings, which are truly revolting when indulged in by any of the private members of the churches, but quite insufferable in those who minister in holy things. If indulged in to the smallest extent, they will increase to more ungodliness. The disgusting examples of Hymeneus and Philetus are mentioned as a warning. But although the vain and unbecoming conduct of ministers and other members of the church may produce great disorder, and provoke reproach; “Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure.” They cannot remove, nor shake that, for it hath this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his. The solemn charge is given, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, whether a minister or not, let every one making profession of that sacred name, depart from iniquity. Now in connection with, and to confirm the foregoing, and to show that the foundation of God cannot be moved, even by the wicked conduct of the ministers who have or do stand in connection with the church, the apostle uses the simile in the text considered. “But in a great house.” The church of Christ is frequently compared to, and sometimes called a house. It is the house of God, and the gate of heaven.

A spiritual house, composed of lively stones, and it is the dwelling place of God. It is truly a great house in many respects. As the temple in which God dwells, and which he has chosen for his habitation, and in which he has said that he will dwell forever. It has many mansions; if it were not so Christ would have told us. It's Maker and Builder is God, and it stands eternal in the heavens. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." It is exclusively his workmanship.

It is common in all great houses, when properly furnished, to have a variety of vessels, for as great a variety of purposes, and some of gold, or silver, according to the wealth and taste of the proprietor. So in the church, when regarded in her present organization, there is a diversity of gifts. The ministers of the gospel are called vessels, and earthen vessels. "This treasure [the gospel ministry] we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be not of men, but of God." It should not be regarded strange therefore, as the ministers in the church are but vessels containing treasure for the Master's use, that from her first organization to the end of her development, there should be found in her connection a variety differing in honor and utility, as golden vessels differ from those of wood, or of earth, or as widely as the inspired apostles differed from Hymeneus and Philetus.

The apostles, like vessels of gold, when the Son of man sits on the throne of his glory, also sit with him on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. While Timothy, Titus and others in the primitive state of the church, as vessels of silver, were next to the apostles in honor, and they who purge themselves from the corruptions against which Paul warned Timothy, are vessels of honor, fitted for the Master's use, in degree as they approach the purity in doctrine, order and practice of the apostles of the Lamb. While all those who are loose and reckless, in their doctrine and deportment, though they may be in connection with the church of God, like Hymeneus and Philetus, and Judas Iscariot, who had even had part of the ministry, or like the Judaizing teachers of the early days, or the workmongrel interlopers, who manage to connect themselves with the church of Christ and to get into the ministry, in the present times, are vessels to dishonor and like Edom, the Lord's "washpot," to catch the filth which is washed from the daughters of God's people, and to draw from the communion of the church such unstable and fickle souls as are not built upon the immovable foundation which bears the indelible seal:

"The Lord knoweth them that are his."

"If a man therefore purge himself from these." *These* things against which Paul has warned Timothy, vain, foolish and profane babblings, and flee also youthful lusts, avoid the heresy of Hymeneus and Philetus, in short, if a minister avoids all that is forbidden, and faithfully performs all that is enjoined, he shall rise to fill a more important position in the house of God, and be accounted worthy of double honor by his brethren. As a vessel meet, or suitable, for his Master's use, and for his holy vocation, as *sanctified*, or set apart, above the meaner vessels, which seem only meet to be wash-pots, in containing only that which is unclean.

Vessels in the house of God may differ in capacity, as the vessels of cups differ from the vessels of flagons, and yet be equally honored, and meet for the Master's use. Indeed in our figure, it is usual to find in a great house, vessels of smaller size and capacity, made of the more precious material. Vessels of flagons are not made of gold or silver, so we see the vessels of God's holy sanctuary are esteemed precious, according to their purity in faith and practice.

Our subject presents a solemn admonition to those who have entered the ministry. If they would be approved of God and useful to the church to purge themselves from everything incompatible with their holy calling. Alas! How many wooden, earthen or defiled or cracked vessels there are which seem unfit for use in the house of God. Some are entangled in the affairs of the world, some defiled by unlawful connection with anti-christ, mingling with the ministers of Satan, some by serving their own carnal

lusts, some allowing themselves to be filled with politics, and very many by vain and profane babblings, mixing up with the foolish jestings and worldly broils that exist in the world. "If a man shall purge himself from these he shall be? vessel to honor." But even a vessel of pure gold, if it be cracked, will not ring out the right sound, and if defiled or filthy is not fit to drink from; but thoroughly purged from all defilement, the vessels of the house of God are prepared unto every good work. May the Lord wash us from all our defilements, and make us whiter than snow.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1869.

A CORRESPONDENCE.

A very highly esteemed friend of our acquaintance, whom we fully recognize as a child of God and a sincere and earnest enquirer after the truth, with whom we have had conversation and correspondence by letter on the subject of salvation by grace alone, and one who has been in years past connected with the New School Baptists, but has now left them; but still being perplexed in regard to some points of doctrine and order held by us, has requested our views on some portions of the Scriptures, to which we have written a somewhat lengthy reply. It has occurred to us that there are many others besides the enquirer, who may feel a deep interest in the investigation of the subject; and for their sakes we will give the substance of the correspondence through our columns. That we may not betray confidence, however, we will withhold the name and residence of our correspondence, and will give only so much of the letter as will present the subject of enquiry.

"Elder Beebe: Taking you at your word, that I am not a troubler, I am constrained to write to you again. I did think I would quietly await God's own time to give me light on the subject which is so dark to me, and in so doing, say nothing to any one. But I feel so strong a desire to write to you, that I cannot put it *off* any longer. I do not know why it is, but you are the only Elder I can open my mind to, though there are others more intimate, who visit our house more frequently. I do hope I may never tire you.

We were very sorry to hear of your illness, and hope e'er this you have recovered. I feel such a thirst, such a grasping after that which I am not able to comprehend, that at times I cannot read at all, but have to shut the book. My mind is all confusion. It does seem to me, if it were only our heavenly Father's good pleasure to give me light on this *one* point, everything else would be clear. I commenced reading the prophecy of Ezekiel, but I have had to stop.

Elder Beebe, will you please compare Ezekiel 3:16-22, with Acts 20:26, and Acts 26:18? Who are the wicked? And who are the righteous? If you will, I shall be ever indebted to you. You have opened Scripture to me in a new light, in a different way from what I had understood it; and as I now read over such passages, I enjoy them better than I ever did before. But Elder,

I am not one of those blest souls,
Who, standing in their earthly place,
Can yet, through all their days,
Behold their Father's face.

I am not, – I shall never be,
It is not without unbelief;
But doubts that fill my aching head,
With restless grief.

Yet there will come a time of peace,
To souls with endless questionings torn;
A time of icy, when breaks at last,
The endless morn.

O, spirits kept in perfect faith,
One transport you can never know,
One rapture that can fill the soul,
To overflow.

What will it be, O Lord, my King,
To know thy glory stands secure?
Oh! Heavenly bliss! At last, at last,
To be quite sure!

And so I trust thee, O my Lord!
And, let the days be dark or bright,
I love thee through them all, and wait,
The perfect light.

Reply: Esteemed child, you may rest assured of my sincerity and candor in saying that it affords me great pleasure to receive your communications, and to employ my feeble efforts to relieve your mind on those subjects which have caused you anxiety. And as I trust that, to me is this grace given, that I may preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, I feel thankful to God that any of the dear bleating lambs of his flock can feel a freedom to open their minds to me without reserve on the subject that lies so near the hearts of all who fear the Lord. And could you know the pleasure I feel in replying to your enquiries, you would dismiss all fear of wearying me.

Your letter of the 25th of July came to me this morning, and I feel deeply interested in what it contains. From the kind confiding manner in which you have expressed yourself to me, and your appreciation of my feeble efforts to relieve your mind from perplexities which have given disquietude, I flatter myself that you will not be offended at my addressing you as a *child*, as it is only in the sense in which Paul said to one of the churches, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers.” I truly feel a kind of paternal solicitude for those who are now passing through conflicts with which I have been familiar almost three score years.

Before I attempt to give you my understanding of those passages to which you have called my attention, I wish to premise that all revelation by the unerring Spirit of God to the saints is made to their faith, not to their reason. We are called to walk by faith; not by sight. And to look not on the things that are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. II Corinthians 5:7, & 4:18, also Hebrews 11:1. What therefore God reveals to our faith is not to be doubted because of the blindness of our mental powers to comprehend it. The faith of Abraham impelled him to move forward at the command of God, not knowing whither he went. The natural man (even in the Christian) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him;

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. You cannot discipline, nor educate your reasoning powers so as to make them understand any of the things of the Spirit; for if that could be done, the conflict between the flesh and spirit in the Christian warfare would cease. You think, if the Lord would give you light on the *one point*, everything else would be clear; but it is like the poet's description of climbing up the mountain, where Alps on Alps appear. After we have learned all that we can know while here in the flesh, we shall have to exclaim, as did the apostle, "O the depth!" The *one* perplexing point, if I rightly understand you, is that on which we have conversed, namely, Is the gospel to be preached to the ungodly, as a means by which they are to be, or can be quickened and born again? In reply to this I can only repeat my former replies. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. The commission to the apostles, and their example, shows that the proclamation of the gospel is to be made unrestrictedly, and justifies the practice of Christ's ministers now, in preaching the gospel wherever a door is open, without excluding from the assembly such as are not born again. But this preaching to a mixed multitude is not to quicken them, but it is for a witness. It is a witness in that it discriminates between those who are, and those who are not born again. He that hath an ear, will hear, with joy, and gladly receive what the Spirit, in the gospel, says to the churches. As on the day of Pentecost, all who are pricked in their hearts will gladly receive the word, while all who are dead will fail to receive it. It is a savor of life unto life to them that are alive, and it is all a dead letter to them that are dead. Jesus has said, "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom he will." Is there any other way, power or means, by which the dead can be quickened? "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life." (Not shall, or may have it) John 5:21 & 24. The hearing of the gospel and reception of it proves that the hearer and recipient has already passed from death unto life. None but God can make the dead hear his voice and live. This our Savior can and will do, for he says, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. John 5:25. Can any other voice penetrate the dark dominions of death? If not, why talk of preaching as being a means of doing what none but God himself can do?

The gospel is glad tidings to the meek. Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18. But is the preaching of Christ glad tidings, or gospel, to any who are not meek, or who hate it? "For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard." Hebrews 4:2. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22. And it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8. Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of it. Hebrews 12:2. Now can any man who is destitute of faith, mix faith with hearing the preaching of the word? And if they cannot, will the preaching profit them? We in preaching say to all men, as our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." But that declaration is gospel only to them that love it; it is not glad tidings, and therefore not gospel to those who hate it, or to those who would prefer to be saved in some other way. The sovereignty of God, predestination, election, regeneration and the new birth, the preservation of the saints in grace to glory, with all the promises, instructions, admonitions, laws, and ordinances of Christ, are gospel, because they are *glad* tidings to the meek, to the heaven born; but they are not gospel, because they are not glad tidings to those who hate them. It is not mixed with faith in those who have no faith, and therefore cannot profit them.

But I will now attend to the passages to which you referred, in their order. First, Ezekiel 3:16-22. The *wicked*, in the meaning of this text, is any member of the house of Israel, or any number of them, or even the whole house, when guilty of transgressing the law, or covenant of works which they were

under; and the righteous were those who were ceremonially so, by their obedience to the requisitions of the old covenant. “The word of the Lord” came to Ezekiel, saying, “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel.” Why not to the house of Esau, and to everybody else? Because the word of the Lord confined his charge to the house of Israel, and if he extended his watchcare to any other people he would have disobeyed the word of the Lord. He was commanded to receive his instructions at the mouth of God, and from no other source. The house of Israel was the family of Israel, God’s peculiar people. To them and to no other people he gave his law as a covenant of works, and if Ezekiel had attempted to apply that law to any of the heathen nations round about them, if he had called on the Gentiles to mingle with Israel, to be circumcised, to worship with them in the tabernacle or temple, or at their altars, he would have transgressed the law of the Lord. The law and the priesthood of Israel differed from that of all other people. That law provided that an Israelite who had done wickedly, if he should turn from his wickedness and do that which was lawful and right, bring his sin-offering to the priest, he should be restored to his place and privileges in that house; and his wickedness from which he had turned should not be remembered against him. And if a righteous Israelite, that is, one who had not transgressed the law, should turn away from his legal righteousness, by any transgression of the law, his former righteousness should not be remembered, but in his transgression he should die.

The fearfully responsible position of Ezekiel as a watchman to the house of Israel imposed on him the duty to receive the word of the Lord, at the mouth of God, and bear that word or message, precisely as he received it from God, to every one to whom it was sent. Hence we find almost every chapter of his prophecy, and every message he delivered was preceded by the words, “The word of the Lord came unto me, saying,” or words of a similar import. He, as a watchman to the house of Israel, was required to stand in the watch tower, and there watch and wait for the word or message of his God, and when that word came to him, declaring either good or evil, he was to deliver the message faithfully, or the consequence of his negligence or disobedience would be required at his hands, or charged upon him.

Now the house of Israel under the law, was a type of the gospel church, under law to Christ, and the prophet was a type of Christ, as the prophet and high priest of our profession, and also represented, as a watchman, those whom God has called under the gospel dispensation, to take the oversight of the church which he has purchased with his own blood, as gospel ministers. Their watchcare is confined to the church of God, as Ezekiel’s was to the house of Israel, and they too, like him, are to receive their message at the mouth of God, and having God’s word, to declare it faithfully. And as Ezekiel declared to Israel their transgressions and to God’s people their sins, so the faithful watchman whom God has placed upon the walls of Zion shall never hold their peace, they are solemnly charged to reprove, admonish and rebuke, and warn the unruly in the church of Christ.

The law of Moses to the house of Israel is figurative of the laws of Christ which he has given for the government of his church. The law of Christ is binding as well upon the watchmen, as upon all others who are of the household of God. They must receive their message only at the mouth of God, that is the Scriptures, in which God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. And the law of Christ forbids them to add to, or diminish from, what they receive at the mouth of God. If they add to his words, God will add to them the plagues which are written, or if they take from his words, God will take from them their part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city. Revelation 22:18,19. Life and death, by the law to the children of Israel, prefigured the gospel standing of the saints whose names are registered among the living in Jerusalem, as continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship; while such as are expelled from the church, by the laws of Christ, are excluded from a name in the registry of the church, and from all the privileges of the same. And we

infer from the application of the figure of the responsibility of Ezekiel as a watchman, that if under the gospel any of the members lose their standing in the fellowship of the church, through the unfaithfulness of the ministers to warn them, and to declare faithfully to them the word of the Lord, such ministers, by the faithful application of the laws of Christ, shall also fall under the discipline and be expelled from the church. I understand that death to the offending Israelite by the law prefigured exclusion from the church by the laws of Christ. As I cannot in this letter dwell as extensively on this subject as I could wish, I will pass to consider the next passage you have referred me to.

Acts 20:26. This passage appears to me confirmatory and illustrative of what I have written. Paul assured the elders of the gospel church, that he had not shunned to declare all the counsel of God. As a faithful watchman he had delivered to those elders, and to all the churches, every word that he had received of the Lord, and he therefore stood acquitted from the blood of all men; from the blood of all who in any of the churches had disregarded the counsel of the Lord, and thereby lost their name and standing in the church. He was not held responsible for their heresy or apostasy, for he had faithfully and constantly warned them with tears. And now as he knew that he should see these elders no more, he took the opportunity to exhort them to do as he had done; for he recognized them also as watchmen, whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers of the flock; to feed the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood. As faithful watchman, they were to look out for those things, which he knew would take place, after his departure, and to faithfully warn the churches to beware of grievous wolves, and also to be upon their guard against those, who, of their selves should arise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. He solemnly charged them as watchmen, saying, “Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day, with tears.” And yet he knew that some of the elders, of their own selves, whom he had so faithfully warned, would after his departure, speak perverse things, and cause divisions; but he was pure from their blood. We cannot find in Paul’s charge to these elders, that he gave them instructions to divide their watchcare, and bestow part of their labor outside of the church of God, nor did he enjoin on them to attempt to change those grievous wolves which should come, from their wolfish nature, and make them harmless lambs or sheep.

The last passage you referred me to is Acts 26:18. In this passage we have a clear statement of the calling of Paul to his apostleship, and of the work which God would himself do through the ministry of Paul. “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of the things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom 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.” Observe God’s special purpose, for which he appeared to Paul. The people to whom God sent him, the assurance that he would continue to appear to him, and the particular work which God purposed to perform by him. Now let us consider the work and design of the gospel ministry as set forth in this passage. “To open their eyes.” That is the eyes of those to whom God sends his ministers. What would be the effect of opening the eyes of a dead person? It can be done, for experiments have been made by *galvanism*, causing movement of the limbs, and opening of the eyes. But can a dead person see any better with their eyes open than when they are shut? But apply this figure where it belongs, to those unto whom God has given life. When Christ raised Lazarus, he came out of the grave a living man; but a napkin was on his face, and had to be removed that he might see. The removing of the napkin would not enable him to see before he was quickened. And it is the same when we apply the figure to spiritual life and spiritual sight. I have shown that none but God himself can give life to the dead; but the gospel ministry is designed to edify

and enlighten the living children of God. Your own case is in point. I am fully satisfied that you have passed from death unto life; if I did not believe this, I could not hope that any presentation of the truth would enlighten you. But being alive, you greatly desire to see some things which are still dark and mysterious to you. You have been laboring to understand the true meaning of these Scriptures, and you think if the Lord would give you light on *one point*, everything else would be clear. You certainly have eyes to see, or you would not have seen that you were a lost sinner, or that Jesus was your precious Savior. But still your eyes have not yet been fully opened to see those things which you are so earnestly seeking after. The apostle says, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye might know what is the hope of his calling." As when our eyes are shut, light is excluded from them, so when they are opened we can see. So the gospel is designed to enlighten the saints. Paul's preaching did not enlighten all the Gentiles; for it was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks folly, but unto all who were called, and quickened, it was Christ, the power and wisdom of God. God's people among the Gentiles were sitting in darkness, surrounded by paganism, and Paul was sent to them, to turn them from darkness to light, by presenting to them the light of the truth as it is in Jesus. God's living children are frequently involved in darkness; but when the glorious light of the gospel shines even unto them, the preaching of the word dispels the darkness, and when delivered from the power of darkness, they gladly turn from error, and renouncing the unfruitful works of darkness, endeavor to walk as the children of light. Deliverance from the power and gloom of darkness by the light of truth brought to them through the gospel ministry, they are delivered also from the power of Satan, as the ruler of the darkness of this world, and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; they are turned from Satan to God, from error to truth, and from sin to the pursuit of holiness. But as the light of the gospel is life, as it is written, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men," so until sinners are quickened, no preaching can possibly enlighten them, so as to turn them from darkness to spiritual light. In the darkness of death by nature, all are held under the power of Satan, and are led captive by him at his will. But when born of God they have eyes to see; new spiritual eyes, to see the kingdom of God, and to know the things thereof, because, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." God is himself the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. The Gentiles to whom Paul was sent required the instruction which was sent them by Paul, and by all the gifts which God has given to his church, to open their eyes, and enlighten their understanding in the truth, to deliver them from the errors which they had cherished, and so to deliver them from Satan's power, and lead them in the way of truth and righteousness.

God has forgiven the sins of all his chosen people, for Christ's sake, and put them forever away by the one offering of our Savior Jesus Christ. And this was accomplished for them when Christ bore their sins in his own body on the cross. But the joyful knowledge of the remission of their sins they could not have until they were quickened and enlightened, or until the eyes of their understanding were opened to know what is the hope of their calling. But when quickened and enlightened by the Spirit, and instructed by the preached gospel, they receive experimentally that forgiveness of sins which God had held in store for them, even when they were dead in sins. When they receive experimentally the forgiveness of their sins, they cease to rely on their own works to commend them to God, and gladly receive the word that assures them that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them, and they gladly receive the preached word, which testifies to them that all the provisions of salvation, and all the promises of the gospel are unto them, and unto their children, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Then do they truly receive forgiveness of their sins, from him who

is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins, and in whose name alone repentance and the forgiveness of sins is authorized to be preached unto them.

This repentance and forgiveness being a part of the inheritance of the sanctified, consecrated, or set apart, people of God, in the reception of it the happy recipients thereof receive an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in God.

God's purpose in appearing to Saul, in making him a witness, in delivering him from the Jews and Gentiles, and in sending him to them, is declared by God himself to Saul; and every Gentile convert is a witness that in this, as in everything else, God's purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Through the preaching and apostleship of Paul, the eyes of millions of quickened Gentiles have been opened, and they have been turned from pagan darkness to the light of truth, and from Satan and his slavish service unto God; and they have received forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in God. But, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed EVEN AS THE LORD GAVE TO EVERY MAN."

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1869.

REPLY TO SISTER MATHEWS.

"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, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Isaiah 40:1,2.

God's people while here upon earth are always represented as a poor and afflicted people, who trust in the Lord, and for whom God has graciously provided comfort which shall be sent in supplies, and so proportioned to their necessities that they shall know that it is from the Lord, who has promised that, "As their days, so shall their strength be." Paul has said of them, "If in this life only we have hope in God, we are of all men most miserable." Among the afflictions to which they are subject are some which are for the testing or trial of their faith and confidence in God; and some are sent in chastisement for their transgressions. The people of Israel under the law were typical of the spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation. The judgments and chastisements of the former, and their deliverances from them were according to the obedience or disobedience to the law under which they were known as God's peculiar people. As an evidence that he regarded them as such, they were frequently sorely chastised for the very things at which the Lord winked when committed by the heathen nations; and he also provided deliverances for them, which the heathen or Gentiles were denied. In the text to which our sister invites our attention, a command is issued from the throne of God, but unto whom it is stated we can only infer, from the words, "*Saith your God,*" that it can be only directed to those whose God is the Lord. God is able to, and sometimes does, send comfort to his people by aliens; as he did to Israel by raising Cyrus to liberate them from Babylon, or as he used the ravens to feed Elijah. But he commissions none to bear his special messages of love and mercy to his people, but his own worshipers, who are his people, and to whom he is their God.

This command to comfort his people seems to generally apply to all whose God is the Lord, as in the ninth and tenth verses, Zion and Jerusalem are found to respond to the command as bearers of the good tidings of comfort to God's people. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid."

The warfare or conflict under which God's people had been depressed and afflicted seems to be on account of their sins and their iniquities; without remission of these there was no comfort for them; for however much ungodly men may rejoice in the works of their own hands, and exult in their iniquities, God's people are so elemented that they can only rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation. In his presence to them is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forever more. But when conscious that they have transgressed his laws, and in their conduct departed from him as the fountain of living water, they realize that "clouds and darkness are round about him; he keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it;" and they are made to say in anguish of spirit, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:1,2.

God's people to whom the message of comfort in our text is sent, had long been struggling under the law, in conflict, and in an unequal warfare. The service which they performed under the covenant of works, and the offerings which they brought continually to the altar, could not purge their conscience from dead works, nor qualify them to worship the true God. Nor could the law help them, because it was weak through the flesh; the blood of the victims which were offered could not prevent a remembrance being made every year of their sins, and hence could secure no substantial comfort for them. But in our text we have a prediction of a perfect and complete atonement for all the people of God. Like many of the predictions of this and other prophets, it is expressed in the perfect or past tense; for although more than seven hundred years should elapse before the advent of the Redeemer, and the work which he should perform in making an end of sin, and in bringing in everlasting righteousness, God could and did speak of things which were not, with the same infallible certainty as though they were already accomplished; for he is the Inhabitant of eternity, and does not require the revolutions of the wheel of time to disclose to his eye anything that shall be in the future. That this prophesy had a special allusion to the introduction of the gospel dispensation is clear from the application of the fourth and fifth verses, to John the Baptist, Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4,5; John 1:23. The law and the prophets were until John, then began to dawn the light of the gospel day. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets." (Isaiah 40:4,5; Malachi 3:1) Then should come forth unto God, out of Bethlehem Ephrathah, him that is to be ruler in Israel; "whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2. And he should turn away ungodliness from Jacob. With his stripes God's people should be healed. Bearing their sins in his own body, he should die, the just for the unjust, and be raised from the dead for their justification, and be exalted, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, (or God's people) and the remission of sins. Acts 5:31, Luke 24:46,47. This gospel message, these good tidings of comfort, by special command of God, were to be made to God's people. Thrice the charge is given, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." But if there be any command from God to speak thus comfortably to any other than God's people, or to cry to the ungodly, that their warfare is accomplished, that their iniquity is pardoned, we have failed to find it in the sacred volume. For eighteen hundred years the messengers of Christ have been reproached and persecuted for not

preaching the gospel to the ungodly, and for applying its comfort exclusively to God's people. We cannot apply the gospel to them who are under the law; for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. To preach the law to them, or to describe the horrors of the damned, or to appeal to them to save themselves, or to allow the Lord to save them, or to tell them to repent, or to believe, is not preaching the gospel; but to preach the gospel is to proclaim glad tidings to the meek, to speak comfortably to God's people, to cry unto Jerusalem, that her warfare is accomplished and that her sins are pardoned. Dare we, without express command from God, preach to any but his people that their iniquity is pardoned? They must first be convinced by a divine power that they are sinners, that they have committed iniquity, before such a message, or assurance of forgiveness, could be glad tidings to them. The word *gospel* signifies good news, or glad tidings, and these words being of the same signification, are used interchangeably in the Scriptures. The words *good tidings* in Isaiah 61:2, are rendered by our Lord, in Luke 4:18, *gospel*, and so throughout the sacred pages, when ever used in reference to spiritual things. Where in the sacred volume shall we find the command from God, saying, Comfort ye, comfort ye the Chaldeans; speak ye comfortably to Babylon, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned? Must we infer that if such joyful tidings are sent to God's people, that he is in justice bound to send a similar message to Sodom and Egypt?

The command of God to his messengers in our text does not leave them at liberty to make the proclamation general; for God has made it special, and limited it to his people, to his Zion, or Jerusalem. Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished. What *warfare*? Her conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil; with sin, death and hell; with the law of a carnal commandment; with the stern demands of God's inflexible justice. From the standpoint of the prophet, his faith illuminated by immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, looked through the vista of intervening ages, and with Abraham he saw the Redeemer's day, his work, his triumph and his glory, rejoiced in it and was glad. The warfare, as conducted by God's people, in vain attempts to meet the law's demands by the blood of bulls and goats, or to establish a law righteousness in which man could be just with God, had proved abortive, and it was made known that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in the sight of God. In the absence of something more efficient, despair must settle forever upon God's people. But lo! In the dark hour in which all human power and excellency had utterly failed, the angel of mercy rolls back the fearful cloud; the voice of God is heard; but not in terrific peals, as when his voice once shook the earth; but in the mild and gentle tones which rang from the Redeemer's mouth, when he said, "Lo I come! In the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God." He comes to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work; and this he declares is the will of the Father, that of all he has given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise them up at the last day. "He shall save his people from their sins." And now, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation." Zechariah 9:9. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3,4. In the proclamation of this comfort and pardon, without any sacrifice of justice or truth, God appears as a just God, and yet a Savior is revealed. God has found a ransom. He is able to justify the ungodly, without the least infraction of his holy and righteous law. Christ our passover was slain. God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He has put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and with his stripes we are healed. There is now forgiveness with him, and upon the most sacred principles of law and justice. For Christ did not come to save us by destroying either the law or the prophets, for he came to fulfill them in their jots and tittles, to meet all their demands, suffer all penalties due to our transgressions, and redeem us with his

precious blood from all iniquities. Although our sins could not be remitted to Christ, for he had to bear them in his own body on the tree, yet he having borne them, was able to arise from the dead, and now he has power on earth to forgive sins, and to do it legally and justly. Her iniquity is pardoned; for she, in the person of her Surety, has received all that law and justice could inflict on him for them; and his propitiatory sacrifice has not only met the exact and even handed retribution due for her sins; but she has received of his hand *double* for all her sins. The word *double* generally means just twice as much, but in this and some other passages it has been supposed to express in very strong terms that the atonement was very full, ample and perfect. To our own mind, however, it seems to express not that the law has received double, for the holy law could only receive the exact amount of its demands. For the law then to inflict more wrath, or to receive more payment than its just due, would be as great a violation of the principles of eternal justice, as it would be to accept of any less than its due. But, cry unto her, that she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. It is then what she, not what the law has received of the Lord's hand. Let us enquire then, What has Zion received of the Lord's hand? Has she received no more than the remission of her sins? The forgiveness of her sins would be exactly the amount of them, and not double their amount. This she has received, and this secures her from all wrath on the account of her sins. As a thick cloud, they are blotted out, and shall be remembered against her no more. But if Christ has only relieved us from responsibility for having sinned, and has done no more for us, that would secure us from wrath on their account, but it would leave us as far from heaven as we were in Adam, before sin entered. It would leave us where our Lord was crucified, suspended between heaven and earth, and without power to reach either heaven or hell. And if we consider that his identification of his people with him in his resurrection life, making us partakers of his divine nature, and imparting to us that spiritual and eternal life which he had with the Father before the world began, causing us to be born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, then we have received the double. Both the expiation of our sins, and reception of his Spirit, the church has received of the Lord's hand. His mediatorial work was not only to put away our sins, but to make us the righteousness of God in him.

Now it strikes us that a faithful proclamation of the perfect, effectual, definite and infallible atonement which the church has received at the hand of the Lord, and her being made a partaker of his eternal righteousness, identified with Christ in resurrection life and immortality, is most comforting to God's people, and all who have received the command in our text, have business enough to occupy all their time, and call into action all their ability, as long as they shall dwell in the house of their pilgrimage.

This commission or command of God is lodged in Zion, it is enjoined on Jerusalem, and lodged within her sacred precincts. It is carefully deposited in the ark of the testimony, and this comfort shall go forth from Zion, and be declared only from Jerusalem, from that Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.

The views which we have written, if we mistake not, will be greatly enlarged by reading understandingly the whole chapter of which our text is the beginning. The voice that proclaims from God this comfort to his people, bids them cry. And if they enquire with the prophet, "What shall I cry?" we are told to discriminate between all flesh, and all the goodness thereof, and the Word of our God. Of the former we are partakers in our first birth, and so far as that is considered we are flesh, and all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof, the most amiable and goodly of all our fleshly qualities or works, are only as the flower of the field, withering, fading, dying. But that which is born of incorruptible seed, is born of the Word of our God which liveth and abideth forever. Zion has this testimony, and none but the Zion of God can either have or comprehend it. "O, Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice

with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, [all of which are represented by, and under the government of Jerusalem] Behold your God.” Behold him in the face of your Redeemer; for, “Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand; and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.” Well may the enraptured psalmist exclaim, “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.” Comfort inspiring words which God has commanded to be spoken to his people.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1869.

ACTS 26:16-18.

Reply to Brother D.H. Goble:

There was a remarkable display of the power of God in the calling and conversion of Saul, and it was so clearly the work of God as to leave no room for caviling. Up to that moment he had lived a conceited self-righteous Pharisee, professing more than ordinary piety, but his piety was of that kind which all self-righteous Arminians possess, the more of which they have the greater their hatred to the saints, and violent opposition to the truth. Alive without the law, unsubdued by the least sense of weakness, verily believing that he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus, and regarding it a pious work to persecute the saints of God, he was still breathing slaughter against the disciples of Christ until the very moment when startled by the voice of God from the skies, and all the lights of nature in which he had trusted were put out by that light from heaven, which so far out shined the refulgent brightness of the meridian sun, as to cause him to fall blind and helpless to the ground. Shall we ask what means he had been using, what terms he had accepted, or what conditions he had complied with, to procure this wonderful change? His last breath was slaughter, and the very next succeeding breath was prayer! Helpless and prostrate on the ground, a sin-stricken, heart-broken, subdued and perishing sinner, who did not know the Savior by whose almighty power he was now arrested, and into whose hands he had fallen a helpless captive. A learned and popular divine, a graduate from a Theological school, perfectly versed in all the Jew’s religion, who had made religion his study from his infancy, and with his pockets full of religious tracts or letters from the high priest, and dignitaries of the Mission Society, whose missionaries were compassing sea and land, and himself a zealous missionary, with the field of labors assigned him by the Board, to do their bidding at Damascus, now lies prostrate before the Lord. Stricken down by a power he had not invoked, by the Savior whom he had not known, subdued and passive he now enquires, “Who art thou, Lord?” And, “What wilt thou have me to do?”

Both questions are answered. He is informed that it is Jesus whom he was persecuting, that had stricken him to the ground, and for what purpose he had appeared unto him, and of what he would have him to do. “Rise and stand upon thy feet.” We doubt whether he had power to rise, until Jesus bid him rise, even as he called Lazarus to rise from the dead, and come forth, so there was a power attended the command, which brought the prostrated sinner to his feet. And now, what next? Has he appeared to Saul in wrath, to make him an example of vindictive justice, and pour on him the just retribution for his

dreadful crimes? O no! “For I have appeared unto thee, for this purpose; to make thee a minister, and a witness.” But what kind of a minister? Why, such as Jesus always makes; a Baptist minister; for he was not allowed to enter the ministry until he was first baptized by Ananias. And a Baptist of the Old School faith and order, for he believed all things which were written in the law and in the prophets. Acts 24:14.

In those apostolic days it was not pretended that any but God himself could make gospel ministers. For this purpose of God, Christ had appeared to Saul, to make him a minister and a witness; and as a competent witness he must needs be qualified to speak things he knew and testify things that he had seen. To supply this ability Christ appeared to him, and was revealed in him. Not only was he to bear witness of the things which he had then seen, but things also in which the Lord would also appear unto him. He would appear to him in delivering him from the people, (Jews) and also in delivering him from the Gentiles, unto whom the Lord sent him. And he would also appear unto him in opening the eyes of the blind, and in all the miracles which the Lord wrought through him as an apostle; and in turning the Gentiles from the darkness of pagan idolatry to the light of the gospel, and from the power of Satan, unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ. For this purpose of God, which Paul had no part in purposing, Christ had appeared and still would continue to appear to him. So that whether the presence of Christ was apparent to others or not, he was manifestly apparent to Paul in every deliverance he experienced from Jews or Gentiles, and he appeared to him in the opening of the eyes of the blind, in turning men from darkness to light. And of all this Paul was a faithful witness. He never pretended, nor tolerated the idea that eyes were opened, or sinners converted to God by any art, power, virtue or work that he of himself was capable of performing. It is true God wrought many wonderful miracles by Paul, and used him as his mouth, and spoke by him, as he had formerly spoken by the prophets, but these were none the less the works of God himself, and the words which he spake by the mouth of Paul were none the less God’s words, and the light these words imparted came only from the Sun of Righteousness. The apostles are called stars. Revelation 12:1. And so also are the angels, or messengers of the churches. Revelation 1:20. Stars are said to be dark bodies of themselves, but they are reflectors of the light of the sun. So this treasure, of which we write, is committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power thereof may be of God, and not of man, or of earthen vessels.

God used his apostles, and so he also uses his gospel ministers, not to give life to the dead, nor eyes to the blind, but to edify and enlighten the living to whom he has given life and eyes. Every heaven-born child has spiritual life, and spiritual eyes, but how many of them are in darkness. Once they *were* darkness, but now they are children of the light. Some are like those Gentiles to whom Paul was sent, greatly needing to be taught the way of the Lord more perfectly. The eyes of the learned and eloquent Apollos were opened, and his mind enlightened concerning the baptism of John, and of the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the unpretending Priscilla and Aquilla.

When our esteemed correspondent called on us to explain this text, we inferred that it was not clear to his mind, and in the hope of opening his eyes, eyes which he now has, so as to present to his sight the truth, that seeing it he may be turned from darkness, or obscurity on this subject, to the light, we have attempted to let such light as we have so shine that others who have eyes, or spiritual discernment, may see, and glorify *not us*, but God. As the preaching of the gospel in truth and soberness discloses hidden mysteries to the saints, it tends to their edification. But it never gives spiritual discernment to them from whom God has withheld it. When the quickened sons of God are allured and drawn blindly into error, the presentation of the testimony of the word of the Lord by his witnesses turns them from darkness to light, and as they never go into error only by the influence and power which Satan is

permitted to exercise over them, so the faithful ministry by which they are enlightened turns them from the power of Satan unto God. Among the Gentiles unto whom the Lord sent Paul were the churches of Galatia, which had become bewitched by the power of Satan, through his Judaizing teachers, and Paul's labors were owned and blessed of God for their restoration, and deliverance from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

“And that they may receive the forgiveness of sins.” None but Christ has power on earth to forgive sins. No preaching, even of Paul, can procure the forgiveness of sins, nor is it designed for any such purpose. Then, why, you ask, was Paul sent to the Gentiles that they might receive that forgiveness? If the executive of state has reprieved a convict from the gallows, why is a messenger sent to bear the joyful message to the poor condemned wretch? You answer, that the prisoner may receive it, and enjoy the benefit of it. So were these Gentile sinners redeemed, and for them there is forgiveness provided, and it is with the Lord, and he has ordained that they shall in due time receive it. Hence Paul, and all other gospel ministers whom Christ has made, are sent to preach repentance in Christ's name, and in his name the forgiveness of sins, that they may receive it. Paul was a witness of the resurrection of Christ; for as a risen Savior he had appeared to him to thus qualify him, to proclaim among the Gentiles that Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. This forgiveness is the immediate work of God, but our reception and enjoyment of it is quite another thing. The atonement was made many centuries ago, in which Christ obtained eternal redemption for all his people. But when did we personally and experimentally receive it? Not until by the ministration of the gospel the glad tidings came unto us. And how very slow have some of us been in our reception of it. O, says one, I am too great a sinner! It is too much for me to hope. But when the preaching of the word comes to such, as it came upon those who were pricked in the heart on the day of Pentecost, then they gladly receive the word, and with the word comes the assurance that their sins are forgiven, and they with joy receive it.

When through the ministration of the word the poor quickened and heart-broken sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, he is prepared to follow Christ in the ordinance of baptism, and to enter in through the gates into the city, and have a right to eat of the tree of life, and drink freely of the water of life. As children, and heirs, they can now take their place among the consecrated – set apart, who are in the church, where the heirs have their inheritance, being thus sanctified, or set apart, by faith that is in Christ; for it is only by the faith of the Son of God they can enter into this rest which remains for the people of God. Gospel ministers who are witnesses prepared by and for the Lord, are instructed to “Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” They are to point out the footsteps of the flock, administer the word and the ordinances, by baptizing them that believe and give evidence that they have received the forgiveness of their sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them. And to such the assurance is given that he who has appeared to them to make them ministers and witnesses, is with them always, even to the end of the world.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1869.

I THESSALONIANS 5:15, TITUS 3:8.

Brother Beebe: I feel very anxious to see your views on the following passages of Scripture: I Thessalonians 5:15, and Titus 3:8. If when you have leisure you will write on either or both these texts, I will feel greatly obliged.

Wilson Kugler.
Frenchtown, N.J.
February 13, 1869.

Reply: It is a pleasure to us to labor, to the extent of our very limited ability, for the edification of the children of God, and frequently when searching out the truth for them our own mind has been enlightened and many passages have been opened with comfort to our understanding. But it would be presumptuous in us to favor the idea that we are able to unseal the revelation of God to the benefit of even his living children, a particle farther than it is the pleasure of our Father in heaven to make it clear to our own mind. We often tremble, while we look at a file of many letters, from all parts of our wide spread country, calling on us to explain some passages which seem obscure to those who send them. We tremble not because our labor is called for, but lest our brethren and friends should look to us for that counsel and wisdom which they should ask of him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. There never was a man on earth, if we exclude him who is God, man and Mediator, endued with sufficient wisdom to expound correctly all that is contained in the Scriptures. The prophets sought diligently to learn the full import of the words which God had spoken by them; and the apostles confessed that, without Christ they could do nothing. And if the holy prophets and apostles exclaimed, Who is sufficient for these things? May not such as we veil our faces and exclaim,

“How shall affrighted mortals dare,
To sing thy glory or thy grace?
Beneath thy feet we lie so far,
And see but shadows of thy face.
Who can behold the blazing light?
Who can approach consuming fire?
None but thy wisdom knows thy might,
None but thy word can speak thy name.”

Still God has made it the delightful privilege of even the most feeble of his children to “Speak of the glory of his kingdom, and to talk of his power.” And when we give our views on these sublime and heavenly things, we give them only as our views, and all the saints should compare them first with the Scriptures, and then with their own experience, that they may be satisfied that they are true before they endorse them.

The passages now proposed by brother Kugler are of more plain and practical import than many on which we have sometimes been called to write. Both are found among the faithful admonitions given by the apostle, to be observed by the saints. We will consider them together. That in I Thessalonians 5:15, which reads, “See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.” And the other, Titus 3:8, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.” Both admonitions are in reference to the deportment of the saints. In the first is but a reiteration of the charge so frequently given by our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples. In his Sermon on the Mount, and in all his instructions,

he forbid that they should, under any provocation whatever, render evil for evil, or railing for railing. They were commanded to even love their enemies, cherish the most kindly feelings even to their bitterest enemies. His own example when on the cross writhing in bitterest agony, his prayer was uttered on their behalf. "Father, forgive them." This Christ-like spirit was also exemplified in Stephen's dying prayer for them who were murdering him in a most cruel manner. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Had Stephen rent the air with imprecations of vengeance on his murderers, or had he prayed for retributive justice to surprise them, could he so well have displayed thereby the meek and gentle spirit of his Lord and Maker? Under the law that knew no mercy, an eye was exacted for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but not so in the kingdom of the Redeemer. "Do good to them that persecute, and despitefully use you." And the apostle, enthroned in judgment, ministers to us this rule without any abatement of its spirit and requisition. And the charge comes home on every saint, not only for his own observance and obedience, but the church is required to see that none, that is, none of the brethren or members of the church, shall do it. That is, the church is required, in the exercise of that spiritual authority with which Christ has invested, to see that none be held in fellowship who render evil for evil, either to their fellow members, or to any body else. No exceptions are made, under any peculiar circumstances; not even at the peril of their own lives are they allowed to depart from this divine command. But they are commanded to be as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves.

The other passage is of very similar import. It is a solemn charge to Titus, as a minister of Christ, and having the oversight of the flock of God, that he should never, on any account, or for any cause whatever, negative the divine rule, but affirm constantly the same decisions and rules. An affirmation is sometimes substituted for an oath; but in our text we understand the apostle to enjoin on Titus, and on all other ministers of the gospel, and on all the saints, that in their preaching, and no less in their practice, they should bear their faithful testimony affirmatively to the truth, in deed, as well as in their words. The rules for the government of the church of God were not laid down temporarily, to be revised, and changed to suit coming emergencies, nor to be once presented by affirmation, and then forgotten, but to be affirmed constantly, throughout all time. The things to be thus constantly and perpetually affirmed are couched in a "faithful saying." And as the saying is faithful, it not only includes the peaceable deportment of the saints, but all good works; nor does it leave the saints to guess at what works are good, and what are evil; for in the faithful saying, the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All the works of the Christian which God approves are specified in the faithful sayings of the Scriptures. Whatever they enjoin are good, no others are. And these good works are enjoined on them that have believed. All believers are to be baptized. "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." And they are to continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. There are many of the duties which are enjoined upon the saints by the law of Christ, which the apostle has grouped together in this epistle, all of which are enjoined by divine authority on all who have believed in God, and which they are to be constantly admonished to be careful to observe, and to maintain. They are to be maintained by affirmation, by word and deed, in the face of all opposition of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The word *maintain* implies a vigilance, a careful watchfulness, a close observance, and strict obedience. A godly walk and conversation cannot be maintained in a careless or indifferent way. The believers in God are required to give the most earnest heed to the things which they have heard in the faithful sayings of Christ and his apostles, lest at any time they should let them slip. "These things are good and profitable unto men." We are not to suppose that anything that we can do can be profitable unto God; for when we have done all that he has enjoined, we are to confess that we are unprofitable servants. The psalmist said unto the Lord, "My goodness extendeth not unto thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is

all my delight.” Psalm 16:2,3. In a careful maintenance of the good works enjoined upon those who believe in God, the saints are comforted and edified, the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed, the sick and imprisoned are visited, and the widow and the fatherless are cared for. A strict observance of all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us is profitable to the saints, and reflects honor and praise upon the name of him who has called us by his grace and given us a place in his house, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1869.

ROMANS 5:14.

Brother Beebe: If it not asking too much, I would like to have your views on Romans 5:14, especially on this part of the verse: “Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” I very well know that you are troubled much in this manner, and if it is not entirely agreeable, pass it by, and all will be right. I am very desirous to have your views on this Scripture, because it has given me much thought and trouble. May the good Lord spare your life many years yet, and enable you *us* the future to proclaim his truth, unbiased by any earthly consideration, as you have in the past.

Your brother, if a brother at all.

Isaac W. Kelly

Louisville, Ky.

July 11, 1869.

Reply: In the transgression of Adam, we have a very instructing similitude; for the apostle says, he “is the figure of him that was to come.” That is, of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, answering to that similitude, or figure, is called the second, or anti-typical, Adam. Not only in the similitude of his transgression, but, as the apostle has clearly shown, as the seminal head and progenitor of a posterity. The figure being natural, but the anti-type spiritual; the figure is of the earth, earthy; the anti-type, the Lord from heaven. So that the earthly Adam is emphatically “the figure of him that was to come.” Of this most grand and sublime figure, we need only now to speak of the similitude of Adam’s transgression, or the analogy which Adam’s transgression bears to that which it was designed to prefigure and represent.

The guilt of Adam’s transgression came from the devil. The serpent beguiled Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had forbidden on pain of death. She ate, and thus stood the case. She must die, and in death be forever separated from Adam, as she had no power to return to that state of innocence in which she had with him. But one way was possible for the perpetuation of their unity and identity. He had power to assume her guilt, and take on him her transgression, by receiving the forbidden fruit at her hand, and assuming the penalty of the violated law of God, as she was truly the bone of his bones, and the flesh of his flesh. They twain were one flesh, and by the purpose and decree of God, identified in an indissoluble union. “The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Genesis 3:12. Thus Adam, in following

his bride into the transgression, coming under the condemnation and penalty of the law that she had transgressed, is the figure of him that was to come. Although Adam had no redeeming power to expiate sin, or to deliver himself or bride, or to put forth his hand and help himself to the fruit of the tree of life, yet, his complicity with Eve, following her under the law, and his assumption of the transgression, was at least a very striking similitude.

It is not true that Adam lost the image, or ceased to be the figure of him that was to come, when he received at the hand of the bride the fruit of the tree, and did eat of it; for it is written, “And the Lord God said, Behold the man has become as one of us.” Genesis 3:22. God did not say, Behold the man has lost the image; for there was in the very transgression of Adam, a similitude, indispensably necessary to complete the figure. And the inspired apostle applies this similitude throughout this fifth chapter to the Romans.

If then Adam is the figure of Christ, as the apostle says he *is*, (not was) then his bride, created in him, is a figure of the church, which is the bride, the Lamb’s wife. Paul has thus testified. “For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” I Timothy 2:13,14. Let us apply the similitude. Christ, the Second Adam and the Lord from heaven, “is before all things, and by him all things consist.” Colossians 1:17. Eve was created in Adam. And of the church it is said, “For we are his [God’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:10. “For Adam was first formed, then Eve.” I Timothy 2:13. Of Christ it is said, “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the Head of the body, the church, who is the Beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.” Colossians 1:17,18. “Adam was not deceived.” When Christ came into the world, “He saith, Lo, I come, [in the volume of the book it is written of me] to do thy will, O God.” Hebrews 10:7.

Adam followed his bride into the transgression; and, “He [Christ] was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” II Corinthians 5:21. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6. The words of Adam, which we have repeated, are also applicable to Christ. “The woman [church] which thou gayest to be with me, she gave me, and I did eat.”

When Eve existed in Adam before her formation, Adam loved her, for “no man ever hateth his own flesh.” When she was formed and stood in primeval innocence at his side, he loved her; when she was beguiled by Satan and came under the sentence of the divine law, which forbid her return to him, still he loved her, and rather than endure a separation he gave himself for her. So we understand the church as created and chosen in Christ, was the object of his eternal and immutable love. And when he saw her ruined in the fall, he loved her, notwithstanding all. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him.” Ephesians 2:4. And, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14,15. In taking part of the same flesh and blood, he was made of a woman, and made under the very law which his children had transgressed, to redeem them from under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children. The first Adam could not redeem his bride from her transgression, but as the figure of him that was to come, he could and did receive the consequence of her transgression, even as Christ received and bore in his body the sins of his people.

Thus we see in the transgression of Adam a similitude, and as the text reads, he is the figure of him that was to come.

Again, by closely observing the context we find the apostle discoursing on the subject of the divine law. From Adam to Moses we read of no law in preceptive form being given to the children of Adam; and Paul says, Sin is not imputed where there is no law. Yet until the law, or prior to the law by Moses, sin was in the world; and this is proved from the fact that death reigned during that period. As Adam's transgression was by direct disobedience to a special command or precept of God, those of his posterity which were under the reign of death did not sin after the similitude of his transgression, which proves that they were involved in his sin; for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Therefore, although they had not sinned after the manner or similitude of Adam's sinning, yet, as they had sinned in him when he sinned, the reign of death was upon them, or they could not have died. The law which was given to the Hebrews was not to give mankind a new trial or probation, for the reign of death could not be annulled but by that atonement by Christ of which the apostle is speaking. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound." The entrance of the law by Moses did not occasion the offence, but made it manifest; for the offence existed before the giving of the law. But still the law being holy, just and good, was a detector, or exposor, of sin which already existed in the human race. We do not understand that there were any, from Adam to Moses, that sinned after the similitude of his transgression, either in viewing that similitude as referring to him as the figure of Christ, nor in that similitude, in its application to the manner of his transgression of a direct precept. In the space intervening from Adam to Moses, many died in infancy and in maturer life, who had not sinned by any direct transgression of, or want of obedience to any precept, prohibition or command, as did Adam, and therefore not after the likeness or similitude of his transgression; thus demonstrating that they had sinned in him, as their seminal head, and were consequently under the reign of death.

In replying to brother Kelley, we have taken a wider range, and made this article more lengthy than we had intended.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1869.

I CORINTHIANS 7:5, 14-16.

Dear Brother Beebe: Will you or some of your able correspondents be so kind as to give your views through the "Signs of the Times," on I Corinthians 7:5, 14-16, and much oblige your professed brother,

Wm. Davis.
Lisbon, Ark.
June, 1869.

Reply: Corinth, where this church was located, was one of the most magnificent cities of Greece, and famous for its refinement, literature and wealth, but like all the cities of the Gentile world, at that day, sunk deep in pagan idolatry. Among those pagans there were however, as elsewhere among the Gentiles, many Jewish proselytes long before the gospel was introduced among them or any gospel church organized among them. When the apostles and other primitive preachers of the gospel were driven out of Judea by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the word, and some of them found

their way into Corinth; and under their ministry God was pleased to gather and organize a church. The Corinthian constituents of that church having been brought up and educated principally in paganism, and now called to ignore it, were perplexed in regard to the different teachings of the Jews and Christians. The Jews holding that all who embraced Judaism should put away their pagan wives; as in the ritual of Moses it was unlawful for a Jew to have a Gentile or pagan wife. The apostles of Christ had taught those who professed the Christian faith, that they were not by the laws of Christ required to adhere to Jewish rites, but being under law to Christ they were required to regard their marriage most sacredly binding. The Corinthian church, we infer from the context, had written to Paul to enlighten them on this subject. In reply to their written enquiry, as we understand, the apostle shows that the gospel does not require that the disciples shall be married; and on his own responsibility Paul suggests that the unmarried state would be preferable; but that those who were married, or even betrothed, had no right to disregard their solemn engagements. Parties, either married or betrothed, were no longer independent of each other, and therefore to ignore their solemn pledges, and separate from each other, would be to defraud the forsaken party. This he charges them not to do, except it be with mutual consent for a time, and for devotional purposes, and then to come together again. A Christian husband, having a pagan wife, cannot worship together; and if the pagan desires to go to her idol's temple, and the Christian to the sanctuary of the Lord, let this temporary separation be by mutual consent, and for a limited time. To go beyond this limitation would be fraudulent, for neither the husband nor the wife has *power*, that is proprietorship, or the independent right of his or her own body; for they twain are one. It would be fraudulent, therefore, to desert each other, as it would be to deprive the injured party of his or her lawful rights, and thus would give Satan an advantage and bring dishonor upon the Christian profession. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, [that is a pagan] and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." Why? Because they are legally bound to each other. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband." That is, sanctified by espousal and marriage; consecrated, set apart exclusively to and for each other, legally; forsaking all others in that relation till separated by death. Else were your children unclean, or illegitimate, born out of wedlock, and therefore illegal or bastards; but in this marriage consecration or sanctification they are holy, or lawful children. The Christian husband does not know but that he may convince his pagan wife of the absurdity and abomination of idolatry, nor does the Christian wife know that her pagan husband may not yet become a follower of Christ; hence the impropriety of ignoring the relation of husband and wife, on account of religious differences.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1869.

JOHN 5:29.

Very Dear and much esteemed Brother Beebe: It seems that I cannot do without your comforting paper, as I am situated where I cannot hear the Old School Baptists preach, or but very seldom see one of them. Will you please give your views on John 5:29. Some time ago this

text got hold of my mind and seemed to worry me very much. “And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” I seemed to be fully impressed that I had done nothing that is truly good; but I have done evil all my days.

Yours in much tribulation.

Hargis Farthing.

Newbern, N.C.

February 20, 1869.

Reply: In speaking of the children of God, Christ has pledged his word that he will raise them up to life and immortal glory at the last day. The Scriptures frequently distinguish them from others, as in this text, as they that have done good, which is to us an *evidence*, but not the *cause* of their salvation. As it is said, “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.” Whereas, neither their believing or being baptized is the cause of their salvation; nor their unbelief the cause of their damnation; but in both cases it is the evidence. Faith in Christ and obedience to his precepts give reliable evidence of being born of God, while unbelief and ungodly works are evidence of a state of condemnation.

Hence, in the vision of John, Revelation 20, he saw all the dead stand before God, and they were judged out of those things which were written in the books, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire. Yet they were all judged, “every man according to his works.” The resurrection, judgment and final destiny shall be precisely according to, but not resulting from, their works; for they are judged out of those things which are written in the books. All whose names are in the book of the Lamb were there written from the foundation of the world. See Revelation 13:8, and 17:8. And they are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10. “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.” Philippians 2:12,13. “Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.” Isaiah 26:12.

From these Scriptures it is abundantly manifest that the works which correspond with the eternal records of the books out of which all the dead, both small and great, are judged before God, are the works which God has wrought in us, and has before ordained that we shall walk in them, and to secure the performance of which God himself works in us, both to will and to do. Hence in the absence of good works, thus defined, we lack reliable evidence that our names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life. No human or saving merit can be attributed to our good works, for they are but the development of what God has wrought in us. And we are expressly and repeatedly told in God’s sacred word of truth that the saints are saved by grace, not by works, lest any man should boast. “By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus 3:5. Inasmuch, therefore, as God has before ordained that all his saved people shall walk in good works, and he himself has wrought all these good works in them, and worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, we can find no evidence that any are his children in whom these works of God do not appear, and wherever they do appear they are known as the effect, and not as the cause, of our salvation. Just as the good fruit of a tree is the evidence that the tree is good, and not the cause of its goodness. In all who are born of the Spirit, God has wrought the works of repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, with fervent aspirations after holiness, and a loathing of the sins and pollution of their vile nature, the works of love and the law of Christ. And although, like

our brother Farthing, and like the apostle Paul, they can find nothing good existing in or emanating from their earthly nature, but groan, being burdened with, and long to be delivered from the body of this death, they are, nevertheless, standing fully justified before God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of his righteousness, they have the righteousness of the law of God fulfilled in them, by him who has saved them from their sins, and brought in for them everlasting righteousness, and they shall be raised up at the last day in the resurrection of life.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1869.

PSALM 84:11.

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalm 84:11.

In our recent visit to Virginia, while mingling with the churches and brethren of the late pastoral charge of our lamented brother Leachman, we were informed that the above text was the last he ever preached from publicly, and as they desired to cherish the recollection of his last discourse, we were requested to make the same text the theme of an editorial article. Not having heard his discourse, nor even been informed of how he was led to discourse upon it, we cannot attempt to reproduce his sermon, nor do we claim a gift comparing with the ability of our dear departed brother to write or speak on this or any other subject; yet, from the perfect harmony which has been known to exist between us, from the time of his entering the ministry until he finished his course, we are confident that however far we may fail to come up to the manner and ability with which he presented his views, we shall not differ in any important respect in regard to the doctrine expressed in the text.

A careful examination of this excellent psalm shows the inspired psalmist contemplating with admiration the amiability of the tabernacles of the Lord of hosts, and longing and fainting with desire for the enjoyment of the courts of the house of God, and at a time of sad declension, when the deserted altars of the Lord were used by the sparrows as a place to make their nests and rear their young. How desolate must be the house of God, when deserted by the true worshipers, and so unfrequented by the people of God as to be left for the timid sparrows to use even the altars of the God of Israel as a sequestered place for their exclusive use. Well might the psalmist long and faint for a restoration of the enjoyment of the privileges of the deserted house and altars of the Lord, and sadly contemplate the blessedness of an abode in that consecrated place, and of the man whose strength is in the sacred precincts of the house of God, and in whose heart are the ways whereof; “For,” he says, “a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield.” This is given as a good and sufficient reason of the preference expressed in the preceding verse, for one day within the courts of the Lord, rather than a thousand in the tents of wickedness. A sun and shield signify light and protection, which is found in the amiable tabernacles of the Lord, but cannot be enjoyed in the tents of wickedness. This consideration, together

with the blessed assurance, “The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly,” draws forth the exclamation, “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.” Let us contemplate the text in the beautiful order in which it is recorded.

THE LORD GOD, in striking contrast with the lords many and gods many which are revered by the idolatrous nations of the earth. “Thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth.” Psalm 83:18. Self-existent, independent, and in all things supremely great and glorious. As Lord, he holds dominion over all beings, all worlds and all events, and as God the only object of worship in heaven or in earth. As the Lord God he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. He is called in this psalm the Lord of hosts, the living God. O Lord of hosts, my King. Lord God of hosts. His footsteps are in the mighty deep, and his ways are past finding out. To know him is Eternal Life. Inspired prophets and holy men have declared what he is in his revelation to his own chosen and peculiar people. The psalmist testifies, he is a refuge and strength to his people, and a very present help in trouble. “He standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.”

But we propose to consider what he is as set forth in the unequivocal testimony of our text. And first, he is the Lord God, and as such he is a Sun and Shield. These figures are beautifully illustrative of what the Lord God is to his people, as revealed in the person of his dear Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, “Who being the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 1:3. “For the Lord God is a sun.” However sublime and beautiful this figure may appear when applied to God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose awful radiance and refulgent glory fills all heaven with dazzling brightness, we know that it is applied also by the Holy Spirit to Christ, and presents him in his Mediatonal glory, as the source, fountain and fullness of light, life and immortality to the church which is illuminated only by the brightness of his glory. Of him the prophets wrote as the Sun of Righteousness that should arise with healing in his wings, on them that fear him.

In the sacred record which God has given of his Son, we are first informed of his eternal power and Godhead. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” John 1:1-4. In this record we have the testimony that Christ, whose name is called “THE WORD OF GOD,” was with God, and was God, and that in his advent, “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” And still further, that the life which was and is in him is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Spiritual life and spiritual light are identical. And as all the life and immortality of the church is in Christ, He “is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen.” I Timothy 6:15,16. How beautiful the emblem. The Eternal Father is “the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.” And as Christ and the Father are One, and all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily, so embodied in Christ is all the immortality and refulgent light of eternity, even as the light which shines from the natural sun is embodied in the sun which enlightens the natural world. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in his supreme glory as one with the Eternal Father, is to his church the source, center and fountain of all her spiritual vitality and refulgence. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. And in prediction of his coming it was said to her, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. This light is marvelous, as witnessed by all who are delivered from the power

of darkness and translated into it. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” The church of Christ, as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid, has no other light than that which is given her in Christ. John in his vision of her glory says, “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it.” That is of the natural sun and moon, or lights of nature or of art. “For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” “And there shall be no light there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light.” Revelation 21:23, and 22:5. “Having the glory of God, and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Revelation 21:11. This living light is the glory of God, for it originates in and emanates from him, and is the light of immortality. It is brought to light by him who hath abolished death, and brought immortality to light through the gospel. All who have it have eternal life, for it is eternal life; and all who are destitute of it abide in the darkness of death. All who are born of God are born of light, and are the children of light, for they are the children of God, who is the Father of lights, and the great embodiment of all spiritual light, life and immortality, for our spiritual light and life is hid with Christ in God, and nothing can be more idolatrous than for the children of God to look for light, comfort or animation to any other source. “Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.” Isaiah 50:11. To depart from the Lord God, to look for spiritual animation, light or comfort from any other source, or to rely for life and salvation, or for any spiritual blessing on any other than the Lord our God, will certainly subject the children of God to his rod, and from his hand shall they lie down in sorrow. The all-sufficiency of the light and life which the saints have in their God, is implied by the figure. He is a Sun, and the floods of living light from him can no more diminish the fountain than the shining of the natural sun can lessen its fullness of light. The unattainableness of light and immortality from God by any work of ours is also clearly implied in the infinity of space. Who can ascend up into heaven to bring it down? Who can enjoy its flaming radiance, but those on whom its rays unaided descend? Who can see the sun in any other than its own light? All its stores of radiance comes unsought and unaided to the living, who have eyes to see and be benefited by it. All the treasure of the earth cannot buy one additional ray, nor can all the powers of earth enable the dead or the blind to see or know its splendor. All the living who have sight can enjoy a whole sun, without depriving any other of the same privilege. And the same light that enables us to see the good things which surround us, makes manifest to us also the evil. As the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines in Jesus’ face reveals to us his glory, it also reveals to us the pollution of our own nature. And when our own vileness is seen in the magnitude in which it is presented by the searching light of God, who is our sun, we are made to feel the need of a *shield*.

Those who have no shield shall cry for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the Lamb. Neither rocks nor mountains can afford a refuge for the enemies of the Lord; they shall be broken to pieces, and the Lord shall consume them with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy them with the brightness of his coming. But our God, who is our sun, is also himself our shield, and a perfect place of safety to all his people. As a shield he has not only protected them from judgment and fiery indignation, interposing himself between us and the stern demands of his holy law and eternal justice, receiving in his own body the chastisement of our peace, and the stripes due to our transgressions, but he has so encircled his people within himself that their life is hid in him. He is a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in their midst. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. God, who is the sun, has not only shielded his chosen from condemnation and wrath, but he is their shield to protect them from all their

enemies. He has been their dwelling place in all generations, even from everlasting to everlasting, so that, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." The psalmist says, "I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust. Surely he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." Psalm 91:2-10, 13.

Nations and armies have exhausted their wisdom in inventing armor to shield them in the day of battle, but their strongest shields have been broken. Horses and chariots are vain things for safety. Anti-christ has entrenched herself with mighty bulwarks, in which her children vainly confide; for God, our shield, has declared that their covenant with death he will annul, and their agreement with hell shall not stand. The overflowing scourge shall sweep away their refuge of lies and the falsehoods under which they have sought for protection. But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed. So invincible and invulnerable is the shield that secures the people of the living God, that the enemy must first overcome the God who is our shield before they can endanger those whom he protects.

"The Lord will give grace and glory." These are connected together by a divine power; both are gifts of God, and none can be the recipient of the one without the certainty of both. As glory cannot reach us except by grace, so neither can grace be given us without the certainty of glory. The will of God is the supreme law, and God is governed in all his works by it alone. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and in that will he has inseparably connected grace and glory. The Lord *will* give grace and glory. "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." "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. More over, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Romans 8:29,30. This is all of grace; for "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." And God gives it because he will give it; he will give grace and glory. This grace by which we are saved was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. And it is the grace that bringeth salvation, and teaches those unto whom it is given that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

Let it never be forgotten by the saints that the grace which secures salvation and immortal glory is the grace of God; it can only come from God, and also that he *gives* it. If it were offered to men conditionally, however easy the condition, it would not be a gift; for what we bargain for and obtain in consideration of a condition by us performed would be in the nature of a purchase; besides, if grace or salvation were offered conditionally, then its acceptance or rejection would depend not upon the will of God, but on the will of man; whereas the Scriptures not only testify that it is not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. "The Lord *will* give grace and glory." "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Romans 9:15-18.

“No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Those who walk uprightly, in a general sense, are those who walk circumspectly, or who walk up to or according to a right rule. God has not only given his people a perfect rule in his word to walk by, but he has written his law in their hearts, and has also given them the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, which spirit shall lead them into all truth. And he himself works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he has before ordained that they shall walk in them. He has wrought all their works in them, and thus he has not only taken them out of a horrible pit and miry clay, and set them upon a rock, and put a new song in their mouth, but he has also established their goings, and not left it for man that walketh to direct his own steps. He leads them in a way they know not, and in paths which they have not known. “And they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.” In the inspired Scriptures the man of God is thoroughly furnished to every good work. Walking according to that infallible rule, they walk uprightly.

Again, to walk uprightly is to walk erectly, not like a beast, or serpent, or creeping thing. The church of God is the body of Christ, and Christ is the head of the body, the church, and when the church and her members walk in obedience to him, they exalt him as their head, showing him to be above all; then do they walk uprightly. And as all good things are given them in Christ Jesus, so in their union with, and submission to him, no good thing can be withheld from them. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for them, how shall he not with him also freely give them all things? It is true the children of God while in the flesh carry about a body of death, which cannot walk uprightly, a carnal or fleshly mind that is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; that depraved earthly nature always wars against the spirit; its locomotion is always serpentine and never erect. But, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” I John 3:9. And the apostle Paul says, “For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Romans 7:22,23.

The church of God, as the body of Christ, always walks uprightly. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” I Corinthians 15:50. But in that which is born of the Spirit we find the child of God and heir of all these gracious promises. But we have the assurance that the conflict shall soon be over, and the victory obtained over all that is vile in us, when our God shall change our vile body and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen and glorified Redeemer. This mortal shall then put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and the saying that is written shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up of victory. Then, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is only the fleshly nature in the children of God that now disturbs and makes them restless. Faith rests upon the gracious assurance of our text, that no good thing shall be withheld from them that walk uprightly, and the earnest desire of every saint is that he may walk in all things uprightly and worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1869.

REVELATION 12:3,4.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: – Please give your views on Revelation 12:3,4. “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born;” and oblige one who desires to know the truth.

Peter Ingle
Marion Co., Ala.
August 22, 1869.

Reply: Greatly as we desire to enlighten those who desire to know the truth, we are fully conscious that none but God himself is able to unseal the sacred pages of divine revelation to the understanding of any of the children of men. “As it is written, And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Isaiah 54:13. Nevertheless we are informed that in giving instruction to the children, God did at sundry times and in diverse manner speak in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days by his Son, who being the Mediatorial Head of his church, all spiritual communication from heaven are made to the church through him. And Christ having redeemed his church unto God, has ascended up on high, and received gifts for, and given them to his church, including some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All these gifts God has set in the body, the church, as it hath pleased him; and by and through them, God is still, through Christ, speaking to and instructing Zion’s children by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Only so far, therefore, as God’s ministers are inspired by the Spirit, can they have the mind of Christ, or exercise in the gifts which God has set in the church. However conscious, therefore, of our inability to expound the deep things of God, by any superior light or discernment of our own, relying on the gifts bestowed, we dare not withhold from those who desire to know the truth such light as we are favored with, though feeble it may be.

The revelation of Jesus Christ which John received when on the Isle of Patmos, and which he was commanded to write, was of things which were, and of things which he was told must shortly come to pass, and we are told that our Lord sent and signified them by his angel, to his servant John. They were signified by a variety of figures, which the Holy Spirit employed for the purpose, all of which were full of signification. This we should bear in mind as we proceed to search for the meaning of the passage proposed for consideration. In the preceding chapter there was given to John a reed like unto a rod, and he was directed by the angel of the Lord to rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. The temple of God, we understand, signifies the church of Christ; and the measurement to include the temple, the altar, and the worshipers, and goes back to the laying the foundation, and forward to the bringing the top stone with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. In the measurement the exact number of the days of the persecution of the church in her wilderness state is definitely ascertained. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven,” and there was seen in his temple, or church, what has never been seen anywhere else; namely, “the ark of his testament.” The true testament, or testimony of God, is deposited in the church, which is the temple of the living God. And as neither Dagon, nor any other idol can stand before the ark which contains the testimony of

eternal truth, no branch of anti-christ has any use for it. The opening of the temple in heaven, to our mind, signifies the disclosure of the church in her gospel organization; regenerated from her legal state under the law, by the one offering of Christ, made upon the measured altar. And the time of the coming and Mediatorial work of Christ are signified by the lightning, and voices, and thunderings, which were heard when Mercy and Truth met together, and Righteousness and Peace kissed each other, and when the voice of eternal Justice was heard demanding full satisfaction for the sins of God's people, and the voice of the Son of God responding, "Lo I come, to do thy will, O God." At the resurrection of our crucified Lord, the Sun of Righteousness dispelled the darkness of death which had involved the church, and brought Immortality to light. "His brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power." Habakkuk 3:4. In the refulgent radiance of immortal light, the gospel church appeared, "Looking forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Heaven, which is the throne and government of God, was now clearly seen by those whose eyes were blessed, and in that heavenly state the church appeared as a woman clothed with the Sun, in gospel light and immortal glory; redeemed, regenerated, and risen with Christ to newness of life, above the moon, or legal dispensation, and on her head the royal diadem of sparkling glory reflecting power and everlasting glory through the apostles unto him that sits upon the throne and to the Lamb forever.

As introductory to the full orb'd glory of the church, in her gospel organization, when the first gleaming rays of morning light disclosed this wonder in heaven, when John was sent as the harbinger of Christ, the church still held under the law, was in labor travailing in birth to be delivered; in pain until her Deliverer should come out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For in the day now being ushered in by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, a nation was to be born at once. The disclosure of the church of God, coming up out of the wilderness, was truly a wonder, filling the hearts of all who beheld it with astonishment, and reflecting eternal honor and glory to God in the highest. But as the light of morning advanced, and the dawning light of approaching day drew near, there appeared another wonder; for the same light which reveals the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, also detects the hidden works of dishonesty which the former darkness had concealed. The same light which enables us to see the kingdom of God will disclose to us the opposite abominations of anti-christ; so as the light increased, another wonder was seen; behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads appeared. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them down to the earth. This heaven in which these wonders appeared was the Jewish heaven, and the false prophets which were identified with the people of Israel, in the old Jerusalem, are undoubtedly the stars which were drawn by the tail of the great red dragon, and which were ultimately cast out from their former habitation, into the earth, no more to even seem to be governed by a theocracy, but swallowed up like the company who contested the right of the priesthood with Aaron, they were dispersed among the uncircumcised Gentiles, henceforth to be governed only by earthly wisdom and human policy; and drawn by the dragon, to be forever identified with the Devil and his angels, in mists of darkness reserved unto the judgment of the great day to be punished.

The dragon stood before the woman, as stood Herod in waiting to devour the child as soon as he should be born.

The red dragon, in our text, is in verse nine said to be the old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. He is capable of strange transformations, sometimes appearing as an angel of light, and is described in a variety of forms to John in his vision. In his pagan form, as a great red dragon; in his Papal form, as a beast rising up out of the sea; as the Protestant beast, as rising out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, but speaking as a dragon. In the image of the beast, the same old

serpent, called the Devil and Satan, is now seen in the combination of all the humanly contrived religious institutions of the present age, which the Protestant beast has commanded them who dwell on the earth to make, and to which power is now given to proscribe, persecute, disfranchise, and finally to put to death all such as have not the mark of the beast, or his image, or the number of his name. The first form in which this monster is detected by the light of divine revelation as arraying his infernal forces against Christ and his church is that in which he is seen in our text; a great red dragon; red, because stained with the blood of persecuted and slaughtered thousands of the saints and his dragon form distinguishing his pagan career. In this pagan dragon form he stood before the church, for to devour the child Jesus as soon as he was born. Not only as Herod stood ready to destroy him as soon as born of Mary, but at his crucifixion to utterly destroy him; as soon as raised from the dead in the regeneration, to destroy him in his members. It is true the Jews conspired with the Romans to devour the holy child Jesus, but it was under the Roman authorities which were pagan at the time, that he was delivered up to be crucified. And this pagan form of opposition to Christ and the church continued until the dragon gave his seat and power and great authority to the Papal beast. The seven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns of the dragon, correspond with the number of the heads, horns and crowns of the Papal beast, and refer to the various departments of their organization, and the crowned heads of power which have agreed and given their power to sustain the beast, just as the power of the United States has been, and now is being given to sustain the image of the beast, by chartered rights, special privileges, endowments. There is, to say the least, a remarkable coincidence in the form of our national government compared with that of the dragon and the beast, at this time; the President, and his cabinet being seven, sustained by ten horns or military divisions of power, rising above and holding dominions over the States of our national confederacy. Whether there be anything ominous in this coincidence or not, it is certainly remarkable.

The views which we have thus hastily written, we are aware, are open to criticism of those who are more enlightened on the subject. We do not wish to force them on any who may dissent from them. We only give them as our present views, because our views are called for on the subject by one who professes to desire to know the truth, and as we have nothing we wish to disguise or to keep secret in our religious views, we lay what we have written before our readers, for their consideration. In all we write we are liable to err; but when writing on passages of the Scriptures so highly figurative as this under consideration, we have much fear lest we may darken counsel by words without knowledge. If what we have written shall afford any light or comfort to brother Ingle, or to anyone else, we shall not have labored in vain.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1869.



ROMANS 7:2.

VERY DEAR AND MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER BEEBE: – Will you please give your views, through the “Signs of the Times,” on Romans 7:2, and much oblige your brother in tribulation, if a brother at all.

William Brickey.

Red Bud, Illinois.

September 21, 1869.

Reply: The passage proposed for consideration reads thus: “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.” The law of marriage which Moses gave to the Hebrews, as well as that law which was from the beginning, to which our Savior referred in his answer to the Pharisees, Matthew 19:3-9, was probably well understood by the saints to whom the apostle was directing his discourse, and his allusion to it was for the purpose of illustrating the redemption of the church from under the law, and her marriage to Christ, which was not so clearly understood. It was frequently the case that Christ and the apostles used subjects which were familiar to the saints to show by analogy the meaning of things which were more obscure to them. There are but few lessons in the gospel, which the saints have been more slow to learn and fully comprehend, than that of our release from the law, and marriage to Christ. The natural inclination of our carnal mind is to legality, to a system of works, and just so far as we are ignorant of God’s righteousness, like the carnal Jews, we go about to establish our own righteousness, in doing which we look to the law for a rule, and to our own strength for ability to meet the requisitions, and vainly suppose that we can in that manner commend ourselves to God. But the declaration of the Scriptures is, By the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God; And as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.

The force of the apostle’s argument will more clearly appear when we consider the nature and dominion of law. Paul was speaking to them who knew the law, knew that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. The law of the land in which we dwell extends its authority over living subjects, but cannot hold dominion over us when we are dead. So long, therefore, as we are subjects of the law which Paul in this connection calls a ministration of condemnation, and a law of sin and death, we are disqualified to be subjects of the law of Christ. No man can serve two masters. But if the law which we were under has convicted us of sin, and put us to death, it can extend its dominion no farther. If our sins were all laid on Christ, and he died our death, then we became dead to the law, and being quickened in the resurrection life of Christ, we are no more under the law that has slain us, but are under law to him who has raised us up from the dead. “I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.” Still more clearly to illustrate this subject, the law of matrimony is used in the text under consideration. The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. That is, she is bound by the law of God. No human law can dissolve the relationship. Our legislatures may legalize adultery by granting divorcements, as they are called; but the relationship of husband and wife can only be dissolved by death. So stood the case with us in our relation to the law which held dominion over us, and which poured its curses upon our heads. No power could release us from its dominion, nor abate its severity, or shield us from its cursings. As long as we were under the law we were under its curse; and its dominion was so long as we lived under it. But when the law had exhausted all its wrath and vengeance on us in our Head, and we were buried with him by baptism into death, the relation ceased; the law was no longer our husband; the legal covenant, by its own well defined limitation expired, and left the church in her resurrection life free

from Moses, free from the ministration of condemnation, and free to be married to him that is risen from the dead, that she might bring forth fruit unto God. “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead.” David loved Bathsheba while she was the wife of Uriah the Hitite, but his marriage to her could not be legally consummated so long as Uriah lived. And Christ so loved the church that he gave himself for it. She could not be legally wedded to Christ in the New Covenant relation, until every jot and tittle of the law was fulfilled. The marriage nuptials of the Lamb could not be legalized until the covenant she was under to Moses was lawfully annulled.

“So then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man.” As a woman who has a living husband cannot be married to another man without involving the guilt of adultery, so neither can we be married to Christ until we first become fully dead to the law, and the law dead to us. Such a union would be unlawful and adulterous.

The church under the legal covenant was in bondage, and the bond woman, in Paul’s allegory, was mount Sinai, in Arabia, answering to Jerusalem, under the Sinai covenant, in bondage with her children. Galatians 4:25. But whom the Son maketh free, are free indeed. He has redeemed his people from the dominion, as well as from the curse, of that covenant; and having removed the legal impediment out of the way, has betrothed her unto himself in righteousness. She is no adulteress in her marriage to Christ; for her obligation to Moses are fully, justly and righteously canceled; and Moses is dead, and cannot pursue her over Jordan; but Joshua is her leader. In the gospel covenant she is legally recognized as the bride, the Lamb’s wife. In the individual experience of all the saints, this doctrine is illustrated. The first perceptible evidence of a quickened state is that in which we find ourselves in bondage under the law, held there by an unrelenting and inexorable power. We have heard of the heavenly Bridegroom, the blessed Savior, and fain would we fly to his arms; but the law, our old husband, holds dominion over us; and until his claims are satisfied, we cannot be wedded to Christ. All our works of obedience to the law fail to bring us any nearer to Christ. All our efforts to liquidate the demands of our old husband prove ineffectual and vain. Nothing short of death can put asunder what God has joined, and we see, and feel, and acknowledge the power of the law, until sin revives and we die. But when the law has pursued us to death, and laid us in our grave, then Christ our Resurrection and our Life is revealed in us, and then we find that we are dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead. Until Christ is revealed, the law holds us in durance, and pours down upon us its dreadful curses; its dominion over us is demonstrated by a flaming sword, which turneth every way, meets us at every point, and will be satisfied with nothing we can do. Tell us then, while thus sinking in despair, how easy it is to come to Christ and be his bride, while the very heavens lower in darkness, and the flaming sword of Eternal Justice is brandished over our devoted head, and we reply, No man can come unto him, except the Father which sent him draw them. With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. But when God reveals his Son in us, as he did in Saul, immediately we confer no more with flesh and blood. In the body of his flesh we were slain by the law, and in his resurrection life we are raised up in newness of life. His resurrection life has quickened us, and brought us up from the dead. Death is abolished, and immortality is brought to light. The marriage of the Lamb to us has come, and our heavenly Bridegroom takes us by the hand, and by all that is sacred, covenants and promises to love and cherish, support and protect us as his bride, as long as the days of heaven shall endure.

“My guilt and wretchedness he knows,
Yet takes and owns me for his spouse;
My debts he pays and sets me free,
And makes his riches o’er to me.

My filthy rags are laid aside;
He clothes me as becomes his bride;
Himself bestows my wedding dress,
The robe of perfect righteousness.”

Who that has been slain by the law, and raised from the dead by the resurrection life of Christ, would wish to leave his sacred embrace, to go in search of the dead body of Moses? Our dead husband never blessed, but always cursed us. Our living husband always blesses and never curses. The former required everything, but furnished nothing; but the latter furnishes everything freely, and demands nothing in payment. Then let us with cheerful hearts love, honor and obey him in all things, and never seek another lover.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1869.

REMARKS ON JOHN 3:5.

In reply to brother John W. Henley, of Georgia.

“Jesus answered and said, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

The kingdom of God, in the third verse of this chapter, and the kingdom of God in our text, we understand to be one and the same, and means the organized church of our Lord Jesus Christ, which when Jesus held this discourse with Nicodemus, was soon to be set up in gospel order, according to former predictions, Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 32:1. This kingdom was not to be like any of the kingdoms of the earth, and is therefore called the kingdom of God; it was not to be governed by any human power or policy, and is therefore also called the kingdom of God. Typified by the Jewish Theocracy, but still differing very essentially from it, as that embraced the natural seed of Abraham, and had a worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances; but this should embrace only those who are of the faith of Abraham, and are his seed anti-typically, being Christ’s. Galatians 3:29. The former was a natural, but the latter a spiritual kingdom. Its King is the Lord from heaven; its law is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, written in the hearts of his subjects by the Holy Spirit, and his subjects are they only who are born of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Born of God, of the water and of the Spirit, and consequently they are all purely spiritual. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” I Corinthians 15:50. Hence, therefore, the indispensable necessity of the new birth, without which no man can either see or enter this spiritual organization. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

In the typical organization, all that were born (of the flesh) in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, were required to be circumcised with the circumcision made with hands, on pain of expulsion from the privileges of the covenant under which that commonwealth was instituted. But under the new and anti-typical covenant, all who are born of God, in his house, and bought with the precious blood of Christ, and none others can be recognized as subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, are entitled to the privileges of the house of God. Under the new covenant, "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision that is outward in the flesh." For if the children of the flesh could be made the children of God, no new birth would be required. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Romans 9:8. "But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Romans 2:28,29.

From the above testimony it is clear that the kingdom of God, of heaven, being purely spiritual, can admit of nothing carnal, and therefore flesh and blood cannot come into it. Carnal men may make a profession of religion and have a form of godliness, and even hold a nominal standing as members of the church of God; but as the kingdom is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, their membership is only nominal. The kingdom is spiritual, and the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I Corinthians 2:14. And as that only is spirit, which is born of the Spirit, they cannot see or enter the kingdom of which we write, except they be born again. All the efforts of men, therefore, to educate, reform, or bring children or adults into the kingdom of God are futile and abortive, because no operation can make them spiritual; for only that can be spiritual which is born of the Spirit. The slave may cringe under the lash, and yield a reluctant obedience to the coercive power that compels his submission; but no earthly power can make a man love God. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Romans 8:7,8.

Having, as we trust, clearly demonstrated from the Scriptures that the kingdom spoken of in our text is spiritual, and that all mankind by nature are carnal, sold under sin, and consequently incapable of seeing or entering it by anything they can do, or that men or angels can do for them, we will now pass to consider what it is to be born of the water and of the Spirit.

Upon this vitally important subject, ourselves and some of our brethren have been accused of being too metaphysical; but to the science of metaphysics we make no claim, but our desire is to be scriptural; and as the words *born* and *born again* are frequently used by holy inspiration, we feel justified in believing they mean something of importance. We know that the natural birth is the bringing into manifestation something that is begotten, and which had existence before it was born; and we infer that a spiritual birth in that respect is analogous. This inference we think is strengthened by the explanation to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." A fleshly seed produces a fleshly production, and a spiritual seed will produce a spiritual production. The descendants of the earthly Adam are developed by their natural birth, in the nature and image of Adam; and "as is the earthy [Adam] such are they that are earthy." "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul;" consequently all who are born of the flesh are living souls; Adam, their earthly progenitor, when animated with the breath of life, became a living soul; so all his posterity when born of the flesh are developed as living souls. But as all the posterity of Adam have sinned, and the law has said, The soul that sinneth it shall die, death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

We cannot, therefore, inherit eternal life from the earthly Adam, or by a fleshly birth. Slain by the law, we are all dead in sin and held forever in that death, unless we be made partakers of that eternal life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. For, “this life was with the Father, and was manifested.” “And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Hence, the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, is a Quickening Spirit. “For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” John 5:21. The Son is, therefore, a quickening Spirit. The life which we have from the earthly Adam is mortal, and involved in sin and death; but the life we have in Christ is immortal, pure and eternal. As we were brought forth in our earthly relation by our first or natural birth, so, if we understand correctly, we were brought forth in our relation to Christ when quickened by his Spirit, or when he as our life was revealed in us by his quickening Spirit. Our relation to the earth (“Dust thou art,”) is developed in our fleshly birth. Our relation to God is developed in our spiritual birth. In our first, we bear the image of the earthly Adam; but in being born again, we bear the image of the heavenly Adam, for he is the Lord from heaven. All in us, therefore, that is corrupt, vile, sinful and mortal, is born of the flesh, and from this fleshly nature in which there dwells no good thing, arises a constant warfare in every Christian against all that is spiritual, holy and pure; so that all Christians while in the flesh are called to deny themselves, to crucify the old man, and to put on the new man which after God (not Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. While all there is in the children of God is pure, spiritual and holy, is born of God, and cannot sin, for his (God’s) seed remaineth in him; he cannot sin, because he is born of God. I John 3:9.

As to the precise meaning of our Lord in the use of the words *born of the water*, some of our most gifted brethren have differed; some supposed that the birth of the water meant the natural birth; but this view conflicts with our understanding; for to our mind Christ is speaking of the necessity of being born of the water and of the Spirit, in contradistinction from, and as both being necessary after having been born of the flesh. A man already born of the flesh, before he can possibly see or enter the kingdom, must be born of the water and of the Spirit before he can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Others have supposed that to be baptized is to be born of the water. This supposition we cannot admit, only in a figurative sense. As baptism is a figurative ordinance, designed to represent death, burial and resurrection, so it may, and does most beautifully represent being buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we should walk in newness of life. The ordinance of Christian baptism buries us into water, but not into death; but clearly represents our burial with Christ into death, and resurrection with him to newness of life. It may be much easier for us to show what it does not, than what it does mean; but it is far better for us to wait for our spiritual Interpreter to lead our minds into a correct understanding of the Scriptures, than to attempt to force an explanation which is not clearly harmonious with the word of God and experience of the saints.

As to what it is to be born of the Spirit, there is but little room for doubtful disputation among those who have experienced that work. It is to receive the Spirit of Christ; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and none can have that Spirit except they be born of it. And as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. It is a spirit which the natural man cannot receive, and which our Lord says “the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.” But as that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and the spiritual judgeth all things, even the deep things of God. It is by the indwelling of the Spirit that we know that we have passed from death unto life.

As brother Henley particularly desires our views in regard to being born of the *water*, we will give such views as we have on that part of the text. John, in declaring the faith of the children of God, says, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God;" and in his testimony of the Christ, he further says, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth; the spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree in one." I John 5:6-8. It is our conviction that if we could clearly understand the sense in which the water and the blood are used in this text, all would be plain in regard to our being born of the water and the Spirit. It refers to the coming of Christ, not into the world, when born of Mary, but when he came into his kingdom or church, and received his coronation as the Christ and Lord, and was given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The three most prominent witnesses of the Messiahship of our Lord, by which the faith of the saints is established in the discriminating doctrine that "Jesus is the Christ," are first: that of the spirit which was given, when we read in the book of Isaiah the prophet, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:16-22. Observe that the signification of the name *Christ*, is the Anointed.

Hence the descent of the Spirit of the Lord God upon him was an indisputable evidence or witness that he was the Christ of God. The next in order was when he came to Jordan to John to be baptized. He came in that ordinance by water, and on that memorable occasion the witness of his being the Christ, and that he had come in the flesh, was most convincingly demonstrated when John, by a direct sign which was given him, identified him, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Then and there the Spirit descended like a dove and abode on him in witness of his Messiahship, and the heavens were opened to him, and the voice of God, in audible words declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13-17. The third witness of his identity as the Christ of God, is found in the efficiency of his precious blood which was shed for the remission of sins. So strikingly demonstrative was this witness that his very murderers were constrained to cry, "Truly this was the Son of God!" Thus Jesus in opening the way into his kingdom, and in entering into the holiest of all, entered by the blood of the everlasting covenant, having obtained eternal redemption for his people. In perfect harmony with these witnesses, as we conceive, all his people come into the kingdom of God. The Spirit, the water and the blood must agree in their identification as the children of his kingdom. First, the Spirit of the Lord God, which is the quickening spirit, makes them alive, quickens and animates them with spiritual vitality, and makes them feel the need of living water, which can only be found in Christ, who is the place of broad rivers and streams. So far as we can perceive any distinction between being born of the water, and of the Spirit, the Spirit first operates upon the sinner, and makes him sensible that he is guilty before God, righteously condemned by the just and holy law, and utterly helpless and bankrupt. Then the water of life flowing through Christ from the throne of God and the Lamb, with cleansing, cheering and life inspiring power, is applied, and he is born of the water into the liberty of the sons of God.

To be born of the water and of the Spirit, in this view of the subject, is equivalent to being born of the life and of the Spirit. The Spirit is the power by which the work is effected, and the water is the life which the Spirit gives, and hence, allowing the figurative meaning of water as frequently used in the Scriptures to signify vitality, we cannot be born of the Spirit without being born of the water. In this application, the three which bear witness in earth give harmonious testimony. The Spirit in quickening

bears witness that we are born of God; the water of life flows to the quickened child in corroborating evidence that he has passed from death unto life, cleansing and purifying and consecrating to a spiritual state; and the blood of Christ, in meeting, canceling and perfectly satisfying all the demands of law and justice, all agree, not only in demonstration that the sinner is redeemed and born again, but also that Jesus is the Christ of God, and the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

In the preceding views we have spoken only of the birth of the water and of the Spirit in its experimental and personal application to the individual experience of the saints; but if we mistake not, the birth of water may have a two fold application; and as being named first in our text, in its application to the redemption of the church as a body. The apostle speaks of the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:5-7. This washing of regeneration has effected the justification of the saints, and secured the grounds of heirship according to the hope of eternal glory; it must, therefore, refer to the death and resurrection of Christ; for he was delivered for our offences and raised from the dead for our justification. The *washing* of regeneration must mean the putting away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, for he gave himself for us for that very purpose, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, and present them without spot or wrinkle before God. He died our death, suffered in our flesh, and the penalty of the divine law was executed on us in him, so that when he died for us all, then were all dead; but he was quickened by the Spirit, and that quickening Spirit was through him poured abundantly on us, so that the apostle could testify that we are quickened together with him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. All this was necessary and indispensably so, that we should receive the adoption of sons, and be made heirs according to the hope of eternal glory. If sons, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. By his resurrection from the dead, we are begotten again to a lively hope, and to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away.

This washing of water by the Word is still more clearly referable to the death and resurrection of the church in Christ, by Paul, thus: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Ephesians 5:25-32. If this washing of water by the word was the washing of regeneration, it must have been effected by the Spirit, the water and the blood, which bear witness in earth, and it was accomplished by the death and resurrection of Christ.

But once more. The apostle again testifies of Christ; saying, "And he is the Head of the body, the church; who is the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unprovable in his sight." Colossians 1:17-22. Observe his death is called a *washing*, and his

resurrection a *birth*; must this not then be the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost? And if it be, was it not shed abundantly on the members of his body through him? In reference to his resurrection it was said, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” Psalm 2:7. And in Acts 13:32,33 “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”

Was the Head of the body, the church, begotten, and born from the dead, and his body and members left in death? Or did he abolish death and bring life and immortality to light in his resurrection? If he has begotten us again to a lively (vital) hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and we are washed and cleansed from sin by his death and resurrection, and presented to himself a glorious church, free from spot or wrinkle, can this be any other than the washing of regeneration, the washing of water by the word? If this be so, then it follows that the church was born of the water when Christ arose from the dead and became the first fruits of them that slept, and all the members in him were born of the water, and received the washing of regeneration, when Christ washed and cleansed and purified them, at that time when a nation was born at once, and that Scripture was fulfilled, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.” Isaiah 26:19. And certain it is that except a man be, in this sense, born of the water, and in due time quickened by the Holy Spirit which through him was shed on his people, he can neither see, nor enter into the kingdom of God.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1869.

A CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter was written in private correspondence with one of the trembling lambs of our Redeemer, who seems to be earnestly inquiring the way to Zion. Believing that what would be applicable to her, will also apply to thousands who may read it, we venture to insert it in our columns, hoping that it may afford comfort and assurance to such as are tried and tempted.

Madam: – In fulfillment of my promise I embrace this first opportunity to write you on the all important subject of salvation, and on the evidences which the Scriptures warrant us to rely upon as demonstrating to us that we are personally, certainly, and savingly interested in that salvation which from God proceeds, and which leads to God again. In your letter to me, which I answered, and in my conversation with you at your house, you told me of the deep exercises of your mind, the sense you had felt of your lost and helpless condition as a sinner, together with an abiding feeling of unworthiness, to mingle with the people of God. You inquired how it could be that you should have so great a love for the Old School Baptists while you felt so utterly unworthy to be numbered with them. All these exercises, as I tried to tell you, and as I now repeat, are marks of a work of the Spirit of God in your heart. It is the Spirit’s work to convince a poor sinner of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. We may indeed have some vague idea that we are sinners in a common or general sense, without any other than the light of nature; our conscience may accuse us, and our natural judgment may be convinced that this is so; but such natural conviction will give us but very little trouble or anxiety; for if

it be but a natural conviction, we invariably feel satisfied that we can at any time repent, reform, and obtain forgiveness; and this we intend at some convenient time to attend to; and in this delusion we rest, and dismiss all unpleasant thoughts on the subject. These natural convictions never destroy in us our relish for sin, though they make us, at times, afraid of punishment. Nor do they ever produce in us a particle of love to God, to his people, to his word, or to his holiness. With all such convictions we would choose to continue in sin, if we could feel sure the indulgence would not subject us to the wrath of God. Millions of our fallen race are now under this delusion, and regard these spasmodic excitements of their human passions as true religion.

But the work of the Spirit of God in all who are saved is: first, to quicken the sinner from a state of death, for we are by nature dead in sins. The first evidence we can have that we are quickened by the Spirit is that we are made to feel the weight and guilt of sin as a crushing burden on our heart, and to loathe it with perfect abhorrence. The perfections of God and the holiness of his law are made to appear to us as they never appeared before. A solemn sense of God's goodness in sparing our lives, and of our vile ingratitude to him, makes us wonder that he has not sent us down to perdition. In this condition a quickened sinner feels inclined to make amends for past transgressions by reformation. He says in his mind, I will commit no more sin against that good, just and merciful God who has spared me so long. He is resolved to seek for salvation by praying, and by obedience to the divine law, and by using what he has been told are *means of grace*. To do this work he applies himself with strong resolutions, and in vain hope that he shall succeed; his fears are all allayed perhaps for a time, and sometimes he thinks he is progressing encouragingly. He fancies that he has got to be almost a saint, and is much better than some who profess Christianity. But, if he is really a quickened sinner, this fatal delusion will soon explode. Soon he will be made to see and feel that his case is far more desperate than he had supposed. His prayers are lifeless and formal, and he begins to fear that he is presumptuous in calling on God, even for mercy. He cannot say, "Our Father," for he has no evidence that he is a child of God. Now, instead of growing better, he feels worse than ever.

Afraid to pray, and unable to suppress the outflowing aspirations of his heart, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," he smites upon his breast, and groans in agony of spirit. The passions of his wicked heart over which he thought he had gained the mastery, now show themselves to be unsubdued. Vain and wicked thoughts arise, and an unslain relish for the pleasures of sin is seen and felt, and a fountain of all that is unholy, he finds in his very nature. Alarmed now, and despairing, he concludes that his case is different, and more hopeless than that of any others. Instead of taking refuge in what he has been doing, to secure his peace with God, he reviews all that he has done with fearful alarm. He fears that he has provoked God's wrath and committed the unpardonable sin in having taken the sacred name of God in prayer on his polluted lips. Thus he is led to try all his own works, until he sees them all fail, and he is thoroughly convinced that if his salvation depends on his doing one good deed, he cannot do it; or on his thinking one holy thought, he cannot think it. By this time he has such a discovery of the purity of God and the sinfulness of himself, he is constrained to acknowledge the justice of God in sending him to hell. He cannot now see how God can maintain his justice and truth in saving so vile a sinner.

These are some of the first exercises of all who are quickened by the Holy Spirit. Perhaps this is not so vividly felt by all, but much more so by some, before the evidence is brought home with joy and comfort, that their sins were washed away by the dear Redeemer, and that Redeemer presented to them as their Prince and Savior, exalted at God's right hand to give repentance and remission of sins.

This deliverance may come gradually and so imperceptibly that they can never tell the exact time when their burden left them; or it may come so suddenly and powerfully that they can never forget the time

and place; but in either case IT COMES, and the final result is precisely the same. That is, the Savior is revealed, the burden is taken away, the love of God is sweetly shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and a calm, serene, confiding trust in God is felt, joy and gladness springs up in them, and their joyful tongue breaks forth in songs of praise to God and the Lamb.

This, dear friend, is the cause of your loving the Old School Baptists, and this is why you love their doctrine and order, and why you desire to walk in the ordinances of the house of God. It is not possible that the love of which you speak result from any other cause. God, by his apostle, has declared, "Love is of God." I John 4:7. And he also says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3:14. The most reliable and infallible evidence we can have that we are born of God is that we love God, love holiness, and love the brethren, and at the same time feel our own unworthiness of his love. To hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to feel and mourn over the vileness and depravity of our own carnal nature, to see a beauty in the lovely ordinances of the gospels and long to feel assured that we have a right to walk in them, are evidences which transcend all other evidences. Indeed, without this evidence, all others are empty and vain. Paul says, "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." I Corinthians 13:1-3. So we see that divine inspiration attributes to the love of God in the hearts and actions of the saints an importance far surpassing all other gifts. Without it no one can have evidence that he is born of God; for it is very emphatically declared, "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." I John 4:7. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Another very important evidence that we are born of God and led by his Spirit is a desire to honor and obey him; for these desires are inspired in us by the power of that love of which we have spoken. This love and these desires are only found in those who have passed from death unto life, and in whose hearts the law of Christ is written, and over whom he reigns.

Now you know that you love the people of God and delight to be in their company, and you esteem them as the excellent ones of the earth; therefore you have the most important and conclusive of all evidences that you are a child of God and an heir of immortal glory. It is true you feel very unworthy, and so do all who have this love. Cut off from all confidence in yourself, or in your own works, from necessity you have to look to and rely alone upon Christ, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." If you could feel any more worthy than you do, you would be deceived. The same light which shines in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of our dear Redeemer, also makes us see the vileness of our own sinful nature. But, how blessed is the thought, all that we lack or need to make us holy and happy is richly treasured up in Christ for all who love him. The immortal crown of righteousness which was laid up for Paul, the righteous Judge shall also give to all them who love his appearing. II Timothy 4:8. You have labored hard and long to suppress and keep back vain thoughts, carnal passions, and unholy desires from rising; and because you cannot succeed in this, you write bitter things against yourself. You think, if you were born of God, you would be more pure and holy; but, poor child, you have a nature which is born of the flesh, and which is flesh, in which dwelleth no good thing; that fleshly nature is impure and unholy; but that life in you which is born of God is pure and holy. If this were not the case, you would not know anything about the Christian warfare, in which the flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. You think that real Christians do not feel as you feel, are not captivated and led astray as you are; but Paul was a Christian and an apostle, and even he found a law (or governing

power) in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members. Do you feel very wretched in such a state? So did he. He cried, “O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Do you find that to will is present with you, but how to perform that which is good you find not? So did he. He said he could not do the things which he would. Are you willing to be like Paul, poor, helpless, and in yourself unworthy, and altogether dependent on the Lord Jesus Christ for all that pertains to life and salvation? Or would you prefer to be like the Pharisee, who stood and prayed, telling the Lord how good he felt himself to be, and how many good things he had done? No, no, your reply will be,

“Dear Savior, let me never be,
Joined with the boasting Pharisee;
I have no merit of my own,
But plead the merits of thy Son.”

If you hunger and thirst after righteousness, then you are already blessed, and Jesus says you shall be filled. If you were already filled, you would no longer hunger and thirst; for they who are filled do not hunger, and they who have drunk all they desire, do not thirst. So if we could in ourselves have all the righteousness we desire, we would no longer pant for the living God, as the hart panteth for the water brooks.

We may be greatly at loss to know when we began to love God, and to love his dear people; but the important point is to know we do love him and them. We have great reason to rejoice that our evidences do not rest conditionally on our being able to tell when, where, and how we were first exercised in regard to these things; for such conditions would cut off the hope of thousands of God’s dear children. Present rather than past evidences are what we need. No amount of former evidence can shield us from doubts and fears which in subsequent life we have to encounter. The gospel feast is spread for all who hunger and thirst for gospel food. If you are hungry, that is an evidence that it is your privilege to eat. If you have an ear to hear, then it is yours to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. If you love the Lord, then keep his commandments. If he has enabled you to see his footsteps, then walk in them. If you lack wisdom, ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. If you feel unworthy of the least of all the mercies of the Lord, thank God that he has made you to feel so, and regard it as a family mark common to all who belong to the household of God; and look unto Jesus, not to yourself, for fitness. He is himself the righteousness of all his people, all they have, or ever will have. “Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”

“Trust in the Lord, forever trust,
And banish all your fears;
Strength in the Lord Jehovah dwells,
Eternal as his years.”

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1869.

EZEKIEL 17:22-24.

Reply to Brother B. Bundy, on Ezekiel 17:22-24: – “Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent; in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish; I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it.”

In this chapter the prophet was instructed to put forth a riddle and speak a parable unto the house of Israel, in which Israel is represented as a high cedar. The king of Israel and his seed, were as the top of the young twigs of its highest branch. The king of Babylon is represented in the riddle as a great eagle, with great and long wings, and full of feathers, coming to Jerusalem and bringing the king of Israel and his seed under tribute to Babylon. And the king of Egypt as another great eagle, with great wings and many feathers, to whom the king of Israel looked for aid, in violation of his covenant and oath; and the interposition of God in frustrating the designs of the perjured king. And in the conclusion of the chapter we have a declaration of what God himself would do, both in frustrating the devices of men, and in accomplishing his own sovereign purpose concerning Israel. This purpose is declared in the text which we are called to explain. In responding to the call of brother Bundy, we can only give him such views as we have on the subject. Without attempting any further explanation of the two great eagles, Babylon and Egypt, than what God has himself given in this chapter, from the twenty-fifth verse, inclusive, we will offer such views as we have on what is declared in the last three verses of the chapter.

First, we call attention to the high authority from which the declaration comes. “Thus saith the Lord God,” the supreme ruler and controller of all events, who doth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; who commands, and it stands fast, who speaks the word, and it is done. God that cannot lie hath spoken it. He says, “I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar and will set it.” Israel is undoubtedly intended by the high cedar, exalted to heaven, as our Lord said of Capernaum, and other cities of Judah. Matthew 11:20-24. The highest branch of Israel was Judah. See Genesis 49:8-12. This branch was set in dominion over all the other tribes of Israel, or branches of this high cedar, according to the prophetic blessing, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The young twigs of this lofty branch of the high cedar represents the latest productions, or developments of the tribe or branch from which they shoot forth. As in the riddle in the beginning of this chapter, the top twigs cropped off by the great eagle, are explained to mean the king and princes of Israel; so in our text we must understand the royal seed in its latest development. “Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar.” He does not say that he will take the highest branch; but he will take *of* the highest branch; nor does he say that he would take the young twigs; but he says, “I will crop off from the top of his young twigs, a tender one.” Even as some of these twigs had been taken off by the great Babylonian eagle, so from the top of these young twigs of a still later development, would he crop off a tender one, which he would set, and which he would plant upon a high mountain and eminent.

We think there can be no doubt that this tender one is our Lord Jesus Christ; “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah.” Hebrews 7:14. As David was of the tribe of Judah, “Therefore he being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne.” Acts 2:30. “For unto us a child is born,

unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah 9:6,7. “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.” Isaiah 11:1. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zechariah 6:12,13. Observe that by lineal descent from David, our Lord was entitled to the throne and kingdom of David, to the temporal government, and in this sense he was born king of the Jews. But he had not come into the world to be temporal king, and therefore he must be cropped off, or cut off from the high cedar, and from the top of the young, or latest twigs of that tree, and be planted; and, like a corn of wheat, fall into the earth and die, rising from the dead, grow up out of his place, (his place among the young twigs of the high branch of the cedar, or commonwealth of Israel). Thus when he came in the flesh, he should grow up before the Lord, as a *tender plant*. Isaiah 53:2. Agreeing with the description in our text, “a tender one,” and yet he should be raised up by the Father, as “a plant of renown.” Ezekiel 34:29. He should be planted on a high mountain and eminent. “In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it,” saith the Lord. Of this mountain of the house of the Lord, high and eminent, we are told in prophecy, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it.” Isaiah 2:2 & Micah 4:1. This house is the church of God, built up of lively stones, fitly framed, and builded for a habitation, in which God has said, Here I dwell forever. I Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21,22; Psalm 132:13-17. God says he has laid in Zion for a foundation, a stone. Isaiah 28:16. And the psalmist says, “His foundation is in the holy mountain.” Psalm 87:1. Thus clearly showing that the high mountain of Israel, and eminent, in which he has planted this “tender one,” is none other than his church, which he came to redeem and save.

The planting and setting up of this tender one, cropped off from the royal twigs of Judah, deserves more than a passing notice. As in the tender twigs of the uttermost branches of the stately cedars are found the seed or germ for propagation, so in Christ, as the Second Adam, was, and is, the life and immortality of all his members. He is the quickening Spirit, from whom all his members are made alive from the dead. For the manifestation of *this one*, Israel waited till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made. “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Galatians 3:16. Now of the planting of this seed let us hear what Christ himself has said. “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:23,24. As the Son of man he stood connected with the highest branch of the high cedar, being the son of David, and of the tribe of Judah; while as the Son of God, he was David’s Lord. “Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, after the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Romans 1:3,4. It appears to us that when our Mediatorial Head was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was sown in the earth, and embodied in that flesh, was so identified with them that all their sins were laid on him; he was legally the seed of Abraham, and under the law, and as such he was put to death in the flesh, cut off from the high cedar, and by his circumcision, in the putting away the

body of the sins of the flesh, was planted in the earth, and in the nature of his elect people died in the earth, was buried by baptism into death, was planted therein, so as to become dead to the law, and the end of the law for righteousness; for, “Know ye not, brethren, [for I speak to them that know the law] how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law of her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.” “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.”

Thus when Jesus died in the flesh, he was to be known no more after the flesh, or as a Jew, or twig of that branch of the cedar from which he was cut off. The corn of wheat that fell into the ground died; but in his resurrection, he was quickened and justified in the Spirit. Raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he passed beyond the precincts of that law and flesh under and in which he had been put to death, and having thus abolished death, brought life and immortality to light. Death no more, death hath no more dominion over him. He that went forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, has returned with joy, bearing his sheaves with him; for “The Lord is risen indeed, and has become the first fruits of them that slept.”

Thus was the tender one cropped from the young twigs of the highest branch of Israel, planted, and that relation in which under the law he was known as the son of David after the flesh, and in his resurrection life he comes forth from the dead, from under the curse and dominion of the law, growing up out of his place, in the cedar, or Israel in the flesh, and the tender plant grows up, as the Plant of Renown, in the mountain of the house of the Lord. In the high mountain and eminent of his resurrected, or regenerated church, he is now seen as the “True Vine” of which his Father is the Husbandman. And as the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, he is exalted to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

“The kings of the earth *set* themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed.” Psalm 2:2. But they shall be unseated, and their counsels shall not stand; for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. “Yet have I *set* my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” His kingdom shall endure as the days of heaven, of his dominion there shall be no end. “A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary.” Planted upon this mountain, high and eminent. “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is without end.”

“In the mountain of the house of the Lord will I plant it, and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar.” The highest elevation of Israel is that Jerusalem which is above, and is free. Risen with Christ, and established in the mountain of his holiness. With the Lamb standing upon mount Zion; dwelling in God; can there be any higher elevation than this of the spiritual Israel? Here grows the tree of Life, within the Holy City, with spreading branches, bearing twelve manner of fruits; yielding her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2. Our Redeemer says to his disciples, “I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. As the vine is in the branches, the branches being a part of the vine, so the branches are in the vine; and without this vital union and identity no fruit could be borne. So this goodly cedar is in the branches, and the branches are all the goodly cedar, and thus connected, God says it shall bear fruit and be a goodly cedar.

“And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.” This declaration may mean the gathering of the Gentiles, or rather of God’s chosen people from every kindred and tribe of the earth, into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may dwell under the protection, and be subject to the laws and ordinances of the church of God. Whether this be a correct application of the figure or not, we know that God will gather into his kingdom all his redeemed ones, out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. But as the birds are no part of the tree, it may be designed to represent those nominal professors of Christianity, hypocrites, and imposters, which have in all ages of the church secreted and shielded themselves under a covering of pretended piety, to take away their reproach. Whatever may have been the primary design of this part of the figure, we know that the people of God, of every description as to nationality, grade or condition in nature, shall come to Zion like clouds and as doves to their windows, and shall abide under the shadow and protection of this goodly cedar. And it is also true that birds of every wing, vultures, owls, and every unclean and hateful bird, have annoyed the church of God by lodging in her branches.

“And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree flourish.” All the trees of the field must mean all the nations of the earth. As Israel in her nationality was the stately cedar tree, so the Gentile nations are the trees of the field, or world. And all the nations of the earth shall know the reality of what God hath spoken. “Break forth into joy, and sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” Isaiah 52:9,10. All the nations of the world know that God has brought down the Jewish nation from the lofty eminence they once held among the nations of the earth, and driven out the carnal Israelites to wander among the Gentile nations. And they shall all know that God has exalted his poor and afflicted people. He has dried up the green tree, there is no sap or vitality any more in their rituals, their ordinances or sacrifices, their types or ceremonies; for the anti-type has come, and their solemn feasts, and vain oblations are abominable in his sight. But the church of God among the Gentiles is exalted, and made green and fruitful, and it shall flourish like the Palm tree, and grow like the cedars of Lebanon.

“I the Lord have spoken, and have done it.” He speaks the word and it stands fast; He commands and it is done. The words which go forth out of his mouth shall not return to him void; they shall accomplish that for which they are sent, or spoken, and shall prosper in that he please.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1869.

END OF VOLUME THIRTY-SEVEN.

Many solemn reflections rush unbidden to our mind as we announce the closing of the thirty-seventh volume of our publication, and of the thirty-seventh year of our editorial labors. More than half of the years of our pilgrimage on earth have been devoted, to a great extent, in trying to disseminate truth and oppose error, through the columns of our humble sheet. The generation to whom our early volumes were addressed in “troubled times,” have left these earthly shores, and reached the destiny appointed

for them, from whence they can never return to this world; yet God has not left himself without witnesses. As our aged fathers and brethren have been called from their labors, new recruits have been gathered into the kingdom, so that now instead of the fathers, we see the children, and we are assured that the household of God shall never be desolate so long as our God is able of stones to raise up children to Abraham.

In reviewing the ground over which we have been much hurried, we find great cause to adore and bless the Lord for his sustaining power and grace to usward. For, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us, when the waters had overwhelmed us; the stream had gone over our soul. Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth." Psalm 124: 1-6.

All who are familiar with the history of the church of God for the last half century know what conflicts she has had with the enemies of truth, and how severe the ordeal through which she came, when purged from her nominal connection with those who desire to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, and to be called by her name to save them from reproach. During that memorable struggle, our publication was commenced, as a medium through which those who refused to receive the mark of the beast, or his image, or the number of his name in their forehead or in their hand, might speak words of admonition and encouragement one to another, and unitedly protest against the abominations which sought to be palmed upon the world in our name, as also to refute the slanderous reports which teemed through the numerous publications of our subtle adversaries. That the "Signs of the Times" has been made useful to the saints, we have the testimony of thousands of the humble followers of the Lamb. In its successive volumes are preserved to us the testimony of very many of the dear tried and afflicted saints of the past generation, among whom were some of the most brilliant gifts in the church. To suppose that such a paper, published at such a time, and under such circumstances, and its humble publisher, and correspondents and patrons, would escape the virulent opposition and malignant assaults of its opposers, would be simply preposterous. For almost forty years we have stood at our post in the foremost ranks, facing our assailants, and why we have never faltered is not to be recorded to our praise; for, as the psalmist has said in the foregoing reference, it is because the Lord has saved us from being swallowed up. The world, with all its influences, and Satan with his lying vanities, and our own treacherous carnal nature were all on the side of the enemy, and what were we to withstand such a host? We can only say, Having obtained favor from the Lord, we continue to the present time, and only indulge the hope that so far as it shall please God to keep us we shall be sustained. And, if we know our own heart, we have no desire to be sustained only as he shall provide.

Owing to some heavy losses sustained by us, for which our patrons are not responsible, we are in great need of all the balances now due us on old subscriptions, and shall hope that our friends will exert themselves to extend our circulation, by procuring new subscriptions, and by forwarding such collections as they can make for us as soon as convenient. The last two or three years numbers of our paper have been delayed in order to make some improvements in our office. This and the preceding number have been printed by a newly invented hydraulic machine, which at considerable expense we have introduced into our press room in place of our steam engine.

After issuing this number, which completes the 37th volume, we shall, as at the end of every volume, strike from our subscription list many names, from whom we have had no intelligence or remittance for some time, in doing which we may strike off some which ought to be retained. It is not our intention to discontinue the paper to any who really desire its continuance, and should we inadvertently do so, we

will hope to be informed, and we will re-insert all such on our list. We shall also send bills to those who are delinquent, and desire immediate payment, as we have very heavy obligations to meet. Should there be any inaccuracies discovered in any of the bills sent out, we will correct them on being so informed.

Our terms for the ensuing year will continue as last year, which are published in each number; and we renew our pledge that as soon as our list of paying subscribers shall reach ten thousand we will issue the paper weekly. Our present circulation of paying subscribers does not exceed five thousand, but we are confident that by exertion on the part of our friends it could soon be more than doubled. And the greater our list, the greater amount of matter can be afforded for the same expense.

We shall issue the first number of our next volume in a few days, somewhat in advance of its date; and as we cannot afford to publish a large surplus above the number of actual subscribers, we hope to hear immediately from those who wish their subscription to begin with the volume.

Ministers, and brethren in general, and all who are friends to our publication, who can get up a club of subscribers, and send in their orders and money, will be entitled to the club rates, and to the premiums as published in our terms. We specially request those who send in orders to write the names of subscribers, and the Post-office, county and State to which they desire to have the papers addressed, in a plain hand.

The utility of a paper wholly devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause, furnishing facilities for a general correspondence throughout our continent, has been tested by an experience of thirty-seven years. Many thousands of our brethren and sisters, and others who love the truth, have been able to hear through our columns of the general state of the churches, and to receive consolation and instruction, who, living isolated from the society of their kindred in Christ, have no other means of such intelligence.

Of the ability and orthodoxy of the editor, we shall leave our patrons to form their own decisions from the past. If our constant labor in the publication for so many years has failed to make our brethren acquainted with us, it is not likely that anything we can now say will supply the deficiency.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1869.

END OF VOLUME VII.